

It Is Time to Conscript The War Industries Under Workers' Control!

AN EDITORIAL

The time has come for workers in the United States to turn their backs on the camp of the imperialist war makers and to begin to do a little hard thinking for themselves and in their own interest.

The capitalists, with Roosevelt at their head, say that they are fighting for democracy and against fascism. Under cover of this we, the workers, have been forced into the army against our will. Under cover of this we, the workers, are chained to the war industries at low pay and long hours.

What kind of democracy is this that Roosevelt and the capitalists want us to die for? They conscripted us into the army and some of them are talking today about taking away our working class rights in the factories.

All the great industries are still owned, controlled and operated by the capitalists for one purpose only: to produce private profit, and to pay dividends and interest to the rich.

The workers have little, but they are in danger of being forced to give up even the little which they have.

The cost of the simple necessities of life is rising weekly. Every housewife and every father has felt the pinch already.

Congress is preparing to increase the tax burden of the poor. This means that workers will have less money to meet the rising cost of food, clothing and rent.

Later we will be made to "save" by being forced to buy government bonds—or in some other fashion. This will take another chunk from our wages and leave less for meat, bread and milk.

The capitalists and their government will later try to freeze wages at the present level.

Roosevelt has called for the seven day week. This is the opening wedge to eliminate the 40-hour week and institute the 56-hour week. With the speed-up, every worker will become more a slave than he is today and every factory will become a graveyard.

The capitalists and their government, with Roosevelt at its head, can do all this because they own and control everything. No matter where we look, everything we see belongs to the capitalists.

We only do the work; perform the labor that produces the wealth.

The capitalists and their government take the loaf and leave us the crumbs.

It cannot and will not be otherwise until we change things. We do the work that produces the wealth. We have been drafted; conscripted into the army. Why can't we operate and control the war industries?

Let us demand that the government take over the war industries and have them operated and controlled by the workers. They conscripted the workers, why can't they conscript the war industries and put them under the control of those who do the work?

This is a reasonable demand for the workers to make on the government. It is a democratic demand. If the government at Washington is a government of, by and for the people, there can be no objection to this demand.

Of course, we can have no interest in the government taking over and conscripting the war industries unless these industries are to be controlled and operated by the workers. Without workers' control things would go along just as at present: big profits and low wages; millions in dividends and long hours for the workers.

There must be no such fraud as in England where the representatives of the unions sit in the cabinet and in Parliament as captives of Churchill and the British ruling class. Nor do we want any fakery such as the "Mediation" Board where the labor men are captives of the United States ruling class. This is not workers' control nor the beginnings of workers' control.

We want the government to conscript the war industries and turn them over to the workers to manage and operate. The workers will control production and wages and hours. The workers will also determine what share, if any, of the wealth they produce shall go to the present owners, and how it shall be paid—if at all.

Harlem Gobbles Up Party Pamphlet on Bus Victory

Last Saturday, New York City Local of the Workers Party in conjunction with the Young Peoples Socialist League opened its sales campaign of the recently issued "Jim Crow on the Run," new 16 page (one cent) pamphlet analyzing the recent

victory of the Harlem Negroes in their struggle for jobs for Negroes as bus drivers on the NYC bus lines. Twelve hundred copies were sold by some three dozen party and YPSL comrades very easily. In fact, they were gobbled up.

The New York Local has issued 10,000 copies of this pamphlet and expects to sell them all within the next two weeks. The excellence of the pamphlet combined with the genuine interest of the Harlem workers in the bus strike has led the party and YPSL to plan another sale next Saturday. It is expected that the forthcoming sales will exceed those of last week.

As the pamphlet points out, this victory in Harlem is of national importance. The struggle and the victory of any part of the Negro people are of interest and value to all of them. In the fight for equal treatment for Negroes, the abolishment of Jim Crow, white and Negro working class unity, "Jim Crow on the Run" can be of great assistance.

Although this pamphlet deals with the New York strike, it also includes a discussion of the broad and more general issues of Negro discrimination. Party branches outside New York are urged to write in for copies. We are sure that "Jim Crow on the Run" will be a good seller and will serve to gain the party many contacts and friends. The pamphlet sells for a penny apiece. Branches can order them from the Local New York office.

Akron Poll Shows 90% for War Referendum

Ninety per cent of the people polled in the Akron Beacon Journal's American Forum cast their votes in favor of a people's referendum to declare war. The people are allowed to vote on war—only in a mock poll which indicates to the people's mock representatives in Congress that their war ballyhoo in these parts has been only ten per cent effective.

The poll indicates to us, however, that despite the millions of tons of newsprint, the countless billions of dollars and the unmeasured decibels of lung-power urging war on the people—there is no gratifying response to the war makers. The people do not trust Congress; their suspicions tell them the power to declare war should be in their own hands. And so it should.

The Workers Party program states: LET THE PEOPLE VOTE ON WAR!

LABOR ACTION

MAY 12, 1941

Organ of the Workers Party of the United States

THREE CENTS

PUT THE BOSSES ON ICE; LABOR NEEDS NO 'COOLING'

Just Steaming Us Up!



It's Higher Wages We Want-Not Long Hours

Does Roosevelt's Letter to Knudsen Mean a Longer Working Day?

By DAVID COOLIDGE

Roosevelt's letter to Knudsen, demanding that industry go on a 168-hour seven-day week, failed to go into details on the hours of work. For instance, the letter didn't say what is to happen to the 40 hour week or whether or not each shift will work seven days or 56 hours and be paid at the rate of time and a half for the additional 16 hours.

Roosevelt says that it is imperative to increase production. His proposal, along with that of the bosses, is to increase the work week. The impression to be gained from the letter to Knudsen is that he is only demanding that the plants be operated continuously for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At present, plants operating under the Wages and Hours Act are running 120 hours a week if they are operating on a three shift schedule. But, for one reason or another, many plants are not running on a three shift schedule.

The report of Walter Fuller to Knudsen also shows that thousands of small and medium sized plants are not working on "defense" or-

ders. Of 14,077 plants that made returns, only 28 per cent were engaged in "defense" production; 4,539 were prepared and willing to take some of this business if they could get it, and 1,881 were willing to install the necessary machinery if they were assured they would get "defense" orders.

Of the plants that reported, 72 per cent were operating only one shift, and only 8 per cent were operating three shifts.

Over 3,000 plants reported that if production were stepped up to three shifts, an additional 205,664 workers would be required.

This investigation supplements one made by the army and navy which revealed that of 20,000 larger plants surveyed only 10,000 had received "defense" orders.

All of this demonstrates several significant things about the so-called "defense" program. In the first place, it is clear that if present plant capacity were operated three shifts on the present 40 hour week, an additional million workers at the very least could be employed. Next, it is clear that the big industries have

hogged or been given preferment in the allocation of the war orders.

The Bosses' Interests

It is not the 120-hour week that is holding up "defense." Roosevelt must know this unless he is a plain ass. It is not the 120-hour week that is the "bottleneck." How about aluminum and the little deal with German aluminum manufacturers that the Aluminum Co. is charged with? The Department of Justice has whispered that collusion between the Mellon aluminum trust and the German aluminum trust gives Germany an advantage over the U.S. Also the government is at present "investigating" the tool industry in the Middle West with the suspicion that some gentlemen are not exactly pure in practicing their "American way of life."

Also, the OPM has found it necessary to look into the matter of hoarding by industry, especially the metal industries. The OPM calls this hoarding, the aim of which is, to increase scarcity and force a price rise; "overbuying for unnecessary inventories." Also the new restrictions are "to stop the building up of artificially

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A List of Anti-Labor Legislation

The Michigan Labor Mediation Act of June, 1939, has a clause reading: "Where the employer is operating a public utility or hospital or any other industry affected with a public interest," a union must give notice of its intent to strike 30 days in advance.

This law is now being used against the General Motors workers and workers in other plants to compel a "cooling off" period of 30 days.

Besides the Wicks bill, depriving the transit workers of the right to strike, Governor Lehman of New York signed three anti-sabotage bills: (1) An amendment to the war-time anti-sabotage act of 1917 makes a felony the destruction or injury to military supplies. (2) Provides that a company making military supplies may get permission to bar entry to its property. (3) Permits highways and roads around defense plants to be closed.

The first bill, which can be used by the boss against any militant worker he chooses, contains no clause "protecting labor." The last two contain so-called protective clauses—but what do they amount to when the boss and the forces of government combine to break a strike!

Similar anti-sabotage laws are going through in Pennsylvania, Maryland and throughout the South, many of them not even containing the camouflage clause "protecting labor."

The Oklahoma Senate passed a bill making it a penal offense to organize workers in "defense" projects and to collect fees from persons working on such projects.

Texas House of Representatives passed a bill making it a penal offense to picket.

Secretary of War Stimson's call for the organization of home guard units by the states to curb labor disturbances has been effective. State guard forces to replace the National Guard units in federal service, have expanded under War Department pressure to 112, 124 men. Officials report that 45, 391 rifles and other pieces of equipment for shooting strikers have thus far been issued from the army's surplus stocks.

Weekly drills are in progress in 19 states. In 14 additional states and in Porto Rico the guard units have been organized, and equipment for shooting is to be issued. The largest forces are, in New York, which is forming a guard of 13,910, and California and Texas, with 10,000 each.

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We Must Act NOW Against The Vicious Vinson Bill

By SUSAN GREEN

The Vinson Compulsory Mediation Bill is this week before the House Rules Committee. IT MUST BE DEFEATED.

The bosses' hands are hot and sweaty from grabbing war profits. LET THEM COOL OFF! A strike is a hard, cold reality that no workers undertake hot-headedly. LABOR DOES NOT NEED TO BE COOLED OFF.

The Vinson bill provides for a 25-day cooling-off period after workers have decided to strike and for penalties against workers up to \$5,000 and a year in jail if they disobey the law and refuse to "cool off."

The bosses love this cooling-off period FOR LABOR. It will give them 25 days in which to prepare a sure-fire campaign AGAINST STRIKING WORKERS.

The bosses' eyes glisten with the fever of greed in expectation of more and better war profits. LET THEM COOL OFF!

When workers vote for a strike they know what they are in for: loss of wages, picketing in all weather and at all hours, hunger and sickness at home, increasing debt, policemen's clubs, tear gas, armored trucks, bullets.

THESE ARE COLD FACTS THAT THE WORKERS ARE WELL ACQUAINTED WITH.

They do not need to be cooled off. THE VINSON BILL MUST BE DEFEATED.

There is talk in Washington about "compromise." The bill may be amended, leaving out some of the more objectionable provisions.

These are: 1) The right of the bosses to fire workers who are "subversive"—which means ANY MILITANT UNIONIST. 2) The prohibition against union organization of plants that are now open shop.

These two provisions may be dropped, according to reports. The cooler heads in Congress understand some cold facts, too. They know the workers in their present strength and militancy will not stand for such DIRECT ATTACKS ON THEIR RIGHT TO ORGANIZE.

But these legislators for the bosses will TRY TO PUT OVER THE "COOLING OFF" PERIOD—in the interest of "national defense."

It sounds so innocent! Why should not labor "cool off" and "mediate" its grievances—in the "national emergency," which is also an innocent way of saying "preparation for imperialist-boss war"?

But this means—in actuality—TAKING AWAY LABOR'S RIGHT TO STRIKE.

In the 25-day cooling-off period the united forces of the boss and the government can be so well organized as to take away from the strikers every chance of victory.

THAT IS EQUAL TO TAKING AWAY THE RIGHT TO STRIKE.

THAT IS EQUAL TO REDUCING THE WORKING CLASS TO INDUSTRIAL SLAVES.

THE VINSON BILL MUST BE DEFEATED—IN TOTO. The workers want no part of it.

The bosses lust for mountains of profit to increase their power and domination over this country and the whole world. It has nothing to do with the necessities of life. LET THEM COOL OFF!

The workers strike to get the NECESSITIES OF LIFE. They fight for (Continued on page 2)

Kansas City Labor Shows Its Mettle

Special to Labor Action
KANSAS CITY, Mo., May 1—Kansas City is stirred to the last man, but conservative union leaders—both AFL and CIO—are doing their best to stifle all militancy, even at the risk of crushing the hopes and confidence that the newly-roused workers are putting in class action.

Not a week passes without some new outburst of pent-up resentment from unexpected quarters, and in most instances the hitherto passive workers are achieving their demands through solid organization and their own ingenuity.

Yesterday 500 girls walked out of the Cowden Manufacturing Co., striking against both the company and the AFL union (the United Garment Workers). And also against national "defense," according to the local press, which ran headlines about the \$300,000 in orders for Army Air Corps clothing.

Since Cowden opened shop in 1919,

he has had a contract with the UGW. But the union pie cards did nothing and cared less about the speed-up, lack of seniority, line system of sewing and other bad working conditions. When the workers, led by several key militants, decided to take things into their own hands and closed down the plant, Leonard Williams, business agent (and president of the Central Labor Union) was Johnny-on-the-Spot, for once.

"There is no strike here," Williams told those on the picket line. "The company has not broken its contract in any way. The thing for you to do is to go back to work. The international union is not back of you."

"It never was!" shouted someone in the crowd. Strikers booed Williams as he pushed through the crowd and left. Only eight persons answered his summons back to work.

Cowden refused to deal with the "wildcat" group which presented the "outlaw" contract, he said. "We have

a union contract and it would be illegal for us to deal with any employees except the official union representatives. The plant will be closed down indefinitely if the employees refuse to return to work." The Garment Union and the CLU agreed with the boss against the workers.

Finally, when international representatives rushed into K.C. denouncing the strike, they were able to get the girls back into the plant. But not to work. Today they are on a slow-down inside the plant, while the company and the UGW representatives are deliberating whether to fire the leaders of the strike—as a lesson to the rebellious workers.

Many of the rank and file leaders are considering the possibility of joining the CIO. In view of the militancy of these workers, it is unlikely that the leaders will be fired, nor will they give up the fight until their conditions are improved.

A week ago 150 girls at the egg-

breaking plant of the Trainin Produce Co. pulled one of the most militant strikes that K.C. had seen in some years—and won. In an effort to improve their \$8.00 per week, back-breaking jobs, the majority had joined the union (AFL). The management thereupon signed a contract with a CIO paper local. The girls replied with a strike for union recognition—almost unanimous. The few who tried to pass the picket line were well spattered with flying eggs. For over a week the good-looking pickets marched with signs in one hand and eggs in the other. Finally the CIO was forced to retire, and the demands were granted.

A week earlier the Beemis Bag Co. signed an agreement after a solid strike that lasted almost a month. This was the signal for workers in several other bag plants to come into the Textile Workers Union (CIO). One of the plants used solely

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With the Labor Unions— On the Picket Line

By David Coolidge

CIO SHOULD INVESTIGATE SIBONEY AFFAIR

The strange dispute between the National Maritime Union and the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, which resulted in the NMU "breaking the MEBA strike" on the American Export liner Siboney, is an unfortunate affair. It is not possible to comment on the incident in detail for the reason that all of the facts are not available.

The MEBA called the strike on the Siboney which was supported by the NMU by refusal to pass through the MEBA picket line. The company presumably replaced the engineers with non-union men but the liner could not sail because the NMU refused to supply seamen. Later, the NMU withdrew its support of the strike, claiming, according to press reports, that the MEBA was unreasonable in its demands and that the strike was a one-man show. The NMU issued a statement claiming that E. F. Trainer, business manager of the MEBA local, had deceived the NMU on his demands and on other issues of the strike. The NMU also claimed that they were aiding a strike in which the engineers supposedly concerned were neither involved nor interested.

Joe Curran, president of the NMU and a vice-president of the CIO, then ordered the NMU men to sign up for the ship and collaborated with the ship's owners in getting the Siboney ready to sail despite the MEBA picket line. The MEBA, which along with the NMU is a CIO affiliate, has demanded an investi-

gation by the CIO and charges Curran with bringing about "the replacement of eight striking CIO engineers with company union strike-breakers."

The CIO should investigate this affair and take a firm and clear position. There is something wrong somewhere. Both of these unions belong to the CIO. If the difference were of such a nature that Curran felt that it was not longer correct for the NMU to support the strike of the MEBA, he should have submitted the matter to Philip Murray before acting in the way he did. Then the top officers of the CIO could have rendered a decision and given instructions to the MEBA if it was found to be at fault.

Furthermore, we would be interested to know why Curran did not discover that the strike was a "one man show" before the NMU gave its support to these eight MEBA engineers. It seems to us that it would not be difficult for the president of the NMU, who is at the same time a vice-president of the CIO, to discover the issues involved in an eight-man strike on one ship.

If the MEBA is not a bona-fide union, then it has no place in the CIO. Curran, as an officer of the CIO, should have known something about this. Whatever the merits of the case, this incident doesn't smell good. The CIO should investigate and establish the facts publicly. This is especially necessary since the MEBA announces a continuation of the strike against other Export Line ships.

GOOD AND BAD IN BETHLEHEM CONTRACT

With much waving of "good will" banners by Mrs. Herrick, of the New York NLRB, by John Green, president of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers and, of course, by Sidney Hillman, Bethlehem Steel Co. has signed its first contract with the CIO.

The contract covers 1,700 workers in the Hoboken shipyards of Bethlehem. While this contract is nothing to be especially jubilant over, it does mean a breaking down of Bethlehem's union-busting policy. The company at least has signed a contract.

The present contract grants nothing much of a material sort. There is to be no closed shop. The company reserves the right to bargain with individual employees or groups of employees outside the union. Wage adjustments are left to the decisions of the Atlantic Coast Shipbuilding Stabilization Conference. The contract must not be construed as abridging "the exercise of the regular and customary functions of management."

The union pledges that it will not "in any way threaten, intimidate or coerce or attempt to coerce any employee of the company for any purpose whatsoever." The contract bans all strikes, sit-downs, slow-downs, boycotting, picketing, stoppage or curtailment of work or any other interference with or demonstration against the Hoboken yard on or off the premises. The contract calls for an "impartial" umpire in cases where differences can not be settled by the grievance committees.

J. Ullmer, company representative, thanked Mrs. Herrick for her part in bringing about the settlement and

said that "we hope that we have been able to convince you that it is and has been the company's policy to deal in good faith with the properly chosen and duly certified representatives of its employees, as was done in this case." It may be necessary to remind readers that this man Ullmer is talking about the Bethlehem Steel Co.

One of the finest things about this contract is the provision for its termination on 20 days' notice.

There is nothing incorrect about a union going step by step in dealing with such bandit outfits as Bethlehem Steel. The workers must realize, however, that they have taken only a small step. They haven't won any "great victory," as their officers will attempt to make it appear. The contract gives them a toe hold, and lays the basis for the fight for higher wages, for complete organization of Bethlehem and for better working conditions, including shorter hours.

Furthermore, the workers at Bethlehem should not be trapped by any nonsense from the company about the great contributions of Mrs. Herrick toward the "spirit of cooperation." If Mrs. Herrick or any other NLRB official has so much influence with Bethlehem, why in hell wasn't it used long ago?

The decisive event in dragging a contract out of Bethlehem was the mass strike and picket lines at Lackawanna, Bethlehem and Johnstown. Herrick, the NLRB and Hillman had nothing to do with it of any real importance. They came along with their honey and "cooperation" after the workers had used their own methods of educating Bethlehem.

SOME MORE ON THE MEDIATION BOARD

Roosevelt's latest and smoothest strike-breaking outfit, the "Mediation" Board, hasn't yet found the "formula" for settling the differences between the UAW-CIO and General Motors. The union demands a 10 cents an hour increase. The company says that this would add \$50,000,000 a year to its payroll. GM is willing to take \$15,000,000 from the duPonts and other big shot stockholders, but not 50 million.

Charles Wilson, president of GM, says "there is no economic justification for the corporation to raise wages at present. The problem is how much General Motors is willing to pay to avoid a strike." The company is willing to pay \$15,000,000. The only inference to be drawn from the Wilson statement is that the union is attempting to hijack the company; the GM workers are holding up the company and trying to take something that doesn't belong to the workers. The duPonts, Raskob's, Fishers, Sloans and Morgans are about to be robbed of their livelihood by a gang of merciless and mercenary scoundrels.

Mr. Wilson also is convinced that

"strikes are expensive and are not should be 'collecting': the collecting necessary. Collective bargaining should not always mean collecting; it should mean bargaining too."

We agree that collective bargaining should mean bargaining. The result of the bargaining, however, of higher wages, shorter hours, union recognition and better working conditions.

There is one question we should like to have answered in connection with this GM-UAW (CIO) dispute. Whose side is Philip Murray on? He is a member of the "Mediation" Board and he has been sitting in the negotiations, with Thomas, representing the UAW. How can Murray remain a member of this strike-breaking board and at the same time represent the CIO unions? He sits with the enemies of labor (the government and the employers) one day and the workers the following day.

Any labor leader who accepts a post on a government board or employer group dealing with labor relations should be forced to resign his post in the union.

American Committee for Fourth Int'l Challenges Lie on Uruguay Group

Editor, Labor Action:

Some months back the Socialist Appeal—organ of the Cannon group now published as The Militant—contained a statement that the leaders of that section of the Uruguay organization of the Fourth International which supported the Workers Party tendency in America had withdrawn from the revolutionary movement into retirement.

We are in receipt of information that authorizes us to state categorically that this is a malicious lie, without a shred of truth. The comrades involved in this falsehood are active revolutionists and have every intention of continuing their work, as militants of the Fourth International.

American Committee for the Fourth International

WP May Day Rallies Spread Socialist Message Party Speakers Flay Imperialist War—Hail Workers' Militancy

The workers' fight against Hitlerism is the struggle for socialism, for the defeat of all the imperialist bosses everywhere—this was the theme around which the May Day Rally of Local New York, Workers Party, was built.

As expressed by Emanuel Garrett, Managing Editor of LABOR ACTION and the chief speaker at the meeting, the Workers Party hates Hitlerism as the vicious enemy of the workers and fights it tooth and nail. However it hates no less the other varieties of capitalism out of which fascism sprang. If Roosevelt's war were a war against fascism, the WP would be the first to support it. But Roosevelt's war is not the fight of the workers against Hitlerism, it can't be! It is the fight of the American bosses for world domination against the rival German bosses who also want world domination.

Local New York of the WP, the Young Peoples Socialist League and sympathizers of the movement turned out in force at Madison Square Park to celebrate the international workers' holiday and to give revolutionary hope and courage to the workers of the largest city of the world.

It was a fitting place for holding a May Day celebration. Grouped around Madison Square Park are imposing office structures where exploiters of labor carry on—standing among them are the building of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, top high among the profit-fleecers of the world. The speakers called upon the workers to make for themselves a future no longer controlled by the capitalist class but by the workers owning all the social wealth, all the means of production, under a workers' government.

The speakers stand, gay in red bunting, was surrounded by a mass of comrades bearing placards inscribed with the Party's slogans: "Conscript the War Industries under Workers' Control!" — "No Government Contract Without a Union Contract!" — "Let the People Vote on War!" — "Down with Jim-Crow and Anti-Semitism!" — "For a Workers' Government!" These and many more slogans were attractively displayed.

Youth Hear Message

When the comrades of the YPSL raised their red banners as a signal for opening the meeting, the police stepped in with a you-can't-do-that edict. Tom Brown, chairman of the meeting, and the other comrades in charge, argued that there was no ordinance forbidding the showing of a symbolic red banner—not inscribed with the insignia of any foreign government. The police sergeant "democratically" settled the matter by admonishing the comrades "Not to be arbitrary!" The sergeant was weak on his English, though strong on enforcing laws that do not even exist.

Irving Howe of the YPSL was the first speaker. Even the cops were listening as he described the hopelessness of youth under boss rule, before whom stretches a horrible future, their lives wasted in imperialist war, unless they choose the only way out—socialism. Arthur Parks also spoke for the youth.

Hits Jim-Crow

Conrad Lynn, introduced by the chairman as a well-known Negro, a lawyer for his people, pointed to the towering edifices of wealth and then down the street to the deserted loft buildings where the small-fry-bosses had once carried on. This, he said, symbolized the development in the United States—the concentration of wealth in a handful of top capitalists. He called for the forward march of black and white workers, united in their unconquerable might, to fight for the rights of Negroes, for the rights of all the workers, and finally to topple the remaining handful of capitalists off their pinnacle.

Emanuel Garrett, in a fine, impressive speech, said that the Workers Party, meeting in small groups throughout the country to celebrate May Day, did not stand by themselves: The militant WP is part and parcel of the militant workers of the whole country. The WP is united in a common cause with the fighting Ford workers, with the embattled Bethlehem workers, struggling against the vicious and powerful enemies of labor.

Lashes at Pessimists

With the hammerlike force, comrade Garrett exposed the hypocrisy of the Roosevelt administration automatically, dragging the unwilling people into the imperialist war. Roosevelt tells the people this is a war for democracy, but the people are not given the right to vote on the vital question of war! The warmongers are afraid the people will vote against it. This is "democracy" in action. Comrade Garrett also branded the anti-war agitation of the local unit of the Communist Party as a fake—dictated by the interests of the Stalin-Hitler war partnership. Tomorrow, said the speaker, if Stalin should make a switch to the Roosevelt gang, the CP would be the loudest to shout for war.

Garrett lashed at those who despair in the face of world reaction, and who seek refuge in pessimism and cynicism. This is indeed, said the speaker, a dark hour—but through that darkness shines the strength of the working class—a strength and courage and optimism demonstrated on innumerable picket lines in every section of the country. In certain of the European countries, workers may be beaten and cowed. But only temporarily. The day will come when they will rise and put an end to the senseless bloodshed of imperialist war. The spirit and vitality that cracked the Bethlehem and Ford open-shoppers in this country, will lead to socialist triumph.

Phila.

PHILADELPHIA—Nearly fifty militants, young and old, heard Judy Stone of the Young Peoples Socialist League and Paul Temple of the Workers Party commemorate the First of May by hurling the anti-war defiance of revolutionary socialism at the war mongering capitalist class.

Judy Stone traced the rise of May Day through the last fifty years, from an American holiday to one that is celebrated by the international working class. From the Harvester strike of Haymarket days to the gigantic class struggles carried on by the workers of the International Harvester Corporation in the war days of today.

Paul Temple showed how under the smoke screen of defense, the rapacious boss class aided by their office boy Roosevelt, are making tremendous profits while the workers are being loaded with heavy taxes. Only the real nationalization of the war industries under workers' control can help the workers maintain a decent standard of living. Society can be saved from the misery and bloodshed that is capitalist government by replacing its oppressor's with a socialist government.

In preparation for the meeting, the Workers Party and the Young Peoples Socialist League distributed two thousand May Day leaflets, and more than five hundred LABOR ACTIONS. More than 75% of this literature was distributed to the workers of the greatest basic industrial plant in Philadelphia. The workers who have been receiving the Party literature for almost six months at this factory readily accepted the revolutionary message of the Workers Party.

Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES—Nearly 1,000 copies of the May Day issue of LABOR ACTION and 2,000 copies of the May Day manifesto were distributed this last week at aircraft, longshoremen, shipyard and needle trades meetings.

Besides, the Los Angeles local of the Workers Party held a very enjoyable May Day picnic.

Kansas City--

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Negro women and was able to win a contract without a strike. A strike-bound oil station chain has just been granted an injunction to restrain anyone from scattering tacks in its driveways.

Auto Workers Set

At a recent special meeting of the UAW-AFL, Local 93 (General Motors), a majority movement was afoot to swing the whole local into the CIO. It was stopped only by a special delegation of national AFL leaders who undemocratically turned the meeting into a brawl and prevented the question from reaching the floor. But they won't be able to hold those workers long. They know what they want and the recent lessons of the Ford strike have convinced even the slowest members of the rôle of the AFL in the automobile industry.

The Ford local of the CIO, which has been out on strike for almost three years now, had a meeting where a special report was heard on the Ford strike, and further plans for activity laid.

These represent only a few of the strikes and struggles of labor in this part of the country. Even the workers of small textile mills in the heart of rural Missouri are spontaneously joining the CIO and calling for union organizers. By all indications, the upsurge of working class militancy has not yet reached its peak.

LET THE PEOPLE
VOTE ON WAR!

CIO Confident Of Victory in Lackawanna Poll

Special to Labor Action

BUFFALO, N. Y.—On Wednesday, May 4, workers at the great Lackawanna plant of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation go to the polls to select their bargaining agent in an NLRB election. Result of the election is a foregone conclusion; the workers, being nobody's fools, are solid CIO men, and will take this opportunity to carve one more notch in the SWOC victory belt.

Lackawanna is in a festive mood. Huge billboards are covered with SWOC election posters, autos are plastered with "Vote SWOC" stickers (as a matter of fact, you see them all over Buffalo), new offices have been opened up. The town is lousy with organizers, a full twenty of them doing the last minute work of lining up the few hesitant men. There is no such tension before this contest as there was before the big strike, because this is a lead-pipe cinch. Opposition is just about non-existent—the company union might as well be in Timbuctoo.

The steel workers are going to utilize this election (which they realize full well was wrung from the government and the company as a result of militant action) as one more opportunity to display their united strength. A smashing victory on May 14 will be one more step on the road not only to the realization of all their demands, but also to the building of more powerful CIO unions in Buffalo, especially in aircraft. Penty of Buffalo workers have been impressed by the ten cent wage increase which the steel companies were forced to grant a few weeks ago, but they are going to be more impressed in the future, because the Bethlehem workers look on the ten cents raise as only the beginning.

Wages, Hours-

(Continued from page 1)

large inventories.

The OPM evidently doesn't have much faith in the patriotism of its friends of the business world. Despite the fact that buyers and sellers of the specified metals must report their transactions, "the division of priorities is now working on plans for a field staff which will be able, very soon, to begin making audits and spot checks on inventories." Seemingly the bosses don't trust each other.

Whatever the bosses and the government do, between and among themselves to prosecute their war is no special concern of the working class. On all matters relating solely to themselves they can operate as they damn please. They can sell to Germany or Japan. They can pile up their raw materials and supplies and gouge each other to their heart's content. They can lie to their government and to each other. They can set their cops, spies and stoolpigeons on each other to find whether or not their laws are being violated. That's their business.

Where OUR Interests Lie
But we have something to say about the hours we work and how much we are paid for that work. That's where we come in on this "defense" business. We're not looking for more work but more money.

We don't want longer hours, but a higher hourly rate of pay and shorter hours. If we don't want to be turned into pack mules somewhere down the road, then we must watch Roosevelt and the bosses in their efforts to increase the work week.

A seven day 168 hour week isn't necessary. There has to be time to repair, clean and oil machinery. Furthermore the workers must have and demand time off for rest, recreation and educational pursuits. Why should these be a monopoly of the bosses?

We Propose:
A SIX HOUR DAY AND A FIVE DAY WEEK.

MINIMUM PAY OF \$30 FOR THIS 30 HOUR WEEK.

TIME AND A HALF FOR OVERTIME, ABOVE THIRTY HOURS. DOUBLE TIME FOR SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

INCREASED WAGES ALL ALONG THE LINE WHENEVER THE COST OF LIVING RISES.

Vinson --

(Continued from page 1)

a living wage, for decent hours and conditions. THESE ARE NECESSITIES OF LIFE.

That is why workers turn out in mass picket lines. LABOR KNOWS WHY IT HAS TO STRIKE. IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE COOLED OFF. And labor can go out on picket lines to LICK THE VICIOUS VINSON BILL.

TO LICK THE VINSON BILL is also a NECESSITY OF LIFE FOR LABOR.

Labor Action Bookshelf By Dwight Macdonald

THE ASSASSINATION OF LEON TROTSKY, by Albert Goldman. 74 pages, 15 cents. Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York City.

When Leon Trotsky was brutally murdered in his home in Mexico City last summer, practically the whole American press, with the exception of the Stalinist papers (and the undercover Stalinoid PMJ) attributed the crime to the agents of Stalin. Many a worker, with a well-founded suspicion of the American press, no doubt thought to himself at the time: "Sounds logical, but how do I know the papers aren't doing some more red-baiting? There's no black-and-white PROOF that Stalin and the GPU were behind it."

This proof now exists, in the form of this excellent little pamphlet by Albert Goldman, well known labor lawyer and legal adviser of Trotsky up to his death. As counsel for Trotsky's widow, Goldman made a thorough investigation of the crime on the scene, and took part in the examination of "Frank Jacon," the murderer. Here he gives the result of his investigation in a wealth of detail, much of it never before made public.

He piles up the evidence and shows beyond any reasonable doubt that (1) Jacon's explanation of how he came to commit the murder is a crude lie from beginning to end, (2) Jacon himself is not what he claims to be, and (3) there is a mountain of evidence—including certain slips in Jacon's "confession," the origin of his passport, and his inability to explain the source of the large funds he possessed—to link him up with the one man in the whole world who had most to gain from Trotsky's death, the man whose agents tried to shoot Trotsky earlier in the summer, the man whose orders sealed the fate of one after another of Trotsky's family and household—namely, Josef Stalin, well described by Trotsky himself as "the Borgia of the Kremlin."

This pamphlet, which should be put in the hands of every honest supporter of the Communist Party in this country (and there are, unfortunately, many such), closes the case of Leon Trotsky against the bloody, barbarous masters of the Soviet Union today. The charge, Murder. The verdict, Guilty!

LABOR AND NATIONAL DEFENSE. 143 pages, \$1.00. Twentieth Century Fund, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City.

This survey, prepared by a group of economists, is valuable as a thorough, reasonably unbiased and up-to-date study of what the effect of the Roosevelt war program has been to date on America labor, and what it is likely to be in the future. Its main findings can be summed up:

(1) A few months ago, economists were predicting that even when the war production program got going 100 per cent, there would still be considerable unemployment. Since then, however, the program has been so greatly expanded that unemployment will be wiped out by the middle of 1942.

(2) This liquidation of unemployment is only relative, however. Actually, because of the chaotic, planless nature of capitalist production, there will always be shortages in one industry or region and surpluses of labor in another, so that, the survey estimates, even at peak war production, "there may be one or two million unemployed."

(3) The demand will be mostly for workers with some degree of skill. "It is estimated that about 35 per cent of the men demanded will be skilled workers, 40 per cent semi-skilled and 25 per cent unskilled."

(4) It is interesting to note that this committee of bourgeois economists makes two recommendations which were pushed very hard several months ago by the CIO (and which were killed by the dollar-a-year men): (a) "Formation of management-worker committees in all defense industries"; (b) "wider distribution of defense orders and more extensive use of subcontracting." As I pointed out last month in *The New Internationalist*, such proposals coming from labor, although reactionary in their aim since they line up labor behind the imperialist war being fought by Churchill-Roosevelt, show that labor today can plan and organize production better than the bourgeoisie can.

(5) The survey takes up at length the delicate question of strikes. It concludes that "friction" is bound to continue in future, since in most of the key war industries—steel, rubber, automobiles, oil, chemicals, etc.—the unions are young (post-1933) and in the midst of aggressive organizing campaigns.

(6) It comes out against any outlawing of strikes or compulsory arbitration on the realistic grounds that past experience has shown that such measures just don't work, that strikes go on just the same. "Strikes in democratic countries can be prevented only by agreement between employers and workers—not by law," write the learned economists. This is true enough. But it doesn't seem to occur to these wise men that, when and if the bosses have to choose between strikes and democracy on the one hand, and the survival of their system on the other, they will not choose . . . strikes. This choice seems to be a long way off right now. The current strategy of the bosses, which this study of course reflects, is to go easy on labor, to retreat from the extreme measures which were being advocated in Congress five or six weeks ago. But labor shouldn't deceive itself. This is not spring, but Indian summer, and the winter of fascism will surely come unless the workers fight with redoubled militancy in the future.

Schedule of Shachtman National Tour

Los Angeles	Sunday to Saturday, May 11-17
Houston	Friday, May 23
Kansas City	Tuesday, May 27
St. Louis	Thursday to Sunday, May 29 to June 1
Streator	Monday, June 2
Chicago	Tuesday-Wednesday, June 3-4
Louisville	Friday, June 6
Cincinnati	Saturday, June 7
Columbus	Sunday, June 8
Akron	Monday, June 9
Youngstown	Tuesday, June 10
Pittsburgh	Wednesday-Thursday, June 11-12
Washington	Friday, June 13
Baltimore	Saturday, June 14
Philadelphia	Sunday, June 15
Reading	Monday, June 16
Mt. Carmel	Tuesday, June 17
Newark	Wednesday, June 18
Massachusetts (Boston, Lynn, Worcester, Fitchburg)	Friday to Monday, June 20-23

HAVE YOU READ:

Jim-Crow on the Run

A Pamphlet Issued by Local New York
Of the Workers Party Analyzing the
Victory in the Harlem Bus Strike

1c

Help us distribute this Pamphlet. Order your copies
IN QUANTITY from Local New York, Workers Party,
114 West 14th Street, New York City. Special rates on
Quantity Orders.

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

Governor Robert A. Hurley, chief executive of the commonwealth of Connecticut, has waived the 10 p.m. limit set by law on women's night work. This will allow the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. of New Haven and the Remington Arms Co. of Bridgeport to establish full night shifts of women workers and thus make more profits out of the sweat of women in the "national emergency."

How come that a law passed by the so-called representatives of the people can be so arbitrarily suspended by a governor without the consent of the governed? How come that a law to protect the health of women in industry, forced upon the statute books after long years of hard struggle by the workers, can be nullified by the scratch of a governor's pen?

Under an emergency provision of ANOTHER Connecticut law he is empowered to set aside the 10 p.m. limit on night work for women. The emergency now existing is that the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. wishes to increase its weekly output of cartridges from 11,000,000 to 17,000,000 by employing women at night. The Remington Arms Co. also desires to increase its output by using the same method.

So, presto! This emergency provision is taken out of mothballs and put into service.

In the balance of values of capitalists and their politicians, the health of working women has no weight against cartridges and profits.

This attack on labor legislation in the state of Connecticut—only one of many throughout the country—must serve as a warning to all workers, men and women, black and white.

World capitalism, having brought on another murderous war, into which the American bosses want to plunge the nation in order to "get theirs," a "national emergency" now exists. In every state there is some law somewhere—even though it may be a hundred years old—that can be trotted out "legally" to suspend hard-won labor legislation.

Every shred of legal protection for labor will be gone in the winds raised by the total war cyclone—unless Labor says NO—and suits its ACTION to its word.

Did you ever hear of William McChesney Martin, Jr.? You haven't unless you read the long stories about him and saw the many pictures of him that the boss press was carrying. You wouldn't have heard of him for the simple reason that you, as working women, don't have much to do with the New York Stock Exchange, of which Mr. Martin was \$48,000-a-year president until he was drafted into the army a few days ago.

At the same time William Metrinko, who at the age of 23 is a \$16-a-week or \$800-a-year page boy at the New York Stock Exchange, was also drafted into the army. His story was combined with Mr. Martin's—to show how "democratically" the draft law works.

Says who? Mr. Martin confessed to reporters that he had saved some money—he modestly refrained from saying how much. I would wager my last hairpin that he is a very rich man. To the president of the New York Stock Exchange, the yearly salary of \$48,000 is mere pin money. The big dough comes from trading in stocks and bonds, and from dividends and interest "earned" by the parasite owners of corporations paper—out of the products for which labor is not fully paid. It was also reported that Mr. Martin has plans for the future, involving the purchase of an expensive seat on the New York Stock Exchange.

But what has \$16-a-week William Metrinko doing in the boss army? He has no stakes in the capitalist set-up. He will get nothing out of the war but a mud-hole in some foreign battlefield. His class will get nothing out of the war but indescribable misery—and more misery in a post-war depression. He does not belong in the army. He is drafted as a SLAVE to serve his masters.

Why do I put this item about two men into a women's column? I was thinking about the mother of William Metrinko. I was thinking about the mothers of all the William Metrinkos of the country—for whom the capitalist system holds no future—now about to give up their lives for that enslaving system in a bloody and useless war.

Is it not the human duty of these women to fight the boss system that has robbed their boys of the opportunity for a good life, and now is about to rob them of life itself?

FROM OUR WEST COAST CORRESPONDENT

The Cost of Living Shoots Skyward

A 24-hour shutdown of all government projects in San Diego involving 13,000 AFL workers quickly brought wage adjustments demanded by the strikers.

This action came after the usual months of fooling around by Navy officials in regard to union negotiations. Since housing conditions are fantastic beyond description in San Diego—the terrific boom here makes it impossible to set up enough homes even if someone wanted to, and nobody does except at a huge profit—and the cost of living is sky high, the AFL workers have demanded a wage increase.

Their case was so sound that even local Naval officials admitted they were entitled to an increase. So the boys were stalled around by the higher-ups in Washington.

But the complete shutdown brought results fast. In 24 hours, to be exact. Almost before the newspapers had time to whip up a "sabotaging national defense" baloney scare.

PRICES GO UP SKY HIGH

Folks out here got two stiff jolts last week that have everyone talking, plenty and furiously.

The conservative Los Angeles Times came out with a big story that the cost of living in this area will have increased by 50 per cent in September over that of one year ago.

Let me repeat that. In one year, the cost of living will have gone up 50 per cent, says a conservative newspaper!

If LABOR ACTION said that, it would just be radical propaganda. Some people have doubted our analysis on this point.

But the facts are too painfully present for anyone to ignore any longer.

Already, since last September, the cost of living has gone up around 35 per cent. Rents here increase monthly, since the aircraft boom brings thousands of more workers, and housing facilities are nothing to write home about.

Food in the grocery stores and in the restaurants has gone up in a glaring fashion. Milk, sugar, meat, above all meat and bread, are some of the commodities where prices are high. And in restaurants, 35 cent meals have gone to 45 and fifty cents. Movie prices are up, since the whole burden of taxation has been foisted on the customer.

The pinch has been felt by every consumer.

Beware of Lindbergh's Program!

His Program Differs from Ours as Black Differs from White

Several readers of LABOR ACTION have asked us why, if we are serious when we assert that war is the great issue before the American people today, we don't support the vigorous anti-war drive now being staged by Charles A. Lindbergh and the America First Committee. If the question of war or peace is today the supreme question facing the working class, why shouldn't a paper devoted to their interests give support—however critical and limited—to the most powerful organized group now opposing American entry into the war?

The explanation is simply that our reasons for opposing American entry into the war are quite different from those of Lindbergh and his America First group. As Marxist revolutionaries, we oppose going into the war because we know that such action would tie the American working class—now showing such splendid guts and spirit in the defense of its interests—to the gunwheels of American imperialism, that it would mean giving up a golden opportunity to make a basic change in the rotten capitalist system that brought about the war in the first place. (Look at what has happened to British labor and its war aims in the last year if you don't believe us.)

THE WHY OF LINDBERGH

Why does Lindbergh oppose the war? So that he may better lead the masses toward a more progressive, just and humane society? Everyone knows that Lindbergh has never shown the faintest interest in the cause of labor and that his social views are extremely reactionary. His wife, the daughter of a Morgan partner, is the author of the most effective pro-fascist pamphlet yet published in English. His own relations with the Nazis have been close and friendly. Much as we hate to admit it, Roosevelt's secretary, Stephen Early, scored a bullseye when he wisecracked the other day: "I understand that Colonel Lindbergh is returning his commission to the Secretary of War. That leads

Workers who got wage increases in the last six months find that they are having a harder time of making a go of things!

Some waitresses in a union told me that they get more and more complaints about the cost of meals—and they very correctly add that they are tired of it, since they just work there too.

And you should hear the housewives talk about the way the grocery bill has gone up!

On top of all this, has come the report from Washington about the new taxes planned to pay the cost of Wall Street's war. Five cents on a pound of coffee! That stuck in our mind.

The other taxes all hit the poor man. The new income taxes will "hit the lower brackets," as they say in Washington.

The squeeze is just crushing. The whole process is nothing but a combined form of inflation, making the poor man pay for the rich man's war.

In this, like in so many other things, the West Coast either goes up or comes down the fastest. Everything seems to operate that way here. And right now, inflation is what's hitting the poor man below the belt.

It's time for the unions to demand more, and for the housewives as an auxiliary, to form committees in neighborhoods to fight against the high prices.

And it should be done around the general idea of making the rich pay for their own war.

LEGISLATURE IN ANTI-LABOR SESSION

Up in Sacramento a bunch of morons are meeting in what is supposed to be an August session of the State Legislature. Among other items they are considering a few bills directed against labor. Merely 4,000 bills! And they do this on money the tax payers pour out.

They have one bill, the Tenney law, which is aimed at "subversive" organizations. It is calculated to smash all militant and revolutionary labor organizations, by imposing huge fines and jail sentences for membership, by demanding full financial accounts, publication of all membership and sympathizer lists, and, we believe, reports on activities. It's a cinch to pass and be signed in a few weeks.

In order to look like an economy body, these same gentlemen, many of them direct representatives of the Associated Farmers, also are trying to shift the whole burden of relief back to the coun-

ties, as was the case one hundred years ago in America.

Also, this would give the local Hitlers, who are entrenched in the relief set-up, a chance to use that weapon against unions by denying any aid to strikers.

In a brilliant stroke of genius, the pompous ignoramus who are officially called the state education committee of the legislature, produced a profound idea on smashing Hitlerism. All school buses, by state law, will be painted red, white and blue, they recommend. Which prompted a cynical columnist to ask, "What, no stars?" Obviously fifth column sabotage working in the committee.

WHERE'S YOUR DRAFT CARD?

Once in a while the Los Angeles police department takes time out from its strike-breaking activities—when there aren't any strikes in progress—to carry out what is known as a traffic drive.

A bunch of bluecoats surround a busy highway and suddenly swoop down on all the motorists passing by. Flashlights glare into your eyes, your car is given a test, you're asked a lot of questions and then permitted to drive on. It gives you the same feeling you get when watching a movie scene where the Gestapo surrounds a block and then goes to work on everyone who happens to be there.

This feeling has gotten stronger lately since the cops have begun their inquisition with the question—the very first question—Where's your draft card!

Which reminds us of the latest news from California's draft camps. Many letters coming from there to folks back home have been marked by one major complaint. Most of the men have been given furloughs to return home or visit the city for a few days and they have been treated with such contempt, especially by what passes off as polite society, that they returned to camp vowing not to go to the city again.

"All the boys are sore and talking plenty about the treatment they got," is how one draftee expressed it.

But their solution is a cowardly one. Don't stay at the camps. Take a bunch to town with you, and insist upon your rights.

JACK WILSON.

and, second, to bamboozle the American bourgeoisie with the vision of a peaceful division of the world with a triumphant Hitler. This is exploiting the deep and genuine anti-war sentiment of the American masses for the benefit of the Nazis—no more and no less.

Lindbergh speaks for that section of the American ruling class which finds the present war plans of the Roosevelt Administration in conflict with their specific interests. A significant key to the measure of their "anti-wariness" is their openly expressed desire for United States control of Latin America by occupation, if necessary, or by other means if more feasible. In a later issue of LABOR ACTION we will return to Lindbergh, discuss the men behind him and the motives behind their program.

N. I. Features Trotsky Article

The May issue of The New Internationalist is now off the press. Featuring an article by Leon Trotsky, "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," the issue contains a wide variety of interesting material. Included in the issue are:

Stalinism and War—by Joseph Carter.
Hook Purges Marxism—by Paul Temple.
Fascism in Germany—a continuation of the discussion by Dwight Macdonald and Albert Gates.
American Imperialism—by Frank Demby.
On Mexico—by Joseph Arnold.

For orders or subscriptions write to The New Internationalist, 114 West 14th Street, New York City.

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

CATCHES US ON AN IMPORTANT POINT

Dear Comrade Editor:

LABOR ACTION has, up to now, carried on a consistent fight for higher living standards for the working class and against the war. Therefore it is with some astonishment that I read in the April 28 issue, on page 1, the following slogans:

"Thirty dollars for a 30-hour work week, with time and a half for overtime" and "No declaration of war without a referendum of all over 18."

Regarding the first one, I would like to ask—the editor of LABOR ACTION now joined in the campaign of the bosses and the government to reduce workers' living standards? It is a fact that thousands of workers are now earning more than \$30 a week. We should fight to raise the pay of the lower-paid workers to a

MINIMUM wage of \$30 for a 30-hour week, and above that, but not to REDUCE the wages of workers now making more than this minimum. In fact, I don't think that is what the editor meant, but the language could easily be interpreted that way.

Also, I don't think we should be satisfied with present wage rates, on overtime or anything else. As long as a tiny group of fabulously wealthy persons controls this country, the workers should constantly demand a greater share of the national income. As soon as a demand is won workers should raise new demands and fight for them. The demand for time and a half for overtime was OK in the past, but now that this has been realized, not only in union agreements but also in the law of the land, it is my opinion that we should demand double time for overtime. Why not? Aren't the bosses forcing the workers

to toil 60 and more hours per week to produce the machines of death, and aren't the bosses rolling in huge profits out of this slaughter, into which they are now preparing to send the draftees? The workers are certainly entitled to double time for overtime.

Regarding the second slogan, I would like to ask—if the boss government granted your demand and gave you a referendum of all over 18, would you then sanction a declaration of war? It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the government, in order to make the war look better in the eyes of the people, might decide to hold a referendum, after the fashion of a Hitler plebiscite. In such an election they would get a big majority for declaring war. But that should not justify your support of the war.

It is correct to say that the people cannot trust the handful of rich men in Congress to decide the question of war and peace; and to demand that the war-making power be taken out of the hands of Congress and submitted to a REALLY DEMOCRATIC vote of the people, after a genuine opportunity for all sides of the question to be heard by the people. But we must be careful not to spread the illusion that such a democratic referendum can be obtained from the boss government, and we must choose our words with care so as not to give an impression contrary to what we actually mean.

Aside from the above, I think LABOR ACTION is a swell paper, far superior to any other weekly or daily labor publication. I would, however, like to see more news about the labor and anti-war struggle in

Europe and the colonial countries; and some information about the struggles of the poor farmers of our own country, which has been practically non-existent in the pages of LABOR ACTION.

M. W.

Brooklyn, April 17.

(You are altogether right on the first point. If you will look on page 3 of the issue you mention, you will see the slogan correctly worded. The wording on page 1 is wrong through an editorial oversight.)

As for the second criticism, you must be very careful—as so, indeed, must we. Regardless of what the vote would be for war, we would still be opposed to the imperialist war. Still, we maintain that the power to declare a war, even a war we oppose, must rest exclusively

Relics of 1918 Jim-Crowed in Vet Hospital

By TED LYONS

It is one of those balmy, sunny days—mothers parading with their buggies down the boulevard, kids playing ball in the streets, and, as usual, the boys on the corner.

You can't imagine that somewhere in this world there is a war on and that ordinary guys are busy blowing each other apart—except for the fact that the main topic of "corner conversation" is about the war, and not about that "cute number that just breezed by" (although this point is not altogether neglected). Everyone asks "How soon will we be in it? Where will they send us? How long is this damned thing going to last?"

Yes, you can't imagine that there's a war on—except that some of the familiar "corner faces" are absent . . . "caught in the draft" . . . pictures of 'em—tanned and grinning in army uniform—are passed around . . . letters compared. Some write that the food is great and that they've never felt so healthy and strong. Of course our boys are the type that never did hit it off well as a foreman or a copper; so the letters are interspersed with tales of this guy getting 30 days for talking back to an officer, and another guy taking a rap because he refused to act as a stool pigeon and give some fellows away. It's warm and sunny today but you know there's a war being fought.

A VISIT TO EDWARD HINES HOSPITAL

And so, with the boys breaking up, each off to make the most of a free Sunday, you decide to hike to the Edward Hines Hospital to see a pal who went "over there" in the first installment in the war for "democracy." The Edward Hines Hospital is a fine, modern establishment surrounded by spacious grounds out in Maywood, Ill. Here is where some of the living human remnants of the last war are kept.

Sunday brings a lot of visitors. There are the wives, sweethearts, mothers, fathers, children, cousins, friends, etc., of the boys who came back . . . but with parties missing.

There are also present the usual array of professional "good will spreaders" . . . the tall, gawky, make-up-less Salvation Army "lassies" who have all the looks of a well preserved prune. There are the swarms of patriotic, well-prepared society women who "tour" the hospital with their prepared display of oh-so-sad and tearful faces.

You roam around, up and down the long, clean, white corridors. You pass row after row of "medicine smelling" wards, catching glimpses of the boys who fought Kaiser Bill in World War I. These vets aren't exactly boys now—plenty of white haired men with old, ash-gray faces around here.

You see vets walking on crutches or being wheel-chaired through the corridors by their visitors. There are vets who haven't been out of a bed in 23 years . . . vets bandaged from head to foot—like a mummy . . . vets with burned bodies and horribly distorting wounds . . . and vets too mutilated to be seen—it's hard to imagine that all these war-torn figures were once exactly the same healthy young conscripts whose pictures the boys were passing around on the corner this morning. You wonder what these fellows have been thinking of, lying in bed for so many years. You shudder when you ask yourself how many of the boys you know will end up like these vets . . . you walk on.

JIM-CROWED THEN; JIM-CROWED NOW

It's good to hear that your friend is feeling better; and after a while you're both jawin' away.

What your friend has to say isn't pleasant. Another Negro veteran joins the conversation. He too has some unpleasant facts to report:

Both of these boys were practically shot to hell fighting for the "American way of life" and "democracy" over in France in 1918. Both of these boys, being Negroes, suffered under Jim-Crow rule all through World War I. Now as the United States is slipping into another war for "democracy" and FDR extolls the "American way of life" once more—these boys are being Jim-Crowed again. And being Jim-Crowed in a government hospital! You listen:

Negro veterans in the Receiving Ward E-2 North are not allowed to use the same toilets that the white vets use. In Dining Room F, Negro veterans have to wait in line while the white veterans are eating, and then they are served!

Special Negro barbers are employed to cut only the hair of Negro vets!

What a fraud this "American way of life" is to these Negroes! What a grateful reward was meted out to these Negroes who saved "democracy" in 1918! Jim-Crowed then, and Jim-Crowed now!

You walk out into the sunshine and it's such a damned beautiful day you wouldn't think that there ever was a war in '18 except for the ghosts you've just seen in the hospital . . . And you can't for the life of you imagine that a war is going on now except that the newspaper headlines scream at you: "British Leave Greece with Heavy Death Toll" . . . "U. S. Lands Troops in Bahamas" . . . and so on . . . "Convoys Needed to Convey Convoys" (or something like that) . . . and even the "Sox Murder Indians" . . . Well, it could be worse—the Sox might've lost!

those farm workers with whom we have contact and of whom and to whom we can write authoritatively, we have published considerable material. From time to time we have had articles on the migratory workers of the west. And so far as we know, we are the only paper which devotes consistent and considerable space to the sharecroppers. Look through our issues and you will find something relating to the sharecroppers in most of them. In the next issue we intend beginning another series on them.—Ed.

A BON VOYAGE FROM POISON-PEN WRITER

Editor: You and your party stink old skunk-belly. Wait till we get you on the boat. You are rotten Communist rat. Go to hell or Russia, mongols. God Bless America.

An American of Irish Parent, Boston, May 1, 1941

(Tut! Tut! You may Irish, but you're no countryman of Jim Connolly—Ed.)

Editorials

OUR PROGRAM AGAINST THE WAR

1. Not a man, not a cent for Wall Street's war. All war funds to the unemployed.
2. For a rising scale of wages to meet increasing cost of living. Thirty-Thirty—\$30 weekly minimum wage—30-hour weekly maximum for all workers.
3. Expropriate the Sixty Families. For Government ownership and workers control of all war industries—aviation, steel, chemicals, railroads, public utilities, etc.
4. Against both imperialist war camps. For the Third Camp of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples.
5. Let the people vote on war. For the right of youth to vote at the age of 18.
6. Abolish secret diplomacy. Open the files of the State Department.
7. Withdraw all armed forces from territory outside the United States. Free the colonies. Hands off Latin America.
8. Against compulsory military training and conscription.
9. For the defense of civil liberties and workers' rights. Stop the persecution of aliens. Against the M-Day Plans and war-time dictatorship.
10. For full social, economic and political equality for Negroes. End discrimination against Negroes in industry and trade unions.
11. For an independent Labor Party.
12. For Workers' Defense Guards against Fascist and vigilante attacks.
13. No confidence in the Roosevelt government. For a workers' government and a people's army.
14. For Peace through Socialism. For the Socialist United States of the Americas, for the Socialist United States of Europe, and for the World Socialist Federation.

They Are Ready For the Shooting

The United States is gradually, cautiously but surely moving toward military participation in the Second World Imperialist War. For many months, as LABOR ACTION has repeatedly explained, Roosevelt has been preparing the country for the imperialist crusade against German imperialism. His has been a course of "softening" the opposition and winning over big business to support of his plans. Some of the ruling class were not so easy to convince, but now the educational process is complete.

It wasn't that the big capitalists were against war and imperialism; they only like to be sure that they will be on the winning side. They want to feel certain that American imperialism will triumph and that our own Sixty Families will get away with the loot and the swag.

Furthermore, American capitalists wanted to have guarantees that there would be no New Deal foolishness that would interfere with their profits while they were patriotically making the world safe for democracy. This little detail having been taken care of to their satisfaction, they are now ready to enter the holy crusade for the "American way of life" and the victory of "our system of free enterprise."

Believing that their profits and dividends are assured, the bosses and their stooges are ready to fight anybody that might endanger those profits and dividends; or to give "all out aid" to anybody that is ready to help protect those profits and dividends.

Right now the "friend" is England and the "enemy" is Germany. This is largely accidental. It is not so much that our imperialists love England and her vast empire but rather that they, at the moment, fear what would happen to their own imperialist plans should Germany win. The Morgans and the Rockefellers want U. S. imperialism to dominate the world. To achieve this they must defeat Germany—and Germany, of course, has similar ambitions.

The easiest and cheapest method of defeating Germany is to give aid to England. The bosses thought at first this could be accomplished merely by sending supplies of all kinds. This would keep American factories, banks and mills away from German bombers and at the same time solve the tough problem of the workers' opposition to dying in somebody else's war.

But now the bosses are convinced that this cheap and easy method of licking Hitler won't produce the right results. "We've got to get into this war and start shooting," they say. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., (whose great life work has been teaching Sunday school) "in anguish of spirit" is ready for the fray. He hates war and "prefers the ways of peace." But God's will be done; "we must act today." Let's start shooting so that "as those who come after us read the history of this fateful hour, they may have occasion to give humble thanks for the stand this day taken by all those who

proudly call themselves Americans!"

Thomas Lamont (Morgan) is also ready to grab his Bible, his trusty musket and the flag. Conant of Harvard, leader of the Morgan intellectual front, chirps up with a demand that the U. S. "become a naval belligerent now." Conant adds that "the hour for action has clearly struck."

Willkie (the man with the \$13,000 throat) is also ready to fight as long as there is a youth left to shoulder a gun. Willkie says that the struggle is more than military. It is "political struggle and an economic and social one. Its immediate manifestation finds itself in the struggle between the people of Britain and Germany in warfare. Its later manifestations will find themselves in the struggle for WORLD TRADE."

We say they are ready for the shooting. In Brazil, Africa, Greenland, Suez, France: anywhere on land or sea. Anywhere there is oil for the Rockefellers and the Mellons. Anywhere that steel, automobiles, wheat and cotton can be exported. Anywhere that the Morgans have investments. Anywhere that there is a chance to grab a slice of the crumbing British Empire. Anywhere that there are raw materials for U. S. factories. Any place that there are colonies and workers to exploit for the enrichment of American imperialism.

Jim-Crow Rides In a Pullman

In the Mitchell Jim-Crow car case, the Supreme Court decided unanimously that railroads must provide Negroes with accommodations equal to those provided whites. If the roads have Jim-Crow cars they must be as good as those that whites ride in. If dining cars are provided for whites, then there must be a dining car for Negroes with service equal to that for the whites. If a Negro buys a first-class ticket and wants a Pullman, then the road must provide one, and it must be the equal of the Pullman used by white people.

This is what the decision means and it doesn't mean anything more. The Court decision gives railroad the right to go ahead with Jim-Crow segregation and insult. The only condition laid down is that the insulting Jim-Crow accommodations must be physically equal to accommodations for white people.

Justice Hughes said that the issue was "not a question of segregation, but one of equality of treatment." That may be technically correct. We don't know anything about the law or what the technical issue before the Court was; and we don't give a damn. What we want to emphasize is that Negro citizens may still be Jim-Crowed, insulted and kicked around on the railroads of the South. This decision hasn't remedied a single evil suffered by the mass of Negroes in the United States.

This decision may be a "victory" to upper class Negroes who have money for first-class tickets and drawing rooms. But how about the mass of Negroes who don't even have money for a day coach ticket? Those who succeed in scraping together enough for necessary travel will find themselves, as in the past, huddled together behind the baggage car or in a Jim-Crow coach that is in no manner equal to coaches supplied for whites.

The basic problem of Jim-Crow, on the railroads and elsewhere, remains. Negro papers do Negroes (and white workers too, for that matter) a distinct disservice when they hail this decision as a "victory." Negroes must continue the fight for SOCIAL, POLITICAL and ECONOMIC EQUALITY. This is especially important today, when Negroes are being drafted to fight for democracy... in Germany, Poland and Yugoslavia.

LABOR ACTION

114 W. 14th Street
New York City

Dear Friends:

I am interested in learning more about the Workers Party and its fight against the bosses' war plans.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____

Imperialist Powers Reach For Near and Middle East

By SHERMAN STANLEY

The battle for control of the riches of the Near East is on in full force. The completion of the Balkan conquest by the blitz armies of Germany was the preliminary step. Now comes the "Drive to the East"—toward the oil fields, toward Suez, toward the cotton of the Nile valley. German imperialism sticks with mechanical rigidity to its imperialist aims of 100 years—the famous "Drang nach Osten."

Britain, on the other hand, is fighting a "defensive" imperialist struggle. It has sewed up possession of these regions ever since the last World War—now it stands in great danger of losing them to its mighty rival, Germany. Because of its tremendous weakness—an overwhelming proof of the hatred in which it is held by the masses of these countries—Britain will probably lose the fight for the Near East in short order. All it has to rely upon are its relatively small English and Australian forces (backed by a small group of professional soldiers from India), plus whatever limited aid Roosevelt may send. Of material or moral support from the population, it has literally none. These people have lived under British domination too long to be whipped up into sacrificing their lives or possessions for the continuation of British rule.

Tempting Prizes

What countries are involved? First there is Turkey (15,000,000 population), Egypt (16,000,000), Syria (3,000,000), Palestine (2,000,000), Saudi Arabia (3,000,000), Transjordan (400,000) and Iraq (3,500,000). These nations (total population 33,000,000) are involved directly and immediately. At a more remote distance lie even greater stakes—perhaps the greatest of the war: Iran (Persia), Afghanistan, Ceylon and India—the most magnificent of all imperialist prizes.

The rewards offered by a successful conquest of the Near and Middle East by Hitler are rich and tempting. If they were not the British would not be prepared to battle so hard for them. They are both strategic and economic in nature. Control of the eastern Mediterranean and its water routes, domination of the Arabian colonial world, the great oil wells of Iran, Iraq and Arabia, the food crops of wheat, rice, barley, fruits and dates. The important thing to note is that this is the first major effort on Hitler's part to break out of the confines of Europe proper and seize a substantial portion of the genuine colonial world for imperialist exploitation.

The real character of this conflict has already been clearly shown in the fighting in Egypt. Here Axis (German-Italian) and British forces have fought for months, but the ENTIRE native population of 16,000,000 Egyptian peasants and workers remain totally indifferent to and non-participants in the struggle. To them it is a fight for control of the Suez Canal, Egyptian cotton and commerce, ports and harbors to protect Britain's Far Eastern life-line, etc. It concerns them in no way, except insofar as they can express their hostility to BOTH sides.

The Iraq "Uprising"

The same thing holds true for Iraq, which has now been dragged into the war. Since 1925 the British have dominated, through their puppet government, this miserably poor and thinly populated country of 3,500,000 people. They have no interest in the country itself. Lying in the extensive semi-arid plateau area of the Near East it is a poor country with wandering Bedouin tribesmen and semi-feudal "felahien" peasants. It

Coast Machinists Win Pay Boost

Special to Labor Action
SAN FRANCISCO—Direct action of AFL Machinists Local 68 brought good results to 1,500 workers as they held solidly together on the picket line until a union contract containing major demands was signed.

This strike was called despite attempts of Sidney Hillman, as labor representative in the Office of Production Management, to force all West Coast machinists unions to accept a coast-wide contract that would chisel down some of the wage levels already won.

Direct negotiations brought the final contract after efforts of Roosevelt's Mediation Board to force the strikers to retreat also failed to bring desired results.

As it stands, the direct negotiations brought a wage increase of 15 cents an hour to those men making less than \$15 per hour, double time for overtime, a ten per cent bonus for men working from 4 p.m. to midnight and 15 per cent bonus to those working from midnight to 8 a.m.

Under the Hillman "master agreement," \$1.12 an hour was set as the standard and only time and a half was to be given for overtime, while the unions in the Bay area had already established the precedent of double time for overtime.

has always been ruled by a clique of big landlords, merchants and western-educated army officers. This clique has always been ready to mount the auction block and offer itself up to the highest paying imperialist power. Heretofore that has been Britain.

The current "uprising" against the British, led by Rashid Ali, a big landowner, in no way stems from the nationalist desires of the poor people. It simply means that a section of the ruling clique—principally the pro-Nazi army officers—have been bought off by the Germans and are now playing their game. It is a clique battle pure and simple. The stake is obvious: the Mosul oil fields and the pipe lines running through the country from Mosul and Iran to Palestine and French Syria. So far as the imperialists are concerned that is all Iraq amounts to—a country with invaluable oil fields that will aid the continuation of the world slaughter.

Lack Leadership

To gain support among the Arabs

AFL's Bureaucratic High-handedness May Push Boeing Men Into CIO

By D. D.

SEATTLE—Riding roughshod over the democratically expressed wishes of the 10,000 Boeing workers who rejected his red-hunting drive and bitter because a local unionist dared run against him for office, Harvey Brown, president of the AFL Machinists Union, suspended the Boeing local charter.

This provoked a crisis and a division in the labor movement caused by the ruthless and dictatorial efforts of the AFL fakers to subdue the militant local union which had won substantial gains from the company despite their interference.

After charges of communism against all leading local officers were rejected by a union vote—and the brain trust behind the trial committee was an admitted police agent—Brown stepped in to suspend the local officials.

Brown's vitriolic red-baiting and high-handed methods aroused such opposition among the ranks at a large meeting attended by over 2,500 members that, failing to get support for his actions, Brown suspended the local's charter.

The vast majority of the active unionists in the Boeing local have judged the situation primarily on the basis that the local leaders have gotten them good results, while the international has always sabotaged their struggle against the company.

John Baeder, local president, and Hugo Lundquist, business agent, led the fight against the company, directed the negotiations and accomplished gains. Their arbitrary removal by Brown was seen as a blow to the union.

Life on a Government Project --- Or Misery in a War-Boom Town

By DON WELLS

RAVENNA, Ohio—Even in the midst of the tremendous boom caused by preparations for the new American bold bath, the plight of the worker is an unbelievable one.

Life on the huge government projects is barbaric. Take as an example the \$20,000,000 Ravenna Ordnance Project in Ravenna, Ohio. As has been shown in previous articles in LABOR ACTION, what appears on the surface to be a slight improvement in wages is really a fiction. The workers, who are for the most part migratory, are faced with the necessity of maintaining two establishments. One for themselves and one for their families in far-off Alabama or Oregon or Oklahoma. Even if they could afford to bring them to their place of employment, they would have no place to live. There just aren't any houses for them.

The Negro finds it doubly difficult, since he is barred from those barracks that have been built. In Ravenna, they were forced to build a regular jungle of shacks in order to have a place to sleep. Then the local papers and authorities began to complain about the shacks. The construction company in charge of the work said, "OK, brother, we'll take care of that little problem." So they fired all those Negro workers living in shacks.

"Gold Rush" Violence

The scene is somewhat like it must have been back in the gold rush days. Whole trailer camps of prostitutes have sprung up. Saloons have a trap door directly over the cash register where a guard sits, high powered rifle in hand, and watches the till every minute to guard the unending flow of money spent by the workers seeking some sort of enjoyment in a none too enjoyable surrounding.

You don't dare stick your nose outside the camp in an automobile but what some state trooper arrests you for speeding, which to them means anything over 10 miles an hour. The trooper tells you that you will be fined \$5.00, but that if you want to

—and it is clear that support is desired only from the Arabian chieftains and feudal ruling cliques—Hitler must indulge in widespread "anti-British imperialist" demagoguery. He must pose as the great liberator, come to free the Arab colonials from long and harsh British rule. This, naturally, is a 100 per cent lie and we understand that Hitler will replace British rule with the just as exploitative rule of the Nazis. The events of the fast-approaching struggle will undoubtedly revive much genuine Arabian and anti-imperialist nationalist sentiment. But because of the lack of any strong revolutionary Marxist forces, or of movements with a serious socialist background and tradition in this section of the world it is highly improbable that much will be accomplished. The masses involved realize full well what is the issue and resent being driven like sheep from one imperialist fold into another, but they lack the organizational weapons and leadership with which to express themselves.

THE NEGRO'S FIGHT

Ford Tries to Feed the Negro Poisoned Bait

By J. R. JOHNSON

The capitalist class in America is continually using the Negro as a football. Ford the industrialist and Hamilton Fish, the politician, are now playing that game as hard as they can. The NLRB election at Ford's Detroit plant is near, and Ford is working on the Negroes to wreck the CIO chances. It is a beautiful example of the difference between the barbarism by which alone capitalism can live and the tendency toward a better world which is in the workers' movement. Organized labor fighting to unite the workers and overcome race prejudice. Ford using all his power to divide them and to stimulate a race riot on a large scale.

The key point is the foundry and rolling mill where most of the moulding is done. There are usually 7,000 Negro workers there and 4,000 white workers. The CIO is having success in organizing the plant. Ford has his service men working among the Negroes getting them to join the AFL. He has given some of his Negro workers time off to work among their fellow Negroes and encourage them to join the AFL. The Negroes traditionally hate the AFL but the word has gone around that Ford is in favor of the AFL and the Negroes are lining up with the AFL (Pittsburgh Courier, April 26). Fighting is going on in the plants. Ford would love nothing better than a real "race" riot, in which whites would kill Negroes and Negroes would kill whites. Then the police would come in. The press would fill the front page with "Reds cause race riot," etc. The governor would declare martial law. Union organization work would halt. And under cover of this, Ford would mobilize for another offensive against organized labor.

UNION MUST SEE THE FACTS

The Negroes are listening to Ford because he hires 13,000 Negroes out of 86,000 workers in the plant. Skilled Negroes get a chance at Ford. The union must look this fact in the face. Not tomorrow but today the union must assume responsibility for the employment of Negroes in every department of every automobile works in the country. The union must give leadership. It must challenge the Ford's for the position of assisting the Negro people to achieve their complete emancipation. Even if the CIO wins the election, that will not settle the question for good and all. America, with the rest of the world, is heading toward a terrific social crisis and the Negro question is going to emerge as one of the chief battle-grounds. Organized labor must make the Negro's cause its own.

Organized labor must do it. Ford is using the Negroes, of course, only to break the labor movement, whereupon he will of course turn round and beat the Negroes down into a semi-slavery.

Now Hamilton Fish, New York congressman, speaking at the Y's "Activities week" some days ago, told Negroes that they should dominate the political preferment of eight states but that they must fight for their rights. What is Fish fishing for? Fish is in trouble in his own state. A poll the other day showed that his pro-fascist policy is not popular among his constituents. During the last election, Roosevelt did his best to unsettle Fish. Fish is looking round for new support. So he'll fool some Negroes. "Fight," says Fish, new friend of Negroes. "Organize and fight for your rights." And the Negro press writes about Fish's fighting speech. Fish is fighting for Fish, not for Negroes. In these difficult days, the workers, the oppressed, cannot afford to be tricked by the Ford and the Fishes. Don't listen to them. Labor must battle for the Negroes. The Negroes must battle for labor. Otherwise, increased exploitation of both white and black labor by both the Ford and the Fishes.

COLD-SHOULDER FORD AND ALL SUCH

Finally, one word which we ask our Negro friends to think over whenever they hear Ford and Fish saying how they love Negroes. The most powerful machine history has ever seen for the grinding out of profit from workers is the Nazi party of Germany. Do you know what its full name is? It is the National Socialist Workers Party of Germany. Yes. In order to catch the working class and roll it out flat, Hitler called his party a socialist party and a workers' party. So when Ford and Fish come fishing in Negro waters with bright bait marked "Friends of Negroes," the Negroes will say, "We know you. We hear what you say, but we know what you want. We have seen your great hero and model, self-styled friend of the workers in Germany and what he has done to them. We'll help ourselves, thank you, and we shall recognize only labor organizations as friends of Negroes. And even when they cold-shoulder us, we shall struggle with them to make them see and we see. But, Mr. Hitler, Mr. Ford and Mr. Fish, to hell with you and all such."

For Labor Action— Join the Workers Party

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