

LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 21, 1944

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

UAW Ford Local Joins Fight on No-Strike Policy

The following is a leaflet issued by the progressive group in Ford Local 400, UAW-CIO, Detroit, which is running fifteen progressive delegates to the international convention to be held on September 12. This is an important event, for it demonstrates the real feelings of the rank and file members of the auto workers' union and their determination to defend their organization against the auto barons' anti-union drive with the only kind of program that can win.

There has been no equality of sacrifice by all parties concerned. ONLY LABOR HAS SACRIFICED AND LOST. The Ford Motor Co. uses the no-strike pledge as a club to beat labor over the head. Only labor suffers violation of seniority, violation of contract, loss of double time, discharging of all militant union members, and long dragged out settlements of grievances, and if and when labor does win—the company stalls and refuses to pay up (the Pratt & Whitney case, for example). Wages are frozen—yet every worker knows that there has been a wage freeze for labor but not for the broker, the banker and industrial magnate. And now the reconversion period is at hand. What will the future mean? HOW LONG WILL YOU WORK? WILL YOUR SENIORITY KEEP YOUR JOB? WILL THERE BE JOBS?

THE NO-STRIKE PLEDGE WILL HANDCUFF OUR UNION during this period! All companies have embarked on a policy aimed at breaking organized labor. Pitting you against your union brother, working men against

Progressives Win in Chicago

BULLETIN—As we go to press we have been informed that Local 719, UAW-CIO, in Chicago has just elected a full progressive delegation to the international convention on a program calling for rescinding of the no-strike pledge, removal of labor members from the WLB and calling for the organization of an independent Labor Party.

The progressives in the Buick local in Chicago likewise elected a full delegation on a program similar to the above.

working women. The returning soldier against us all. Since the entry of the United States into the war, big corporations, aided by the War Labor Board, have withdrawn one concession after another from the union, reducing collective bargaining to a mockery.

A deliberate anti-union drive, spearheaded by the Ford Motor Co., is under full sail. At all Ford plants, committees are suspended, placed under probation, or discharged without regard for the union; contract provisions are violated and ignored, workers are reclassified or shuffled from department to department, and find themselves at the same work at reduced wages; dozens of persecutions are invented—speed-ups on the job, withdrawing of chairs from departments, timing of workers who go to the wash room—all aimed at a war of nerves against the union membership. Time for action has come! Action, to wake up the do-nothing policy of our well-fed, well-rested international officers. Neither you nor I—the rank and file—were permitted by referendum vote to express our wish at giving away the only weapon labor had, THE RIGHT TO STRIKE!

A lesson all workers must learn today, and learn well if they are going to maintain and keep a strong union, revolves around this no-strike pledge. The UAW was a strong, militant union; we had to fight, bleed, suffer, yes—and some died fighting to organize for labor's rights. These are the things that make a great labor union. Leadership may come and go but these militant traditions must go on forever. Our duty to each other is clear. We must vote for top officials (by referendum vote, if necessary) who are against the pledge and vote for delegates to the national convention on the same basis, for at the national convention the policy for the entire membership is decided. As long as organized labor is handcuffed with the no-strike pledge, just that long will our union be weakened by management's attacks without being able to fight back effectively. THE STRIKE WEAPON IS LABOR'S ONLY WEAPON.

Transport Company Aided Philly Race-Hate Strike

Workers Defense League Release

As investigations into the facts and background of the recent hate strike of Philadelphia transit workers against the upgrading of eight Negroes to motormen's positions commenced last week, the evidence pointed increasingly at top officials of the Philadelphia Transit Company as the real instigators of that shameful demonstration.

The evidence substantiated the previously made charges that a few disgruntled company-union leaders, in collusion with the heads of the PTC, whipped up a state of mob hysteria and race hatred among the transit workers for the purpose of busting the CIO union which had won the right to act as collective bargaining agent for the men. That the workers lent themselves to this shameful scheme reflects on the deep ignorance which exists among large sections of the population as to the self-defeating uses of race prejudice in all phases of American life.

The charges of company collusion were based on the following facts, which implicate Dr. A. A. Mitten, head of the Philadelphia Transit Company and chairman of its industrial relations committee:

1. Mitten admits he knew about the "surprise stoppage" the evening before it occurred, yet HE DID NOTHING.
2. He saw the strike starting at the car barns August 1 and DID NOTHING.
3. By afternoon of August 1, the Philadelphia Transit Company was paralyzed. The PTC executive committee did not meet, for Dr. Mitten DID NOTHING to call it together.
4. Strikers met on company property repeatedly, thus giving an air of

company approval to the hate strike, yet HE DID NOTHING.

It was also noted that Mitten's suggestion that upgrading of Negroes be suspended as a measure to end the strike constituted the only public support from high places that the race strikers secured. This practically clinched the assertion of labor observers that Mitten was working hand-in-glove with the leaders of the company union in an attempt to use the strike to break the Transit Workers Union, CIO, which recently won an NLRB election.

Although the government has taken over the company properties, it was not learned whether the eight Negro motorman-trainees had received calls to take out and operate trolleys in Philadelphia.

If and when they do, it can be predicted that the population of the city will generally accept the sight of Negro motormen as normal and only befitting their recognized ability, as any white worker, in this field. This has been the case in large cities like New York, Detroit and Buffalo, where Negro trolley operators and bus drivers have a notable record for safety of operation and general excellence in their work.

This has been the case in EVERY industry where the stupid "color line" has been battered down and man-made prejudices cast aside. The Negroes will continue their fight against discrimination. That is certain. But the intelligent and CLASS-CONSCIOUS white workers must aid them in their efforts to break down the walls which separate and prevent them from achieving solidarity. White workers, the labor movement, must take the lead. There is ONLY ONE working class!

NEXT WEEK

Plans for Germany's Partition

By Max Shachtman

The Coming Convention of the UAW

By Stanley Holland

Story of the Rubber Workers Union

By Bill Ford

AS WELL AS OTHER ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Big Business Senate Votes Meager Relief!

Who Betrayed Revolt of the Polish Underground?

The events in Warsaw bear a sinister mark. Conflicting reports make it hard to establish ALL the facts beyond dispute. But those facts which are known and admitted on all sides, as well as those conclusions which clearly flow from the facts, make at least a preliminary judgment possible.

Hudson Men Stop Contract Chiselling

Just as Hudson Local 154, Detroit, was preparing itself for elections to the UAW convention an incident occurred which typifies the conditions the unions in the CIO and the AFL have sunk to.

About forty-five days ago, management issued a memorandum to supervision revising the contract. This memo had been sent through without consulting the union or gaining its consent. The change consisted of a procedure which made it virtually impossible for the chief stewards to leave the plant in order that they might go to the employment office for final negotiation of grievances.

The chief stewards of the main plant of Hudson (whom this affected mainly) agreed to ignore the procedure and when being refused passes by the foremen began to walk through the gates without them. For some time this procedure was maintained; chief stewards walked in and out of the plant whenever necessary to carry on collective bargaining, as provided for in the contract.

Finally some executive conceived of the brainstorm of allowing the stewards out of the plant, but when they tried to come in would not be permitted to enter. There were several minor incidents and finally, approximately twenty chief stewards found themselves locked out one morning. When word of the lockout finally filtered into the shop, workers began to lay down their tools, while some departments began to walk toward the gate. As soon as the workers were seen marching down the aisles toward the gate, the chief stewards were hastily allowed to enter the plant. Finally, management, having had a good scare thrown into it, agreed to follow the contract to the letter.

Hudson workers are afflicted by the same troubles that bother every (Continued on page 2)

As the Russian armies advanced on Warsaw, an uprising organized by the Polish Underground movement broke out inside the city. The Underground movement is composed overwhelmingly of volunteers, workers and peasants, impelled by a passionate hatred of the German oppressor, inspired by the hope of establishing a new Poland, free of foreign domination and of oppression at the hands of the old rulers of Poland. It is a movement that is still weighed down by illusions about the liberating character of Allied imperialism, and by lack of clarity about the goal it strives so passionately and devotedly to attain. But the goal itself is unmistakable—a Poland ruled by the workers and peasants—and it has been solemnly avowed by the Underground masses on numerous occasions.

The warriors of the Polish Underground have not been and are not making their epic sacrifices in the struggle against the Nazi overlords in order to make it easy for the reactionary Polish colonels, capitalist magnates and bloated landlords to return to their old power. From the working class point of view, the Polish Underground is probably the most advanced of any of the other anti-Nazi movements in Europe.

WHY IT CAME
Who is responsible for the Warsaw uprising?

The Polish government in exile in London declares that it authorized the Warsaw Underground to strike at a moment when action would be best synchronized with the Russian advance and attack. It adds that Moscow was fully informed of this

happening in Warsaw rests entirely upon Polish emigrant circles in London.

Who is right? We have no means of saying for sure at present. We do know that both the Moscow Stalinists and the London Poles are capable of making lying statements with a straight face, as they have shown on countless occasions. On this occasion, it is not even very important to speculate on which one of the liars is telling the truth. It does not alter the really important facts.



WINSTON CHURCHILL

WHERE MOSCOW COMES IN
Let us suppose for a moment that Moscow is right in saying that the London Polish chiefs ordered the uprising in Warsaw for political purposes, a supposition which is not at all unreasonable. Let us suppose Moscow is right in charging that the uprising was organized entirely on London-Polish responsibility in order to show that it has real strength inside Poland and is therefore entitled to take over the government in Poland once the Germans are driven out.

What difference would that make once the Underground workers have risen in armed revolt and begun to make things hot for the Germans invested in Warsaw? If the Russians were interested merely in winning the war and crushing the German enemy, they could very easily refrain their opinions about the "untimely" or "political" character of the uprising, and at the same time bend every effort to give all possible aid and comfort to the men who are actually fighting, and fighting against terrific odds.

When Moscow says: We were not informed, we were not consulted, we will therefore not lift a finger to help the Warsaw insurrectionaries, let them perish for all we care—it is the same as saying: Our prestige comes first, to hell with the others.

But actually, it is much more than a case of chauvinistic prestige. The (Continued on page 3)



JOSEPH STALIN

decision and that "complete instructions were sent to Moscow for dropping a Russian liaison officer in Warsaw, for delivering arms and for giving air support to the Poles."

The official Moscow statement declares that "no attempts to notify and coordinate any events in Warsaw with the Soviet command were ever made by the Polish emigrant circles. The responsibility for things

Lessons for Labor in a Shameful Strike

PHILADELPHIA—The anti-Negro strike that tied up local transportation for nearly a week has been broken by government seizure of the Philadelphia Transportation Company, and trolleys are now operating on schedule, with an armed soldier standing beside each operator.

As thinking union men begin to reflect upon the lessons of the strike and its conclusion, a number of important facts of general interest and education to the labor movement are coming to light.

The first of these lessons is that labor must not rely upon the forces of government to do a job for it that it must do for itself. The Army's taking over of the trolley system is a double-edged sword. It cut against the Jim Crow strike leadership. But in their ignorance many labor leaders applauded this, without knowing that the Army was establishing a procedure and precedent which will be used just as effectively against any legitimate strike of workers against their employers.

The men who led the trolley strike were enemies of organized labor. They were company stooges and former leaders of the company union. They were vicious enemies of equal job rights for Negroes and incited white workers against Negro workers with the language typical of

race-haters and fascists. The strike against the employment of Negroes on trolleys was carried out with the open support of the company officials. It was therefore, a blow at real unionism and a blow at the best interests of labor. As such the strike had to be fought by organized labor. It was in the interests of labor that union men break the strike. All the traditional distaste of union men for the role of strike-breakers should not have in any way affected their actions if they thought through intelligently the meaning of the strike.

In this strike those who opposed equal job rights for Negro workers were "scabs" against the principles of unionism. Those who joined hands with the company officials against fellow workers of a different colored skin were "union-breakers."

But the job of breaking this phony strike belonged to the organized labor movement; in the first place, to the Transport Workers Union, CIO, and not to the U. S. Army. The Army did not break the strike in order to save union principles. It did not take over in order to save the CIO union against the company stooges. It did not take over out of consideration for the rights of Negroes. How could it? Is not the Army itself just as Jim Crow as the PTC and company stooges who led the strike? In fact, the

Army is worse. The PTC has mixed crews of Negro and white workers for maintenance work. But the Army has not a single mixed regiment. Do not the heads of the Army hate organized labor, particularly the CIO, just as much as do the heads of the PTC? Just recall the statement of General Marshall last Christmas, when he accused labor of playing into the hands of Hitler, lengthening the war, and causing unnecessary death to soldiers. Both William Green and Philip Murray denounce this vicious attack upon labor. But the Army heads have never withdrawn their statement.

The means used by the Army to break the strike were the means of a military dictatorship. Are the rights of Negroes and the democratic rights of organized labor to be defended by trampling upon the very democratic guarantees that make a free labor movement possible? The weapons used by the Army were the very weapons forged and sharpened for use against organized labor. What were they?

(1) The arrest of the strike leaders under the Smith-Connally law; a law hated and opposed by every union man.

(2) The drafting of all strikers of military age; a method of combatting

The Senate did it again! It went on record giving big business a twenty-eight billion dollar rebate in the post-war period to add to its present fabulous reserves and war profits, while it gave labor a swift boot in the pants! This time it took the form of the adoption of the George "states' rights" so-called reconversion bill which tosses the problem of unemployment, jobs, hunger and lives of the workers' families onto the states, which in turn have meager provisions to aid unemployed workers and no post-war plans at all.

The Kilgore bill was decisively defeated and in that action the Senate revealed that it is a big business body, a class body, serving the interests of American capitalism. Was the Kilgore

CP's Attack Labor Action Distributor

CHICAGO—Using a car to cut off a LABOR ACTION distributor from the factory gate of the McCormick-Harvester plant in Chicago, Communist gangsters led by Tom Kelly forcibly wrested the bundle of papers from the distributor and succeeded in their dirty work where they had failed a week previously.

A couple of weeks back the Communist hooligans tried to prevent the workers at the plant from reading LABOR ACTION by physically attacking a woman distributor at the plant gates, but she loudly denounced their actions for the blatant Nazi tactics that they were, and the Stalinists were forced to retreat. Last Saturday, however, they were back with reinforcements against LABOR ACTION's lone woman distributor.

Many workers who witnessed the attack of the Hitler-like goons of Kelly & Co. were shocked at the infringement of the civil liberties of the distributor. Some were heard to remark that they considered themselves intelligent enough to decide for themselves which labor or any other kind of paper they wished to read, without being dictated to by "Brother" Kelly and his gang.

When the latter try to start taking away the basic rights of the workers it is time to tell off the Stalinist stool-pigeons of the bosses. They will not succeed in their efforts to turn over the unions to the bosses and to labor's enemies and they will not succeed in silencing the voice of LABOR ACTION, which is concerned first and foremost with the protection and improvement of workers' living standards.

This pro-labor policy is what gets under the skin of Kelly and the Communist sell-out artists. Right now they are battling for their parasitic lives in the Farm Equipment Union, where the workers are attempting to get these vultures off their necks. That is why Kelly, who is an international representative of the union, and his bullies are so desperately trying to prevent the workers at McCormick-Harvester from reading the TRUTH about them and their ruinous policies.

bill a perfect bill? Not at all, but it at least provided some measure of relief to the prospective millions of unemployed. It provided financial relief up to \$35 a week, for two years, depending upon income of the workers. It provided for schooling and for transportation expenses to jobs.

This partial aid bill was too much for a reactionary, evil-minded, bootlicking Senate whose chief aim in life is to serve the profit interests of the country. And who did it? Democrats and Republicans alike. Thus, they demonstrated again, that when it comes to serving capitalist interests there are no real, decisive differences between the party labels.

The furious barrage against the Kilgore bill was typical of big business, its servants in Congress and its servant, the yellow press. What did the latter say about the Kilgore bill? The same old stuff it said during the crises for which the capitalist system is responsible. It would pamper the workers—this coming from men who haven't put in a good stiff day's work for more years than they can remember.

The Kilgore bill would mean that the unemployed workers would from then on eat nothing but caviar, pompano fish and drink champagne—this was said by a high priced journalist called Arthur Krock of the hypocritical New York Times, who himself would shudder at the diet of the average American worker.

The Kilgore bill would mean that workers wouldn't take jobs if they could get fifteen, twenty, twenty-five or thirty dollars a week relief for themselves and their families—a subsistence wage far below what workers need only to live. Here again they reveal not merely their stupidity but their essential hatred of labor, which produces the wealth of this country and enables the whole host of parasites from the capitalists to the newspaper columnists to live.

And in all this, Franklin D. Roosevelt, pride of the CIO and Democratic Party candidate for a fourth term, has been stone deaf and dumb!

There is a big lesson in this affair. It shows labor what it must do! Quit playing capitalist politics! Build an independent party of labor to fight for a labor program for all the people and a government of the workers, poor farmers and the poor. Fight for LABOR ACTION's program!

strikes which labor has always condemned.

(3) Listing all strikers who failed to return to work with the War Manpower Commission and declaring them ineligible for jobs for the duration; a part of the "forced labor" system which the labor movement has violently opposed.

(4) Cancellations of gas ration stamps for all strikers; a utilization of the rationing system as part of police coercion, a purpose for which it was not intended.

(5) Placing an armed soldier, outfitted in complete battle dress from helmet to rifle, at the side of every operator.

Can labor applaud this system of breaking a strike regardless of the nature or purpose of the strike? Will not the formula worked out for breaking this strike be used against those short-sighted labor leaders who applaud? Of course, it will. And what is more, the Army officers will point to the fact that these men applauded when it was done against the Jim Crow strike. What difference does it make to the Army officers what sort of strike they break? If anything, they will act more swiftly, more viciously and with a real show of liking for their job when it comes to cracking down on a legitimate strike of workers to uphold their un-

standards. The bulk of the Army officers are anti-Negro and anti-labor. They did not relish doing a job on an anti-Negro and anti-union strike. But they will really go to work on a strike called in accordance with union principles.

How would a really progressive labor movement have answered the problem of this strike? In the first place, a really progressive leadership in the TWU-CIO would have had the confidence of the men in the PTC. The men had voted for the CIO by a wide margin over the company union and the AFL in the labor board elections last spring. They did this because they were looking for a fighting leadership that would get them something. But the TWU-CIO is led by Michael Quill and a gang of Communist Party hacks who follow the "party line." The "party line" is whatever Moscow wants. Right now Moscow wants one hundred per cent support of war production and support of Roosevelt. This means complete support of the no-strike pledge. This means a policy of appeasing the PTC management instead of fighting it. This results in the workers getting the short end of it. Wages, hours, conditions and other questions don't seem any better after six months of the CIO. Why should they (Continued on page 3)

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Fight for Right to Strike Gains in UAW Ranks

Reprinted from Union Action, organ of the Progressive Group of Local 719, UAW-CIO

Let us use our common sense. The unions gave up the right to strike for the duration. Two promises: Promise No. 1 from the government: There would be no exorbitant war profits by the bosses and no reduction of labor's standard of living.

Let us check up on the promises. Fact No. 1: Profits of the big corporations engaged in war production have never been so high in all history—the history of this country or any other. We are speaking of their net profits, AFTER the deduction of ALL taxes.

In addition to their enormous profits, the big corporations have accumulated reserves that run into billions of dollars. They have nothing to worry about. The government guaranteed them contracts. It even built and equipped plants for them to operate and profit on. It guaranteed them raw materials, labor and

a profitable sure-thing market. As for the post-war period, they don't even need a government guarantee. Their reserves are already stored up, no matter how hard things are in the future. The corporation heads do not need to go to heaven. They have found a paradise right here on earth.

Fact No. 2: Labor's standard of living HAS declined. If you don't know this as a fact from the way your weekly budget is working out, all you need do is study the report on wages and living costs made a few months ago by President R. J. Thomas of the UAW and Secretary-Treasurer George C. Meaney of the AFL. They prove with fact and figures that the cost of living for the average worker's family has jumped way ahead of its income. That is only another way of saying that our standard of living has been reduced.

In other words, the corporations have carried their share—the profits of the war. Labor has carried its share—the burdens of the war. This is known as—"equality of sacrifice."

Fact No. 3: There have been no lockouts of labor. That is true. But an employer would have to be stark,

staring mad to lock out his workers at a time when he is making fortunes hand over fist and when the wages, hours and jobs of his workers are frozen stiff by government order. However, the minute a contract is terminated and no more profit is to be made at the moment, the employer still has his business; his profits, his reserves—and his workers have the streets to walk.

Is that a lockout? Oh, no! It's only a "cut-back." What is a cut-back? A lockout with a fancy name. Does it feel one bit better for the worker to be thrown into the street if his unemployment is called a cut-back than if it is called a lockout? Will the grocer and the butcher sell you more food if you are cut back than if you are locked out?

The cutback-lockouts are growing in number. President Thomas says employment will drop about 1,650,000 in four industries alone before the end of 1944.

Now let's use our heads. What good does it do to talk about a guaranteed annual wage after the war, if we can't even get such a wage during the war?

A guaranteed annual wage is an excellent idea, a first-rate necessity. We are one hundred per cent for it. So is every worker.

But the way to get it is to start working and fighting for it now, and not after we have begun walking the post-war streets in search for any old job, at any old wages.

The trouble is, however, that we can't fight for anything now. When we demand decent wages now—just to meet the rising cost of living—the corporations and the government just sit back and laugh in our faces.

They sneer at us and say: "What are you going to do about it if we refuse your demand? You can't strike, because you are pledged not to. And if you can't strike, you can't do anything. So shut up, and go back to your machines."

What can we say? What can we do? Pound the table? All that gets hurt is our hand. Go to the WLB? That's like sending a sick man to a cemetery for a cure.

So, we go back to our machines as we are told and we wait for the lockout—excuse, please, the cut-back. We are hamstrung, paralyzed.

The corporations and the government did not keep their pledges. They were scraps of paper written to kid us into a trap.

By the no-strike pledge, labor not only lost its only effective weapon, but it gave the profit-swollen corporations a club with which we have been hammered over the head.

We must, in sheer self-defense, tear that club out of their hands and regain our best weapon.

We want a decent living standard. We want a guaranteed annual wage—now, as well as after the war. If the government can guarantee the monopolists their fabulous billions in profit, why can't we be guaranteed our just annual wage, so that we can begin to live in "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want"?

The way to get such an annual wage is to start fighting for it now—not in the dim future.

You can't fight any fight if you are disarmed. We must get back our best weapon—the right to strike. Without it, we are sunk.

Think it over. It's as simple as that. All you need do is—use your common sense.

Local 212, Detroit UAW--CIO

Hammers No-Strike Pledge

The minority resolution on the no-strike pledge stated in part: "That the Michigan CIO convention calls upon the national CIO either to rescind the no-strike pledge or to conduct a national referendum among its membership to decide whether to reaffirm or rescind this pledge."

This was a clear-cut invitation to submit the matter for final decision to the men and women working in the shops. Logically they are the people who should be allowed to decide, since they have to bear the brunt, in terms of a wage freeze and

ly accused the leadership of fearing the decision the rank and file would make. This accusation seemed to be borne out by what transpired at the convention. In their feverish anxiety to reaffirm the pledge, they pulled one device after another out of their bag of tricks—and a big bag it was! Sensing that sentiment for revoking the pledge was increasing, the leadership maneuvered to bring the issue up for consideration on Thursday instead of Friday, as originally scheduled.

A barrage of patriotism was let loose on the minority report, and the excessive flag waving from the speakers stand caused at least one delegation to walk out and purchase more flags to wave back! Ordinary rules of procedure were thrown to the winds—the chair simply refused to recognize certain known speakers for the minority report. Likewise ig-

nored were demands for a rollcall vote on the question. The leaders pleaded, cajoled and threatened. They made the most dire predictions as to what would follow a revocation of the pledge. Public opinion would be turned against us, President Roosevelt would be defeated, the war would be lost, in short, everything would be sure to go to the dogs.

The fact that the top leadership had to resort to all these dubious methods must indicate that they were more than a little shaky about their stand on the matter. They purported to speak for the rank and file. Yet they were afraid to submit their case to the rank and file. Maybe it's because in the backs of their minds they have the uneasy feeling that they no longer express the needs of the rank and file.—Voice of Local 212, UAW-CIO, Detroit.

No Salary Freeze in the \$25 an Hour B(racket)

While labor is held down by the Little Steel formula to not more than fifteen per cent increase in wage rates compared with the rates prevailing at the end of 1940, the managers of "our" corporations have been under no restrictions. By the device of proxies sent out to widely scattered stockholders, corporation executives elect and re-elect themselves. They have used this nearly unlimited power to vote themselves enormous salary increases.

The American Investors Union of New York has tabulated the salaries and the increases of pay for some corporation presidents as follows:

Table with columns: Name, 1940 Salary, 1943 Salary, Over (Increase), 1940 Salary. Lists executives from American Woolen Co., Aviation Corp., Burlington Mills Corp., etc.

Nor is this all. The executives of many companies have induced the companies they control to set up for them so-called pension trusts, so that when they retire they will continue to get a substantial proportion of their salary to the end of their lives.

Dewey Backs Up Wage Freeze

Replying to the misconception spread by a Pittsburgh labor leader with whom he had conferred, Tom Dewey, GOP candidate for the presidency, had the following to say on wage-freezing:

"I told him I thought the wage-freeze was essential, with such adjustments as have to be made from time to time for the rising cost of living."—New York Times, August 2.

That Dewey found it necessary to refute the "misconception" that he is AGAINST wage freezing is an interesting commentary on the way he will "interpret" the Republican platform, which states flatly that it is in favor of wiping the wage-freeze off the map.

We have no doubt whatsoever that such a powerful "interpreter" as Dewey will, if elected to office, understand the "essential" part of the wage-freeze but completely miss the "adjustment" angle of the same statement.

unsettled grievances. Certainly the people who hold positions high up in the union, far removed from the machine and the assembly line, do not feel the consequences of the pledge. Why do they not let the rank and file speak for itself?

Officers Dictate Elections in Kearny Shipyard Union

KEARNY, N. J.—It isn't long since the reactionaries won the election at Federal Shipbuilding & Drydock Co., and already their bureaucratic, undemocratic practices are in evidence. Delegates to the convention of the IUMSWA will not be elected by ballot. They are to consist of the official board of the union, four members of the grievance committee and two members at large. When a rank and file member asked who the two members were to be, he was told that they would be selected by the official board.

This flagrant violation of democracy is especially unfair, since the annual convention of the IUMSWA sets policy for the entire industry. It is of the greatest importance to give the men in the yards an opportunity to select delegates who will express their point of view.

A further example of the manner of the present leadership in office is

the following article which appeared in the Local 16 edition of the Shipyard Worker:

"NIGHT SHIFT REPRESENTATION AT CONVENTION"

"Local 16 Official Board today announced that immediate plans are being worked out to give full representation to the night shifts of the Kearny and Port Newark Yards at the national convention convening in Atlantic City, N. J., Thursday, September 28. Complete details of the plan will appear in this newspaper as soon as they have been worked out."

This announcement came as a complete surprise after the former plan had been officially adopted by the union. You don't know if you're coming or going. The official board will work out the plans! It will not even bother to consult the rank and file. It will just print its decisions in the next issue of the paper!

How Labor Fought Jay Gould Out of the Past

By RUTH PHILLIPS

The huge fortunes of America's "Sixty Families" were made in the years following the Civil War, years of vast expansion for American capitalism. The men who made these fortunes, the Goulds, the Vanderbilts, the Rockefellers, the Morgans, were ruthless men who stopped at nothing in their incessant drive for profits. The corruption of public administrations, the expropriation of small landholders, illegal speculation, these and worse were their methods. Above all, they mercilessly exploited the millions of workers they employed. The attitude of these robber barons was summed up in the cynical and contemptuous statement of Jay Gould, railroad magnate, when he said: "I can hire one half of the working class to kill the other half."

This is the story of how Jay Gould ate his words: The grandfather of the AFL and the CIO was the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor, founded in 1869 in Philadelphia. For years, "The Knights" made slow progress, winning a local strike here, losing another there. But in 1885, when Jay Gould announced a ten per cent wage cut for shopmen on his Wabash and other railroad lines, the Knights organized and won a strike of shopmen, with other departments not affected by the wage-cut, declaring themselves ready for a sympathy walk-out. The wage cut was rescinded.

Jay Gould, temporarily beaten, hastened to break the union before it had consolidated its strength. A few months later he discharged from the Wabash line a group of union men. The Knights of Labor threatened a boycott of Wabash rolling stock, which would have effectively tied up thousands of miles of railways.

Jay Gould, powerful and ruthless, had to step down from his high horse before the organized might of labor. He invited the Knights of Labor leaders to a conference with him, at which a settlement was made in the union's favor. For those days, this was front-page news. Never before had a leading industrialist dealt with labor across the conference table. The labor movement had established itself as a force with which the rulers of society must deal, and thousands of workers joined the ranks of organized labor as a result of this victory for working class solidarity.

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor . . .

Dear Editor:

I recently took a subscription to your paper and like it very much, and would like to ask a favor of you. Some time ago there was published in your paper an article on a statement made by the English section of the Trotskyists in which they were quoted as calling the British Eighth Army, "their army." I was having an argument with a friend of mine who says it was never published and I would like very much to prove my argument, and show him the article. I am not sure, but I think it was in a February issue. I would appreciate it very much if you would send this clipping, as soon as possible, as my friend might leave town, and I have a money bet on this.

G. V. S., Brookline, Mass.

Our subscriber's friend will have to pay off. The February 7 issue of LABOR ACTION, which we mailed to her, contains the article "Unbelievable Statement," in which there is the following quotation from the theoretical organ of the Workers In-Workers International League of England: "We have a victorious army in

North Africa, and Italy, and I say, yes, long live the Eighth Army, because that is our army. One of our comrades has spoken to a number of people who have had letters from the Eighth Army soldiers, showing their complete dissatisfaction. We know of incidents in the Army, Navy and

other forces that have never been reported, and that it is impossible for us to report. It is OUR Eighth Army that is being hammered and tested and being organized for the purpose of changing the face of the world. This applies equally to all the forces." (Emphasis in original.)

Hudson Local - -

(Continued from page 1)

other worker in America: "freezing" of wages accompanied by skyrocketing prices, incredibly poor housing, little recreational facilities, hemming and hawing for months trying to get their grievances settled by the War Labor Board. Yet the example stated above indicates how by just a minor show of force the workers were able to gain their ends: the upholding of the contract with the company.

All over America the workers witness the gradual breakdown of collective bargaining; they see themselves tied to machines, grievances unsettled—not through the fault of the rank and file leaders, the stew-

ards—but because the top leadership of their unions has surrendered to the capitalists the only weapon the workers possess: the strike weapon.

The delegates from Hudson Local, who are right now preparing to go to the UAW convention, should learn a lesson from the little incident of the workers walking toward the gate: rescind the no-strike pledge! Give the workers at Hudson and in every other UAW shop a chance to build their union, to get their wages raised and to get their grievances settled. Only by militant union action can the UAW be built—not by appeals to the War Labor Board.

High Taxes Have Not Stopped High Incomes

By WALTER WEISS

Workers who think that they have been suffering under the Little Steel formula will be interested to hear of the financial disasters that have befallen the big capitalists who employ them.

While the corporations show, even in their own disguised reports, steadily rising profits, the National Association of Manufacturers and similar organizations, which never cease to conduct "political action" campaigns, bewail through every newspaper and magazine in the land that the percentage of profits on sales has kept falling during the war. Taxes are threatening the post-war incentive to produce, they say. The famous Mr. Ruml has another new tax plan, to do away with corporation taxes, with the noble purpose, of course, of raising wages, lower prices and benefiting the small investor.

Furthermore, a corporation executive who receives an increase in salary or bonus—allowed despite the freeze because of merit or greater responsibility—is some such reason—is, because of the personal income tax, especially since the first Ruml plan went into effect, no better off than before. Worse off, in fact. In its issue of August 11, the United States News, a weekly magazine of high reputation, publishes a sensational article, headlined "Executives' Pay Cut." It appears that Eugene Grace, head of Bethlehem Steel, a company which has been doing better than most, had take-home pay in salary and bonus of \$143,000 for 1940. This used to be called his "take"—it was really too big to take home. In 1944, however, it is estimated that he is taking home only \$5,000. Statistics are offered to show that other big executives have fared similarly. In fact, the bigger the salary, the smaller the take-home. What a pay cut!

THE POOR BOSS IS "FROM HUNGER" ON A FULL STOMACH

Labor has been complaining that President Roosevelt's stabilization program has been carried out only insofar as it affects workers. Not so. The \$25,000 ceiling on salaries, which Congress ruled out, is actually in effect. It is estimated that after 1944 taxes no corporation official will have more than \$22,500 left. The companies themselves put the figure a little higher but not much higher than the United States News.

You don't believe all this? Neither do we. Neither does the United States News.

That magazine arrives at its conclusions by making some big assumptions. One of these is that, because of the freeze, 1944 salaries may be considered to be the same as those in 1942. Files of LABOR ACTION could enlighten the editors of the U. S. News on this score. We secured our information mainly from the respectable New York Times, whose reporters in turn used the files of the Securities & Exchange Commission. However, it is the job of capitalist editors to overlook information, even information from their own pages, which does not fit into the picture they are painting.

Another strange thing about take-home pay, as arrived at by the U. S. News and the Times and other such sources, is that it is figured AFTER all legal income tax deductions. In other words, not only are Mr. Grace's contributions to charity deducted but also such items as the interest he pays on his outstanding debts. The press never figures the take-home pay of workers in quite that way.

In the third place, you are, of course, aware that big executives don't depend solely or even mainly on their salaries but rake in some extra dollars from their stocks, bonds, and other properties.

But let's forget that last point and stick just to salaries. In fact, let's forget all three points we have so far made and also a few untouched ones, such as the legal loopholes available to those who can afford the right lawyers.

The big joker in this colossal pay-cut story still remains. We will assume, along with the U. S. News, that Mr. Grace is earning \$538,000 for his work at Bethlehem in 1944. We will also charitably assume that his tax is as high as \$429,000. This leaves \$109,000. Next we assume that \$53,000 (about ten per cent of the total salary) goes for charity, interest on debt, deductible losses, etc. That still leaves \$56,000 clear for food, clothing, shelter, and an occasional movie or glass of beer (extra movies and beers, by the way, which are not covered by an expense account).

"TO FORGIVE IS DIVINE"—ESPECIALLY TAXES

How is the \$56,000 reduced to \$5,000? You will recall that, when 1942 taxes were forgiven, Mr. Ruml's plan was changed a little. Only 75 per cent instead of 100 per cent was forgiven. The remaining 25 per cent amounts to a cool \$100,000 or so, of which \$50,000 must be paid this year.

So there he is, left with a paltry \$5,000. He can't live on that. What are he and gentlemen of similar standing to do? The U. S. News suggests that they will, both this year and next, have to dip into their savings or, perhaps (God forbid!), reduce their contributions to charity.

Then, like a breath of fresh air, comes a frank admission into this atmosphere of statistical gas. "The chances are good," says the U. S. News article, "that these savings will be available."

Why? When Congress passed its modification of the Ruml plan, you were perhaps forgiven \$100 in taxes. Mr. Grace, with a tax bill of \$400,000 for 1942, was forgiven 75 per cent of that figure, or \$300,000.

Until he made his income tax return in March of this year he had the whole \$400,000. In fact, since the U. S. News assumes that he is paying the 25 per cent in back taxes out of this and next year's income, he still has the whole \$400,000—increased, of course, beyond \$400,000, because he hasn't kept it under the mattress.

Let's divide up the money (forgetting how it may have grown) between this year and next to supplement that \$5,000 take-home pay. The result is \$200,000 more for each year, or \$205,000 in all. Refer to the second paragraph above and you will find that his take-home in 1940 was \$143,000.

Some other time, when the weather isn't so hot, we can think about the extra income that the Grace crowd makes or will make from investments, pension funds, and stocks that are offered to insiders at far below the market price.

The U. S. News concludes its story by pointing out that the nest-egg made possible by the forgiven taxes "does not change the fact" that no executive is this year taking home as much as \$25,000. No, sir, those fellows were all paid off way in advance.

It's good to have "facts" like that. Now you can go back to your own worries about the Little Steel formula while waiting for the birth of Mr. Ruml's new brain-child.

The "Big Steal" Formula

WASHINGTON—Four years of war production have been mighty kind to the steel companies, with profits soaring to an annual average from 1940 through 1943 of \$631,981,000—an increase of 356 per cent above the peacetime level of 1936-39.

That was the report made to the War Labor Board panel considering the demands of the CIO United Steel Workers for a seventeen cents an hour raise, an annual wage and other gains. The report, submitted by USWA-CIO Research Director Harold Ruttenberg, showed that four war years have done the following for the industry:

- 1. Raised profits before federal taxes 356 per cent over the peacetime level of 1936-39, or from 138 million to 632 million dollars.
2. Made the industry eligible for federal tax refunds of from 122 million to 167 million dollars, depending on circumstances, for each of two post-war years.
3. Increased the payment of dividends by 60 per cent over the 1936-39 peacetime level, or from \$94 million to almost \$150 million a year.
4. Jumped the depreciation, etc., allowances from a peacetime annual average of 146 million to 267 million dollars for the wartime average—an increase of 82 per cent, though operations only increased 67 per cent.
5. Raised total assets by 22 per cent, or from a little under five billion in 1939 to over six billion dollars in 1943.
6. Boosted undistributed profits by 74 per cent, or from a total of 595 million dollars at the end of 1939 to one billion, 35 million dollars at the end of 1943.
7. Increased general reserves from 104 million dollars at the end of 1939 to 317 million dollars at the end of 1943, an increase of 203 per cent.
8. Increased total financial resources (excluding refundable federal taxes) by 110 per cent, from 703 million dollars at the end of 1939 to one billion, 473 million dollars at the end of 1943.
9. Increased net current assets—the industry's working capital—by 47 per cent from one billion, 228 million dollars at the end of 1939 to one billion, 810 million dollars at the end of 1943.
10. Increased the industry's excess of net current assets over funded debt in 1943 as compared to 1939 by 247 per cent, or from 310 million dollars at the end of 1939 to 1 billion, 75 million dollars at the end of 1943.

In Memory of Leon Trotsky, Murdered by Stalin's GPU Four Years Ago

HE FORETOLD THE FUTURE OF A WHOLE WORLD!

Leader of Russian Revolution Was One of the Great Champions of the Working Class

By T. R. COBB

In the parlance of the labor movement, especially in the trade unions, a new term, a new tag, has been added. To most union men and women the words is really new. To a handful of others it is an old, familiar name.

The tag is "TROTSKYISM," derived from the labor principles of the late Leon Trotsky. The tag is a bit foreign-sounding, perhaps, but no more so than the surnames of millions of American workers, and much less so than some of the unpronounceable tongue-twisters borne by the first eleven men of the Notre Dame football team. His working class program for America is thoroughly native!

The worker who advocates revocation of the no-strike pledge at his union meeting is more apt than not to be called a "Trotskyist" by members of the Communist Party, who look upon labor's great weapon as a relic of the dead, dead past—when unions REALLY were unions.

The worker who wants an independent Labor Party to oppose the big business parties of the Democrats and Republicans—he's apt to be tagged a "Trotskyist."

The worker who thinks the rich should be taxed until it hurts, to pay for their war—he's likely to be called a "Trotskyist."

The worker who believes that the working class can run the country better than the capitalist profiteers and blunderers—he's labeled "Trotskyist."

As a matter of fact, whenever any radical labor idea, plan or program is advanced for the solution of the basic political and economic problems of the world through the institution of workers' governments, the proponent of those ideas hears the united cry of capitalist and Stalinist-communist alike—"You're a Trotskyist, and what you're preaching is Trotskyism."

lies I recognize are the workers of all the other countries. My politics are established not for the purpose of diplomatic conventions but for the development of the international revolutionary movement of the working class. I cannot put hopes in the allies of the Soviet Union, in France and England. They can betray one another. They can separate from one another. But I am sure that the workers, who understand very well the situation—they will be free and they will win one hundred workers and the hundred workers a thousand soldiers. They will be victorious at the end of the war. It seems to me very simple, but I believe it is a good idea."

HE WAS A POLITICAL REALIST

But don't be misled for a moment into believing that Trotsky was a mere dreamer of a world plan for the emancipation of the oppressed. Unlike the journalistic fly-by-nights who turn out grandiose, impractical political fantasies like a sausage-machine, Trotsky worked out his plan for the achievement of lasting world peace and plenty for all down to the last rock-bottom detail, subject only to the inevitable changes which events and the relative strength of the contending classes in society force it to make.

Trotsky's practical program is contained in the sharp and far-sighted document which he wrote in 1938 called "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International."

Realizing that a contradiction exists between the world's ripeness for a new system of economic, political and social equality and the fact that the working class is not sufficiently prepared to take advantage of that ripe condition, Trotsky advanced a program to help the masses in their daily struggles, to build a bridge between their present needs and demands and the final achievement of working class governments and working class power.

He called this a system of "transitional demands," a series of realistic demands stemming from today's conditions and the state of today's working class. Instead of labor's traditional "minimum program," these "transitional demands" were directed at the very heart and soul of the dying capitalist system.

It included a demand for a sliding scale of wages and a sliding scale of hours to contend with the rising cost of living and unemployment; it urged the class-conscious worker to take an active part in the trade unions for the purpose of strengthening them and raising their spirit of militancy; it advised the organization of factory committees, elected by all the workers in a factory, to create a counterweight to both the boss and the conservative union officials; it went further and called for workers' control of industry, whereby the workers could keep tabs on the profits, the production levels, and all the innermost workings of the places where they spend the greater part of their lives; it demanded the expropriation, with indemnification, of America's "Sixty Ruling Families"; it showed that workers' defense groups for the protection of the labor unions and labor's rights must develop from the elementary picket line and that workers' militias must be organized in order to give active expression to the workers' hatred of scabs and fascists; it advocated a close alliance between labor and the working farmer for the eventual creation of a workers' and farmers' government; it warned against the impending imperialist world war and called for unalterable opposition to it before and after its outbreak.

WE WERE TAUGHT BY HIM

The program of the Workers Party, which LABOR ACTION speaks for, is based almost entirely, in spirit, on these "transitional demands" first devised by Leon Trotsky.

We disagree with Trotsky's and his "official" followers' estimation of the present Russian state. While he and they considered it basically a "workers' state," we, on the other hand, do not consider it to be anything of the sort. We regard Russia as a collectivist state ruled by a bureaucratic class which exploits the workers and peasants in its own interests.

However, an examination of the man's life and work marks Trotsky as one of those rare geniuses of history whose contributions to mankind reverberate around the world today. He was motivated by the great ideals of human progress that led men gladly to lay down their lives in the fight for freedom. Trotsky gave his for working-class freedom, for the cause of international peace and plenty—for world socialism.

Why should the living fighters for such a cause flinch when they are called "Trotskyists"? In the meaning of the words on this page, we're "Trotskyists," for "Trotskyism" means freedom for mankind.



Leon Trotsky

All this is no accident, for when one of Stalin's hired assassins entered the study-room of Leon Trotsky in Mexico four years ago and drove a pick-axe through the brain of the exiled leader of the Russian revolution, mankind lost one of its great champions, one of its greatest leaders in the historic fight for a world of peace and plenty for all.

His prophecies at this very moment haunt the capitalist rulers and politicians of the world. They haunt Churchill, whose recent speeches carry bitter but respectful references to "the Trotskyite form of communism" which he thanks Stalin for wiping out in Russia. They haunt Hitler, until other things began to haunt him, but they will plague Hitler's successors, be they the Allies or the Junkers or the plain "democrats." Above all, they haunt Stalin.

Exactly what were Trotsky's words, beliefs and theories that they fear?

One quotation, to begin with; it is from the preface by the noted American journalist, Lincoln Steffens, to Trotsky's "The Bolsheviks and World Peace."

"Trotsky is against all the present governments of Europe and the 'bourgeois system' everywhere in the world. He isn't pro-Allies; he isn't even pro-Russian. He isn't a patriot at all. He is for a class, the proletariat, the working people of all countries, and he is for his class only to get rid of classes and get down or up to—humanity."

No wonder the capitalists and their political representatives hated him, reviled him, still fear his name and attempt to crush his followers!

And here is a key to Leon Trotsky's character and work—his attitude toward the masses, the toilers of the world, for whom he had immense compassion and in whom he had limitless faith. At one of the hearings of the John Dewey Commission, which completely exonerated him of all charges made against him in the Moscow frame-up trials, Trotsky told Attorney John Finerty with dignity and restraint:

"Mr. Attorney, France and Great Britain are not my allies. They can be the allies of the Soviet state. My allies are the workers of all countries, and the only al-

His Unheeded Warning of '31

The world today would indeed be a different world if there were no Hitler, and the thought of such a possibility should properly torment those who were responsible for the brutalitarian nightmare that now racks the globe.

The Hitlerite hordes COULD have been beaten down if the German workers heeded the clear-cut and pro-

Hitler Banned All of Trotsky's Writings

"The Germans arrived with a long list giving the titles of proscribed books. Very few authors were banned in toto. De Gaulle was one, TROTSKY was another."—From a review of Reports on France in the British Tribune, March 20, 1942.

phetic warning of Leon Trotsky to their growing influence and power. Learning of Hitler's tremendous electoral vote in 1930, Trotsky hastened to issue what is one of the most heart-rending appeals in all political literature to the members and leaders of the Communist Party of Germany, which was then declaring that the Social-Democrats and not the Nazis were the main enemy of the working class.

This is what he wrote in November, 1931, in "Ger-

Fascism and the New Deal
By Leon Trotsky

Two methods for saving historically doomed capitalism are today vying with each other in the world arena—fascism and the New Deal. Fascism bases its program on the demolition of labor organizations, on the destruction of social reforms, and on the complete annihilation of democratic rights, in order to forestall a resurrection of the proletariat's class struggle. The fascist state officially legalizes the degradation of workers and the pauperization of the middle classes, in the name of saving the "nation" and the "race"—presumptuous names under which decaying capitalism figures.

The policy of the New Deal, which tries to save imperialist democracy by way of sops to the labor and farmer aristocracy, is in its broad compass accessible only to the very wealthy nations, and so in that sense it is American policy par excellence. The American government has attempted to shift a part of the costs of that policy to the shoulders of the monopolists, exhorting them to raise wages and shorten the labor day and thus increase the purchasing power of the population and extend production. Leon Blum attempted to translate this sermon into elementary school French. In vain! The French capitalist, like the American, does not produce for the sake of production, but for profit. He is always ready to limit production, even to destroy manufactured products, if thereby his own share of the national income will be increased.

The New Deal program is all the more inconsistent in that, while preaching sermons to the magnates of capital about the advantages of abundance over scarcity, the government dispenses premiums for cutting down on production. Is greater confusion possible? The government confutes its critics with the challenge: can you do better? What all this means is that on the basis of capitalism the situation is hopeless.

Polish Workers--

(Continued from page 1)

Stalinists know the caliber of the Polish Underground—not of this or that leader, but of the resolute masses who compose it. They know that these are people who never compromised in the struggle against Hitlerism and Hitler, who fought the Nazis in the heroic defense of Warsaw after the "Colonels' Government" had fled, and at the same time that Stalin and Hitler were working cheek by jowl to divide the loot of Poland.

FEAR OF THE WORKERS

The Stalinists know that the Underground masses are overwhelmingly socialist in their convictions and aspirations. What is more, the Underground, while it has leaned backward not to offend Moscow in any way, is nevertheless opposed to the domination of Poland, or of the Polish working class and labor movement, by the Stalinists and the GPU. It may be ready to work with the Russians as allies, but not work under the Stalinists as slaves. Moscow knows this, too. And it is this knowledge that has determined the vicious, snarling, treacherous attitude of Moscow toward the Warsaw uprising!

There is not an iota of doubt in our minds that Moscow looks with the serene indifference upon the slaughter of the ill-equipped Warsaw Poles by the greatly superior Nazis. The Warsaw Underground, most advanced of the movements for national freedom, is a thorn in the side of the Germans—but it is also a thorn in the side of the Stalinists. If the Nazis pluck this thorn, it is all to the good for Moscow and its plan. What plan? To reduce Poland to a Russian vassal, at the very least; toward this end, to impose upon Poland the Kremlin's hand-picked puppet "government" which it has on file in its Foreign Office.

That is why Moscow treated the Warsaw fighters with such brutally cynical disdain, with such frigid indifference to their fate. That is why it did not say: "Even though the uprising is a cheap trick by London, these workers are fighting a common

enemy, we will not leave them in the lurch, we will help them by word and by deed." That is why it made no effort to supply them.

Could supplies have been gotten to Warsaw? We do not pretend to know the technical possibilities, or the disposition of military forces in and around Warsaw. We do know that the Russians have been able in the past to supply their own encircled troops; to supply isolated guerrillas behind the German lines; to supply even the far-off Yugoslavs under Tito. We do know that an August 14 dispatch to the New York Times from London reports that the Warsaw Underground army "has begun to receive token deliveries of Allied arms," which would indicate that such deliveries were technically possible. And we do know that Moscow is not at all interested in such "technical" questions, because of its venomously hostile attitude toward the Polish Underground, which it has not been able to subvert and dominate, which it hates as much as it fears, and which it intends to dispose of in due time by its favorite method—"liquidation."

LONDON JOINS IN

What about the "democrats" in London and Washington? Were they informed and consulted in advance about the Warsaw uprising? Possibly, and even probably. But it is significant that once it broke out and met with such a violent rebuff from Moscow, neither London nor Washington had a word of good cheer for the insurgents. The main lines of the division of the war spoils in Europe have already been laid down by Washington, London and Moscow. All of Eastern Europe has been practically acknowledged as Russia's domain, her "sphere of influence." England declared war upon Germany in 1939 presumably in protest against the rape of Poland. The second rape of Poland is at hand. Only, this time the criminal is not the retreating Nazi. The criminals and accomplices come from Moscow, London and Washington.

That is the sinister meaning of the scandal of Warsaw.

This Is James T. Farrell's Tribute to Leon Trotsky

"I know of no words strong enough to be employed in condemning the murder of Leon Trotsky. And I am convinced that he was murdered by an agent of the OGPU."

"For Leon Trotsky I felt both admiration and affection. I was not a follower of his in the strict and literal meaning of this term. But I was influenced by him. The OLD MAN educated some of the members of his generation; I was one of those whom he educated. Were it not for his writings, I would be a different person than I am, and I would think differently than I do. The loss of Leon Trotsky at this particular moment is tragic. In this black and bitter period of reaction, Trotsky was needed, and needed not merely as a symbol, but even more so as a leader. Now, those points on which one disagreed with him fade in importance. One sees now his greatness, the inspiration which was gained from his very life, from his indomitable fight and from his brilliant writings. Leon Trotsky was a great revolutionist, a great writer, a great man, a great spirit. Edmund Wilson, the literary critic, once remarked that since his exile from Soviet Russia, Leon Trotsky had served as the 'Marxist conscience of the world.' The pickaxe blow of Stalin's hired assassin struck down the 'Marxist conscience of the world.' With grief I say farewell to the OLD MAN. He is dead in the flesh. The spirit that animated his work will not die."

JAMES T. FARRELL.

August 28, 1940.

Capitalism Taboos 'Equal Opportunity' For Negro People

By W. F. CARLTON

Addressing an audience at Lincoln's tomb in Springfield, Ill., some days ago, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York state: "It is a fitting occasion to renew our determination to bring complete equality of opportunity of life in America to all the Negro people."

Governor Dewey does not mean this. It is campaign baloney. The Republican platform has been characterized by Walter White as "dishonest and stupid." The Democratic platform simply did its best to pretend that the Negro question does not exist.

Yet we can expect many statements like the one quoted, by Dewey, from all types of political candidates and agitators between now and the elections. Let us make it quite clear at once that this phrase, "complete equality of opportunity for Negroes," is not to be judged according to the sincerity or insincerity of capitalist politicians. Both parties are seeking to fool the Negroes. But if even they were not attempting to do this, it would be impossible for Negroes to have equality of opportunity under capitalist society. We struggle for it. The more advanced unions struggle for it also. Victories can be gained. But the 'thinking Negro must bear in mind always the limitations of the society in which he lives.

Since 1929, this country was unable to have less than ten million unemployed, until the preparations for the war saved the situation temporarily.

Since the war, however, the development of production in the United States has reached astonishing heights. Today the productive capacity of the country is such that if the population returned to the standard of living that existed before the war, there would be at the very least some twenty million unemployed. This is the problem that faces the country as a whole. This is the problem that the Negroes must constantly bear in mind.

First of all, if the United States economy cannot be organized in such a manner as to prevent this mass of unemployment, the "equality of opportunity" open to large numbers of the Negroes would be equality of opportunity to starve side by side with the white workers. No amount of promises, sincere or insincere, by Democratic or Republican politicians can prevent that.

But, secondly, and flowing from this, the very conditions of unemployment create a terrible situation.

Philly Strike --

(Continued from page 1)

show great confidence in the CIO leadership?

Furthermore, the TWU-CIO ducked out on the Negro question during the labor board election campaign. They did not try to educate the men on the race question. They did not tell the men frankly that the way to better wages and shorter hours was through unity instead of race rivalry. They did not say bluntly that the union would be 100 per cent stronger if Negroes worked on trolleys and, thereby, once and for all end the race question. Such hiding of one's head in the sand always leaves the rear exposed for an unexpected kick.

Had the union followed a fighting program it would have had support among the men. They would have seen their future guaranteed by sticking with the union and not by trying to keep the jobs for whites only. Had a minority group succeeded in causing a stoppage despite such support for the union, the union could have called a meeting of all the men in the various barns and explained the situation to them.

But the Communist flag-wavers who make big speeches about fight-

ing fascism in Europe did not dare show their faces in the car barns to lick the fascist elements in their own union. The Communist officials of the TWU hid themselves in the union headquarters and issued press releases denouncing the strikers as being unpatriotic. What a confession of bankruptcy! What a confession that the rank and file lacked faith in them! When the union sought to restore service on the Market Street elevated and the Broad Street subway on the second day of the strike, it could not muster more than a handful and these were soon argued out of working by the strike pickets.

The real union men in the TWU who are wondering what happened to their union during the strike should think of these things. It is necessary that they start organizing within the union to dump out the Communist stooges with their appeasement policy and build a really strong union on a fighting program of getting something for the men and women of the PTC. Once this is done, they need have no fears that the PTC workers won't stand behind the union, come what may and regardless of the issue.

This basis of unemployment is the fertile soil on which flourish the race-haters and the race-baiters. They organize themselves politically, using the unemployment in industry as a means of creating social and political difficulties for the Negroes. Under these circumstances, the whole Negro question becomes one of the tensest political questions in the country. Instead of orderly progress toward the achievement of greater and greater equality, we have a period of racial riots and the unloosing of terror and counter-terror. During the last year or two the signs of this have been coming thick and fast.

Therefore, we struggle always for the immediate issues of equality wherever possible. But we must cultivate no illusions about the sincerity or insincerity of this or that particular party or candidate. Along with their immediate struggles the Negroes must ask themselves: What is the program of this or that political organization or party for the creation of such a society in the United States as will root out the conditions from which the prejudice and the inequality spring?

Neither of the two major parties has any serious program for the reconstruction of American society.

All their talk, therefore, among capitalist politicians, about equality of opportunity for Negroes has no meaning in the face of the economic and social crisis which lies ahead. The Workers Party has its transitional program for the purpose of mobilizing the American workers toward the struggle for a new social order. For the large masses of the workers, that struggle centers about the struggle for a mass Labor Party. The Negro, however, who sees clearly not only the immediate struggles but the basic and fundamental problem which lies behind it must make up his mind to follow the example of Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman and those other great Negroes in the greatest period of American history. These banded themselves together in revolutionary organizations in order, by precept and example, to mobilize the large masses of the population for a radical solution of the American crisis of those days. Here is a case where we can safely say to serious Negroes today: Come thou and do likewise.

Editorials

What About It, Mr. Robert J. Watt?

The latest issue of *Labor*, weekly newspaper of the railway unions, reports a very interesting speech made by Robert J. Watt, representative of the AFL on the War Labor Board, at the annual convention of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor. After denouncing the government for its failure to plan for reconversion, thus making vast unemployment certain, he attacked the Administration for what *Labor* described as a "betrayal of promises made to the nation's workers when labor signed the no-strike pledge."

It is not entirely true that "labor" signed the no-strike pledge, if by labor is meant the workers of this country. The no-strike pledge was given by labor representatives and, in the first instance, was without consultation or agreement with the millions of rank and file workers. But Watt's speech is interesting because he charges, the report says, that the government's "part of the bargain... was that all disputes would be decided on their merits. Instead, arbitrary directives and regulations were put over to straight-jacket the workers."

"When the Little Steel formula became effective, we were told it was for the purpose of making wage rates stay on a level with living costs," Mr. Watt said. "Instead it has submerged wages further and further below the constantly mounting rise in living costs. Wages have been frozen at rates fifteen per cent above the level of January, 1941, but profits have not."

Mr. Watt is absolutely correct. But, what lessons does he draw from his own position that the government betrayed the workers, or double-crossed them? None! Mr. Watt still advocates the retention of the no-strike pledge, which hamstring labor, and he still sits on the War Labor Board, which is the instrument through which the "double-cross" and the "betrayal of labor" takes place daily.

We believe, however, that the lessons are clear: labor should end the no-strike pledge; labor should get off the WLB, where it is a party to the big double-cross and the betrayal!

Communist-led ALP Joins Tammany

When the Communist Party, along with Sidney Hillman, chairman of the CIO Political Action Committee, succeeded in capturing the machinery of New York's American Labor Party last fall, we predicted that the *coup d'etat* meant the end of all independent political action by the ALP in the state and city elections. This had been borne out by the recent announcements on ALP endorsements of candidates for the forthcoming elections.

The American Labor Party has gone down the line for the Democratic candidates—from dog catcher to State Supreme Court justices, from county clerks to the candidate for the presidency of the United States.

While the party never lived up to the real principle of an INDEPENDENT political organization, playing ball with the corrupt Tammany Hall machine, under the control of the 'right wing' Dubinsky group, the party at times ran independent candidates. But with the victory of the Stalinist-Hillman forces, even limited independent political action has ended.

Under the domination of Representative Vito Marcantonio, one of Earl Browder's fellow travelers, the ALP has made deals with Tammany-type politicians all over the state, accepting and endorsing reactionary Democrats and dubious "win the war" hacks. Not a single candidate has been reported as running independently on an ALP ticket.

What we said during the primary fight about the ALP and a Communist-Hillman victory is coming true as quickly as was forecast. The next step after the elections will in all probability be the dissolution of the ALP.

No Censorship on Soldier's Reaning!

A once celebrated cartoonist years ago drew a picture of what the capitalist class regarded as the perfect soldier. It showed the powerful man, tall, broad-shouldered and with bulging biceps, but without a head. The ideal soldier under capitalism is one who knows nothing and is incapable of thinking. He is merely an automatic machine turned out for the single purpose of carrying out orders.

This is the essence of the congressional measure pushed through by that reactionary Milquetoast from Ohio, Senator Taft. The aim of the Taft measure is to keep the soldier from reading "political" books, papers, magazines or anything else in print that might get him to think along partisan lines!

Does that mean that the GOP senator from Ohio wants the soldier to read nothing? No, he is quite content that he read the *Chicago Tribune* or any other reactionary writing which would influence him with anti-labor partisan politics. The brass-hats string along with Taft.

We, however, are against any censorship of the soldier's reading material. We are for the complete democratic right of the soldier to read any and all literature, and that includes socialist literature and papers like *LABOR ACTION*. In other words, we are for his right to read what he pleases!

We see no reason why the soldier, just because he wears a uniform, should lose his democratic rights. The whole thing smacks of rank hypocrisy. High officers have their opinions and they speak them out whenever they please. Being officers in the Army never stopped them from voicing publicly their anti-labor, pro-big-business sentiments.

Big business and the big business press has flooded the armed forces with their labor-baiting material. A Westbrook Pegler can have his anti-social, labor-hating material printed in official army papers, but pro-labor, anti-profiteering and, of course, socialist literature and socialist papers are either completely barred from or are handicapped in reaching the workers in uniform.

All of labor must protest against any "Index Expurgatorius" for the servicemen!

Max Shachtman Writes on THE TRAGEDY IN PHILADELPHIA

The Philadelphia transit "strike" was a tragedy in more than one sense.

It created a highly critical situation which the labor movement was in a position to handle magnificently. It did not do so. It lost an opportunity to demonstrate its caliber and stature in a crisis which had more than local importance, for the "strike" was of nation-wide and even international significance.

All the workers in the Philadelphia transit system went out on "strike" against the perfectly proper and long overdue upgrading of eight Negro workers.

We do not believe for one minute that all these workers, or even a majority of them, are poisoned by the spirit of Jim Crow, which is the hallmark of American capitalism. They would not, of their own free will, take such an action as they did which could only benefit the union-busting program of the company. They were maneuvered into it, however, by an aggressive and vicious minority, of shady origin and shadier connections. This minority was able to trick the others into "striking" by demagoguery, by intimidation, by organized action which was not countered by organized resistance.

COMPANY AIDED "STRIKERS"

Whether or not company officials, notorious for their hatred of labor unions, were directly behind the move or connived in it, has not been proved, although it would not surprise us one bit if proof were forthcoming. What needs no further proof, though, is the fact that the company gave its tacit approval to the

walkout. The meetings to plan it were held on company property and without the slightest company objection. The company encouraged the walkout by the suggestion of its chief official, Mitten, that the upgrading of Negroes be suspended as a measure to end the "strike." Like every capitalist employer, the transit company knows that if the workers can be kept divided along lines of color, race or religion, they are easy prey.

But precisely because of the company's sinister interests in the shameful walkout, the organized labor movement had a great opportunity, and an even greater duty, to step into the situation and solve it in its own way.

It is true that Michael Quill, head of the CIO Transport Workers Union, proceeded to Philadelphia and appealed to the men to call off their "strike." But obviously his appeal was ineffectual. Among other things, he could not—being a Stalinist who is head-over-heels in favor of the war—give a very convincing answer to the arguments of the reactionary "strike" leaders that they were only insisting on the same kind of segregation and discrimination against Negroes which is the official practice of the U. S. Army.

Quill, however, is only one man. In addition, there is a big and powerful labor movement in Philadelphia. Why was it not mobilized in this crisis? Where were its leaders and spokesmen, Murray, Hillman, Thomas and the others? Here was an unparalleled opportunity to show some of the statesmanship they talk so much about. They showed absolutely nothing.

There Was Another Way to End This Strike

WHAT LABOR SHOULD HAVE DONE

Thousands, and tens of thousands, of workers in Philadelphia, both Negro and white, could have been assembled to consider this tragic situation. Such an assembly could easily have made clear to the transit workers, to the entire population of the city, and indeed to the whole country, where labor really stood in this crisis. It could have spoken and acted so clearly that everybody would understand that these people who are the carriers of Jim Crow poison speak and act only for themselves, or only for the reactionaries whose tools they are, and not for the labor movement. A mobilization of the Philadelphia labor movement, in meeting, parade or demonstration, would have given enormous encouragement to the majority of the transit workers who were duped or intimidated into walking out. It would have showed them, and made them feel, that they had friends, powerful friends. It would have served to isolate the Jim Crow minority into the tiny, dirty corner where they belong.

What is more, such a mobilization—which would have been the easiest thing in the world to organize

—would have had incalculably favorable effects upon the Negro people, not only the eight transit workers directly involved, but upon every Negro in the United States. It would have been worth more than a million words and a thousand pledges in proving what we have always said and what we are still profoundly convinced of—that the only hope of the Negro people is the labor movement. That has been shown time and again. In Philadelphia, there was a splendid opportunity to show it once more and in a decisive way.

And still more, if the labor movement had handled the situation in this way—and we have no doubt about its effectiveness—it would have had a tremendously favorable effect upon the American people as a whole. It would be a demonstration to them that the organized working class is able to deal effectively, and in a progressive way, with serious, difficult and critical problems. It would have enhanced the prestige of the labor movement tenfold throughout the country. It would have given positive emphasis to labor's demands in general, and especially to labor's right to have the dominant voice in the nation's political affairs.

Labor Must Prevent a Repetition of This Affair

Labor missed this opportunity, and that is a downright tragedy.

This is not all. Labor did not intervene. But the government and its army did, and they helped bring the walkout to an end.

What is bad about that? It may be asked. Didn't the army get the shameful "strike" ended, and assure the upgrading of the Negroes?

If the army were to put an end to the Jim Crow system in its own ranks, we might begin to consider seriously the argument that it smashed Jim Crow on the Philadelphia transit system!

From the standpoint of the interests of labor, both Negro and white, the intervention of the army was another tragedy. It is true that the failure of the labor movement to act in the situation made the action of the army virtually inevitable. With what consequence? With the consequence that from now on the intervention of the government's armed forces in a genuine and legitimate workers' strike will be justified by reference to the "good work" they did in the Philadelphia situation, and to the praise they got from the labor leaders. And anyone who is even slightly acquainted with the history of the labor movement and its struggles, knows that the armed forces—be they policemen, national guardsmen or the army—have never been called into a strike to protect the interests of the workers, but just the other way around.

After all, workers form organizations of their

own, excluding capitalists, because they realize that nobody will protect labor's interests except labor itself. If this were not true, they might just as well join the Chamber of Commerce, or the Democratic Party, and leave it at that. If this is true—and it most certainly is—then anyone who by word or deed contributes to the illusion that a force outside the working class will protect its interests, is helping to undermine the very organizations that the working class formed to protect itself. That is just what the official labor leaders, from Quill to Murray and back again, helped to do, whether they realize it or not. And from that standpoint as well, the Philadelphia situation was a tragedy for the labor movement.

In the days to come, there may be—in fact there surely will be—other Philadelphias. The fact that the walkout took place in a Northern metropolis, and not in the South, shows how nation-wide in scope is the virus of Jim Crow and the problem it creates. The forces of reaction, which live and prosper upon divisions in the working class, will do their utmost to spread this virus. They will try to continue pumping into the workers the poison which American capitalism feeds them from childhood on. The tougher things get, and the harder the reactionaries find it to deal with social problems, the more furiously will they work at the Jim Crow pump.

That is what the labor movement must watch out for. That is why it must take to heart the lessons of the Philadelphia Jim Crow "strike." What is involved is the very existence of the labor movement in the days to come. It would be a fatal mistake not to understand this.

YELLOW PRESS...

"Pampering" the Jobless With Bare Necessities

By MIKE WYLIE

The guardians of the "free press," meaning freedom to lie, conceal, misrepresent, slander and otherwise confuse the millions of newspaper readers in the country, have given us a frank preview of how it intends to deal with the problems of post-war unemployment and the workers' demands for economic security in the days to come.

In their editorials on the recently defeated Murray-Kilgore bill, the capitalist pen prostitutes raised a terrific howl that brought back memories of their most evil and soulless performances in the black days of the great depression.

In those days they attacked each appropriation for relief, no matter how small or ineffectual, as "socialistic" and leading to the "demoralization" of the unemployed—as though the miserable hand-outs of the Roosevelt Administration could be conceived as anything but the subsidized system of starvation and decreacy that it actually was!

Now they are at it again. Now they are belittling the same raucous tune. "Loafing Pay Bill" is what the New York Daily News called the inadequate Murray-Kilgore measure. "A bill to make unemployment blissful" is the frothy phrase applied to it by Arthur Krock, the Tory phonograph record of the New York Times.

The same newspaper in its lead editorial of August 14 said "it would obviously make it more profitable, and certainly more pleasant, for millions of men and women to be idle than to work. Thirty-five dollars a week is greater than the average wage paid in industry before the war. It is greater than the average wage paid even today in the nation's textile industries and clothing industries, or in the nation's retail trades. How many people would work for less when they could rest for more?"

That quotation is worth several rereadings, because it describes in a nutshell the whole attitude of the capitalist class and its journalistic echoes to the problem.

Note that it does not DEPLORE the fact that the average worker in this country had an annual income that was substandard, that kept him and his family in a state of perpetual poverty and insecurity, that subjected him to the economic terrorization of a ruthless system.

The New York Times is worried over the possibility that a DOLE of twenty-five dollars a week (the final compromise of the Murray-Kilgore bill) for a family of three would seriously affect the labor market of the open-shoppers, the slave-shoppers and cut-throat manufacturers of EVERY region of the country.

Yes, a relatively high rate of unemployment compensation WOULD act as a floor under wages! Yes, the manufacturers would only be able to find hopeless idiots to work for them at thirty-five dollars a week if the rate of unemployment compensation were the same amount! Besides, this amount would not be taxable by the government, forcing the government to turn the BIG BUSINESS for the costs of running the sweet racket of BIG BUSINESS, which it calls "free enterprise."

That is why the New York Times, as spokesman for the capitalists, is so emphatic in its opposition to such measures as the Murray-Kilgore bill.

The capitalists are not interested in how many men are thrown out of work nor in the post-war period. They have always claimed that a "reservoir of unemployed" is necessary to their system. It pits the employed worker against the unemployed worker in a competition for the available jobs, thereby forcing down the wage levels of the entire working population.

The capitalists ARE interested in keeping the unemployed worker in a state of beggary and desperation so that they can DICTATE the terms and conditions of life itself to the overwhelming majority of people over whom they exercise their power. The capitalists also require large numbers of unemployed for use as STRIKE-BREAKERS and GOON SQUADS AGAINST THE UNIONS.

By defeating the Murray-Kilgore bill, which was not a "job bill" but a measure to determine the size of the unemployed dole, Congress has spoken for the capitalist masters of the United States. It gave the journalistic vultures of the capitalist press an opportunity to acclaim its defeat with undisguised glee and relief.

But there will probably be twenty million unemployed after the war, to which must be added ten million returning servicemen. They have yet to be heard from.

Honorable capitalists, senators and representatives—what do you think THEY will say?

Why U. S. Workers Should Support National Liberation Struggles

By J. R. JOHNSON

The cracks in the German structure will naturally bring increased activity and hopes in the European underground and guerrilla movements. Some people, good class-conscious workers and even some revolutionaries, are raising the question: "Isn't it time to break with Tito and the other resistance leaders who are after all part of Anglo-American-Russian imperialism?"

There is here a fine collection of mistakes. First of all, when the Workers Party declared that it supported the SLOGAN of national liberation and recommended revolutionary socialists to join the resistance movements it did not thereby support, for example, Tito. No such thing. What we do is to join a lot of workers and peasants who of their own accord joined up with Tito to rid their country of a tyrannical and murderous oppressor. That we join a group of workers or workers and peasants and raise the slogan which is most likely to rally them does not in any way mean that we support those who happen to be leading them.

The underground and guerrilla movements, in France, in Yugoslavia, and in Greece are spontaneous mass movements. The workers join them willingly. If they are not satisfied with the movement they try to change it and if they do not succeed they leave it and join another, or go

home. Many of the Yugoslavs left Mikhailovich to join Tito. Today they say that they support Tito "because he is a good fighter." That is a capital summation of the whole question.

Same with the German soldiers. They didn't support Rommel because he won victories in Egypt; and then didn't support him because he was beaten by Montgomery. In each case a highly organized, stable capitalist state organized its capitalist army, facing all workers will the alternative: "Obey or else."

But when the masses of workers and peasants rush to join or to form a guerrilla band or underground organization, that is something else. True, the most perfect thing would be for them to form a strictly class organization. Sure we would prefer that. Unfortunately it hasn't happened that way.

But, it can be argued, the large majority of the workers in the U. S. A. are in the Democratic or Republican Parties, and you of the Workers Party repudiate all support of those parties.

To that, the answer is simple enough. Do the Republican or Democratic Parties consist of masses of workers fighting for workers' demands? The question is not only rhetorical, it is ridiculous. If, during the post-war period in America, a fascist leader organized a part of the

army and fascists bands and attacked the Roosevelt government; and if the Roosevelt government mobilized the government and the workers to fight against this American Franco, the Workers Party would certainly fight alongside the Roosevelt government. Astonishing? Not at all. We did exactly that in Spain in 1936-38. We fought with the Loyalist capitalist government against Franco.

But did we support, Azana, Prieto, Caballero, Negrin and other Loyalist leaders? No such thing. The Trotskyists fought with the Loyalist armies but continually pointed out to the workers that no victory could be won over Franco unless the workers themselves took over the power.

"Ah!" says our sectarian, "I note that you say in the post-war period. That is our case. This is an imperialist war." And he concludes triumphantly: "Tito's army is tied to the United Nations. If even you SAY you do not support him, by joining his forces you are supporting one side of the imperialist war."

Frankly, this is a form of insanity. Imagine that the Japanese have landed on the West Coast, have defeated the U. S. government and army and begin the persecution and plunder of the people. The American workers, deserted by the capitalists, begin to organize themselves in their own bands in order to fight against this intolerable oppression. Nobody com-

pels them to do so. They do it because they cannot live under this destruction of their living standards and their rights and their pride. Some U. S. colonel or even NCO organizes and leads this fight. He is capitalist in his ideas. Soon there gather around him some representatives of the U. S. A. capitalist regime who begin to direct the movement as far as they can toward the restoration of the defeated and discredited American capitalist regime. What do some people propose?

That because the workers who form the main body of the movement do not declare for socialism, the socialists in it must denounce the movement—and leave it.

This, we repeat, is a form of insanity. In addition, it shows great ignorance of revolutionary politics. Suppose the movement was entirely a workers' movement, consisting of nothing else but workers, calling itself the American Workers Movement for National Liberation, would our sectarians leave it then? Ac-



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