

# THE FIGHTING WORKER

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## Only Armed Working Class Can Defend The Soviet Union

### War Jingoos Disrupt Gimbel Strike

**New York, Sept. 8.**—Fifteen hundred Gimbel Department Store workers are in the fourth week of a strike for a closed shop, 8 hour day, five day week and a 5 cents per hour increase in pay.

The strikers are organized in the CIO Clerks International.

After weeks of negotiations a series of points were agreed to by the negotiating committee of the workers and the Company. These included a 42 hour, 5½ day week, a \$1.50 raise in pay, a closed shop and other concessions. The big joker in the contract, however, was the length of the contract.

The leaders of the local, acting in agreement with John L. Lewis, agreed to a 3½ year contract. It further specified that wage changes could not be taken up for at least 2½ years.

Considering the increased cost of living and inflation, and more to come, this actually will result in a pay cut for the Gimbel workers.

#### STALINISTS REVERSE

The union leaders under Stalinist influence were willing to accept the proposition, and the membership was lined up to ratify the agreement, and then hell popped loose. The Company refused to honor its agreement in relation to the closed shop, and length of hours.

In the meantime, Sam Wolchok, head of the international union, and tied in with the Hillman CIO group signed a contract with 83 Gimbel workers in the warehouse behind the back of the union com-

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Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union as an attempt to break out of the stalemate caused by increased United States aid to England has solved nothing for Germany, but has made her situation much worse.

### How To Fight The High Cost of Living

The only effective way to fight against the high cost of living is to:

1—Fight at the point of production (in the factory or plant) for increased wages and for the six hour day and the five day week.

2—Join the union of your industry and help build a militant fighting democratic union.

3—Fight against the war and those who try to take the worker's democratic rights away under the name of "national unity".

4—As an auxiliary struggle, subordinated to the above, fight the Rent Hogs, the Monopoly prices, the Profiteers, the taxes and other burdens placed on the workers' backs.

5—These measures will help stem the tide, even more important, they will help prepare the way for the only real solution —  
**WORKER'S CONTROL OF PRODUCTION UNDER A WORKER'S COUNCIL GOVERNMENT.**

Although Leningrad is in grave danger the Germans are making no progress in other sections and the increasing bad weather is helping the Red Army inflict heavy losses in men and material on the fascist troops.

#### MASS ACTION CAN DEFEAT FASCISM

The Stalinists have been forced to grant some concessions to the workers of the Soviet Union. In the areas which the Nazi dominate and in the besieged cities Stalinism is forced to organize workers' militias. But only if the Soviet masses reestablish genuine SOVIETS with workers' democracy will the armed might of the October Revolution again drive out the imperialist invaders.

#### GERMAN DIFFICULTIES MOUNT

While Hitler has more than he can handle with the Red Army, his other difficulties are also mounting. In occupied Europe a rising storm of protest based on starvation and mass discontent is playing havoc with Nazi plans. The opposition in France to the

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## Waller Hearing Shows Need for United Defense

**Richmond, Va., Sept. 10:**—The hearing for Odell Waller's new trial opened yesterday before the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. Waller is being defended by Thomas H. Stone of Richmond, James Finerty of New York and several other lawyers.

Odell Waller was sentenced to

die in the electric chair by a reactionary Jim-Crow jury last year. A nation-wide protest organized by the Waller Defense Committee forced a reprieve from December 27 to March 14, 1941. The appeal of the case to the State Supreme Court extended the stay of execution.

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## «DEFENSE PROGRAM» CREATES UNEMPLOYMENT

Much material has already been gathered to indicate the terrific dislocation of capitalist economy by the "defense" boom. New enormous plants spring up in the wilderness, employing thousands of men. There are no housing facilities, and trailer camps and jalopies have become "home" to these workers.

A new army of industrial "okies" is created for the construction of these plants — an army that migrates all the way across the continent and back — an army that is always in want. The **Fighting Worker** has already revealed some of the unspeakable conditions that exist in some of these construction camps.

But an even more serious aspect of the problem is the fact that hundreds of thousands are being laid off because of the defense boom. "Priorities" mean impoverishment for those employed by plants not reaping the new "prosperity."

### WAR "PROSPERITY"

No serious attempt has been made by the government to estimate the number thus disemployed because of the unavailability of raw materials.

But we do know that the silk workers are out. The auto workers are being decimated by the reduced production orders. And with the allocation of steel on a full priority bases, many mills not rolling priorities equipment (the strip and sheet mills, for example) will have to close down for lack of steel ingots.

The oil and gas limitation in the east has already thrown thousands out of work and will strike back further and further through the ranks of the workers.

### NEW CRISIS COMING

Meanwhile those very industries whose over-production in the "Golden Twenties" made the major contribution to the crisis of 1929 and the ensuing ten-year depression, are expanding their plants. Steel is increasing its productive capacity, as are oil, electric power, etc. The inevitable result of all this activity will be a crash

far worse than the crash of 1929.

### WHAT SHALL WORKERS DO?

What is to happen to all these workers thrown out of employment by the drastic change in production requirements? The young worker will be denied relief and driven into the army. The older worker, lacking the militancy of youth to support him in the struggle, will be powerless to resist cuts in relief, denial of unemployment insurance, etc.

The only road out for these workers will be the revolutionary

road. As they struggle, they will see, clearer than at any time in history, that not merely the "bad" bosses, but the federal, state and local governments put in power and maintained by the boss class to serve its interests, stand between them and food, health, housing, and a decent standard of living.

The workers must organize to fight the boss class and all its agencies. Their fight is against capitalism, FOR workers' control of production in a society governed by workers' councils.

## Leaders Guarantee No Strike If Given Checkoff

On the national field the strikes and strike threats clearly show the role of the labor-fakers. The just-finished railroad strike vote makes it clear that jurisdiction is not in the hands of the rank and file, but is maintained by the RAILROAD MAGNATES through the Mediation Board which they control. It is even admitted by the Brotherhood heads that the sole purpose of the strike vote was to force compulsory arbitration.

### FAKERS FIGHT FOR MORE GRAFT

On this basis we can predict in advance if it is left to the leaders that there will not at the present time be any railroad strike. The arbitration board will "grant" some piddling concessions to the workers' demands, thus furnishing the Brotherhood bureaucrats with the excuse they need for

heading off the workers' militancy. This also preserves the union fakers from exposure as collaborators with the railway barons.

The struggle between the bureaucrats and the capitalists is not for the improvement of the workers' conditions. Their struggle is solely for the closed shop and the check-off. And they make it perfectly clear in their dealings with the bosses that they are promising no strikes in the period of "national emergency." In fact the best "argument" for the closed shop the labor fakers have to offer is that this will prevent "irresponsible" strikes.

In other words, if you recognize the bureaucrats, you won't have to worry about the rank and file. The Daily Worker mirrors this attitude, proclaiming that the closed shop contract is the best guarantee against production slow-ups instigated by "Nazi agents".

The only possible way in which the workers can defend themselves against Fascism, at home or abroad, is by their own rank-and-file control of their unions, AGAINST their "leaders" (the Lewises, the Greens, the Dubinskys, the Murrays, and their present stooges, the Stalinists.)

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# Protest Army Jim Crow

A preliminary meeting, called September 2, under the auspices of the Washington Park Forum, formed a "Committee for Negro Freedom" to protest the treatment given to Negro soldiers drafted into the army. Fifty Negro and white workers responded to a first leaflet which contained excerpts from the letter sent by a soldier to the Fighting Worker.

Altho only a hundred or so leaflets were distributed, the response indicates the widespread resentment against the reign of terror instigated in the United States Jim-Crow army, and carried out by the military police and southern reactionaries.

A mass protest meeting has been set for September 21, calling on all to join their voices in this protest. A leaflet with further details will be issued and the Fighting Worker will carry an announcement of the place.

**TROTSKYITES HIDE FACE**

At the preliminary meeting, William Avery and other members of the RWL proposed that a united front of organizations be asked to participate and enlarge the meeting. The Shachtman Trotskyites via their main speaker opposed this policy and insisted that the committee be composed of individuals only. They proposed that such people as the Rev. Clayton Powell (to be brought in from New York at the expense of the committee) and the Rev. Austin of Chicago (who is looking for votes to make him head of the National Baptist Convention), be the main speakers.

This line of tail-ending Negro pacifist and religious leaders, and

revolutions that are now being prepared.

The workers everywhere have but one answer and one way to fight this war: —

**For class unity against national unity.**

**The main enemy is at home, our own ruling class.**

**Fight Fascism by fighting capitalism.**

of hiding even their own organization behind the skirts of such elements; is for the purpose of "reaching" the Negro masses".

**With what message?** That, it seems, is not important.

**FOR ANTI-WAR, ANTI-JIM CROW**

Avery's proposals to have anti-war speakers, and to enlarge the protest to include also the treatment of white soldiers and workers, were rejected by these so-called revolutionists.

Only an anti-Jim-Crow, anti-war and pro-labor protest can be effective.

The policy of the war department, which endorses and enforces the Jim-Crowing of the Negro soldiers, reveals the hollowness of Wall Street's "fight for freedom of minorities." It is the Roosevelt government which segregates the Negro soldier. It is Roosevelt's administration which puts Negro-hating MP's in charge of Negro soldiers. The fight for elimination of racial discrimination in the army must be tied up with the struggle against the whole capitalist system and its imperialist executive committee.

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**CHICAGO MEETINGS**

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**Only Armed Working Class Can Defend The Soviet Union**

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plans for closer Berlin-Vichy co-operation is only the opening gun of greater struggles this winter.

**JAPAN AT A TURNING POINT**

Japan, as an Axis partner is at its most critical stage. Either it must start military operations at once which will involve it with Anglo - American - Soviet forces or it must try to "save face" and back-track on the Axis agreement as a step toward capitulation to American imperialism. Its period of sitting on the side line and snatching what it can while the other imperialists are busy is now over and a new phase is at hand.

**ROOSEVELT'S FREEDOM OF THE SEAS**

At the same time the American imperialists are extending their domination and control routes around Europe and Asia under the cloak of the "Freedom of the Seas". Routes to England through Iceland go a long way toward bottling up Europe. Shipments through Vladivostok already challenge Japanese domination in that area. The new African bases and the Red Sea route increase this pressure.

**THE REAL STRUGGLE STILL AHEAD**

United States is not only arming to smash any plan of Axis domination, and to keep the British in second place in the Roosevelt-Churchill "New Order", but above all the exploiters are preparing internally and internationally to use their strength in an attempt to determine the outcome of the war and to fight back the rising proletarian and colonial

## WAR JINGOES DISRUPT GIMBEL STRIKE

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mittee. The Stalinists were able to get the workers to reverse their position and the strike continued on the basis of the original demands.

### WOLCHOK KNIFES STRIKE

Wolchok did not point out the previous Stalinists opportunist role, and instead knifed the strike in the back. He permits the warehouse workers to remain on the job while the other 1500 picket. As a result the United Parcel truck drivers are still delivering Gimbel parcels, and the Building Servicemen at the store, who are willing to walk out are still at work. In addition, Wolchok is withholding the local's check-off funds, sorely needed in the strike.

### WAR IS AXIS OF UNION PROBLEMS

Most of the problems in the unions are being settled around the war question. The Hillman group and its Roosevelt support, and now the Stalinists with their pro-war position, stifle the free action of the workers for better conditions. You cannot serve the Wall Street imperialists and the workers interests at the same time.

A progressive group based upon rank and file control and opposition to the imperialist war must be built in the unions. Without such a program and a group willing to raise this fight in the unions, even the fight for more bread and butter is considerably weakened.

## Gestapo At Work

Wire tapping and listening in on private conversations is illegal and immoral according to Federal Law, so the FBI installed a dictaphone to spy on Harry Bridges, west coast union leader. As any Philadelphia lawyer can easily see, there is a vast difference between wire-tapping and putting in a dictaphone.

**For Democratic Rights — For the Right to Organize, Strike and Picket**

## CLASS STRUGGLE IN FRANCE

France today is a country in a pre-revolutionary state whose development toward revolution is retarded by the presence of German bayonets.

Prior to the outbreak of the war, the French government was the most unstable in Europe. Internationally, this instability pointed to the approaching revolution. As a reflection of French international policy — which tail-ended the British — it indicated the impending crack-up of German-British relations. Two agents to the international inter — and intra-class struggles as focused in France, were the presence of Spanish workers in arms on one border and German capitalists in arms on the other.

Thus, pre-war France was the key to international class relations. Similarly, Vichy France is one of the international class barometers today.

Yesterday France tail-ended Britain, today she tail-ends Germany, reflecting the conversion of a British-controlled Europe into a Nazi-dominated continent.

### STALINISM CHANGES LINE

Where formerly French Stalinists bade the French working-class to sabotage for Germany and against Britain, today they are seeking sabotage for Russia against Germany. Neither policy is a Marxist position of revolu-

tionary defeatism against French capitalism for a French social revolution.

Where pre-war France nourished a militant fascist movement headed by dissenting French capitalists, today French bosses who stack their chips on a German defeat, or who have heavy investments in French colonies inaccessible to Nazi dictates, cultivate the "free" French, British-oriented, De Gaulle movement.

Above all, the France of Petain is the same seething hot-bed of mass revolts as the France of Daladier, only it is ten times as hot and growing hotter.

### SOCIALIST UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

The outbreak of imperialist war slows down in its early stages, the development of class contradictions. As the war proceeds the process turns to its opposite — an acceleration of class contradictions occurs.

Europe today is a powder keg. The appalling slaughter and increased misery of the masses plus the increasing disorganization of Capitalism to the point where the ruling butchers are no longer able to control their society, is rapidly creating the spark that will ignite it. The explosion will smash capitalism to bits. From the smoke and ruins, will emerge the **United States of Socialist Europe.**

## Free Odell Waller

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ution.

### NEED NATIONAL UNITED CAMPAIGN

After the Waller Defense Committee obtained nation-wide publicity for the case, the Workers Defense League (socialist controlled) and the N.A.A.C.P. entered the case and also carried on propaganda on Waller's behalf.

The need of the hour is greater unity among the forces participating in Waller's defense. So far, the two latter organizations have refused to form a united front. The Revolutionary Workers League

urges that all attempts be made to coordinate national activity to win freedom for Waller.

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