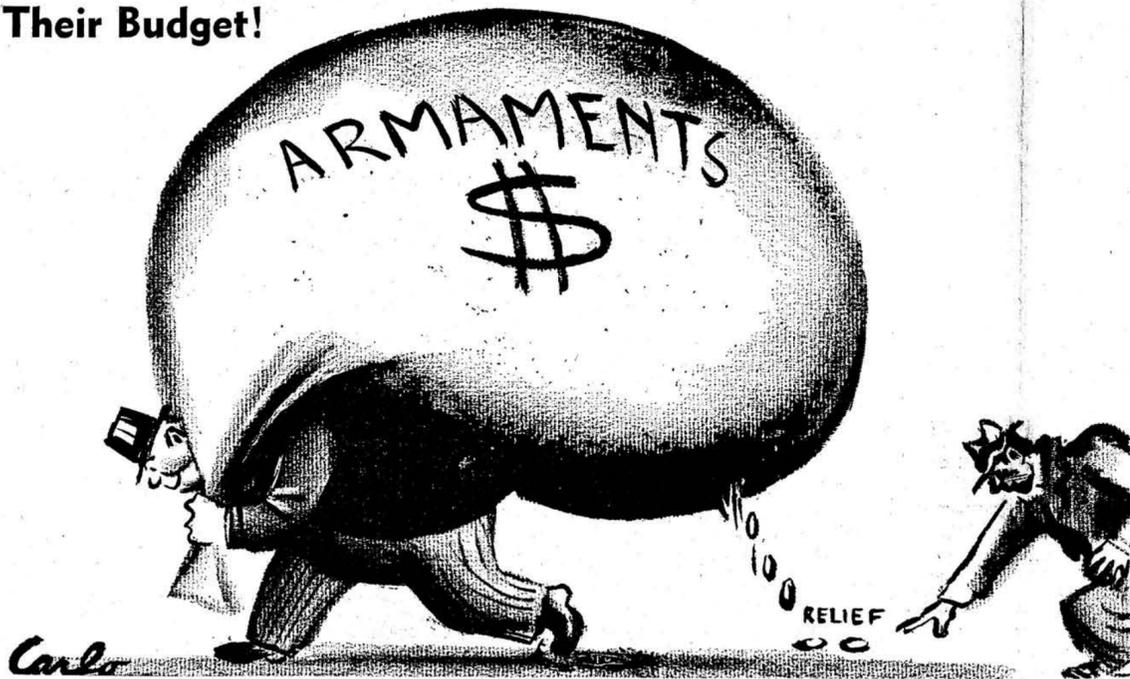


BANKERS LAUD WAR DICTATOR BILL!

Their Budget!



DAVID COOLIDGE WRITES FROM THE FIELD ON MISSOURI'S SHARECROPPERS **Chattel Slaves in All but Name . . .**

By DAVID COOLIDGE

ST. LOUIS—Southeastern Missouri is a land of cabins in the cotton; a region of poverty and misery; violence and oppression; exploitation and downright robbery. There is no constitution down here, no pretense of practicing democracy—not even the small measure of democracy that workers have in some other sections of the United States.

This is an area of black and white sharecroppers and tenant farmers who own nothing, not even the barest necessities of life that a worker on home relief can get in a northern city. These people have nothing

but the air they breathe. Perhaps they wouldn't have this, if there were any way for the planters to install a nickel-in-the-slot method of selling the air. If they could, these planters might be found telling a "cropper" or a tenant at the end of the year that so much had been deducted from his cash income for so many cubic yards of air breathed.

This is not an exaggeration; that's the kind of place the cotton region of southeastern Missouri is. These conditions do not exist because the soil is poor and will not yield a living for the people. One planter told us that the cotton yield here is the largest per acre of any section of the cotton belt. Here the soil is black and rich. The land is level and lends itself to cultivation by the most modern mechanical methods. The difficulty arises through the fact that the planters own everything and the sharecroppers have nothing. A small planter, that I spent a few hours with, a "liberal," has 1,100 acres. A nearby planter has 30,000 acres scattered over southeastern Missouri and northern Arkansas.

Army Tells Negro—"Keep Your Place"

WASHINGTON, D.C., January 18—Jim Crow the Negro—that's the policy of the United States Army.

The most recent Army plan is to form a Negro "Jim Crow" pursuit squadron in the Air Corps some time next month.

This decision was announced yesterday by Undersecretary of War Patterson.

That's not all. The War Department brags that it will eventually segregate the Negro and have separate Negro units in every branch of the Army.

The Army doesn't kid when it says something. They've started already. At Fort Sill, Oklahoma, they put all Negroes in one field artillery unit. That's the only artillery unit, these days, that Negroes have been able to join in the Regular Army.

It looks like the Army big-shots are trying to equal Hitler when it comes to discrimination. The Generals are afraid that their lily-white army will be tainted with the non-Aryan Negro, with whom they do not wish to associate and against whom they have nothing but a vicious prejudice.

Worse Than Chattel

The sharecroppers live on these cotton plantations under conditions that surely must be worse than in the days of chattel slavery. They live in shacks and hovels that are indescribable. No one could get even the faintest idea of what these cabins are like without actually seeing them. They seem to be made of anything that the croppers could lay hands on: clapboards and logs of all kinds and shapes. Two rooms: one to cook and eat in, the other to sleep in. The planters refuse to keep holes in the roof patched. When it rains the beds must be moved so that the family can keep up the illusion that they are not living out in the open.

Although there is plenty of food, the sharecroppers don't get it. To be sure they do all the work that produces the food—just like the workers everywhere. The planters eat all the food they can hold and sell the rest. They sell the cotton that the sharecroppers have worked to raise and put the money in their pockets. I went into a corncob bursting with thousands of bushels

of corn but the croppers do not have enough meal for corn bread. The corn yield per acre here is very high and the land could feed all the people.

The average cash income for a family is about \$100 to \$150 a year. One cropper told me that last year he and his wife together had a cash income of \$100. The other income is the tumble down cabin, sow belly, meal and a few other things of like nature. With the cash income they buy clothing, soap and other things that a human being must have to maintain life even on the lowest scale.

When I was down there the crop-

pers and day laborers were still picking cotton on some plantations. I never knew before that cotton was picked in January. What they were picking was what is called "scrap." This is cotton that either is not ready for picking in the regular picking season or is of an inferior grade. The pickers are supposed to get a higher rate per hundred pounds for this "scrap" but on most of the plantations they are paid a lower rate per hundred.

In one county on the Arkansas border, the croppers and day workers had another grievance. They were not only the victims of capitalist ex-

(Continued on page 2)

Administration Maneuvers Block Investigation of Pork-Barrel War Contracts

A Labor Action Exclusive

WASHINGTON—The administration has effectively throttled any attempt at an investigation of fat contracts in the armament program's pork barrel through a series of little-noticed but clever parliamentary moves in the Senate.

The investigation was threatened by Burton K. Wheeler, Democratic senator from the isolationist state of Montana. Wheeler received Senate authorization for the investigation last session but failed to receive funds.

Harry S. Truman, Missouri democrat who, although he is an "administration man," has always been under Wheeler's thumb, introduced a resolution which would give Wheeler's committee \$100,000. This resolution must pass through the Senate audit and control committee, formerly headed by Sen. James F. Byrnes, of South Carolina, New Deal "Mr. Fixit."

The situation became complicated for the administration when it became necessary to transfer Byrnes

to the Senate Foreign Relations committee, which will be the scene of the major fight on the "lend-lease" bill. The next ranking man on the committee, who should become chairman under the senate rules, was Truman.

The Democratic steering committee of the Senate solved the problem by removing Truman from the Audit and Control committee and replacing him with Sen. Carl Hayden, party hack from Arizona. Hayden has never deviated from the straight New Deal line and NO Senate investigation can receive funds unless they are cleared through the committee.

The same tactic was employed in the last session when a resolution by Sen. Bennet C. Clark, other Democrat from Missouri, to investigate "foreign propaganda in the United States" was introduced in a move to embarrass the administration. The resolution cleared the Senate foreign relations committee but was bottled up in Audit and Control until the Congress had ended.

Wheeler's investigation, which ostensibly sought to determine the amount of foreign control over American industry, was anticipated as an extremely revealing move. Wheeler, who is under heavy pressure from pacifists and isolationists in his state and the middle west, is considered one of the best probers in the Senate.

Another parliamentary move by the administration to gain an advantage in the coming fight over the lend-lease bill was thwarted by an unexpected set of circumstances. Senate New Dealers had attempted to "pack" the Foreign Relations committee with Sen. Warren R. Austin, of Vermont, ultra-reactionary Republican who has been "playing ball" with the President for several years.

However, the selection of Republicans to serve on a committee is up to the "committee on committees" (Continued from page 3)

Conscription Threat Fails To Balk Ryan Strike Plans

By JACK WILSON

SAN DIEGO, Calif.—If you go on strike, we'll conscript you immediately!

This strike-breaking threat was hurled at Ryan Aeronautical Co. workers by the local draft board here under advice of U.S. Army officials when the CIO union announced the results of a strike vote to enforce wage demands.

It was such an open expose of the role of the U.S. Army and the conscription laws that national draft headquarters was forced to repudiate, at least in words, the stand of the Army officials and the draft board.

The attempted intimidation failed to budge the workers one inch. It incensed the labor movement greatly.

For the Ryan workers have a real issue. Average wages at the plant are 9½ cents less per hour than the national standard in aircraft, in organized and unorganized plants.

The big majority of Ryan men work 56 hours a week in order to make a total weekly pay of \$25. They are able to eke out an existence only by slaving seven days a week.

The arrogance of the company is almost unbelievable. They are bucking the union all the way down the line, when everyone knows that the company is making huge profits. It has \$10,000,000 in orders from the U.S. Government and England.

In the furious publicity campaign waged between the company and the CIO, the union has exposed the false wage claims of the company at every turn.

Threat Boomerangs

The company's arrogance came from their belief that with the aid of the threats from U.S. Army officials and the draft board they could force the workers to submit to their present lousy wages and hours.

San Diego newspapers proclaimed the threats of the officials as though that would settle the matter.

The Army officials explained in detail how they would apply to strikers the clause which says that not working changes one's deferment status. This possible move, incidentally was exposed two months ago in LABOR ACTION in its analysis of the conscription law.

CIO officials wired protests to President Roosevelt and the national draft headquarters in order to get public attention to the attempted strike-breaking.

Antagonism against the Army flared in the whole labor movement here because of these threats. It was pulled too crudely and too quickly. In fact it boomeranged. That is why the national draft headquarters repudiated the local board.

Since that day the CIO and Ryan management have been meeting without any break in the deadlock. So the CIO was forced to set a deadline of Jan. 21 for the strike.

Richard Frankenstein, autoworkers' international representative sent out by President R.J. Thomas especially to handle this situation, has notified the national CIO, the defense commission and other agencies of each step in the situation.

It will be difficult for Sidney Hill-

(Continued on page 3)

A NEGRO

issue of LABOR ACTION will be published next week. Those who remember the special CIO issue we published at the time of the CIO convention, and the special election campaign issue before that, will not want to miss this Special Negro Number.

J.R. Johnson will contribute an article on the problems of the Negro in the United States. Albert Gates, Jack Mann and other Labor Action writers are preparing special articles for this issue covering every phase of the Negro problem: Jim-Crow, housing, war, sports, etc. If you do not want to miss your copy, order it early. Order copies for your friends. Send in your contributions so that we can publish extra copies for free distribution among the Negro masses.

Over One Million British Workers Demand More Pay

By SUSAN GREEN

One million arms workers in Great Britain demanded an increase in wages last week. Following their example, the shipbuilding workers en masse did likewise a few days ago. These English workers are not quietly starving, awaiting the utopia-after-the-war promised by the Bevin and the bosses. They want to know NOW how they can live on an average wage of \$17 a week.

The arms and shipbuilding workers are asking an increase of five cents an hour. Hearings have been held before an official arbitration tribunal—behind closed doors. The final decision has not yet been reached.

The workers, however, are in no mood to take a negative answer. Out of the \$17 weekly wage, they have to pay rent of at least \$6 a week, and a minimum of \$1.20 for coal. Food prices have been skyrocketing. For example, eggs are 7¢ each, bacon 40¢ a pound, beans 16¢ a pound. Even the government admits a rise of twenty-five percent in the cost of living since the war started. Unions declare that the official figure is based on tricky statistics and that actually the percentage of increase in the cost of living is much higher.

Anger Piles Up

Although there is a war-time ban on strikes in "democratic" England, the threat of strike hangs in the air. The anger of the workers has been piling up. They know that as the class of under-dogs they have been getting the usual dirty end of the stick as regards rising prices, as regards air raid shelters, as regards food rationing.

They see prices going out of sight, skyward, while they wait for a tribunal to decide upon their meager demand for five cents more an hour. At night they crawl into underground caves where water trickles down the walls and across the stone floors on which men and women try to sleep, with filth and rats for company. Whereas the rich rest in air-conditioned safety in the style to which they are accustomed. The rationing of food prevents the working woman from getting even the bit of meat she could afford to buy. But the rich satisfy their appetites at the best hotels.

(Continued on page 3)

But Labor Must Block Enactment Of the Bill

Winthrop Aldrich is head of the Chase National Bank, the largest commercial bank in the world. By virtue of this position, he is the financial chief of the Rockefeller billions.

Last week Aldrich, reporting to the annual meeting of stockholders, urged "overwhelming support in Congress and throughout the country" for the "lend-lease" bill which would give President Roosevelt sweeping dictatorial war powers.

Aldrich appealed against "partisanship" or "delay beyond that reasonable period . . . necessary to insure the specific provisions of the bill are well designed to accomplish its major purpose."

What is this "major purpose"? Stripped of hokum it is this: to speed military entry into the war by laying in Roosevelt's hands the power to carry out Wall Street's dictate without interference or delay. Roosevelt may try to conceal from the masses the true nature of this "major purpose." But the two great financial empires of America, Morgan and Rockefeller, know what it is. That is why Aldrich, a Rockefeller man, is "overwhelming" in his support of the bill. That is why Stettinius, a Morgan man, is a member of the official war-preparation set-up.

Bankers and brokers have mighty few interests in common. When a banker comes out "overwhelmingly" for a government bill, it's more than enough reason for workers to be downright suspicious of the scheme.

Every school kid knows that the Rockefeller-Morgan interests got us into the last war. Fat volumes have been written to show just how it was done. And the same is being repeated today.

Behind the Mask

The Rockefeller-Morgan empire is spread over all the continents of the world. Their interests are interlocked with the interests of the British imperialists. In addition they are busily taking over into their own hands, by loans and sales, a substantial part of the British industrial, financial and colonial empire.

Hence their "overwhelming" desire for speedier military entry. Hence the war powers bill. By a multitude of steps, Roosevelt has in effect, already entered the war. But Wall Street sees its empire best served now by military entry to crush their German rivals.

Though they mask their scheme as "anti-Hitlerism," they are really concerned with profits, and only with profits: They approved the victory of Hitlerism in Germany. Knudsen, the big-boss of the "defense" board, and a General Motors executive, commended Hitler for having performed a "miracle." Roosevelt chose as his financial adviser on war matters a Mr. Forrestal from the banking firm of Dillon-Reed which was notorious for its relations with Germany.

Beware then fellow-worker, when a government scheme is so obviously touted by the Wall Street gang (except for the tiny few whose specific business interests are slightly different). They will gain from the bill in military conquest and in dividends. The American people will pay for it in loss of liberty—yes, loss of liberty!—AND IN LOSS OF LIFE!

The "lend-lease" bill is a dangerous weapon in the hands of jingo reaction. Labor must therefore leave no step undone in blocking its passage. Already unions are being compelled to fight for their elementary rights—like the right to strike. Under a war dictatorship, such as the "lend-lease" bill will establish, Wall Street's puppets will seek to strangle union and labor independence altogether.

The bankers have spoken. LET LABOR SPEAK NOW!

Sharecroppers Listen Eagerly to Coolidge

Snap Up LABOR ACTIONS — Not Enough Copies Available to Go Around

ST. LOUIS—As a part of his tour Comrade Coolidge spoke to a meeting of the sharecroppers union in southeastern Missouri. Due to conditions of terror and oppression these meetings are held in out of the way places. The local before which Comrade Coolidge spoke is very active and is made up of the most militant sharecroppers in the area. The meeting was well attended, most of those present being Negroes. There were about 50 present.

The meeting was opened by the Negro chairman with a reading from the Bible, and prayer. After this they sang "We Shall Not Be Moved," and "I Ain't Gonna Be a Slave No More."

This was followed by brief talks by members of the Workers Party branch of St. Louis.

In his speech Coolidge explained that they were organizing for the same purposes as workers all over the country; that they should not feel that they were alone, that in the days to come, as the workers in the cities became better organized, these workers would come to the assistance of the sharecroppers and help them to free themselves from oppression. Comrade Coolidge explained why the landlords oppressed them, and what they and all other workers must do to gain freedom, security and happiness.

Those present understood very well what the speakers were talking about and indicated their agreement by loud applause. After the speaking, there was a thorough discussion of the housing projects, union organization, wages and living conditions.

During the trip thousands of copies of back numbers of LABOR ACTION were distributed free. These workers are always anxious to get LABOR ACTION and there are never enough copies to go around. In the course of the distribution it had to be explained that only one bundle should go to a family.

Good and Welfare by Lefty

I HOPE THAT some of you radical union guys read the paper the other day—especially you troublemakers who gave a great big horse laugh when you read secretary of war Stimson's statement at the AFL convention that everyone—not only labor—is going to be asked to sacrifice in these coming months.

Because if you did read the paper last week you probably saw how secretary of war Stimson is in there sacrificing along with the rest of us. Here's the dope from a UP feature story on the hearings on the aid-to-Britain bill:

"Persistent republican questioning delayed Secretary of War Stimson's lunch inordinately today when he was recalled by the house foreign affairs committee for further examination on President Roosevelt's lease-lend bill. "He testified from 10 a.m. until 1:05 p.m. when the hearing was recessed until 2:30."

O.K., boys—now let's stop that beefing about the fifty cent per hour scale in the aircraft industry. After all, Stimson's sacrificing too.

LOST AND FOUND DEPARTMENT:
WHATSOEVER BECAME of that strong isolationist bloc in congress that was going to keep the United States out of war?

IT SEEMS TO BE the fashion nowadays for members of the Upper Classes to issue statements on what they're going to do after the war is over. They mustn't be so sure or something.

The latest to honor us by taking us into his thoughts with him is the duke of Windsor. At the Miami air races recently, the duke's aide said that "he would follow the duke wherever fortune led them after the war. I hope then we can settle down on a farm with a lot of cows."

Fine, fine, but what will the cows think of it?

OUR GREAT United States as shown in a press dispatch: **Father Flanagan, of Boys Town, said tonight he had asked Louisiana authorities to parole to him Jack Swanson, 13, Wales Center, N.Y., who was sentenced to prison for stealing an apple.**

EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS OF THE ROYALTY:
THE DUKE OF Windsor's aide sounds off: "Frankly, I do not believe the duke should have taken the job of ambassador to Washington, for, after all, it is more fitting that one of royal blood be a governor, don't you know."

A FRIEND OF this column's who is currently attending that strange institution among strange institutions, the university of Chicago, recently sent us several copies of the **Daily Maroon**, the student paper.

Among some interesting features, which we hope to be able to comment on at some future date, is a revealing series of articles by W. Somerset Maugham called "Young Men In England."

Maugham's articles reflect the extreme need of the British ruling class to secure behind it the support of the disillusioned British workers in that he holds out the bait of socialism—to be achieved quietly and in good taste, of course, after the war.

Well, we've heard that sort of stuff before. You know—"Call off the strike, come back to work, and we'll negotiate the differences."

And our answer remains the same—BALONEY, Mr. Maugham!

REST IN PEACE:
THE LOVESTONE GROUP

Akron Negroes Party News Denied Jobs In War Plant

Special to Labor Action
AKRON—The local office of the Ohio State Employment Service, following the race discrimination policy laid down by the rubber barons, is refusing to give Negroes jobs in the munitions plant that is being constructed at Ravenna, Ohio. The employment office interviewers have been informed that it is just a waste of their time to interview and refer qualified Negroes for these positions.

The Akron branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has intervened with a gentle reminder to President Roosevelt of his hypocritical pledge: "As regards the national defense program, there shall be no discrimination on account of race and color." An affidavit says that, in November, several hundred women were interviewed at the Ohio State Employment Bureau for provisional civil service jobs as arsenal learners making gas masks; that of the scores of Negro women who applied only one was chosen and that she was dismissed at 2 p.m. on her first day at work, as soon as it was learned a Negro had been hired.

The actions of the NAACP indicate that it believes it can win by merely giving the facts publicity and by bringing them to the attention of President Roosevelt. But the only way to win this fight is open struggle together with their white class brothers against the boss war drive.

Labor Group Hears Coolidge In Streator

STREATOR, Ill.—Trade union workers of Streator heard David Coolidge analyze the CIO and AFL and the prospects for American labor in the war, at a meeting Saturday, January 11, sponsored by the Streator Labor Book Exchange.

Lively discussion and requests for Coolidge to expound on the "democracy" found in India, South Africa and other British colonies followed his exposure of the war lies of the capitalist press.

BOSTON—Party work in various fields, particularly in the trade union field, has gone forward noticeably in the Massachusetts area from the report of Harry Allen, Organization Secretary of the Workers Party, who has just completed visits to the Party units in Worcester, Fitchburg, Lynn and Boston.

Contact work among the Negro population, with papers and literature, is being carried on systematically by Boston, and is now bearing fruit. Worcester is also now conducting neighborhood work.

Trade union work largely occupies the attention of the Party people in Lynn, and considerable progress has been made in this field, with prospects for greatly increased activity.

On Sunday, January 12, a district conference of the Massachusetts units was held, where the work was reviewed and immediate tasks laid out. The character of the work in the Massachusetts area was reflected in the fact that the main report and discussion took place around trade union problems on a local and statewide scale, and in connection with war developments. All the comrades realize the possibilities opened to them in trade union work, and steps have been taken to implement the decisions adopted by the conference on this and other questions.

In addition to Negro and Trade Union work, ways and means for necessary defense and refugee activities were discussed. The district conferences are being held regularly, and they are proving excellent mediums for the review and development of Party work in the Massachusetts region. It was decided, also, at the district conference to intensify the educational activities within the organization, as well as preparation for public meetings for David Coolidge.

LOS ANGELES, Calif.—Ten non-party members joined the Tuesday night classes held under the auspices of Labor Action Institute at the first session. Jack Wilson spoke on "War Boom and Inflation." The classes are held every Tuesday night at 8 p.m. at 320 1/2 W. 2nd St.

KANSAS CITY—On his way to the west coast, David Coolidge stopped in this city for a small meeting attended by invited contacts. Circumstances made it impossible to have a public meeting, but those present were highly pleased with the results of the discussion.

A Story With a Moral—When Britain Deported the Refugees from Palestine

By J. JACOBY

Over 1,500 refugees were deported from Palestine by the British administration in the last few weeks. This deportation was the reason for the General strike of Palestine Jews reported in an earlier issue of LABOR ACTION. The refugees, many of whom had wandered for months over closed borders and on stormy seas, were loaded into two British boats and presumably taken to Mauritius Island.

Thus, while the British wail about the devastating effect of the war on their merchant marine, and the acute shortage of freighters, they can still, in a pinch, spare two boats for so "holy" a cause as deporting refugees from a land looked upon as a homeland.

The outrage of this act was strong enough to overcome the pro-British sentiment of Palestine Jews and evoked a wave of mass political strikes.

Press Reaction

But how did American Jews react to this demonstration of Democracy at work? How did American Zionists react to this shameful act? How did the American Jewish Press react to it? Anyone familiar with the Jewish press knows that Palestine news is front page news. But not this time. Oh no! You had to look hard for the news of the strike and deportation in order to find it.

And editorially? Here and there a few words of mild protest with an explanation that nothing, but nothing, could spoil "our" love for the British. And where silence could no longer be maintained, the most favorite line was that this was the doing of the local Administration in Palestine, that the London Government does not, or will not, or would not, or perhaps could not, approve of all this. We all remember the legends of old Tzarist Russia about the Tzar having the tenderest love for his people—only his advisers were wicked men. If you only could change the few "bad" officials in Palestine. This was the official stew that the readers of the Jewish press were asked to swallow, and like. Leading in this shameful performance was, as always, the Social-Democratic Jewish Daily Forward. Whereas the nationalist Jewish papers at least tried to pretend a semblance of protest, the Forward was so busy lauding the new order in England and "Rooseveltism" that it simply forgot the "little" disturbance caused by deporting refugees to a concentration camp on an Island in the Indian ocean. Only a short time ago, the notorious H. Lang (H. stands either for Harry or Hearst), of the same Forward, grew lyrical about the noble sacrifices the British are making to bring about (don't laugh!) Arab-Jewish Unity for the cause of humanity. But what about this disgrace? Just forget about it!

The Zionist Muddle
And the Zionists? Here is what the organ of the left wing Zionist Youth Organization, Hashomer - Hatzair, writes about their dignified reaction. "... the Zionist movement here in America satisfied itself merely with a verbal protest, mild, carefully worded and sent from one office to the other." The Hashomer quite indignantly asked "Why weren't the Jewish masses aroused and shaken?" (Hashomer Hatzair, January 1941 in "Zionism—A people's Expression").
But we on our side could in turn ask Hashomer: by whom could the Jewish people be aroused and shaken? Do you expect the Zionist organization of America, the Jewish bourgeoisie, to lead the struggle for the rights of the Jewish masses? Did not the experience, of the last few decades teach us that the bourgeoisie, even of oppressed minorities, is organically incapable of leading a determined, progressive struggle for national emancipation? Why, the Jewish Zionist bourgeoisie is shaking in its boots now for fear of harboring an "ism!" However, Zionism is also an "ism." Why didn't you, at least, try to rouse the Jewish masses, the Jewish youth, against the duplicity of English imperialism. Because to do that you would also have to expose the miserable role of the Weizmann's and Kaufman's and Lipsky's with whom you collaborate.

Yes, friends of the Hashomer, life is going to be increasingly difficult for you. More and more will the interest of British imperialism come in bitter conflict with the interests of the oppressed masses of the world—including the Jews. In vain will you expect the Jewish bourgeoisie to lead the struggle for emancipation. The only thing the latter is capable of is crawling on all fours. And you? You will write articles complaining about its crawling, unless you realize that a new period is coming in Anglo-Jewish relations in Palestine. A period in which the right to emigrate, the right to colonize will have to be fought for, not in cooperation, but in violent conflict, with British Imperialism.

Our account would not be complete without a word on the Stalinists and their attempts to capitalize on the tragedy of these refugees.

The press, saying that a strike at this time would be "unfair." The company is appealing to the public on the grounds that the strike is "unfair." But the facts speak for themselves.

You see, "they" had the nerve to try to organize a wave of protests against the British. The Freiheit thundered. But its thunder fell on deaf ears. The demagoguery of the "Molotov" boys was so transparent, their shameless pro - Stalin - Hitler maneuvers were so obvious, that they succeeded in deceiving no one except their own dwindling membership. For any honest worker-Jew, would ask them: Why does not the Soviet Union open its doors to refugees?

It is enough to recite the story of the Warsaw cabinet maker (most probably a member of a trade union) who after weeks of living in the hell called "no man's land" between the German and Russian frontiers finally fell upon a daring and revolutionary idea. He gathered around him thousands of his fellow refugees and, improvising a red flag on a

stick, marched to the Russian frontier with the "Internationale" on his lips. The guards, confronted for the first time with such an unusual and unexpected demonstration, felt quite confused and did not know exactly what to do.

They could not stop workers singing the "Internationale" and carrying a red flag. So they let them pass. But those poor soldiers did not know that they live in the "Socialist Fatherland" led by the wisest of men, etc. For instructions came from headquarters that red flag or no red flag, "Internationale" or no "Internationale", the borders of the USSR are hermetically sealed for the unfortunate refugees. Shoot if you have to! Shoot!—thus the instructions.

How then can the Stalinists hope to fool anyone today?

depend on small nations like Bulgaria. She is so small that she cannot dictate whether there shall be war or peace. "We shall have to be ready" he said "for any eventuality."

ENGLAND'S POSITION
While Hitler's minions are thus poised in the Balkans, the intervention of his air fleet in the Mediterranean last week has given Churchill cause for serious worry. The disablement of about one third of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean by the dreaded Stuka Dive Bombers not only threatens British control of the Mediterranean but raises the question, for the first time in the war, of the vulnerability of Great Britain's greatest asset, her fleet, to German air attacks.

In anticipation of the aid that Great Britain may require from the United States both Secretaries Knox and Stimson argued before the Foreign Affairs Committee against any amendment to the "Lend-Lease" bill which would prohibit the use of the United States Navy from either conveying British and American ships to the war zone or from transferring any part of it for use by Great Britain.

Since the attitude of the Vichy government is of paramount importance to any plan that Hitler may undertake, it appears that negotiations with the former have finally cleared up those differences that were expressed by Britain's abrupt dismissal of Laval. Admiral Leahy's warm reception in France as the new American ambassador did not prevent the issuance of the following brief but significant communique which appeared on Jan. 19: "Marshal Petain, Chief of State, yesterday met President Laval. They had a long conversation in the course of which the misunderstandings that brought about the events of Dec. 13 were dispelled." The communique is clearly a success for the Nazis who have demanded the reinstatement of Laval. It is important to note that the latter is referred to as President Laval. Nothing could probably be more humiliating to Petain but that is the price one pays in Hitler's "new order."

Since this threat is of more immediate concern to Yugoslavia or Bulgaria, through which the German troops will have to pass, it is significant that on his visit to Germany, the Bulgarian premier assured Hitler that Bulgaria would not stand in the way. Despite the dilemma of Bulgaria best characterized by King Boris' statement to a correspondent that his ministers are pro-German, his wife is pro-Italian and his people are pro-Russian, the Bulgarian Premier at least spoke quite realistically when he said in Germany that he warned the Bulgarian people, upon his return from his "health" consultation in Germany, "that to-day war and peace do not

plotation; their misery was added to by being openly and brazenly robbed by the planters. That part of the AAA payments which should go to the croppers is kept by the planters and the croppers get none of it.

The federal government went into this area with the idea of attempting some improvement in the lives of the people. A housing project was planned that would make possible a higher standard of living. One project was built with comfortable sanitary dwellings, adequate garden space for food, and acreage for raising cash crops. Provision was made for seeds, cows, horses and pigs. Here the croppers and laborers can live like human beings and have an opportunity for a measure of independence.

But this was just what the planters are opposed to. They fought against it and won out. The government compromised on another plan which provides for a house, garden plot and a commons that all are expected to use for the growing of the cash crop. Of course this commons is not adequate and the understanding is that the people who live in the project will work by the day for one or another. For this work, the croppers are paid seventy-five cents a day.

The sharecroppers object to this scheme and rightly so. They want the original plan of the government because this plan gives them enough acreage for food and a cash crop. This tends to make them independent of the planters. That is why the planters fought so hard and viciously against the original government plan.

meanwhile all plans were made for the strike. A soup kitchen has been set up, picket cards issued, etc. While the CIO is trying to obtain a 75 cent hourly minimum for the 1,500 Ryan workers, it is expected that they would accept a compromise similar to the one in the Vultee contract, would be accepted. So far, however, the company has refused to budge from a 50 cent minimum.

A St. Louis Aircraft Worker Writes About His Union Local The Way to Correct a Union's Shortcomings Is to Get Into the Union and Press for Militancy

By A MEMBER OF LOCAL 710

ST. LOUIS—One month ago at Robertson, Mo., plant of the Curtiss Wright Aircraft Corp. just outside of St. Louis, an NLRB election was held between the International Association of Machinists, AFL, and an independent union which is really a company union. The AFL won by a vote of 560 to 250. I would like to give a background of the events that are taking place here and try to give a few ideas on what I think is necessary to make the union go forward.

Local 710 of the IAM was organized as an industrial union. Every worker in the plant is eligible for the union. Welders, painters, electricians, machinists, sheetmetal workers, pattern makers, carpenters, riveters, production workers, are all members of Local 710. I have read in previous issues of LABOR ACTION that at various aircraft companies where the AFL has contracts, there have been attempts made by the AFL to divide the workers into various craft unions. At this plant there has been no attempt or even talk of such action. It should certainly be opposed if it is ever tried because it would mean the end of the union.

Won Six-Month Strike

This is the second time that Local 710 has had to prove its majority by a NLRB election. In the spring of 1938, the union won the election over the company. It became necessary to call a strike which lasted six months. This Curtiss Wright company is certainly a hard baby to crack. Tool dies and machinery were even moved to the Buffalo plant of the company. For all practical purposes the plant was closed down. They produced about one plane in this length of time.

It was a militant strike. The strikers held firm and won. The company finally signed a contract and a min-

imum of 50 cents an hour was established. Wages had been as low as 38 cents an hour.

As a result of the war drive, Curtiss Wright has received huge orders from the army and navy. All of the workers who had been out on strike and had never been called back, were now rehired, as well as a lot of new workers, workers who had never had a real job before. Young men who had learned their trade in vocational schools got jobs. (Like everything else in capitalism, these schools, which are springing up like mushrooms all over the country are rackets. They charge about ten times what the training is really worth, sell the students tools and other equipment, which they never use, and give them relatively little training.)

Scab Union Formed

It was during this six month strike that the so called "independent union", the Aircraft Workers Union, was organized. Its leaders were men who sell their minds and their conscience, as well as their labor, to the boss men who had scabbed during the strike, and had been rewarded by the company with jobs as lead men (sub foremen) and foremen. With the influx of new workers, the Aircraft had its chance. Being foremen and the like, they would approach the new worker and ask him to join. The new men felt their jobs were at stake, and many joined. Then too, most of them had never had any union experience. The Aircraft never at any time had any influence over the men who had been out on strike. Even the men who did sign were far from being enthusiastic members.

This company union would pass out leaflets once every couple of weeks trying to get the men to join. Their chief argument was to tell of the advantages their brother union in the Buffalo plant gained for the workers there. These concessions which they wrung from the company consisted of picnics, credit unions and all that kind of crap. Never anything about wage increases.

They also carried on a whispering campaign against the AFL saying that all the AFL wanted to do was to strike. Then they'd point to the six months strike and say "you wouldn't want to go out on strike six more months, would you?" For a while this gained members, and they felt confident enough to ask for the NLRB election. This same outfit about a month ago signed a contract with the Curtiss Wright at Buffalo in which they gave up their rights for about a 3¢ an hour raise.

After a while the new workers find out that the \$20 a week which looked so big isn't so big after all. After you pay board, room, laundry and transportation, you have about 50¢ to last to next pay day. Add to

this the fact that the company gives wage increases to some of the workers and not to others. The ones who don't get raised feel cheated. Then the thing that makes the men sit up and take notice: the Vultee strikers get 62 1/2¢ an hour and all they get is 50¢ an hour. All they think about is this 12 1/2¢ difference. In addition, it is obvious to everyone that the company is making enormous profits. Their attitude therefore is that if we ever expect to get a raise it's when the company is making lots of profit.

More Boldness Needed

Even the AFL union is not carrying on a real organized campaign. Individual members carry on, but the union, with the exception of occasionally passing out leaflets and newspapers, fail to carry on a bold and vigorous campaign. The six month strike in 1938 sort of dampened the enthusiasm of the members, to the extent that they were not really active in the union when they were rehired. They were certainly contemptuous of the Aircraft scabs, but they were for the AFL in a passive sort of way. If a strike were called they wouldn't scab and in the case of election they would vote for the AFL. And that's just what they did.

As I said before, the election was in favor of the AFL by 560 to 250. The next day all the rats had crawled back into their holes. There were very few aircraft union buttons in sight.

The leadership of the AFL has its shortcomings. I don't mean to say that they aren't good union men. But they just don't understand how to handle the problem, that has come before them like the matter of re-organizing these new men. The company is building a huge new plant which is to hire 10,000 workers. When the plant is completed and those new men come in, it's going to be a bigger problem than before. I think the reason for this is that the leaders are the more skilled workers—machinists, welders and the like. The new men are not so skilled. They are younger on the whole than the experienced men and the two don't quite understand each other.

In one of the issues of the newspaper that the AFL handed out at the gates, there was an editorial on the Vultee strike. Instead of saying three cheers for the Vultee boys, it repealed the slanders of the capitalist politicians, Attorney General Jackson and Martin Dies, that Vultee strike was led by a bunch of reeds. That sort of red-baiting stuff is bad for a union to engage in, for it is always used against the workers.

not draw the workers any closer to the union.

However these faults can very easily be overcome. It is the duty of the militant union members to get into the union. It's a fact that many of the best union men still remain outside of the union. You certainly can't build a union on the outside looking in. These workers have to get into the union, attend union meetings, get up on the floor of meetings, and work out plans to go forward. A few determined men can do wonders if they make up their minds to do it. If we are to win those 10,000 workers over, we have to start right away, and get to work! January 17, 1941

12 Crane Operators Stage 2 1/2 Hour Strike At Republic Steel

CLEVELAND, Jan. 17—Twelve crane operators at the Corrigan McKinney plant of Republic Steel staged a two and a half hour "wildcat" strike in protest against a 15 to 20 cent an hour wage cut, and the unjust firing of two men. This work stoppage halted the work of 800 men.

James F. Dewey, federal mediator, is stepping into the picture to adjust grievances, because the men in the plant are tired of being kicked around, and are threatening to strike. The local SWOC leadership which is afraid of militant action on the part of the rank and file talked the operators out of staging another strike on the next day, which 500 CIO men promised to support. They want the mediator to handle the situation. But it seems that the workers in the plant have realized that only militant action can conquer Tom Girdler's empire.

Cleveland Plant Faces Strike Action

CLEVELAND, Jan. 17—A strike vote was taken by the United Automobile Workers (CIO) at the Weatherhead Company which is engaged in defense work. This action was taken after every other means had been tried to settle the differences. The company refuses to give a 10 cent per hour increase to bring wages up to CIO standards in line with the enormous rise in corporation profits and with the rise in the cost of living.

The company is willing to grant a 3 cent wage increase only on the basis of a two year contract. According to union officials the company, for example, could give a 5 cent per hour raise at a net cost of \$36,000. Instead of coming to an agreement the company gives a statement to

SCHEDULE FOR COOLIDGE TOUR

San Francisco	January 28-February 1
Seattle	February 3
St. Paul	February 6
Louisville	February 7-8
Columbus	February 9-10
Pittsburgh	February 11-13
Baltimore	February 14
Washington	February 15-17
Philadelphia	February 18-19
Worcester	February 20-21
Boston	February 22-23
Lynn	February 24-25
New York	February 27

Fascism and the World War by Max Shachtman

ARTICLE VI: HOW TO FIGHT THE FASCIST MENACE

We are fighting for a new social order, says Hitler. We are fighting against the capitalist-plutocratic nations. We are fighting to establish a model socialism, in which Labor is master and measuring-stick of everything.

In reality, the Nazis are fighting to establish the domination of German capitalism over the entire world. They are fighting to make the peoples of every country the slaves of the German Empire, toiling in a vast concentration camp to pile up tribute for the rulers of the Third Reich.

We are fighting for civilization and Christianity, says Churchill. We are fighting against the servitude of Fascism, for the freedom of nations, their right of self-determination and self-government.

In reality, England is fighting to preserve the power and plunder derived from the threatened British Empire. She fought for that in the last World War and is fighting for it in this one.

We are fighting for democracy and for Our Way of Life, says Roosevelt. We are out to prevent Fascism from ruling the world and enslaving the peoples.

In reality, the rulers of the United States are also fighting for their power and profits, which are threatened by the world-wide expansion of their German rival.

IN WHOSE INTEREST?

The second world war is an imperialist war on both sides of the battlefield; just as the first world war was. In this war, the deception of the peoples driven into the nightmarish horrors of the war is even grosser and more despicable than it was in 1914. In this war, the rulers of the "democracies" hold out even less hope to the people of a durable peace after the war, of security, of democracy. This time, the promises are vaguer than ever and more hesitantly made. More often than not, the democratic statesmen themselves do not know what the war will bring, either for them or for the masses of the people. And that, among other reasons, is why they have not yet put into clear language their "war aims."

But the masses of the working people, who do the actual fighting and suffering and dying in the war, cannot be hesitant or indifferent about their war aims. The people did not want the war—nowhere. But the war is here. They have been dragged and duped into it. They have no interest in keeping it going indefinitely, piling up mountains of corpses, spreading havoc and devastation, accumulating dreadful burdens to weigh down future generations, as we are today weighed down by the burdens of the last war.

The people, the working people and not the parasites, hate and fear Fascism, as we said before and as everybody knows. They want to see it defeated. They want to raise their standard of living and not have it debased under the rule of Fascism. They want to preserve what democratic rights they have, they want these rights extended, and not destroyed by totalitarianism. They want a world in which they can live in peace and comfort, and not a world of misery and suffering over which the threat of war hovers like a black cloud that never passes away.

In fact, the intense feeling that the workers have against Fascism—not against Germany or the German people, but against Fascism—is one of the factors that gives a different aspect to this world war, even if it does not change the character of the war from the imperialist conflict that it is. The war-mongers, the ruling classes on both sides, recognize this factor for what it is worth. That is why, in both camps, ninety percent of the war agitation is based on an appeal to the workers, to their class feelings, something that did not prevail in the last war, in any case not to such a great extent. It is an involuntary admission on the part of all rulers that, now more than ever, the fate of humanity, of organized society, lies in the powerful hand of labor.

It is, therefore, more than ever imperative that labor work out its own independent program in the war. That is why it must establish a complete political and organizational integrity, relying on its own organized strength, its own plans and programs, its own leadership. **There is no other class in existence today that can preserve society from disintegration and barbarism, from Fascism and war in permanence.** It is above all from this standpoint that the policies and activities of the "patriots" in the ranks of labor, who work day and night to subordinate labor to the capitalist war machine, are so criminal and reactionary. To subjugate the working class to the interests of the war-mongers and their capitalist government in the name of the "war-mongers and their capitalist government in the name of the 'war against Fascism'" is the surest way to facilitate the world triumph of totalitarianism by gagging and fettering the only organized social force capable of making the world safe for freedom, peace, and abundance for the people.

LABOR AND CAPITAL DIFFER

Different people mean different things when they say the same thing! So it is with different classes.

When the capitalists speak of fighting against Fascism and for democracy and democratic rights, what do they mean? They mean their "democratic right" to exploit profitably the millions of workers and poor farmers over whom they rule. They mean their "right" to throw millions of workers on to the streets periodically, when it is not profitable to run the industries. They mean their "right" to control, directly and indirectly, by bribery and pressure, the government and the policies of the government, the newspapers, the movies, the schools, the radio, the churches. They mean their "right" to exploit and rule over hundreds of millions of colonial slaves, undisturbed in this rule by the genuinely democratic right of the slaves themselves or by the commercial and financial rival of other imperialist powers. They mean, in a word, their "right" to dispose of the bodies and minds of the millions of people who constitute the useful classes of society.

The workers mean something quite different. They mean their right to organize freely into their own unions and political parties so as to be able better to defend their own economic and political position. They mean their right to free speech, to free press, to free assembly, so that they can more ably and intelligently fight for more liberty, for a higher standard of living, for human dignity and security from want, from suffering, from war. They mean their right freely to elect their representatives to the government who can speak and fight for them.

All these rights are brutally and summarily wiped out by Fascism. But even under capitalist democracy, these rights exist only in restricted form. For example, in the United States, these rights do not exist for the Negroes at all, or scarcely at all. And further, the right of free press exists on paper for the masses, but it doesn't mean very much when the paper and ink and printing presses and newspapers are owned and virtually monopolized by the big capitalists. And not only are these rights restricted in the most democratic of capitalist countries, but the deeper they go into the war the more ruthlessly do the "democrats" themselves wipe out these rights for the people! That is how they are all talking now. They argue, "the way to fight fire is with fire." They mean: "The way to fight totalitarianism abroad is to establish totalitarianism here!"

That's how a military dictatorship was established in "democratic France" right in the middle of the war. That's how the "democratic" government of England is going over step by step to totalitarian measures with the consent and approval of those rotten "labor leaders" who are only lickspittles of British imperialism. That's how the "democratic" United States, before it even formally enters the war, is already proceeding at an ever faster pace to foist a military dictatorship over the people.

What good will it do labor in the democratic countries if Germany is defeated in the war at the price of establishing a totalitarian Fascist regime at home? What progress will be made in smashing Hitlerism in Germany if Fascism wins in the Allied countries and uses its armed might to prevent the German people, at the crucial moment, from overthrowing Fascism by means of a socialist revolution—which the ruling classes of France and England and the United States hate and fear a thousand times more than they do Hitlerite Germany itself?

That is why it must be repeated again and again: Labor must have its own class independence, its own independent program, its own independent leadership. It cannot and must not rely on any other class or program to direct its activities. If it does, then all its devotion and sacrifice will be exploited not to smash Fascism and preserve its democratic rights, but rather to advance the reactionary imperialist interests of the ruling classes.

A PROGRAM FOR LABOR

What does an independent working class program mean; in the present crucial situation in the United States?

It means strengthening the power and militancy of labor, which is a force for progress, which is the only class genuinely concerned with fighting against Fascism and for democratic right. Consequently, it also means weakening the power of the capitalists and imperialists, who are a force for reaction, who are not at all interested in democratic rights but only in their profits, in their ownership of property which enables them to exploit labor, in the acquisition of colonies and new markets and sources of raw materials and cheap labor to exploit so that they can add more profits to the fabulous ones they have today.

An independent program for labor in the present war situation therefore means:

First: **Conscript the war industries and put them under workers' control!** The government does not hesitate to conscript the lives of the people, without any compensation worth speaking of. It doesn't and it cannot guarantee that these lives will be preserved during the war. But it does guarantee capital its "reasonable" profits! The arms, munitions, tank and airplane manufacturers say: "We're good patriots, but we won't turn a wheel without being guaranteed our ten and twelve percent profit" (in reality, it is twenty and fifty and a hundred percent profit). The "democratic" government replies: "Okay, we'll guarantee your profits. Labor should reply: "Nothing doing, gentlemen. You ask us to sacrifice the short working-day for which we have fought for decades. We must sacrifice our fight against the speed-up system. We must sacrifice the fight for a decent wage. We must sacrifice our right to strike. We must sacrifice our lives, as conscripts, in a war we bear no responsibility for. We are the ones, above all others, who suffer and fight and die in the war. Just to make sure that this isn't a war for profit, we want the war industries taken over, taken out of the hands of the private capitalists, the reactionary munitions-makers.

Just to make sure, we want to put them under our control, workers' control!"

Second: **Expropriate the Sixty Plutocratic Families!** They own most of the wealth of the country—the Morgans and Rockefellers and Fords and Mellons and the rest—and they have a tremendous power. It was the same kind of all-powerful plutocrats, magnates of capital and monopolists of industry, who brought Fascism to power in Germany, who put in a military dictatorship in France, who are driving towards totalitarianism in England. They want the same thing here and, given their tremendous economic and social power, they'll get it, too. They must be stripped of their power to finance and promote totalitarian reaction in the United States. Roosevelt has been talking for years about the Economic Royalists but they are just as wealthy and powerful today as they ever were, if not more so. When Roosevelt conscripts labor into the army, he says: "The government has the right to expropriate the life of the workers for the sake of the 'war for democracy'." Let labor say in reply: Expropriate the monopolistic wealth of the Sixty Plutocratic Families!

Third: **Not an eight or ten-hour day, plus speed up, but a six-hour day without any reduction in wages!** Living below a decent subsistence level. A job and a decent living for all workers, must be labor's demand. There are millions still unemployed in this country. For ten million people to be forced to work eight or ten hours a day, while ten million do not get work at all, is absurd and criminal. Cut the length of the working day, and put all the unemployed to work at full trade-union wages. Meanwhile, not a single penny off the relief budget, but rather an increase of it until every man has a job and a decent living. Meanwhile, not a single penny off the housing budget, but rather an enormous increase in it. Homes are a million times more important than war coffins. "Guns, not butter"—that's the slogan of the Fascists.

Fourth: **For a People's Army and Workers' Defense Guards!** Under cover of the "war for democracy," the American Legionnaires and all other reactionaries are working to establish "Home Guards." Every worker ought to know what this would mean—the establishment of a strike-breaking, liberty-suppressing gang at home. Against reaction at home, for the protection of labor's interests, labor should establish Workers' Defense Guards out of its own ranks and under its own control. That will be a force labor can depend upon, can trust to protect its rights while the "war for democracy" is going on. At the same time, labor needs its own army. It can have it, too! Of all classes, labor is best organized. It has the most experience in fighting. It has the best discipline, not barracks-discipline, not tough-guy top-sergeant discipline, but democratic discipline. Tens of thousands of workers are already skilled in the use of arms. Many unions have had rifle clubs for years. These and similar groups can be the nucleus right now for a genuine People's Army.

What about the "regular" Army? It is dominated through and through by the reactionary caste of army officers conservative, bigoted, labor-hating, and already half-Fascist in its mentality and outlook. Every once in a while we read of another Army officer exposed as a supporter of Fascism. It is worth noting the lesson of the French Army, most of whose officer staff went right over to Fascism, "over night." Labor needs and must have its own army, to fight against reaction and Fascism no matter where it appears, an army it controls completely, which is officered by it, which is trained and armed not to fight for colonies, not to fight for the extension of oppression and exploitation, but to fight for the rights and interests of the people, for the democracy of labor.

Fifth: **Complete economic and political rights for the conscripts!** The worker-conscripts in the Army which is supposed to be fighting for democracy, must have full economic and political rights. They must have the right to organize and bargain collectively! The soldiers must have the right to establish their own committees to present their grievances and demands to the officers. They must have the right to read their own press, and to publish a press of their own in the army if they so desire. The officer caste has its own press; the same right must be given the soldiers. They must have the right to meet, without let or hindrance from the brass hats. And the men who are conscripted to die "for democracy" while the munitions makers are given tremendous profits for their "services," should have a minimum wage of twice what they are given now, namely, Sixty Dollars a month. Furthermore, at the end of his year in the army, the worker must be guaranteed his original job. These are the minimum that workers can demand of a government which is so careful to guarantee the war-profits of the big capitalists.

FOR A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT!

Sixth: **Complete social, political and economic equality for the Negroes.** "Democratic" America treats the Negroes in the same spirit that Hitler treats the Jews. What a miserable mockery it is even to talk about a the U.S.A. suffer under the horrors and inequities of Jim-Crowism. Labor, white labor, should take the initiative in a merciless, unrelenting fight to crush the inhumanity of Jim-Crowism. Against Jim-Crow in industry, in unemployment relief, in housing, in theaters and restaurants, on railroads and buses, in the polling booths, and—most revolting of all—in the Army and Navy! It has been rightly said that American "democracy" stinks with the odor of the slave market. Labor must wipe out that foul odor!

Seventh: **For an independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government!** Hitler tells the workers he is fighting for them, for "socialism." Roosevelt and Churchill and Bevin say that this is a holy war against Fascism and for Labor's Rights. We think, frankly, that it's a vicious fraud aimed at getting the workers to support the imperialist ambitions of the ruling classes. But millions of workers believe it. Well, if it's labor's war, then let labor rule! If it's labor's war, let it be fought under labor's government. It's utter foolishness to imagine that Morgan and Ford and Knudsen and Sloan and Stettinius and all the rest of them are friends of labor, that they hate reaction, that they really want to fight Fascism. They'll all turn to Fascism the minute they feel they need it and can get away with it, as they did in Germany and France. **Labor must take over!** It must first form a fighting labor party of its own, and take over power, lock, stock and barrel.

This is not a full program, but it shows the road the workers must take if fascism and reaction are to be smashed, if labor, the labor movement, the rights of labor are to be preserved, made more genuine, and extended in every direction. It is the only road.

The capitalists, the capitalist parties, the capitalist governments, are bankrupt. All they've been able to produce in the last quarter of a century is misery and suffering and crises and unemployment and reaction and Fascism and now the most dreadful of all wars. Labor and labor alone, allied with the poor farmers and the colonial slaves the world over, can save society from destruction. Labor has the destiny of the world in its hand.

THE END

FROM OUR WEST COAST CORRESPONDENT

Hollywood Swings Into the War Drive

The band just finished a hot number. Without waiting for the applause to die down, it softly swung into "God Bless America." The pasty-faced orchestra leader walked up to the mike. He took out a piece of paper from his pocket and began to rant.

"America is the home of democracy, where we are all free and equal. We must beware of the fifth column, etc., etc."

Just as we began to laugh at what we considered a fairly clever takeoff on the current vogue for patriotism, the cornet blared out with a stirring Army bugle call. A roll of drums thundered off the stage.

Out marched a regular Army color guard, with a bevy of beauties trailing behind it. The orchestra played the Stars and Stripes Forever, while this contingent paraded around the stage.

The audience stood up and cheered. The music stopped. A stupid looking lieutenant stiffly walked out from off stage, saluted the band leader, then the audience, and said:

"The United States Army welcomes this opportunity to invite young men to join the colors, etc., etc." While we cursed our luck in getting into this kind of situation at one of the largest theaters here, and awaited the moment when the cuties left the stage to come marching down with volunteer cards for the Army, the fellow next to me said, "My God, just like the movies."

No Bottleneck in War Movies

Just like the movies! How perfectly expressed. For despite the Hays office denials, Hollywood war production is in full bloom, there are no bottlenecks. Every one has knuckled under.

And we are not referring to the usual tripe which has poured out in the last year. The Warner Brothers shorts with their horrible distortion of American history. Or the flag-waving, and the playing of the Star Spangled Banner at all theaters.

Or to the alleged anti-Nazi movies which in reality were pro-British and pro-war. The financial failure of these movies (I Married a Nazi, etc.) are used by Hollywood apologists to prove Hollywood won't make pro-war pictures since they don't go over. Those efforts were too crude, satisfying only to the intelligence of a Hollywood producer.

There are bigger fish to fry now. When President Roosevelt had Carole Lombard and Clark Gable at his side while he whipped up the war spirit in his last radio address, he showed how well Washington understands the role of Hollywood these days.

First, Hollywood has been given the difficult job of selling the draft to the young men. Of popularizing it with the people. And the best comedy talent out here has been drafted to put over Army life to the country. Four studios are rushing to get the message across to the public. Bob Hope's "Caught in the Draft," is supposed to be the killer-diller. And you should see the Army hostesses in the movie plays! They aren't missing a trick.

Orders have gone around in the largest studios to put patriotic speeches everywhere possible. Fathers talking to sons and mothers to daughters and vice versa must now speak of duty to their country. One movie was held up this week to put some of that stuff in.

Deanna Durbin's latest production was shifted around so a couple of Army scenes could be crammed in. You'll have a hard time finding any movie from now on, that doesn't obviously use the war-mongering leit-motif.

And the campaign to sell Yankee imperialism to the South Americans is just getting under way. Hollywood burned its fingers with "Down Argentine Way." It insulted the intelligence of the South Americans too much. But they have brought in a flock of experts and expect to mend their ways.

Navy pictures always did their bit for Uncle Sam. They'll glorify life on the sea on a grand scale now. What about the Negro messboys on the Philadelphia? What vulgar person brought that up?

Pinks Fall Off Stalinist Wagon

All the "pink intellectuals" who played ball with the Stalinists in the pro-Roosevelt days have fallen off the band-wagon here. Some like Melvyn Douglas went through a public confession via a stinkeroo like "He Stayed For Breakfast." All these mental gutsnipers spend their spare time devising ways and means to

repudiate their past and help Roosevelt save America for Wall Street.

Once it was the vogue to be pro-labor. And to be a member of some committee or another which the Stalinists set up to milk the unsuspecting. Only the haughty British colony looked down on these plebeian activities.

Now the British colony reigns over the social life in Hollywood veritably like the Viceroy does over the Indian masses. Douglas Fairbanks Jr.'s poney English accent finally is taken seriously.

Stars go on national tours now to show Hollywood the country's welfare at heart. The train loads which tour the villages on the way to a world premiere make a stock in trade of patriotic speeches to the "yokels," while inside the train...

Drunken orgies have been dignified now. It's all a patriotic duty! And the newspapers here have the nerve to print a full page of pictures showing the glamour boys and gals getting pie-eyed at an alleged benefit.

No Nero fiddling while Rome burned surpasses the Hollywood colony of today in cynicism, decadence and debauchery. History has seen this spectacle before. In Babylon, in the France of Louis XV, in Czarist Russia. The hand writing on the wall is clear.

JACK WILSON

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- 4—Trade union doors closed to the Negro worker—the Negro worker's fight for decent wages, hours, working conditions . . . Open the unions to all workers on equal terms!
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Coolidge Speaks At Four Meetings In Chicago

CHICAGO—David Coolidge, National Labor Secretary of the Workers Party who is now on a nation-wide tour, spoke at a round of meetings arranged for his week's stay in Chicago.

Approximately one hundred Negro and white workers heard Coolidge speak on "What Should the Negro Fight For?—This Is Not Our War" at a meeting held Tuesday, January 7, on the South Side under the auspices of the Chicago local of the Workers Party. Enthusiastic discussion followed the speeches of Coolidge and Esther Gross, representative of the Young Peoples Socialist League, who spoke on "Youth and the Second World War."

On Wednesday, January 8, Coolidge spoke to a meeting of Northwestern University students organized by the Socialist Club. The audience, consisting of Negro and white students, was particularly appreciative of the points on discrimination driven home in Coolidge's address on "The Negro and the War," because Northwestern is a Jim Crow campus where Negro students are not allowed to live in the school dormitories or bathe at the school beaches. Members of the South Side Action Committee, Chicago tenant organization, and the Washington Park Forum also heard Coolidge speak at the regular meetings of their organizations.

One Million—

(Continued from page 1)

In spite of these class inequalities, which stand out in bolder relief now than in peacetime, the employers say this is no time for the workers to demand more wages. They give a very fancy reason. They say that it would be very bad indeed to increase home consumption. They say that goods must be sent out of the country to be sold abroad and help pay for the war. They cross their hearts and promise the workers a "new deal" when the war is won and British imperialism saved.

The workers are not taking seriously this promise of a "new deal" from the bosses after the war. They point to the fact that in the midst of the war boom, there are almost a million jobless workers—a big number for little England. They know that after the war there will be no "new deal" but only a great deal more unemployment.

If the arbitration tribunal refuses the very moderate demand of the arms and shipbuilding workers, this great sector of the British working class will not be frightened by the government ban on strikes.

Investigation—

(Continued from page 1)

which this year, through force of circumstances, became dominated by Sen. Gerald P. Nye, one of Wheeler's fellow isolationists. Nye served notice that he would NOT permit Austin's appointment to the foreign relations committee, and the project was dropped.

"For the Record"

No one in Washington believes that either Nye or Wheeler has any sincere interest in the anti-war struggle. Nevertheless, both come from states where the pressure from Anti-war elements is irresistible.

Other former isolationists, who NO longer feel this pressure, have split sharply from the bloc and do NOT pretend to carry on an anti-war struggle. Chief among these is Sen. Edwin C. Johnson, Colorado Democrat, who has revealed his unwillingness to vote for the lend-lease bill "as long as a financial limit is put on it."

Sen. Arthur H. Vandenberg, Michigan republican, has been gradually giving way to the New Deal and only gives formal opposition to Roosevelt war measures. Sen. Hiram W. Johnson, "die-hard" isolationist, has conceded the impossibility of defeating the lend-lease bill but says "we have to put up a fight for the record."

These N.Y. Stands Sell Labor Action

UPPER WEST SIDE
Eisenbergs—Bdwy. near 63rd St.
66th St. & Bdwy.—SE.
Bdwy. bet. 103rd & 104th—W.
114th & Bdwy.—NE.
114th & Bdwy.—SW.

BRONX

160th & Prospect—subway stand—opp. Brighton Cafeteria.
Simpson St.—subway stand.
174th St. & Boston Rd.—candy store.
Freeman St. & So. Blvd.—NW.
Allerton Ave. & White Plains Rd.—SE.

167th St. & Jerome Ave.—SE.
170th St. & Jerome Ave.—SE.
Burnside Ave. & Jerome Ave.—SE.
Burnside Ave. & Jerome Ave.—SW.

BROOKLYN

Utica Ave. & Eastern Pkwy.—SW.
Strauss St. & Pitkin Ave.—NE.
Rockaway Ave. & Pitkin Ave.—NW.
Rockaway Ave. & Ligon Ave.—SE.
Watkins St. & Pitkin Ave.—NE.
Sutter Ave. & Van Sinderen—NE.

Editorials

OUR PROGRAM AGAINST THE WAR

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

England and Totalitarianism

Civil liberties are a very precious possession. And it is true that, while gradually whittling them away, England has up to the present maintained many of these civil liberties (not everywhere in the Empire to be sure, not in India, for example, but in England proper.) Many workers have therefore been deluded into overlooking the real nature of the war, a war between rival imperialists for imperialist purposes, and accepting the legend that this is a war between democracy and fascism. (We do not speak here of those scoundrels, New Leader variety, who know very well what the war is being fought for, but utilize the retention of civil liberties as a cover for their own perfidy.)

There were reasons for the democracy allowed the British masses. For one thing, the reactionaries dared not risk a civil war with the proletarian masses which would most surely have followed the abrupt totalitarianization of the country. What the temper of the masses is you can gather from our front page story on impending strikes in England. The wherefore and the extent of these liberties we will discuss in a feature article next week.

For the present, we want merely to call attention to the events of the past week which indicate beyond mistaking the direction in which England is moving. Ernest Bevin, who was called into the government with the express purpose of mobilizing labor for the war (much like our own Sidney Hillman), has finally decided that now is the time to get down to business. Bevin, on January 21, informed the House of Commons that labor will henceforth be drafted for the production of war materials. In other words, workers will be shifted around, ordered about, compelled to work where and when the war lords decide—and under conditions they decide. Thus, the first major step in the totalitarianizing of the country has been taken.

Simultaneous with this announcement came the order suppressing the publications of the Communist Party. Now, our readers know what little use we have for the Communist Party—in England, the United States, anywhere. The Communist Party represents, in our opinion, an organized force whose policies, carried out at the dictate of the Kremlin, are inimical to the interests of the proletariat. But labor cannot turn over the job of crushing Stalinism to the capitalist politicians without the gravest danger to itself. Without exception, the professional advocates of "democracy", who are in reality brothers-under-the-skin to the totalitarians, utilize their "anti-Stalinism" as a cloak for the suppression of all labor groups.

These are two straws in the wind. We can expect that the process of totalitarianization will now be speeded in every direction. Capitalism cannot preserve democracy because its system is decayed, its

rule and its war unpopular. Labor has to be conscripted to fight, conscripted to work, and its freedom of speech, press and organization destroyed, lest labor use these freedoms against the rotten system of imperialist exploitation.

Civil liberties are vital to the proletariat if it is to champion its own interests. But the developments in England will prove that democracy can be saved only in the struggle for a greater democracy, under a REAL labor government.

England is going totalitarian. Of that, there is no doubt. How fast, how successfully, depends on the resistance of the British working class. Against the totalitarians in England—and Germany—labor can rely only on its own struggle for freedom and socialist emancipation.

The People Pay

The bosses are always crying about the taxes they have to pay. Why, some of them are left with a measly million dollars after they've shelled out on income tax payments. They wail so loud and so long that they have even got some workers believing that it's the boss who pays for the fantastic war expenditures—and the piddling relief appropriations.

Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. Yes, the coupon clippers do have to rake over a few bucks to the government. They make a lot (much of it on government orders); consequently what they give looks like a lot. But the people who really put up the money that goes into battleships, into politicians' salaries, and into profits on war production, are the . . . people—the great mass of American people.

You see, there are two kinds of taxes: direct and indirect. We don't know many workers who pay direct taxes. That's because we don't know many workers who make a decent wage. But we do know plenty of workers who pay indirect taxes—in fact, everybody we know pays them. And this is how it shapes up for the worker:

- Out of every dollar he spends for furniture, 13 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on rent, 25 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on movies, 12 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on shoes, 7 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on clothes, 10 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on sugar, 18 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on bread, 15 cents is tax.
- Out of every dollar he spends on milk and dairy products, 10 cents is tax.

When tens of millions of people put up a few cents or dollars, that adds up to a sum which makes the few thousand kicked in by some fat-belly look like nothing. And a few cents out of a worker's pocket hurts!

In short, it is the American masses who fill the public treasury with pennies torn from their want. It is the American masses who pay for the tremendous war appropriations. It is the American masses who, in taxes and in labor for lousy wages, pay for the profits that go to the war hawks, the merchants of death.

In the Air

There's something in the air! American diplomats and representatives of all kinds are scurrying around Europe. Col. Donovan, for example, is in Bulgaria on an unexplained mission; Hopkins is in England; Willkie is going there. Stimson warns about something that's going to break in the next ninety days. And Republicans and Democrats are getting real chummy. (It's "Wendell" and "Frank" now when they get together.)

Whatever it is, the American people are being kept in the dark. Banker Aldrich probably knows, but not the people. However, we can make a fairly shrewd guess: Roosevelt is laying out the line for military entry into the war. His representatives are scouting around in Europe to report on what's what, and what can be expected.

Here in the United States, the war-mongering is more open than ever before. Morgenthau, Stimson, Hull, Knox and Knudsen, all spoke before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House as though war entry is a matter of weeks. An unprecedented array of big-shots is being paraded before this committee to hurry-up the passage of the war powers, "lend-lease", bill.

Yes, war entry is definitely in the air. Nothing has been overlooked in preparing for the war, save one thing—to ask the people what they think about it.

The Second of a Series of Articles on Russia

Stalin Orders Labor Peonage

By FRANK DEMBY

On May 28, June 26 and July 10, 1940, Stalin's Council of Peoples' Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued three decrees which subject the workers of Russia to a vicious slavery. These decrees represent the first fruits for the Russian workers of Stalin's debacle in Finland, and the alliance with Hitler fascism.

The First Decree

The first of these decrees, that of May 28, increases the power of the foremen in most of the heavy industries. The foreman is now the direct equivalent in every sense of a superintendent in a capitalist factory. He is to be considered the leader in that portion of the shop over which he has jurisdiction. He has full power in regard to the work assigned to him and bears complete responsibility for the carrying out of this work. The workers will now receive their orders through the foreman exclusively. The foreman now has the power to hire and fire all workmen, with the approval of the head of the department in question. The foreman is given the power to punish workers guilty of interfering with labor discipline. He pays out the wages of the workers. The foreman controls production and changes in production. He is expected to see to it that his workers are properly placed, given the proper tools, and properly instructed so as to produce the maximum amount possible.

Since the foreman is now to occupy such an important position in Russia, he is to be chosen from among engineers, technicians, or highly qualified workmen. As a reward for administering Stalin's whip over the workers, the wages of foremen were raised, starting June 1, so as to be higher than the average wage of qualified workmen. This means, at the very least, a doubling of wages for foremen.

Already functioning foremen, without the necessary technical education, as well as newly appointed foremen, must pass a test given by the Committee of Attestations. In the usual propaganda blast which accompanied this decree, it is indicated that those previously in positions of management were distinguished by a lack of culture and general ignorance. "Proletarian origin" will no longer be a major qualification, or indeed a recommendation, for holding a managerial position in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. How the heads of departments and factory directors, as well as the practical workers without formal education, will respond to this decree remains to be seen, but there are already signs of discord and protest.

The Second Decree

The second decree, that of June 26, is the most drastic of all. To make it more palatable, it was issued at the initiative of the Central Council of Trade Unions of the USSR. A very important part of the decree is that which institutes a general wage cut among all workers of more than 15 percent. This is done not by directly cutting the amount of rubles which one Russian worker gets, but by lengthening the working day. Work is now organized on the basis of a seven day week, instead of a six day week. Hours of work per working day are lengthened from seven to eight hours, in all cases where the working day was formerly seven hours. This covers the overwhelming majority of workers. Those previously working six hours must now work seven hours, while employees of institutions and persons reaching the age of 16 who had previously worked six hours must now work eight hours. In all cases, of course, while the hours of work are increased, the wage remains the same.

More important, however, than the wage cut in the decree of June 26 is the remainder of the decree which establishes complete industrial peonage. Workers are now absolutely forbidden to leave their jobs without authorization, or to move from one job to another. Permission for leaving or changing jobs can be granted only by the special authorization of a factory director. If a worker violates this provision, he can be sentenced by the People's Court to a prison term of from two to four months. If the violation is called an illegal absence, the previous penalty for illegal absence—compulsory dismissal from the job—is supplanted by the new penalty: compulsory labor at the place of employment for a term of six months at a 25 percent wage reduction. And, typical of all Soviet decrees, factory directors who do not properly enforce these provisions will themselves be held responsible.

The lengthening of the work day is justified by references to the dangerous international situation and the threat of war. But it is nowhere indicated that this lengthening of the work day is to be temporary. The binding of workers to the factory, coming on top of the previous introduction of the internal passport system, is aimed at reducing the labor turnover in Soviet industry. The average Russian worker changes his job at least once a year. This is merely a reflection of the terrible living conditions obtaining in most Russian towns and factories. In addition, many of those workers guilty of "illegal absence" were Communist

Party members absent on meetings of one kind or another. Consequently, the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party held in July, 1940, in order to enforce the decree of June 26 amongst Communist Party workers, decreed that there were to be no meetings or conferences of any kind during the working hours of the factory. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is to interfere with the worker's performance on his job.

The Third Decree

The third decree, that of July 10, has to do with output of poor quality and bad performance on the job. Such cases are to be considered wreckage, and therefore a crime against the State. Factory directors and engineers will be held responsible and are subject to prison sentences of from five to eight years in case established standards are not lived up to in any respect whatsoever.

Closely related to these decrees are two others, one of which establishes the penalty for "petty theft" (regardless of the amount) or "acts of hooliganism" at one year in jail; the other specifically applies the industrial peonage decrees to the factory directors, and other managerial officials. No one employed in a factory in any capacity is now permitted to leave that factory, without the consent of Stalin, or one of his hirelings.

Life in Stalin's "paradise" will be something like the following for the average person: He attends school until the age of 14 (our equivalent of free secondary education, and free higher education has been abolished by a more recent decree); from the age of 14 to 18 he will be drafted for compulsory vocational training in mechanical lines which will serve the war machine; at the age of 18 he enters upon five years compulsory military training; at the age of 23,

unless he enters permanent service in the armed forces, he will be assigned to work in any occupation in any location that pleases the dictate of the Kremlin. All this, of course, is in direct violation of Stalin's own constitution of 1936.

When assigned to some factory or establishment, regardless of his own inclination or family ties, the Soviet slave is now bound to the establishment for the rest of his working days. If, of course, the masters in the Kremlin wish to change his place of servitude, they may do so without consulting the worker himself. The result is, therefore, that the Russian worker today does not even have the same rights that the Russian serf had. The serf, at least, while treated as a thing, whose function was simply to produce enough for his lord and master to live on, was bound to the soil and could not be moved about at the whim of his master.

The immediate reason for these decrees of industrial peonage is to be found in the visible breakdown of the Russian system of economic planning. The only way that Stalin knows to increase production is to command slave labor to produce or else. Whether these decrees will increase production or not, remains to be seen. If they do not, it will only hasten the day when Hitler decides to take over the direction of Soviet economy himself. If they do bring results, which is most unlikely, they can only serve to increase the thickness of the chains which bind the Russian worker in servitude today.

In my next article in this series, I shall try to show the extent of the breakdown in Soviet economic planning and the reasons for this breakdown, for it must never be forgotten that the fundamental reasons for Stalin's present policy are to be found in the internal weaknesses of Stalin's regime.

It Happened In Washington!

Special to Labor Action

WASHINGTON—The Senators are all het up over just who the Senator from West Virginia really is. Two men both claim to be the "new" Senator from this state. Just before Homer Holt, governor of that state up to the last election, left office he appointed his friend Clarence Martin. Just one minute after former Sen. Neely became West Virginia's governor on January 12, he appointed his pal, Dr. Joseph Rosier. Why not let the two men toss a coin and decide? They both won't do anything for the West Virginian workers anyway.

publicans and Democrats spent 21 million dollars in the Fall campaign. Of course everybody has an equal chance once their name is on the ballot, and all they need is 21 million to compete. That's what they mean by "democracy".

Chicagoans who are wondering what became of their new Senator "Curly" Brooks when he arrived in Washington may rest. The Senator is well known for his inability to do anything until he gets the o.k. of the Chicago Tribune. As soon as he arrived in the Capitol, he checked in a hotel and before he saw anyone else he held a two hour conference with Arthur Sears Henning, head of the Chicago Tribune's Washington bureau.

Boy have the G-men got the creeps! They are so scared that they won't even let newspaper photographers take shots of the empty grandstands that are set up along the streets for the President's inaugurations.

More Truth Than Poetry

The Washington Merry-Go-Rounders say (N.Y. Mirror, Jan. 18): "The heavy inroad of Wall Street insiders in key defense posts fathered this pun: 'I'd rather be Wright, Gordon than President.' Wright, Gordon, Zachry & Parlin is a leading Wall Street law firm which has three members, Blackwell Smith, Frederick Eaton and John P. Ohl, as dollar-a-year men in strategic defense jobs."

Profits A-Plenty For Lehman Bros.

Last week, LABOR ACTION told a story of the Lehman Corporation. For the information of those readers who expect to ask Gov. Lehman of New York how well his family's corporation is doing these days we save you the trouble and effort. They are doing well enough for themselves.

So that there will be no mistake in anyone's mind as to the reason why people shout for war we pass on to you the comments of The Magazine of Wall Street on some of the stocks purchased by the Lehman Corporation. It looks like war is quite a boom—to them.

- This is what The Magazine of Wall Street says:
- Allis-Chalmers: "Sizeable backlog hold operation at profitable level. Will make defense equipment."
- Fairbanks, Morse: "Earnings and dividends helped by naval program."
- General Electric: "Orders sharply higher and arms program will boost further."
- Westinghouse Electric: "Record unfilled orders to be further boosted by arms program."
- Amer. Locomotive: "Rail business improving, armament orders ahead."
- Baldwin Locomotive: "Large backlog, supplemented by present and future war orders."
- Hercules Powder: "A war baby and growth stock."
- Monsanto Chemical: "Lower returns from English subsidiary being offset by improved domestic results."
- Hugh shipbuilding order backlog and armament will hold operations at high levels."
- Chrysler: "Handling some ordinance business."
- Yellow Truck "B": "Greater foreign and domestic military demand a major factor in larger sales volume."
- Freeport Sulphur: "The sharp upsurge in demand for American sulphur is in great part war-engendered."

THE NEGRO'S FIGHT AN OPEN LETTER

To the Demonstrators On January 26 Against Army, Navy Jim-Crow

By JACK MANN

Dear Friends:

The WORKERS PARTY which fights for COMPLETE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY for the Negro joins with you today in protesting the discrimination of Negroes in the armed forces of the United States.

Because we are opposed to every form of Jim Crow and discrimination, whether in civil life or in the army and navy, we find it rather ludicrous for certain Negro "leaders" to be shouting about "national defense" and "preserving our American way of life" when the official policy of the government is one of segregation and humiliation.

Both the Democratic and Republican politicians are driving full-speed ahead for America's participation in the war under the slogan of "preserving" democracy here and throughout the world. Now, Negroes are 100% for democracy, especially since they have so damn little of it. But they certainly don't want to preserve the kind of "democracy" they are now being asked to defend. The first prerequisite should be that Negroes have the same rights and privileges that are now enjoyed by white citizens.

This right however is denied you by the bosses and the government. Instead you are told that you are not fit to associate on equal terms with whites. This doctrine of white superiority which is enforced by segregation, disfranchisement, lynching and economic servitude is part and parcel of the system of "democracy" you are now asked to defend.

Under these circumstances, it seems to us, that for Negroes to fall for the hokum of "democracy" is merely to give notice that no matter how he is mistreated, no matter how much he is insulted and degraded, no matter how long he is stepped on—he can always be depended on to forget everything and rush to the defense of "his country."

THE WHEN AND THE WHEREFORE

Friends, what we need most of all is clarity on the problems we are here to discuss. The questions we should try to answer are: What is this war all about?—Is it a war really for "democracy"?—Will our status be any different after the war, or will we still be "untouchables"?—What about our brothers in Africa and the other colonial countries?—Is this war being fought for their freedom?—Or is it a war for the maintenance of the status quo?—Does the England we are being asked to give aid to fighting for the freedom of the colonial peoples, or merely for the right to continue to oppress them?

These are not difficult questions and the answers are self-evident. If this were truly a war for "democracy" India, Africa and the West Indies would have been given their freedom by the British government. Every attempt to win a little democracy for the natives in these countries is bitterly and brutally opposed by the "democratic" army of Great Britain.

Similarly in the United States. For all its concern about "democracy", the government refuses to grant independence to the Philippines and Hawaii. It refuses to end discrimination and Jim Crow. Why, in the very midst of the hullabaloo about "preserving democracy" in these United States, it is impossible to get the government to outlaw lynching or to guarantee such an elementary right as the franchise in the south. Both the Anti-Poll-Tax and Anti-Lynching bills are ferociously opposed by the "representatives of the people."

Naturally all decent men, whether black or white, hate and detest Hitlerism and everything it stands for, but the solution does NOT lie in supporting the war aims of British or American imperialism. It lies in fighting for your rights here, AT HOME.

The war is a war for profits, raw materials and colonies. The Negroes have nothing to gain from this war. The only war which is meaningful for the Negro is a war for his liberation from economic servitude, for complete, social, economic and political equality. In that war he has everything to gain. In that war is the answer to Hitlerism and all forms of oppression.

The fight against discrimination in the army or navy is merely a part of the general struggle the Negro is waging for complete equality. When the government announces that Jim Crowism is still the official policy which will be pursued under the draft act, and that Negroes will be segregated in every branch of the service, it is absolutely fantastic to merely insist that this segregation be carried out. That is precisely how the problem is treated at the present time. The statements issued by the "National Committee for Participation of Negroes in National Defense" which has called the protest meetings, and by prominent Negro spokesmen, merely demands the right for Negroes to serve in every branch of the service, but does not have a word to say against the official policy of Jim Crowism. How can Negroes fight effectively against Jim Crowism in civil life, if they do not fight against it when it is officially sanctioned by the government?

If the mass meetings on January 26 are organized as a protest against EVERY manifestation of Jim Crowism, if they show that the Negro means business, they would descend on the Jim Crow jingoists with the impact of a sledge hammer. SUCH a protest would rouse the spirits of the Negro masses. SUCH a protest would make Jim Crow an inescapable national issue.

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