

Labor Faces Cut in Living Standard - -

BOSSSES WAGE WAR ON OVERTIME PAY!

There Is NO 15% Limit On Increase In Profits!

By EVERETT WESTON

While on every hand the government continues its attack on the living standards of the workers, the profits of the bosses rise still higher. The increase in workers' pay has been held to a MAXIMUM of 15 per cent. But the increase in already swollen profits is 5, 10, 100, in one case in the accompanying table 140 times this MAXIMUM for the workers.

The figures in this table are all taken from recent reports in the New York Times. Most of the figures given are for 1942 versus 1941, but there are such irregularities as the companies report. In all cases the profits shown are AFTER all taxes.

The list in this table does not consist, of course, of all companies recently reporting profits. It is worth while citing a few others, those whose 1942 profits were APPARENTLY not very much larger, or even smaller, than the 1941 profits. Even some of these, when we examine their reported "earnings" more closely, show large increases.

For example, the Shell Union Oil Corp. reported a profit of \$16,800,000 for 1942, as against \$17,334,000 in 1941. A drop of more than half a million, you will say. But, to quote the Times: "R. G. A. van der Woude, president, said a new basis had been used in the compilation of the estimate. . . . On the basis of past reports, he said, earnings last year would have been \$18,600,000." This means an increase of \$1,266,000, or 7.3 per cent.

But that still isn't very much. Right you are, and we'll have to look further. The next item we see is "a special reserve against general revaluation of properties," amounting to \$4,400,000. This raises the 1942 profit of \$16,800,000 to \$21,200,000, an increase over the 1941 profit of 22.3 per cent. Or if we use the revised figure given by the president of the company we get an increase over 1941 profits of 32.1 per cent.

Another example: Warner & Swasey Co., machine tool manufacturers, report a profit for 1942 of

These Are The Figures:

Company	"Earnings" for		
	Recent Period	Same Period Year Before	Per Cent Increase
Erie Railroad Co.	\$14,339,524	\$7,853,731	82.6
Austin, Nichols & Co., Inc.	248,568	86,679	186.8
Outboard Marine & Mfg. Co.	518,342	23,453	2110.1
Continental Motors Corp.	5,472,884	3,231,724	69.4
Croft Brewing Co.	38,782	338,425	—
Curtis Mfg. Co. of St. Louis	484,398	191,792	152.6
Hiram Walker-Gooderham & Worts	2,594,529	1,887,048	37.5
First Boston Corp.	491,256	253,000	94.6
United Elastic Corp.	564,511	368,959	52.7
Purity Bakeries Corp.	1,714,538	1,429,379	20.0
Virginia Iron, Coal & Coke Co.	55,865	16,321	242.3
General Finance Corp.	989,786	726,022	36.3
General Baking Co.	2,287,434	1,176,025	94.5
New York & Richmond Gas Co.	145,536	113,989	27.1

*The second figure is a loss, so a comparison cannot be computed.
†Canadian dollars.

only \$1,960,848, compared with \$3,939,859 in 1941—fully twice as much. BUT—approximately \$1,547,000 of the excess profits tax is subtracted from the profit, and \$3,500,000 was salted away for "contingencies." These two figures added make a total profit for 1942 of \$7,007,848—which is almost twice 1941. (This excludes a possible reserve set aside in 1941; none is reported.)

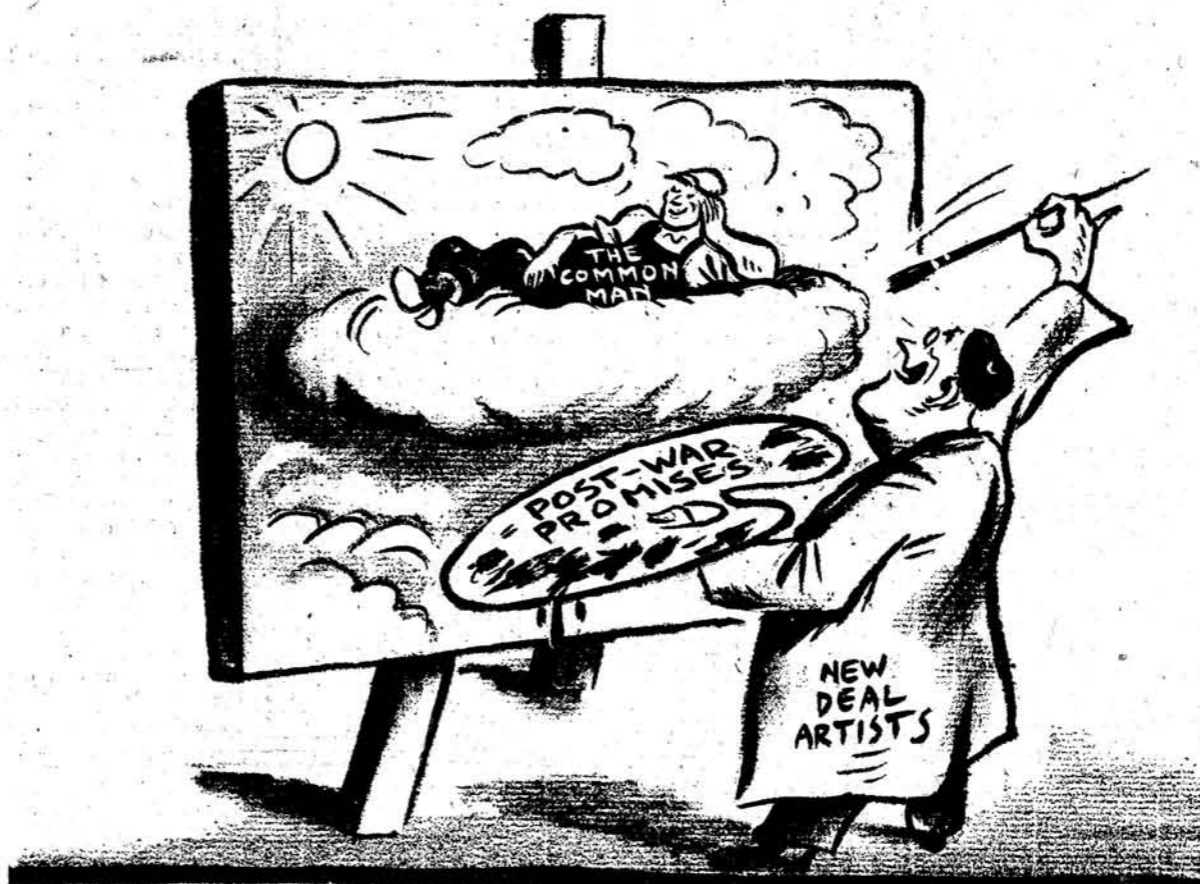
One more example: the Atlas Powder Co. reported a profit of \$1,855,669 for 1942, compared to \$1,904,601 in 1941. A drop in profits of \$50,000? Not at all. In 1941 the contingency reserve was \$350,000, while in 1942 it was \$500,000—\$150,000 more. So that the actual profit in 1942 was \$2,005,669—more than \$100,000 more than in 1941.

A final example: the United Elastic Corp. is given in the accompanying table as "earning" 52.7 per cent more in 1942 than in 1941. You might think this was a big

enough increase, particularly when you remember that 1941 profits were anything but slim for most companies. BUT—in 1942 \$350,000 was slowed away for a rainy day, while in 1941 it was only \$200,000. If we add the \$150,000 difference, then the actual profit in 1942 was 93.7 per cent higher than that of 1941.

In general, the figures in this or any similar table are not high enough. And this or any similar table, if it is based on reported profits alone, does not include all the companies it should. Various devices are used to reduce, in reports and in tax forms, income too large for comfort. Setting up contingency reserves is only one of these; a very important one is advertising. All the charges for those beautiful full-page ads you see, telling you how patriotic your boss is, are deducted from his taxes. But it would take a CPA going over each set of books to calculate these various rackets.

Facts and Fancies!



YEAH, THE WIFE AND I ARE PUTTING A LITTLE MONEY ASIDE TO MEET THE POST-WAR DEPRESSION!



Drive Gets 'Go' Signal In 48-Hour Week Order

By JOHN BERNE

The cat is out of the bag—and it is a very ugly one at that.

No sooner did Mr. Byrnes make public the President's 48-hour work week order than the spokesmen for the hard-bitten bosses—from Rickenbacker to the dignified New York Times—began their attack on the basic 40-hour week. An all-out drive is now on for a basic 48-hour week with time and a half beginning after 48 hours instead of after 40 hours.

So far as it was supposed to raise production, the President's order didn't make sense. It is well known that in war production industries the men and women already work 48 hours a week and more—provided they are not laid off. Even with lay offs, the machine tool industry averaged 54 hours a week in 1942—the machine industry 48 hours—plane and shipbuilding also 48 hours. This means that workers have been slaving for 54, 58 and 60 hours a week—or the above AVERAGES—could not have been attained. How much manpower can the order therefore release in the war production industries!

But it has released daylight and night bombing against time and a half after 40 hours. (Other aspects of the order—its purposes and intentions—were discussed in last week's LABOR ACTION.) The President's order for the basic 48-hour week is the opening the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers have been angling for and waiting for. The President has obliged.

Naturally, the campaign against time and a half is not waged openly and honestly—that is, on the basis that the bosses want to pocket the extra overtime in the form of profits. Such honesty would be too condemning. So the anti-labor campaign managers have discovered that time and a half over forty hours is "INFLATIONARY."

ERIC A. JOHNSTON, the "liberal" president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, who stingingly consents to be photographed with labor leaders as an evidence of "national unity" interviewed President Roosevelt for one and three-quarter hours the other day. On leaving the White House he told reporters he noted "an inflationary tendency" in the forty-eight-hour order "because it would increase the volume of wages."

The New York Times has the remedy right out of a bottle: "The only way in which Congress can hope to undo the harm which will otherwise

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Need for an Independent Labor Party Is Again Proved

Congress Bill to Draft Labor Really Hits at Unions

By GERTRUDE SHAW

Last week there was introduced in Congress the Austin-Wadsworth bill to draft all men and women in the country. This legislative gem, produced by Senator Austin of Vermont and Representative Wadsworth of New York, would require all men between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five and all women between the ages of eighteen and fifty, to be conscripted by the government to any job assigned them in war industry, agriculture or any other occupation deemed essential.

This bill would take away, at one fell swoop, a substantial part of the freedom that labor possesses. It is another attempt—using the smoke screen of war conditions—to put a noose around labor's neck.

While the right of the worker to dispose of his own labor power is hardly the acme of human freedom, still it does distinguish the "free" worker under capitalism from the feudal serf and the chattel slave.

Furthermore, this labor-conscription bill would be a powerful weapon in the hands of the bosses against militant unionists. As we all know, bosses have their ways of exerting political pressure on all kinds of boards. The labor-drafting boards which this bill would establish could simply—at the bosses' instigation—draft for other work the most active and faithful unionists—thus dispersing their strength and breaking up a union stronghold—while replacing them with cadres of "safer" workers also drafted.

Since the bill was introduced in Congress it has become even clearer

er that the real aim of its sponsors is to weaken the unions, disorganize the workers and place them at the tender mercies of their exploiters.

The New York Herald Tribune, that journalistic pillar of American capitalism, came out with an editorial letting the cat out of the bag in the following paragraph:

"The bill, as drawn up, does not deal too honestly with the situation created by the closed shop issue. It is up to the prospective draftees that they are free to join a labor union if they desire. It does not say in so many words that they shall not be forced to join a union. Little imagination is required to suggest the weakness of this omission. Suppose, for example, that a free American is told that, for his country's sake, he must mine coal and that in becoming a coal miner, he must pay dues to Mr. John L. Lewis, whose union has a closed-shop check-off contract with all the coal operators. It is one thing to tell him he has to work for Uncle Sam, quite another to insist that he work for Lewis also."

These are not mincing words. Here is revealed the ardent hope of the boss class to reestablish the open shop as a step back to the boss paradise of the sweat shop. Note that the American worker reduced to industrial serfdom is still to be "A FREE AMERICAN." But most important in the above is that John L. Lewis is singled out as the embodiment of all that is horrible. For Lewis has—so far as at least—been the most reluctant of all the labor leaders to abandon entirely the interests of the workers on the altar of war profits. His announced intention to fight for a \$2.00-a-day wage increase for the miners at the expiration of their present contract, has not sweetened the disposition of the bosses toward him.

The worker must not forget that when the New York Herald Trib-

une uses the words "work for Lewis" that means—in workers' language—BELONG TO A UNION. The payment of union dues is not "working for Lewis." A union must have finances, as every worker knows. It is up to the rank and file to see that dues are fair and that the union he belongs to serves his interests—AND FOR THIS IT MUST BE A MILITANT UNION. What the class for which the New York Herald Tribune speaks wants is to bust the unions and make the workers helpless against the bosses' onslaughts.

The authors of the Austin-Wadsworth bill got the point made by this capitalist sheet and are more than willing to strengthen the anti-union import of the bill. In fact, they have submitted an amendment to the bill—to supply the "omission" pointed

out by the Herald Tribune—as follows:

"Provided further, that every person assigned to serve under this act, including every accepted volunteer, shall have the right to join any union or organization of employees, but no such person shall be obliged to join any such union or organization if he or she should not freely choose so to do."

What a golden opportunity this clause would afford the bosses to negotiate closed shop agreements and "maintenance of membership provisions" in contracts! How they could shift, transfer, fangle, and presto a plant would have a new roster of employees not in the union and not "obligated to join." What a weapon against the union! What a giant stride back to the open shop!

It is important to record here that the above proposed amendment to

the labor-draft bill to make it even more obnoxious, did not spring whole from the heads of Senator Austin and Representative Wadsworth. In that pie was also the finger of one Ernest L. Bell, Jr., of Keene, N. H., who is executive secretary of the new-born Citizens' Committee for a National War Service Act—organized two months ago for the express purpose of furthering the labor-draft bill.

Want to know something about this Citizens' Committee for a National War Service Act? None of the "citizens," you may be sure, are workers. The committee consists of American Legionnaires, corporation lawyers, poll-tax politicians—the gentry looking for every opening to hit labor in the so-called plexus.

Mr. Bell was formerly state com-

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The Criss-Cross Pattern of Diplomatic Contest Stalin Drops "Hint" on War Aims

Though the war is far from won, the Allied powers and their weaker henchmen in the various governments-in-exile are already jockeying for post-war position. Most of this struggle is waged in closed council rooms and in the corridors of Allied diplomacy. However, enough of it seeps through from time to time as the contenders lose patience with one another, or feel compelled to make public, if unofficial, declaration of their wants.

So, for example, the press recently carried a report which attributed to Russia, the intention of securing as its share of the booty, the Baltic states, Bessarabia, the five northern provinces of China, Manchuria, parts of Poland and various ports in Europe. Pravda, the spokesman of the Stalin gov-

ernment, immediately hastened to deny the story—but, in denying the story, gave it substantial verification.

Said the Pravda editorial: "Do there not exist curious people who are ready to present to the Soviet Union parts of the latter's own territory, as, for instance, the Baltic Republics (and Bessarabia)? These persons pretend not to know that the basic law of our country—the Constitution of the USSR—has fixed the ties between these Republics and the other Union Republics, and that the Red Army heroically fights for the honor, independence and integrity of our state."

We have no intention of moralizing over the designs of the imperialists—Soviet imperialism included—or the "auteness" of their diplomatic

language. They are each of them in the war for what they can get, or what they can save. We are interested in their ambitions only as they illustrate the nature of the war—and as they violate the rights of the peoples of the world. In both these connections the Pravda editorial is revealing.

It was, on the one hand, an ingenious piece of nose-thumbing at her allies, and, on the other hand, a blunt warning: "We are telling you right now what we ALREADY consider ours. All other parties had best keep their hands off. We'll tell you later what else we expect." The Baltics were "fixed" to the Soviet Union when the latter, then an ally of Germany, invaded the territory, occupied it and incorporated into the "law of our land."

That is to say, the Baltics are now part of Russia as a result of that kind of aggression which Roosevelt long ago announced the United Nations would not recognize. But Roosevelt-Churchill will have a difficult time making the point. Because, as sure as night follows day, Stalin will argue: "Very well, gentlemen, how about India and a hundred other victims of aggression and conquest I could name?"

That the "broad hint" announced by Pravda does not sit too well with certain members of the Allied camp is obvious. They are willing to concede (as does the New York Times editorially) that Russia has to be reckoned with in any post-war plans. But they mean to make that recon-

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Klan Mobilized Against Labor

The Ku Klux Klan is riding again. The present victim is organized labor in the South. Not the first time, to be sure, but this time they are beginning a new campaign with real energy. In recent weeks, advertisements have appeared in the daily press in Florida and Tennessee calling for 9,000 Klansmen to report for special tasks. The total membership in these two states equals 18,000.

Leaders of the AFL and CIO claim that the KKK has been the leader in intimidating workers against organizational drives in the South, and bears the responsibility for the anti-labor legislation introduced into state legislatures by poll-tax representatives.

The influence of the KKK is very widely reported throughout the en-

tire country. In a United States Rubber Co. plant in Detroit, Negro men were dissatisfied because they were not awarded the promotions which they deserved. They were also incensed by the refusal of the company to hire Negro women. Plans were made to picket the plant but were temporarily postponed because a representative of the United Rubber Workers, CIO, promised to intervene.

The union official stated that the company was probably reacting to the renewed and increased pressure of the KKK.

But the very threat of action dented the company's sensitivity to KKK pressure and several promotions were announced, accompanied by the hiring of a few Negro women.

Europe in Revolt
News from the Socialist Camp

News and Views from the Labor Front

Ford Worker Writes to Sperry Brother

CRDC to Support 'The Militant' and 'Labor Action'

BRITAIN'S 1942 STRIKES HIT A WAR PEAK

According to the liberal papers, "national union" is today stronger than ever in Great Britain—workers and bosses stand united behind Mr. Churchill. Official British labor statistics, which have just been published, tell a different tale.

Great Britain had more labor disputes and lost more man hours of work through strikes in 1942 than in any previous year of the war. A total of 1,281 disputes were recorded during the year, as compared with 1,251 in 1941, 922 in 1940 and 940 in 1939. Man hours lost during the twelve-month period totaled 12,000,000, as compared with 8,800,000 in 1941.

The number of workers directly involved in labor disputes last year was 349,000, while 106,000 more, not directly participating in strikes, were affected. This figure also represents a very substantial increase over the previous year. The mine workers were in the vanguard of the movement. About two-fifths of all strikes occurred in the coal mining industry.

The militancy of British labor has increased greatly in recent months.

The British workers at the beginning of the war had been lulled into the belief that the war was a war for democracy against fascism; they had, in their majority, been made to believe that the participation of some members of the Labor Party in the government was a guarantee that the war was going to be conducted as a real struggle for democracy. They are, however, realizing that, in spite of the participation of some Labor stooges in the government, nothing has been changed in its basically capitalist-imperialist character. As Harold Laski recently pointed out in an article in the New York Times Magazine, the whole economic organization of England, while conducted on a "planified" basis, is controlled by the representatives of big business—the equivalent of our "3-a-Year-Men." Each step taken by the Churchill government in recent times has been a step toward the preservation of the privileges of the old English ruling class. Churchill has said very bluntly that he does not want to assist in the liquidation of the British Empire; neither does he want to relinquish any privileges of the ruling "Sixty Families" in England itself.

CAPITALISTS PLAN TO LOAD BURDEN ON WORKER

Herbert Morrison, Home Secretary and prominent Labor member of the government, discussing post-war economic organization, recently said that the continuation of rationing in "appropriate forms" and price controls, as well as controls over raw material, will be necessary if Britain is to have any chance in fighting American competition on the world market.

British capitalists realize that—no matter how this war is going to end—they will have lost a great part of their colonies. They want to prepare now for the ways and means of shifting the burden of these losses onto the shoulders of the workers. The time in which British workers (at least a substantial number of them) received a few crumbs out of the extra profits British imperialists extracted from colonial labor, is definitely past. The standard of British labor after the war will be considerably lower. A joint committee, representing various British colonial capitalists in Malaya, Burma, Hong Kong, Borneo and Sarawak, is already pressing the government for a commitment to reimburse stockholders for losses involved in the Japanese occupation and in application of the scorched earth policy. That is, they want a commitment and they want it NOW, to insure that the British workers will pay the bill for their losses.

Early illusions are quickly dissipated among the workers. The Stalinists and the trade union bureaucracy do all in their power to keep the workers from fighting for their interests. But the militant shop stewards are taking the lead in many factories and the number of strikes

increases. We have reported in LABOR ACTION on the mass strikes of 40,000 Tyneside shipbuilders and the large movement in Belfast some months ago. In the meantime we have received notice of a number of other movements:

"A thousand miners at Newdigate Colliery, Bedford, Warwickshire, have come out on strike.

"They object to the use of steel props.

"As a rule miners complain that steel does not 'talk' as timber does in case of a pressure heralding a fall, but in this case the objection is that steel reduces the miners' output.

"For the same amount of work, using steel, the miners earn perhaps 20 or 30 per cent less.

"The miners say they appreciate that wood cannot be got, but they contend that a wage adjustment should be made."

"Some thousands of workers have staged a stay-in strike at a large Birmingham factory.

"They are complaining about three of their fellow workers having been discharged.

"The agreed procedure for settling these disputes is for the workpeople to remain at work.

"To overcome this a meeting between the workpeople and the management has been called for today in the factory."

"A disagreement with the management over pay rates has caused a strike at a northeast factory."

—Sunday Dispatch, 22-11-42, quoted from the British New Leader.

Europacus.

Dear Brother:

I read about the splendid victory you militant shop stewards and union activists achieved in smashing finally and completely the long tradition of company unionism fostered by the Sperry Gyroscope Co.

Now that the Sperry workers have voted overwhelmingly for the local UE-CIO union to represent them in collective bargaining with the Sperry Corp., you militant unionists must move on to your second victory, that is, the establish-

ment of a strong union contract guaranteeing substantial wage increases, the closed shop, effective grievance machinery, etc.

We Ford Instrument workers recently negotiated a new union contract with the same Sperry Corporation. Wage demands for twenty cents an hour general increase with a plant-wide minimum of eighty-five cents an hour had been put forth by the active union rank and file despite the fact that James Lustig, Stalinist district organizer, tried to influ-

ence us to accept his own very mild proposals.

The wage and classification demands, which were stubbornly resisted by the company, were finally submitted to arbitration. An award was made which, with all its shortcomings, resulted in wage increases of from five to ten cents an hour for most workers.

Arbitrator Knew Sentiment

This award was not nearly what the workers had originally demanded nor what they deserved, as is the case with all the compromise arbitration awards. However, had the rank and file and militant shop stewards permitted themselves to be swayed by the defeatist attitude of Brother Lustig, they would have come out with far less than they did.

It was only because the arbitrator knew that there was a dissatisfied membership who were making a real wage demand and among whom proposals for a course of strong union action were finding widespread approval, that he handed down the award.

In the past, we organized Ford Instrument workers here paved the way for higher wages and better conditions for our unorganized fellow workers at the Sperry Gyroscope Co. Now that you Sperry workers have your own union organization, you can show us Ford Instrument workers the way to higher wages.

Scrap Little Steel Formula

The Sperry wage increase can go ahead of Ford's because we at Ford Instrument were limited by the arbitrator to the Little Steel formula which is outdated and, in the face of continually rising prices, meaningless, except to the bosses, who use it as the means of freezing wages. You Sperry workers can now take advantage of the movement by the CIO, AFL and UMW to scrap the Little Steel formula or to revise it to compensate for the 36 per cent, 15 per cent, rise in the cost of living since January 1, 1941.

You Sperry workers must not, however, depend on the "fair-mindedness" of any "impartial" arbitrator to win your demands. You

Montgomery Hired by Auto Union As Its Consumer Representative

Donald E. Montgomery has been hired by the United Auto Workers as consumer counsel to the union, with headquarters in Washington. This a union membership of 150,000, representing perhaps 500,000 consumers, will have an independent voice in the capital city to denounce the rooking we are all getting.

Montgomery and the consumer organizations agreed to appear before the Dies Committee provided the origin of the report was made public. To do so would have given clear proof that Dies had been sponsored by big business, particularly by big advertising and the businesses particularly interested in advertising. The matter was dropped, and Montgomery has since been free of attack.

But whether Dies, whose committee got an extension by the large vote of 302 to 94, now feels sufficiently strong to attack, is a question. Montgomery knows his field and the UAW is perhaps the most militant union in the CIO today. The combination can throw a lot of wrenches into the machines mowing down the living standards of labor.

olive-Peet, soap manufacturers.

Robert Lund, of Lambert Pharmacal Co.

Paul West, president of the Association of National Advertisers.

George Gallup, long active in advertising, now conducting "objective" polls on various social issues.

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Guess Who?

At certain times in his career a well known Washington publicist has referred to business men as economic royalists, Tories, Bourbons, reactionaries, copperheads, money changers, selfish individualists, sinister forces, high and mighty people, gentlemen in well warmed and well stocked clubs, advocates of entrenched greed, privileged princes of new economic dynasties, blindly selfish men, professional mourners of an obsolete order, financial gangsters....

They were all just words, but even the words have now disappeared. From his latest fireside chat: "As spokesman for the United States government, you and I take off our hats to those responsible for our American production—to the owners, managers and supervisors."

Attention, Detroit-Flint Workers!

Send your subscriptions, comments about LABOR ACTION and suggestions to our Detroit Office, 1504 Broadway, Room 306.

Keesling, Selective Service Official, Threatens Induction of Strikers

The restlessness of the workers under the no-strike pledge has had its repercussions in Washington. Lieut. Col. Francis V. Keesling, legislative officer of the Selective Service Bureau, told the House Military Affairs Committee on February 15 that consideration should be given to the induction of strikers.

Not that this is something new. "Unofficially," we understand, many militant workers who have participated in strikes during the war have been eased into the armed forces. Keesling's move is apparently to make the induction of strikers open and official.

Intimidation of workers is characteristic of totalitarianism, and that is very definitely beginning to be the shape of things in this country. The restlessness of the workers is due to the cost of living, high taxes, wage freezing, shop grievances unattended to—and a long list of personal pinches that every worker feels. Unable to remedy the cause of the workers' dissatisfaction, unable to do anything about the reasons why the workers have to strike in their own interests, the shapers of our destinies in Washington will use intimidation.

At a meeting of its National Committee on February 9, the Civil Rights Defense Committee voted to collaborate with The Militant and the American Civil Liberties Union in safeguarding the rights of free speech and free press endangered by proceedings of the Department of Justice and the Post Office Department against the paper's mailing rights. The committee also voted its support of LABOR ACTION, which has been similarly molested by the Post Office Department.

Postmaster General Walker has not yet announced his decision on the mailing rights of The Militant. Nor has there been any change in the status of LABOR ACTION or The Militant. Both papers are still held up each week pending release on instructions from the authorities in Washington.

Appeal on Kelly Postal Conviction Before Minn. Supreme Court Feb. 15

According to an announcement by the Civil Rights Defense Committee, the appeal on the conviction of Kelly Postal, secretary-treasurer of Minneapolis Teamsters Union, Local 544, will be heard before the Minnesota Supreme Court on Monday, February 15. The CRDC is directing the defense in this case.

The charges against Postal followed the decision of members of Local 544 to leave the AFL and join the CIO. The membership voted, as was their right, to take their treasury funds with them into the CIO. In collaboration with powerful anti-labor state officials in Minnesota, Daniel J. Tobin, AFL Teamsters' international president, obtained indictments against Postal for embezzlement of union funds.

The first trial against Postal on these charges was thrown out of court by the judge. On second trial, Postal was convicted. This conviction is now being appealed.

Kelly Postal was one of the twenty-eight defendants in the trial of the 544-CIO trade unionists and leaders of the Socialist Workers Party. He was one of the five jury found not guilty. His present conviction is an outgrowth of the cele-

brated Minneapolis "sedition" case. Postal was not accused of misusing the union funds personally—his supposed "guilt" consisted in obeying the unanimous vote of the union at a regular membership meeting. Thus, there is an issue of enormous importance to the entire labor movement at stake in his appeal. That issue is: Do the members of a trade union have the democratic right to decide for themselves the disposition of their union funds?

If Kelly Postal is found guilty, then the officers of the CIO could have been convicted of embezzlement when they left the AFL and took their union funds with them.

It is imperative to prevent this dangerous precedent against labor's democratic rights and this grave injustice to an honorable and militant trade union leader. Postal is threatened with a long term prison sentence in case of an adverse decision.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee states that the legal costs in this appeal will amount to about \$1,000. It asks friends of labor and civil liberties to send contributions immediately to the national office of the committee at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

"Natural" Causes

A story that should bring a blush of shame to the face of every decent Englishman was told at an inquest at Birmingham a few days ago. An old lady had died in an air raid shelter, where she was sleeping. A corner's inquest was held. The husband of the dead woman, 69 years of age, went into the witness box and told this story:

For 48 years he had worked for an undertaker. He was then sacked at a week's notice and given a pension of five shillings a week. On this, plus old age pension, he could not pay the rent of the house which had been his home for 48 years. The landlord put him out in the street. Ill health struck at him.

Without a home, without work, this old man and his wife were driven to live in an underground shelter. "It was warm because of the hot water pipe," he said. He and his wife went to coffee houses for meals, and he "hung about the shelter in the daytime."

This man has brought up six sons, all of whom now serve in the Army. He has not had a chance to save anything. Now he has nothing before him but the relieving officer and a "home"—if he accepts the advice of the coroner. The coroner returned a verdict of "death from natural causes" on the wife. That should not have been the verdict. This was murder. It shows what we mean when we say that capitalism at "peace" murders the workers. —From the British New Leader, January 23.

'India in Revolt'

If you haven't yet ordered and read Henry Judds magnificent pamphlet, "India in Revolt," do so immediately. Order your copy from the Workers Party, 114 West 14th Street, New York City. Twenty-five cents per copy; twenty cents in bundles of five or more.

Buy LA in Detroit at:
Newsstand near Family Theater, Cadillac Square.

Buy NI in Detroit at:
Carl's Book Store, Clairmount and Woodward.
Book Store, Baltimore and Cass.

In Buffalo:
Main and Huren, next to Gamler's.
Main and Mohawk.

In No. Philadelphia:
S.E. Corner—19th and Columbia.
N.W. Corner—19th and Master.
N.E. Corner—24th and Turner.

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Buffalo Reader Writes On AFL and CIO

Gentlemen:

I have received two or three copies of the LABOR ACTION paper. It is really a pleasure to read your paper, as most of the articles are point-blank on the topic.

The reason for me to write this letter was because of an article I read. It mentioned a certain election that was held a few months ago between the CIO and the AFL. I am certain that it must have been the election at the Curtiss-Wright airplane factory. I remember the election very well, as I was a steward, for the CIO. The article was true concerning the facts, that the AFL made a lot of promises, but never kept them.

In my opinion, the reason why we lost that election was because they allowed the women workers to vote. We had one heck of a time trying to get the women to join the CIO. The AFL had come out with pamphlets, telling the women they would make 85 cents an hour after three months. (I worked for one and a half years before I got 85 cents an hour.) Since many of these women never worked in a factory before, they fell for that cheap propaganda.

Today, under the AFL, for eight months now we have not had a general raise yet, to meet up with rise in the cost of living. If you have a raise coming, our foreman tells you to see your AFL committeeman to get our raise. Before he will touch it, your committeeman asks if you are a member of the AFL. If you aren't, he says that he can't do anything for you unless you join. As much as I understand about certain labor laws, I always thought that the union that wins the election is considered to be the bargaining agent between the workers and the employer. Also, that as long as there is an open shop they should settle the complaints of non-union men as well as union men. Since there isn't a closed shop at Curtiss-Wright

many of the fellows won't join the union, as they consider it unfit to belong to.

I expect to be in the Army by July, so all I hope for is that we can get another election here at Curtiss. I am certain that the CIO will win by a greater number than they have won in any other election. Buffalo is turning out to be a very busy industrial center and in order for the men to be well protected, should, in my opinion, join the CIO. It is the only union that will go to bat for you regardless of race, color or creed.

I mentioned this because we have many Negro men and women working alongside us. Many of the white people have a grudge against them. Instead of looking toward the Negro as a fellow-American who is trying to help out, either by dying on our battlefields or working in defense

Censorship

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has stated that no part of the address made by Wendell Willkie at the annual conference of the NAACP held at Los Angeles, July 19, has been permitted to go out of the United States and that other references in speeches to the Negro question had been similarly barred.

Since the government does not hesitate to suppress or censor the comments of the leader of the Republican Party and a full-blown advocate of the "war for democracy," the labor press and labor movement must indeed be vigilant in preventing sharper inroads on their civil rights, particularly a free press. The actions directly leveled so far at LABOR ACTION and The Militant are evidence of the growing reactionary trend of Administration forces.

plants. But still, many ignore this fact.

I sort of guess I have let myself go too much in this letter. I want you to know that I am 100 per cent behind the labor movement to try to organize workers into the union.

A Loyal Reader.

We Must Break The Color Line

Dear Editor:

G. S. Schuyler of the Pittsburgh Courier recalls a conversation in a colored barber shop on the colored question: "He was scarcely literate, but nevertheless (or therefore) an intelligent fellow who had revealed that he knew the score. He opined: 'Mr. Schuyler, the white folks has got a plan on the 'n—', and they're carryin' out that plan.'"

"Is there a plan on the Negro?" Mr. Schuyler continues in comment. "To me there seems to be no question about it. On no other basis can you explain what has happened and is happening.... It is based on the fiction of racial superiority and is in essence no different from that expressed by Hitler, Rosenberg and other Aryans. It assumes the superiority of the so-called white man over all others and enforces various forms of segregation and discrimination in order to make that superiority real.

"Without social equality the colored American is doomed, and those in authority know it even better than Negroes. There can be no social equality without economic, political and educational equality."

Mr. Schuyler is convinced, as we are, that a plan exists to oppress the Negro. Very capably he examines the machinery of oppression but does not bring out clearly the basic cause of its existence: that capitalism wants the cheapest possible source of labor at its disposal, at the time

it wants it, and in the quantity it wants it.

Yet he realizes a great deal of what should be realized by all Negroes. Conceding that the plan has worked so well that part of the Negro population has been conditioned to the colored line as well as the white, he writes further, pointing the

"As the question of segregation on street cars keeps bobbing up, may I suggest that present arrangements are not so discriminatory, for the colored people ride the rear end of the street car going into town, and the white people ride that same end leaving town, except cars that go around a loop."—Letter to the Dallas News.

The Liberal Weeklies: The current New Republic has a long and pious article on Negroes, and how something ought to be done. Following it is a somewhat shorter, but no less pious, article on the Red Cross and blood donors. Does this mention the former policy of excluding "Negro blood" or the present one of segregating it? You guess.

way out and expressing current sentiments of the forward-looking members of the race:

"To show the extent to which our so-called leaders are off the beam, it has for years been their custom to frown upon organized labor and pick out the evils in the labor movement while striving vainly to curry favor with those who would enslave both black and white labor. Our psychological warfare has been primitive and inept, and I know of not a single Negro organization which has the slightest understanding of its possibilities. Politically we have been advised to shuttle back and forth between the two wings of the capitalistic buzzard when we would have engendered far more respect and gained more influence had we

moved farther to the Left on election day."

Politically, the Negro must learn to distinguish the RIGHT side from "right" or conservative if he is to move in the correct, or LEFT direction. At present the characters of practically all political parties slant right. Their concern for the Negro is mere pretense. He must learn to see and understand the background for that pretense. In fact the Negro must become the most informed and most articulate member of the working class.

Events will force him into jobs and positions he has never been in

before, due to labor shortages.

There he has to develop the hardihood and intelligence to combat his own prejudices and those he will meet with in white workers in order to take leadership in dissolving racial prejudices and working toward improvements in labor conditions. There is no "Left" for him to move to but to become a force in organizing a new Labor Party and to link himself with the socialist movement, the Workers Party. ONLY IN A SOCIALIST WORLD CAN HE FIND REAL FREEDOM.

Richard Aarons.

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Another Negro Lynched!

In Georgia, the objection of a Negro to the illegal practices of a sheriff is tantamount to a charge of first degree murder in a court of law.

Robert Hall of Albany, Ga., was arrested on January 29 on charges of stealing a tire. The warrant for his arrest, signed by John C. Derm, from whom the tire was allegedly stolen, was delivered by Sheriff Screws. It was later revealed by Derm that he had never signed a warrant and in addition, that no tire had ever been stolen from him. This statement was corroborated by his brother, George C. Derm, who likewise denied signing the warrant.

The morning following Hall's arrest, a call came into an Albany funeral home requesting an ambulance to pick up a "n-r I had to beat up." The call came from a hospital in Albany and was alleged to have been sent by Sheriff Screws. The jailer claimed that Hall had not been removed from the jail and that his body was in that condition when he was admitted into a county hospital. The deep cuts all over his body and the injuries to his head indicated that he had been tied to a car and dragged along the rough road.

Motive for the attack on this innocent man was expressed by many persons living in Baker County. Hall had appeared before the Grand Jury in an attempt to recover a pistol which the sheriff had taken from Hall's car.

All evidence points to Sheriff Screws as the lyncher of Robert Hall, but to date no charges have been filed against him and no action has been taken.

And year after year the poll-tax senators, representing men like Sheriff Screws, defeat the anti-lynching bills!

Some Would Have You Believe It's "Socialist" But the British Lion Has a Loud Capitalist Roar

(The following excerpts from an article by Prof. Harold J. Laski, of the University of London, printed in the New York Times Magazine of January 24, speak for themselves. Professor Laski—whose mushy politics, by the way, LABOR ACTION does not endorse—gives a resounding rebuke to those gushing American "liberals" who return from England with the "conviction" that there are no longer any classes in that land of "war-born freedom.")

(It might be added that—by changing a few words here and there to comply with the American scene and institutions—the main tenor of Professor Laski's disclosures holds true also for the good old USA.—Editor.)

"The ruling class of Britain is not a simple thing. It is a fusion of interests brought about by three centuries of stress and strain, during which alliances have been made and broken according to the swaying needs of battle. But if we take it in its present phase, the main elements in that ruling class can be distinguished with some certainty.

"There is the element provided by the old aristocracy, whose power in the first place was based on the possession of land. There are families like the Cecils, Stanleys and Churchills, who, generation after generation have helped shape the purposes of state power. There are elements provided by landowners in the rural areas, descendants of the old squirearchy, who still dominate, in alliance with the influence of the church, the

life of the British countryside. There is the business community, a pyramid of interests at the apex of which stands finance, great corporations, whether manufacturing or commercial; and peripheral to them, but taking the main character of their outlook from purposes in large part given by the character of the property system. There is the professional community, lawyers, engineers, doctors, architects and higher civil service. As these are successful they tend increasingly to accept the half-conscious philosophy of the landowner and capitalist, to make their premises of action those which will not disturb the confidence of the ruling class in the power of the system to remain a going concern..."

"Anyone who analyzes the composition of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons cannot

avoid the conclusion that its essential purpose is the protection of the interests of private property in the means of production. Forty-four per cent of them are directors of public companies; between them they hold nearly 1,800 directorships. All important economic interests are represented there—banks, insurance, railways, shipping, iron, steel, engineering, textiles, electricity supply, coal, oil, tobacco, foodstuffs, newspapers and so forth. The main banks, including the Bank of England, have their members, so have the main insurance companies, railways, and so on."

"...As a system it is nevertheless fair to make three comments upon it. "Firstly, it is directed overwhelmingly by men who think out of their experience inevitably in terms limited by the status quo which they have inherited and controlled.

"Secondly, it is overwhelmingly administered by interests which own and control the instruments of production in all the pivotal areas of economic power.

"Thirdly, the prospect of persuading men whose whole outlook is built upon the assumption that the large outlines of the present system are adequate, to think in terms of premises of action which transcend the present system, which push forward boundaries of political democracy toward a permanent limitation of area of capitalist power—that prospect is small indeed..."

"On the constitutional side, the efforts of the Labor Party to press for experiments which press its policy always encounter the fact that there is an overwhelming Conservative majority in both houses of Parliament. A demand, therefore, for public ownership of mines, for example, or for measures which, taken now, look to an assurance of safeguards after the war against mass unemployment which a monopoly of capitalist entails, means a threat to national unity. To press home the policy to which labor is committed means, politically, the end of the political truce and probably a general election. The difficulties and dangers of this policy are thus clear. But to refuse to face them means, on the political plane, that the Labor Party must help wage war on terms approved by the Conservative Party. This is, as a matter of fact, to wage the war for maintaining the present system..."

"The Federation of British Industries—the main policy-forming body for business interests—has a score of members in the House who between them, cover all the main economic empires in Britain. So has the National Union of Manufacturers; so has the National Chamber of Trade; so also has the Association of British Chambers of Commerce; so have the Central Landowners Association and the Central Chamber of Agriculture. The armaments industry has, apart from its directors in the House, two former directors, Sir John Anderson and Mr. Amery, in the Cabinet.

"Thirty-five members of a Parliament have directorships in com-

panies whose stake is in the Dominions. The dominating industries in India and the colonies all have their representatives in the House of Commons, to speak, if need be, on their behalf.

"Forty-three members of Parliament are related to living members of the peerage, and another 95 are related to its members. Of these, 18 are heirs to peerages, 13 are younger sons of peers and 42 are sons-in-law of peers.

"The great aristocrat of today is not merely a landowner. Like the Duke of Montrose, he may be a banker; like Lord Burghley, son of the Marquis of Exeter and brother-in-law of the Duke of Buccleugh, he may be a director of a railroad, a bank and an insurance company. It is not, therefore, an exaggeration, I think, to regard the Conservative Party as in its essence an alliance of aristocracy and plutocracy for the control of the power of the state..."

"I turn from the House of Commons to the government itself. Of the War Cabinet—excluding Lord Halifax and Mr. Casey—two members are by birth aristocrats, while two had, until they assumed office, large business connections. Of Conservative Ministers and junior Ministers, two are dukes, one is a newspaper proprietor and all of the remainder have connections, either immediate or indirect, with big business or the aristocracy, the single exception being the Minister of Pensions..."

"At that level of control where vital decisions are taken, shipbuilding for example, we have evidence from leading trade unionists that there has been no consultation with them. There has been, on the contrary, a constant stream of complaint from labor organizations of a refusal, save in isolated instances, to use the skill and experience of workers. Those in control of economic policy have pretty fully applied the warning of Sir Patrick Hannon, Conservative member of Parliament and a leading industrialist, THAT THE WAR MUST NOT BE USED AS AN AVENUE ALONG WHICH LABOR MOVES TOWARD ENCROACHMENT ON THE SACRED REALM OF MANAGERIAL DISCRETION..."

"...The old governing class will continue to rule Britain because there has been no change in the ownership or control of fundamental economic power."

(The emphases in the above excerpts are all ours. A further emphasis we want to make is that revolutionary socialists aim to make exactly that kind of "change in the ownership and control of fundamental economic powers" that will end the rotten upper class rule described by Professor Laski and which is basically true of every capitalist country. Ownership and control of every nation's economy must be in the hands of the workers as the only possible basis for the socialist society of peace and freedom.—Editor.)

The Problem of Wages and Prices

There Is Only One Real Solution - - Socialism!

By RIA STONE

Next time you go into a restaurant and pay its pre-1929 prices, ask the owner why. Nine times out of ten, he'll mention not only the rising cost of food, but also the wages he has to pay his help to keep them. And if you look like you have a profession or belong to the middle class, he'll add a dig at the unions.

Next time you read in the newspapers about a demand for higher wages in industry, or make such a demand yourself, notice the threat of the bosses, implied or explicit, to raise prices if the increased wages are granted.* For example, in the needle trades strike of a month ago the manufacturers refused the increase on the ground that there was a ceiling price on dresses. And,

more recently, businesses ordered on a forty-eight-hour basis by presidential decree have threatened a rise in prices because of overtime wages.

GOVERNMENT BASED ON PROFIT SYSTEM

The average worker (not to speak of labor leaders who don't want to encroach on the profit system) senses the boss's predicament. And, unable to see any alternative to the profit system, he is often willing to see the boss get higher prices for the goods which he, the worker, has produced. For example, a needle trades worker was explaining to me the other day how the workers in her shop had no grievance against their boss because he had already signed with the local to grant the wage increase—provided

Washington punctured the ceiling on clothing prices. She has to do alterations and dressmaking in her home after hours in order to support her family, but she doesn't connect this with her boss and the profit system which he represents.

Nor does she realize that she and workers like her would take an indirect wage cut through the higher prices her boss gets. Like the boss, but with less justification, she takes for granted the profit system, and, only hopes that the wages she receives under the system will enable her to give reasonably nutritious and adequate food to her family and keep reasonably warm and fashionable clothing on their backs.

The government obviously takes for granted the profit system, and has no intention of jeopardizing it. For example, Prentiss Brown, head of the OPA, has stated that "in some cases where the forty-eight-hour week might force higher prices (due to overtime), he would be inclined to discuss with the War Manpower Commission the feasibility of exempting the employers from the order rather than permitting the higher prices." (New York Times, February 16.)

Superficially, this sounds like an attempt to protect the consumer from higher prices. Actually, however, it is clear that Prentiss Brown, like the rest of the Administration, will go to any lengths to keep the gap between wages and prices which is the source of profit. But to maintain this gap he will lower or maintain wages at their present low level, rather than "permit" prices to rise. Why? Because prices on the whole cannot be altered simply by decree or arbitrary will. They depend upon the value of the commodities produced, and this in turn is in the long run determined by labor productivity and technological conditions beyond the control of either the capitalist or his government representative.

Thus, for example, price rises in consumer goods today are due to decreasing labor productivity caused by such factors as enormous labor turnover, depreciation of machinery with difficulties in replacement, overtaxing of labor from long hours, etc. The restaurant man, who could once fix an icebox leak simply by calling in a plumber, uses a headwaiter to do it. The government, far from being able to decrease or put a ceiling price on these goods, acts to raise them by lengthening hours and decreasing labor efficiency, withdrawing experienced workers into the Army or defense industries, and cur-

tailing machine production for consumer goods. "Legitimate" price increases due to increased costs therefore occur. When these are supplemented by the sheer cheating and gouging of the consumer because the latter must buy at whatever prices, we have both the profit system and "profiteering"—revealing the capitalist system at its rottenest.

THE PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED BY SOCIALISM

Once the socialist solution to the problem of wages and prices is recognized, how criminal, rather than pathetic, appears the plight of the "poor boss who can't make a profit if wages go up and prices don't rise proportionately." Under capitalism or the profit system, it is necessary to maintain and, if possible, increase the gap between wages (or what it costs in labor power to produce goods) and price (or the exchange-value which those goods have on the market). This gap exists because the worker only receives the price of his labor power and no share in the values he creates.

Under socialism, there will be no wages at all—in the sense of remuneration to the worker only to replace the labor power or energy he has expended. There will be no prices or market values in the sense of goods obtainable only on the basis of paying for them at their value. Under socialism, men will receive a share of what has been produced by the common social labor. They will participate in that social labor (in one way or another), and not, as in capitalism, on the basis of the amount of expended energy which must be replenished. (The latter is the way THE WORKER receives his "share" under capitalism; the capitalist receives his "share" because he owns the means of production and can buy the worker's labor power.)

Under capitalism, the worker, on Saturday or at the end of his work week, receives wages which simply go to refurbish him for another Monday. Sunday is the day of rest (if you're lucky and don't have to work on Sundays, too), when you try to feel as strong and able to work as you did the Monday before. And so it goes on for the worker under capitalism—a continuous but tapering spiral (broken only by unemployment), with the worker never quite catching up to his strength of the week before, but always forced to go to work on Monday, anyway (if it isn't depression time and he has a job).

Under socialism, all this is changed. Goods are produced for the use of men and NOT for the profits which they bring in to bosses. Labor power is no longer regarded as a commodity to be bought and sold. It is not purchased at all, let alone purchased at the lowest possible price to keep it alive and able to produce more value. Men, under socialism, will work and produce useful goods. But they will produce these for their mutual needs and for their mutual development.

The sufficiency of goods which men and machines can create will be given to men to develop their bodies so that their minds can grow rich in the wealth of human knowledge, esthetic appreciation and artistic creation. From day to day, from week to week, and from year to year, the spiral of possible individual activity will widen rather than taper, as human productive and intellectual achievements increase.

Men, no longer fettered by the necessity of working not only for their own material maintenance, but for the bosses' even more material profits, will be freed to live more fully. The time that each must work will be small, yet the goods produced for all to enjoy will be plentiful.

Then, surely, will he who even thinks of "reasonable profit" be jeered at as a barbarian out of the past dark ages. He who talks about prices chasing wages will be talking gibberish, for men who have been freed from the capitalist system will also have been freed from wage labor, price and profit.

That is why, instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," workers must inscribe on their banner the REVOLUTIONARY watchword: "Abolition of the wage system!" Socialism is the ONLY answer!

Bosses Attack Overtime Pay

(Continued from page 1)

be done by the Administration's order is to amend at once that section of the wage-hour law which provides for compulsory time and a half overtime between forty and forty-eight hours."

The steady increase in prices by official rulings of the OPA is not inflationary. The unofficial increases through flagging and black market manipulations are not inflationary. The expenditure of 92 per cent of the national budget for destructive war purposes is not inflationary. But when a better-paid worker earning around \$40 a week, gets \$52 for 48 hours work and not \$48—that is "INFLATIONARY." When a worse-paid worker earning \$16 a week gets \$20.80 for 48 hours' work and not \$19.20—that is "INFLATIONARY!"

Eddie Rickenbacker, self-appointed charlatan-champion of the soldier in the foxhole and undisguised labor-hater, has another line. He asserts: "In times like these I do not approve of overtime pay except for the men in the foxholes, the swamps, the deserts—those making the supreme sacrifice." But he is against the \$25,000-a-year salary limit because, as President of Eastern Air Lines—THE VALUE OF WHOSE STOCK HAS DOUBLED IN THE LAST YEAR—Rickenbacker does not want his "initiative limited"; initiative being "one of the great American cornerstones," presumably unnecessary for workers. Furthermore, if a bill were actually proposed to give "overtime pay" to "the men in the foxholes, the swamps, the deserts"—WHICH EVERY WORKER WOULD SUPPORT—Rickenbacker would find as "good" a reason for opposing it as he has for fighting overtime for workers.

Plainly, the President's order has unleashed the anti-labor hounds. Of course, the order was so timed as to soft-soap the WLB refusal to lift the Little Steel formula to meet the increase of about 10 per cent above the formula in the cost of living. The worker is supposed to be content with a 10 per cent wage cut—due to

the decreased purchasing power of the dollar—because the President's order "guarantees" more work for everybody—though at cut-rate wages.

This is obviously a fake. For in the essential war industries—as pointed out above—the work week was already forty-eight hours and more. Still the workers were and are unable to make their wages cover ascending prices, income taxes, withholding taxes, consumer taxes, war-bond purchases. The President's order will certainly not help these workers.

Walter P. Reuther, vice-president of the United Automobile Workers, CIO, has raised another point—the problem of lay-offs. He stated that what is needed is a guaranteed wage equivalent to forty hours of work. Lay-offs, he revealed, have been fairly widespread. He cited the case of the Oldsmobile gun plant where the workers stepped up production 500 per cent above the standards set by the Ordnance Department. A week later the work week was reduced from six to five days—and a few weeks later to three days a week. "They made too many guns—and so lost their earnings," said Mr. Reuther. The President's forty-eight-hour order by no means makes it compulsory for General Motors or any other employer to give all their men forty-eight hours of work each week—or even forty hours. The order leaves a big loophole through which the bosses can continue laying off workers on the ground of material shortages or what-have-you.

For the President included in his order the following very ambiguous sentence:

"The chairman of the War Manpower Commission is authorized to establish a minimum work week greater or less than that established in Section 1 of this order or take other action with respect to any case or type of case in which he determines that such different minimum work week or other action would more effectively contribute to the war effort and pro-

mote the purposes of this order."

You see that this is not really a universal compulsory forty-eight-hour work week—assuming that it were desirable for workers to be on the job for so long a week. FOR MR. McNUIT HAS WIDE POWERS OF MODIFICATION. Undoubtedly the case of the general Motors plant being put on a three-day week could be amply justified as a special "type of case"—along with justification for putting workers and their families on three days' wages. And in other "special" cases the work week can be stretched to 52 (as forecast by McNutt) or 60 or 72 hours.

Strain as one may to see anything else in Mr. Roosevelt's forty-eight-hour order, nothing emerges except the two points we have made this week and last. It is a cover-up to reaffirm the Little Steel formula in the face of a unanimous labor demand that it be lifted. And it is a "GO" signal to the boss blitz against time and a half for overtime.

The bosses have been encouraged to go even further. The New York Times would like "properly controlled piecework and other incentive payment systems"—in a word, SWEATSHOPS!

The best defense against this anti-labor attack is an offensive action. Reuther's idea for a guaranteed minimum wage to meet the problem of lay-offs is good. But labor leaders will not push for this remedy unless they are prodded by the militancy of the rank and file.

However, this demand is hardly enough to meet all the requirements. Labor must lift the Little Steel formula and get a new wage formula escalating with the cost of living. Labor must shift the war tax burden onto the broad shoulders of the rich. Labor itself must organize the machinery for price, rationing and black market control. Above all, labor must revoke the no-strike pledge made by its leaders—because that makes of labor's demands only empty gestures.

India Tastes the "Four Freedoms"

—AN EDITORIAL—

At the time of this writing Ghandi has begun his eighth day of fast in protest against British Rule in India, and to call attention to the world that Indian freedom remains as far away from realization as it has ever been.

Scanning the columns of the capitalist press, one is astonished at the complete absence of news from that great country in Asia. It would appear that this nation of almost 400,000,000 people, having stated its case for freedom, and having had this request rejected, has now settled down to a calm and normal existence.

Yet it was only last week that a handful of the newspapers published a tiny report obscurely placed in the inner pages, which announced that since last August almost a thousand Indians were killed, several thousand wounded, and about sixty thousand arrested, of whom fifteen thousand were detained without charge. This is hardly a quiet situation, but the Big Boss press found it embarrassing and gave this report little or no publicity. It does show, however, that

the Indian masses have not given up their fight for freedom. It also shows that the British are just as determined not to give freedom to India.

The British have become more stubborn than ever. They are completely disdainful of Ghandi's fast and do not display the fears of former years when such actions by Ghandi served to initiate movements of non-violent and very often violent resistance to the British dictatorship. Why have the British become so haughty, where a year ago they seemed ready to make quite a few concessions for some sort of an agreement with India, even though they would not accede to the demand of Indian Independence?

The answer lies in the upturn of military fortune for the Allies and therefore, the British

When the military situation appeared extremely grave for the Empire when Burma was lost and the Japanese threatened to march into India, the British needed every possible assistance from the people whose freedom they had taken and whom they had cruelly exploited for many centuries.

Now, however, when the war position of the Allies has vastly improved, when the Japanese invasion of India has failed to materialize, and when the British have actually begun to move back into Burma, the India situation is no longer of the same gravity to the Empire.

It would appear that, if the military situation is more favorable now, then the British should be more willing than ever to accord the Indians their freedom, or, at least, to make greater concessions than they were willing to give when they regarded themselves in great danger.

That the reverse is true, that an improvement of her military position only means greater resistance to Indian freedom—unless the Indians take it—only proves that, notwithstanding the pretensions of the "civilized" British ruling class, the Empire's general aims in India, the method of her rule, and her rule, and her specific conduct in this instance, is imperialist.

Advocates of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter, please take note!

Editorials

Reaction Grows

The gravest danger that confronts the workers and the poor farmers of this country is the rising tide of reaction throughout the country, especially in Washington. There are many signs, some related, some unconnected, of a concerted drive by Big Business, reactionary legislators, incipient fascist and outright fascist organizations to destroy the organization and gains of all labor. This reaction not only threatens the economic rights of the people, it threatens their democratic rights. A few illustrations will prove this contention.

The conduct of the State Department—not that it can be completely separated from the policy of the Government as a whole but as the body specifically in charge of carrying out a policy in North Africa—demonstrated that it is in the hands of reactionary conservatives, semi-fascists and outright fascists. The deals made with the men of Vichy, and fascists like Peyrouton and General Nogues, have caused the liberal world great anxiety and the die-hard New Dealers extreme worry. But they are not an accident. The ideology of the career diplomats is anything but progressive and democratic.

The attempts of Secretary Hull to live up to his reputation of a democratic mountaineer from Tennessee who really dislikes and disagrees with his "bureaucratic New Deal" colleagues is ludicrous. For it finds him stooping to the level of the anti-Semites when, for example, in reply to a question by the liberal reporter for PM, J. F. Stone, he asked whether his name was not really Feinstone.

But it is not the State Department alone which is the repository of reaction in policy and personnel. A more alarming situation is to be found in Congress. Reaction is rampant in the congressional halls. Dominated by the reactionary bourbon Southern representatives, aided by Northern Democrats and Republicans alike, in cahoots with the reactionary Farm Lobby—the agency of the rich farmers and the National Association of Manufacturers—Congress threatens the very life and existence of the American masses.

The reelection of the notoriously reactionary Dies Committee is another sign of reaction. Even the bourgeois press and many congressional leaders agree that the Dies Committee and its publicity-crazy chairman, Representative Martin Dies, is a patent disgrace. They acknowledge that he has used the Committee for essentially anti-labor and reactionary purposes. They acknowledge that the procedure followed by the Committee is contrary to law—that its conduct is often illegal—and that personal reports, based on the chairman's political aims and prejudices, were sent out without Committee authorization. But this Committee is reelected with enormous majorities in which strong opponents of the Texan representative vote for its extension!

In the South, there has been a revival of the Ku Klux Klan. This fascist organization operates with extreme freedom and in collusion with state officials, who

are often the organizers and leaders of the hooded gangsters. Now their purpose is publicly stated to be a struggle against organized labor and to prevent the union movement from being organized in the South. Who is really behind these people? The answer is obvious. The industrialists and financiers in the South, and their Northern associates who are often the "benefactors" of their Southern associates.

In the prosecution of the thirty-three Axis agents, we are given another illustration of the swells of the reactionary tide. During the course of the trial and in the congressional discussions on the activity of the Department of Justice and its prosecution in this case, William Power Maloney, it became public knowledge that the indicted fascist agents were more than friendly with a large number of reactionary isolationist senators and congressmen. Fear of what the trials would disclose led to a drive in Congress against the activities of Maloney and his subsequent removal from the trial. The reasons are obvious. Maloney was doing a job in this case; he knew too much. It was necessary to get rid of him before the reputations of some of the legislators became as black as their political and social ideas.

And so Attorney General Biddle moved William Power Maloney "upstairs" and turned the trial over to another prosecutor. At the same time Biddle instigated action against a free press—LABOR ACTION and The Militant.

More recently we have the case of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, World War Hero, and a hero of the present one. In the case of Rickenbacker, we have an obvious illustration of the use of a military reputation for anti-labor purposes. Since his rescue from the Pacific, Capt. Rickenbacker has traveled the country from coast to coast with one purpose: to destroy the labor movement, to abolish its economic gains, to destroy its democratic rights and to create a schism between the workers in uniform and the workers in the shops.

Labor is powerful. But it does not realize its own strength. And its arms are bound by its short-sighted and vacillating leaders. For that reason, the campaign of reaction against it is gaining ground. The labor movement surrendered its strike weapon. It therefore has lost the most powerful instrument by which it could defend its economic rights and the gains it achieved after years of struggle. One by one, the economic gains of labor are being washed away in the war economy. But it is losing ground politically—and this is, in a sense, more dangerous.

Labor is not represented in Congress. But it is also unrepresented for the most part in the state legislatures. Thus, in the legislative halls of the nation are gathered all the anti-labor forces ready to commit mayhem against the workers in the shops, factories, mines and mills, and on the farms.

It was never more clear than now, that labor must organize itself politically. It needs its own party—a party of labor—not merely another parliamentary organization, but a militant political organization that will defend and fight for labor's interests and rights.

Negroes Seek New Paths In Fight Against Jim Crow

By HARRY ALLEN

"Discrimination against every race must go!" This was the keynote of Paul V. McNutt's speech before the Negro Labor Victory Committee mass meeting at the Golden Gate Casino, Harlem, on June 28, 1942.

On January 12, 1943, the same Paul V. McNutt scuttled the projected FEPC public hearings on discrimination against the Negroes on the railroads.

In this brief six-month period is represented the very sharp retreat of the Roosevelt Administration before the Jim Crow bloc of reactionary Southern congressmen and discriminatory employers in the great cities, both North and South.

Color Caste System Remains

One need only note the abandonment of the anti-lynching bill, the anti-poll-tax law and the continuance of peonage and the chain gang in the South, to understand why the Negro people conclude that those in authority do not seriously intend—if they ever did—to end the color caste system—expressed in discrimination and segregation. So far as the Negro is concerned, these facts and conditions, in themselves, make a mockery of capitalist "democracy."

Therefore, reliance upon the government to effectively or earnestly break down Jim Crow in various fields has sharply cooled among the Negro masses. "Their general attitude is one of mingled cynicism, resignation and indifference," says the Pittsburgh Courier.

Does this mean that the Negro masses have given up the struggle and the hope for the achievement of their economic, social and political rights? Quite the contrary. Only, they are seeking other paths.

Look to Independent Action

First, they are searching for their own independent course, actions and organizations to serve their ends. They are not satisfied with promises for the future—no matter who makes the promises.

This explains the strong, militant support at first given by great numbers of Negroes to the March on Washington Movement for full rights to the Negroes now. However, when the weak, vacillating leadership of the MOW sidetracked this authentic mass movement into a "go easy" policy and dependence upon Administration favors, the Negro masses again felt betrayed, and they largely abandoned their support of MOW. The Negro masses today want a militant movement for their rights.

Second, the increasing trend among Negroes is to seek either support or a base in the organized labor movement. However, in making their appeal to union labor, the Negro press and leadership do so with varying reasons and motivations. For instance, the Black Despatch (Oklahoma City, Okla.), influential Negro paper in the Southwest, editorially says:

"Union labor needs help just now, while more than ten millions have been withdrawn from the ranks of gainful employment. If the Negro remains on the outside of union labor during this period, what will be the Negro's status later on, when ten million unemployed soldiers return from foreign battlefields to again seek their places in peacetime vocations?"

"It ought to be plain to every Negro on the outside of an insane asylum that unless Negroes now show intelligent and sympathetic interest in the problems of white labor, white labor when it returns from the war will be justified in lacking interest in black problems."

Here it is necessary to note that the Negro leadership and press generally evade or ignore the class origins and development of Jim Crow. Thus, unavoidably, they run into a blind alley in attempting to interpret and resolve the special and double evils imposed on Negroes.

Hence, relating directly to the

labor movement, it must be realized that the Negro press is controlled and directed almost exclusively by the Negro middle and upper classes who follow a policy suited to their particular class interests and situation. Specifically, for instance, note the business man's outlook which largely pervades the Negro publications everywhere. However, the Negro professional elements, because their skills and abilities are even more patently unused or unremunerated than white professionals, are more inclined to admit the need for, or a combination with, unions—qualified by their own class bias or interests.

In the case of the Black Despatch editorial, the attitude reflected toward unionism is not that of Negro and white workingman joining in common cause and organization from a class standpoint. Rather, it is a recognition of the necessity for an approach to organized labor to assure, if possible, some economic protection for Negroes, as Negroes, when war jobs are done, and mass unemployment and economic crisis again convulse the country.

The Labor-Conscious Negro

More significantly, however, there are growing numbers of Negroes who are calling for the complete integration of Negroes, as workers, into the labor movement on a fully equal basis. It is these Negroes particularly who demand an end to any remaining Jim Crow in the labor unions in the interests (1) of Negroes as Negroes, and (2) in order that the labor movement can most effectively combat the employing and ruling class practices of discrimination and segregation against Negroes and other minorities, and the bosses' common exploitation of white and colored workers.

It is in both these lights, therefore, that labor-conscious Negroes hail the establishment of the CIO's anti-discrimination committee; Philip Murray's appointment of the Negro, Boyd Wilson, to help cement the bonds of Negro and white workers in the Steel Workers Union; and the efforts of the Auto Workers and National Maritime Unions and other units, to get rid altogether of any remaining Jim Crow remnants, as symbolized, for instance, in mixed crews in the American Merchant Marine.

Conversely, the standing of the AFL is low among labor-thinking Negroes because of the AFL's essentially do-nothing policy in eliminating widespread Jim Crow in many of its important unions. The rebuff to

Philip Randolph at the AFL-convention is a case in point.

Want No Jim Crow in Unions

War requirements, of course, are making it easier for Negroes to get jobs. However, the bosses otherwise are either against the hiring of Negroes or are for hiring them provided they can continue their established policy of dividing workers on color or racial lines, and thus more easily exploiting both white and black workers. Therefore, the recent establishment of a Jim Crow local (Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders & Welders) in the Portland, Ore., region only serves to convince Negro workers that AFL policy follows along the same pattern as the government and Jim Crow employers.

Obviously, those Negroes who are seeking a labor base for their protection will not for long tolerate, in this period, a labor organization which persists in Jim Crowing them. Nor will they be satisfied merely by the appointment of a Negro (Milton P. Webster, vice-president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters) as a member of an AFL post-war planning committee. They will insist on an end to Jim Crow NOW in the AFL, or turn more and more to the CIO.

What is more important to observe today is (1) the steady turning away of the Negro masses from a reliance on favors from above, from the government; and (2) the growing ability of Negro masses to distinguish the basic and important from the secondary and episodic (that is, they are laying their hopes and foundation in labor unionism and a working class orientation as against Administration sops, easily taken away—FEPC, etc.).

Administration policy more and more shows itself as reflecting the outlook and practices of the real rulers of this country—the big business interests. The Administration's appeasement of, and reconciliation with, the blatant reactionary bloc of Southern Democratic politicians is only an important and potent symptom thereof.

Hence, even as labor must hereafter more swiftly relinquish its faith and belief in governmental agencies to achieve their demands (for example, the demand for representation on fundamentally anti-labor bodies such as the WLB, WPB, etc.), so likewise the Negro masses will and are experiencing the same disillusionment with an appeasement policy. Both Negro and white labor are driven toward a united policy and action by their common class interests against the exploiters and oppressors—the employing class.

Hit at Unions - -

(Continued from page 1)

mander in New Hampshire of the American Legion. Grenville Clark, a member of the rich man's law firm of Root, Clark, Buckner & Ballantine, is secretary-treasurer of this committee—and incidentally a friend of President Roosevelt.

Bills, like this one to conscript labor presumably as a war measure but aimed at the unions; bills like the Hobbs so-called anti-racketeering bill that would make it easy to fake criminal prosecutions of unions, and impoverish them; these are all symptoms of the same boss tactic. Not content with up to 2420 per cent increases in war profits, they become pay-trioteer pioneers to meet every real or imagined "war emergency" with an anti-labor measure that will pay dividends not only for the duration but in the post-war period as well.

Every local union should pass a scathing resolution stating that the workers recognize in the Austin-Wadsworth and Hobbs bills hidden attacks on the unions, and protesting

against their passage. Labor should also hold meetings to demonstrate its protest and get public support against such hypocritical measures.

But labor must take more fundamental action as well. The workers are foolishly supporting the capitalist class in wielding political power against them. For the workers still follow the boss parties and vote into office the very sponsors of anti-labor bills.

Whereas, with the mighty instrument of a real Independent Labor Party based on the unions, labor could not only protect its ground but fight for new gains. And not alone that. For the road of class-conscious political action leads beyond the bounds of an Independent Labor Party operating within the confines of the capitalist system—to a workers' government and socialism.

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KOESTLER: A Pathetic 'Knight' Who Lost His Armor

By R. Fahan

I cannot recall having read a sadder article for a long time than Arthur Koestler's "A Challenge to 'Knights in Rusty Armor'" in the New York Times Magazine Section of February 14. Koestler is the writer and ex-revolutionist whose fame rests on that exciting and provocative portrait of Stalinist bureaucratism, the novel "Darkness at Noon." He writes this article frankly as a member of the "left intelligentsia," which, in recent years, has abandoned its Marxist adherence in order to support the imperialist war, but which still maintains a sort of vague hope that somehow, somewhere socialism will result from the present world mess.

Koestler is refreshing because honest: he admits that which has been becoming completely apparent to the left intellectuals, but which they have refused to admit with an unholly fear—the war shows itself, on the part of the Allies, as well as the Axis, to be nothing more than a conservative struggle for the maintenance of the capitalist status quo. It is this fact which impels Koestler to indulge in the weary, dispirited reflections contained in his article.

ADMISSIONS THAT BUTTRESS MARXISM

He writes: "...The nearer victory comes in sight, the clearer the character of the war reveals itself as what the Tories always said it was—a war for national survival, a war in defense of certain conservative nineteenth century ideals, and not what I and my friends of the left said it was—a revolutionary civil war in Europe on the Spanish pattern."

And again: "Let us be frank; while we rejoice over the victory of our arms, let us recognize the defeat of our aims."

And: "The American elections, the burlesque Darlanism, the melancholy Crippsism and other events make it increasingly clear that the scales are moving more and more to the conservative side, almost in direct proportion to the approach of victory.... Thus, if nothing unexpected happens, the coming victory will be a conservative victory and lead to a conservative peace. It will produce no lasting solution of the minority problem in the European jigsaw puzzle. It will provide no cure for the inherent disease of the capitalist system."

These are, you will readily see, some rather remarkable admissions, especially from one of those who, not so long ago, were seeing a peaceful social revolution in England as a result of the war and who waxed indignant with old-fashioned Marxists who still dared speak of such things as imperialist wars. But here, out of the mouth of one of the most intelligent of these war-baby intellectuals, comes the very admissions that buttress our Marxist case against them.

Thus, if it be true that "our aims" (i.e., a better world) had been defeated even though "our arms" (the Allied armies) approach victory, then what will be the significance and value of that victory? Koestler is not bashful about specifying the signs that "our aims"—which were NEVER the aims of those who control the conduct of the war, but to which they partly paid lip service when they were in dire straits—have met defeat. He understands the mockery of democracy which is the pro-fascist and anti-Semitic regime of Darlan-Giraud-Peyrouton in North Africa; he understands the mockery of national independence which is the British attitude toward India.

A MAN WITHOUT ARMOR—RUSTY OR SHINY

And yet this one-time socialist intellectual, writing as if the very life-blood of his former beliefs had been sucked out of him, still grasps onto the slippery armor of the imperialist cause, even though he cuts his fingers and shames his heart in doing so. And why? Because he hopes that with victory there will come, at least, a "certain minimum of liberty, decency, security... a new, perhaps slightly improved, edition of the pre-Hitlerian old order...."

But the two phrases contradict each other, and the second answers the first. Koestler and his friends know that there was neither security nor decency, and hardly enough liberty in the "pre-Hitlerian order." He no doubt wrote plenty of articles in his day to prove that. And Koestler knows that if this is all that we can expect from victory—"that it will provide no cure for the inherent disease of the capitalist system"—then we must face the dreadful prospect of once more living through the same nightmare: Versailles, inflation, and eventually the new Hitlerism and the Third World War!

It is a sorry and pathetic spectacle, indeed, to watch a man like Koestler state all his disillusion in public print, with the partial purpose of berating those leftist intellectuals who, through cynicism or naivete, still speak of the war as a crusade for a better world. The pro-war intellectuals are acquiring a nervous political itch: their eyes tell them that their tongues are lying.

A few, like Koestler, have the honesty to admit: No, it is no crusade, it is the same old game, and there's nothing new or wonderful to expect. That Koestler, who has lived through so many revolutionary defeats that it has become part of his psychological and political makeup, cannot see his way to return to the socialist camp is more a matter of pity than indignation. He may speak of us as "knights in rusty armor with a well-thumbed handbook of Marx-Engels quotations" which he feels are of but "modest use on this topsy-turvy battleground today" but the words we have quoted from his article show that he has NO political armor, rusty or shiny.

LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

Published Weekly by the Labor Action Publishing Company
114 WEST 14th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.
(3rd Floor)

Vol. 1, No. 8 February 22, 1943

Editor: Emanuel Garrett
Subscription Rate: 60 Cents a Year.
75 Cents for Canada, New York and Foreign

Registered as second-class matter May 24, 1940,
at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the
Act of March 3, 1979.

In the February New International:

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SMASH JIM CROW!

- Down with Jim Crow and anti-Semitism! All discrimination against Negroes in the Army and Navy or by employers in industry must be made a criminal offense!
- For full political, social and economic equality for Negroes!

BE PREPARED!

- For Workers' Defense Guards, trained and controlled by the unions, against vigilantes and fascist attacks!
- For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government! No political support to the Roosevelt government!
- For Peace Through Socialism! For the independence of all colonies!
- For a World Socialist Federation! Only a socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism and fascist barbarism!