

FDR Talks Against Profits, Acts Against Wages - - LABOR CAN MELT THE WAGE FREEZE!

Mass Action Is the Key to Wage Boosts

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The "Hold-the-Line" decree issued by Roosevelt last week should serve as a clear and unmistakable notice to the trade union that if labor is to get wages anywhere near what is required to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living, organized labor will have to fight with increased determination. The fight will have to be waged by mass action and through mass formations. Even a hasty reading of this decree on wages and prices should make this clear to any worker.

The decree says that all government bodies having supervision over wages "are directed to authorize no further increase in wages or salaries except such as are clearly necessary to correct substandards of living..." An exception is made in cases where wage rises have not been made in accordance with the Little Steel formula.

The most important exception made, however, is the so-called "anti-inflationary" proposal of the WPB discussed in LABOR ACTION last week. This permits Economic Stabilization Director Byrnes to authorize "reasonable adjustment of wages and salaries in case of promotions, reclassifications, merit increases, incentive wages or the like, provided that such adjustments do not increase the level of production costs appreciably or furnish the basis either to increase prices or to resist otherwise justifiable reduction in prices."

THE SCHEME BEHIND "INCENTIVE PAY"

It is extremely difficult to determine exactly what this paragraph means. Wages may be increased provided that such rises, however motivated, do not cause prices to rise or do not interfere with price reductions. Also the wage increase must not increase production costs "appreciably."

Employers always contend that wages are the chief item in what they call "cost of production." In attempting to reduce the cost of production they therefore always begin with efforts to cut wages. They don't include interest due bond holders and banks in the cost of production. They don't include dividends paid out as part of cost of production. They don't even include the big salaries paid company officials as part of cost of production. They only bring in the big salaries when they boost the "average wage" by including the big salary along with the lowest wage in arriving at the "average wage."

The bosses have a very definite idea about this; they know what they are doing. They know, even if the workers do not, that labor is the chief producer of wealth. There are millions of workers. If their wages are raised to higher and higher levels the profits of the corporations will be reduced and dividends will have to be lowered. This is what the bosses are interested in, and this is what Roosevelt is interested in. He is the protector of the profits of the boss.

The position of the government and the bosses is that wages must be raised only after they have worked out a

scheme that will increase production out of proportion to the slight increase in wages. To increase production in this way means an increase in profits. An increase in profits means that the corporation can pay bigger dividends and bigger salaries to corporation executives.

This scheme right now is what Roosevelt in his new decree calls "merit increases" and "incentive wages." Bosses always advocate the "merit system" and "incentive system." From their point of view they are correct. Their business is to get more profits. If the managers of industry don't get profits out of the business the owners of the industry—the bondholders and the big stockholders—will kick them out and put in executives who will.

The Roosevelt decree also says that wage increases must not tend to raise prices or interfere with the reduction of prices. Here Roosevelt again intends to make labor bear the main burden. The bosses say that they can't reduce prices because wages are too high. If the workers demand higher wages the bosses immediately demand an increase in prices. No responsibility at all is placed on the bosses for today's high prices. Every worker should know that the cause of high prices is not the wages he is paid. And even if this were true that would be no valid reason for the woefully inadequate wages being paid today.

As far as the bosses are concerned, their demand for high prices is similar to their demand for low wages; they want to increase profits. They make all sorts of plans and enter into all manner of agreements and combinations that have no relationship to the wage rate, for the sole purpose of maintaining or increasing prices. Du Pont and General Electric, even after the U.S. entered the war, maintained their agreements with German firms for the purpose of perpetuating a price monopoly.

But under this latest Roosevelt decree all of this is ignored and labor is told in effect that the only way to ward off chaos is to hold wages down—or for the workers to toil harder and longer so that the boss may get more profits.

To make certain that the bosses have their way, the decree virtually chains the workers to their present jobs. The chairman of the War Manpower Commission is authorized "to forbid... the acceptance of employment by a new employee" except by permission of the government, at "a wage or salary higher than that received by such new employee in his last employment unless the change of employment would aid in the effective prosecution of the war."

This is simple and direct enough. It means that workers must remain in their present jobs unless the government decides that they should work elsewhere. They can't leave their present jobs for a new job in another plant or industry unless the government says yes. This is "our system of free enterprise," 1943 model. This is the labor front, American style for 1943.

It is significant that in this decree Mr. Roosevelt did not discuss profits. He took up this matter in a mild sort of way in his statement on the Public Debt Act of 1943. This was the act to which Congress attached the rider repealing the executive order limiting salaries to \$67,200 flat. In this statement the President said that "practical limitations ought by appropriate taxation to be placed on all income, earned and unearned. I urged and would have welcomed a special tax measure applicable to all excessive incomes from whatever source derived in place of the flat \$67,200 salary limitation. ... I still hope and trust that the Congress, at the earliest possible moment, will give consideration to imposing a special war supertax on net income, from whatever source derived, which after the payment of all taxes exceeds \$25,000."

EVERYBODY GOT SOMETHING—BUT LABOR

The act that Roosevelt was discussing was a bill to extend the public debt limit to two hundred and ten billion dollars. This was the act to which Congress attached the salary rider. Roosevelt said that he did not veto the bill but permitted it to become law without his signature because the Treasury had advised him that to veto the bill would interfere with financing of the war. "I am accordingly allowing the bill to become law," says Roosevelt, "without my signature in order to avoid embarrassment to our war financing program." He says further that "it would have obviously been unfair to stabilize wages and yet leave salaries free to rise to \$67,200."

This is a very lame excuse for not vetoing this bill. Congress attempted to kill three birds with one stone. These representatives of the bosses took a general sock at Roosevelt, they raised the salary limit from \$25,000 to \$67,200 annually and they vetoed the war credits. Roosevelt put a ceiling on present low wages and tied the workers to their present places of employment. Everybody got something from the deal except labor.

Suppose Roosevelt had vetoed this bill. Would the war financing program have been embarrassed? Of course not. Congress must vote the money to prosecute this war; it can't escape this task. The bosses can't escape. They must fight the war and try to win. Everything they have and all they hope to gain all over the world would be jeopardized by refusal to supply the necessary money.

All that could possibly have happened would have been passage of the bill by Congress over Roosevelt's veto. Either they would have done this or the salary rider would have been taken off. Little time would have been lost, because Congress must act in this matter of financing the Second Imperialist World War.

It is easier, however, to fight labor than to fight Congress and the bosses. This would not be true if labor would issue its own Hold-the-Line decree. Labor is in the majority, but a working class majority is no good if you don't use it!

It takes only a Presidential say-so to freeze wages. It takes CONGRESSIONAL ACTION to put a crimp in profits!

That is one of the first points to be noted by every worker with regard to Roosevelt's "hold the line" order. In the decree issued last week, Roosevelt froze wages, promised to hold down prices, but said hardly a word about profits.

A few days after his decree, Roosevelt warned that he would seek a super-tax on profits. But note that this "blow" against profits came in a message explaining why he hadn't vetoed the lifting of the \$25,000 salary limit. Even that modest and inadequate limitation on income (it never covered all income, only salaries) was lifted by Congress. You can easily imagine what chances a bill to cut seriously into profits has in Congress.

However, even if a more severe tax bill is passed—that is, more severe on the bosses; it is already more than severe on the workers—profits are so huge today, and so many are the devices industry employs to get around paying taxes, that the rich will still be left with booty of staggering size.

Holding prices is only a promise; holding profits is less than that. But holding wages is a FACT! With labor sorely in need of increased wages to meet increased living costs over the last two years—not to speak of the wage increases they need to obtain a decent standard of living, and the wage increases they DESERVE in the face of mounting WAR profits—Roosevelt added to the fetters that already strangle labor's living standard.

Roosevelt's decree, added to his earlier decrees and to WLB decisions, etc., means less food, poorer clothing, inadequate shelter for the working class. And labor's answer to that part of the decree—the only part you can be sure will be effected—must be a redoubled effort for wage increases. Wage increases are the paramount need of American labor today!

Roosevelt promised to hold prices down. Good! We're for that. It is necessary. It is a vital supplement to wage increases in maintaining, OR BETTERING, labor's living standard. Roosevelt went further. He promised to hurl prices back to the September, 1942, level. We're for that, too! We have consistently demanded that prices be thrown back. Many have charged us with being unrealistic, saying that it can't be done. Roosevelt, however, admits it can be done. We proposed that they be thrown back to an earlier period. However, we won't quibble. If Roosevelt wants to throw them back to September, we'll settle for that.

BUT, no sooner had he issued his promise than the government raised the price of feed corn five cents a bushel. That five cents will be passed on to the consumer in higher prices for meat! Is that the full measure of Roosevelt's promise?

It obviously is. Roosevelt has been promising to hold prices for a long time now. But prices have not been held. They have systematically gone up. The facts of the matter are simple: government-boss machinery, as represented by the OPA, cannot hold prices in line. People who are committed to the acquisition of profits, people who themselves are connected with powerful profit-making corporations or ideologically cheek-by-jowl with them, cannot hold prices down. The OPA has demonstrated in its months of ineffectual existence that profits come first in its deliberations.

As against Roosevelt's PROMISE, we demand DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF PRICES. We ask that prices be controlled by representatives of the working farmers, housewives and unions.

And we further demand that all taxes on low incomes be eliminated. We propose that a 100 per cent tax be placed on



10,000 in Demonstration Against Jim-Crow

Black and White Workers Join in Mass Rally-Parade Sponsored in Detroit by NAACP and Auto Workers Union

DETROIT—"Bullets, machine guns and submarines draw no color line. Why should our government?" This question was indignantly asked by Dr. James J. McClendon, president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, at the mass rally against Jim Crow held here at Cadillac Square last Sunday, April 11.

Enthusiastic applause of the 10,000 Negro and white workers who had answered the call of the NAACP and the United Automobile Workers greeted his remarks. The parade-

and-rally was the first mass demonstration against the discrimination and segregation of the colored people in the armed forces, in the plants and in government housing held in this country since the formal entry of the United States into the war.

Several dozen Negro soldiers in uniform marched in order rank in the colorful parade, and many more of their soldier comrades joined them at the rally. Negro and white workers from Ford, Chrysler, Briggs and other large war plants were present and distin-

guished by their union caps, plant badges or union banners.

"We colored American citizens," said Dr. McClendon, "feel that we are not being treated right.... We believe that the democracy for which we are fighting should be put into practice here at home now. Not tomorrow, not next year, but now, right now. When the Dorie Millers and the Charles Franches return from the front, wearing the uniform of the United States government, they must be treated as first class citizens, and they must not be re-

fused service in a Greenfield restaurant, as three colored soldiers were a few weeks ago. That is not the type of democracy for which the colored soldiers are fighting....

"We say to you here this afternoon that if this evil is not corrected immediately the boys who are dying in the foxholes of the various war fronts will die in vain."

Citing several examples of local police mistreatment of Negro women here, Dr. McClendon warned, amidst warm applause, that "from now on

we shall hold the Mayor personally responsible" for any police mishandling of colored people.

Leonard D. V. Smith, vice-president of the Michigan CIO Council, another speaker, sounded an even more militant note. He said:

"This nation can ill afford to approach the oppressed and enslaved peoples abroad with olive leaves, and palms of peace on a silver platter, garnished with the nectar of democracy, while more than one tenth of its population is relegated

(Continued on page 4)

Over 100 Subs Last Week! Let's Keep It Up!

APRIL 14-19—FIFTH WEEK:

New York	29
Los Angeles	22
Detroit	15
Chicago	13
Buffalo	7
Cleveland	5
Akron	4
Serraville	4
National Office	2
Philadelphia	1
St. Louis and Missouri	1
TOTAL FOR WEEK	103
GRAND TOTAL	309

NOW we're getting some place! This week's total in the Sub Drive shows what can be done when our friends put their backs into it. With the first third of the Drive completed, we are just keeping up with our quota. But the magnificent advance made during the past two weeks suggests that we can even get ahead of our quota. How about making a WEEKLY TOTAL OF 100 SUBS our starting point—a new Weekly Quota that has been set by our own efforts?

NOTES ON THE SUB DRIVE: ... On a sub blank left at the office by a Negro worker during his lunch hour; "Keep up the

Detroit Tops Sub Quota!

Thirty-five six-month subscriptions to LABOR ACTION and sixty copies of Henry Judd's "India in Revolt" were sold at the rally against Jim Crow in Detroit on April 11. With five other subs sent in by Detroit since the above calculations were made, Detroit becomes the first city to top its quota in the national drive for 1,000 new subscriptions to LABOR ACTION. Detroit writes that it isn't stopping there, but is going ahead to double or triple its quota. The forty subs will be listed in next week's box score. Detroit also writes that 8,000 copies of LABOR ACTION were eagerly taken by the demonstrators at Cadillac Square.

good work!" ... Another comment from a new subscriber: "You put out a damn good paper." ... Credit Los Angeles: a big order for LABOR ACTION leaflets.... And don't forget that we now distribute 12,000 papers each week on the West Coast! ... A miners' paper from Scotland reprints one of Carlo's cartoons. (Carlo's cartoons have been reprinted in the labor press all over the world—and LABOR ACTION doesn't always receive credit!)

From friends of LABOR ACTION in Buffalo (a model report): "We receive and distribute 3,500 papers per week. Of this number, 2,800 goes weekly to three plants, two UAW and one Steel. The remainder, usually about 700, is used in house-to-house distribution, whence come the bulk of our subs. Our success in house-to-house distribution is based on one very simple fact, to wit: LA SELLS ITSELF to people who are familiar with it. We choose a convenient, closely grouped bunch of houses in a working class district, preferably a housing project. EVERY WEEK for at least four weeks, LA is slipped under the door or rolled neatly under the doorknob. (A project of 300 to 400 families can be covered by three or four people in a half hour's time.) Each person is assigned to one area of that project, which is first carefully mapped out, and he or she is completely responsible for seeing that all the houses in that area are covered every week. At the end of the four weeks' time, each person begins talking about the paper in his or her area. This is a much slower process, and anyone else who can be spared is generally sent to help out. Each week, after talking, the salesman leaves papers at that portion of his area that he has not yet reached, so that by the time he reaches the end of his area, some of his prospective customers have received LA for seven or eight weeks, and generally feel pretty strongly SOME WAY about it. Each person carries a notebook in which he makes short notes on each house for future reference. For those houses which have been 'not

home' for more than two weeks in a row, we generally leave a leaflet we have prepared, asking them to mail in a sub."

Ten more weeks to go! Those 1,000 new subscribers are already in sight. And let's build up to the special May Day issue of LA as an immediate goal. We want to publish a weekly total in the May Day issue that will knock your eye out!

LABOR ACTION, 6 mo., 25c; 1 yr., 50c
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News and Views from the Labor Front

All Eyes Are on Mine Union Wage Negotiations

By MIKE STEVENS

When the United Mine Workers and the coal mine operators met this Tuesday, after a long week-end recess, to study Roosevelt's wage-freezing order, the entire country followed the negotiations closely.

The struggle of the miners for a wage increase, the methods they use, the compromise or alliances they make, and the final outcome of these negotiations will determine for the entire trade-union movement in its economic and political struggles.

The picture up to the moment is this:

1. Roosevelt's order forbidding wage increases over the fifteen per cent Little Steel formula is of course intended against all labor, but it was rushed through at this time because it is known that the United Mine Workers, representing a half million workers in a basic industry, are against the Little Steel formula and that every organized worker in the United States is against it. Should the mine workers carry through any militant action which would question the authority of the War Labor Board and its Little Steel formula, union militancy in demands for higher wages could NOT be held in check by union leaders friendly to FDR.

2. John L. Lewis has already condemned the wage freezing order. It

has left the mine workers "still hungry and resentful in having their demands for bread made a political pawn." But Lewis' attempt to gain economic demands without tying them up with the need for independent political action of the working class forces him to seek out solutions which in the long run are detrimental to the working class.

Lewis' suggestion that the government subsidize the mines as in England would be of little benefit to the miners but of tremendous profit to the owners. In the move by Lewis to win the support of the reactionary farm bloc in Congress he has come out in support of the Bankhead and Pace bills, which would raise the cost of food by nineteen per cent.

All these moves are very revealing. Lewis, seeing government reaction against the workers' movement, hopes to arrest it. But instead of following the only possible road which, along with the strike weapon, can lead to success—the independent political action of the working class—he attempts to make a political bloc with a reactionary group of bosses who for their own reasons are also against Roosevelt. Such alliances not only cancel out whatever gains the workers may get, but are ultimately detrimental to ALL the interests of the workers.

Murray-Green Feel Their Way

3. The AFL and CIO are accepting the wage-freezing order, and this means that the rank and file of these organizations will immediately turn

their eyes to the miners' negotiations to see what will happen there. Roosevelt announced that prices on certain foodstuffs will be lowered—but with the next breath he said: "We must be prepared to tax ourselves more, to spend less and save more." This means that even if a few prices are lowered, the few pennies saved there will be taken away many times over in additional taxes, thus continuously worsening the living standards of the working classes, WITHOUT the possibility of wage increases because of the wage-freezing order.

4. Both Green and Murray have been very careful in their acceptance of the wage-freezing order. They are agreeing by degrees, feeling the pulse of the union membership as they go along. Lee Pressman, from Murray's office, threw out a trial balloon at a trade union conference last Sunday. He came out completely for wage freezing, wage incentives, uncritical support of the WLB and the entire "war stabilization program." He said: "The executive order is in no way a step backward. It is a step forward."

Everybody knows that this is Pressman's position, but he could not and would not have spoken in this fashion unless Murray had instructed him to try it and see the reaction. Murray will very soon come out for the wage-freezing order, but in order to sell it to the workers will ask for a number of guarantees from the government: that food prices go down, that the rich be taxed heavier and that profits be reduced. This was the way the auto workers were sold a bill of goods last year in order to give up premium pay. Equality of sacrifice it was called. They and we know it was really.

5. The day before the wage freezing order was announced, Boris Shiskin, chief economist of the AFL, at-

tacked the Labor Department's figures on the cost of living. His figures show that prices have gone up at least thirty-three per cent MORE than indicated by the Labor Department Index, which is the official index used by the government. Is there any wonder that the workers in the United States were not only stunned by the order freezing wages, but also by the tacit acceptance by the trade union leaders? And this is the reason all organized workers are watching the miners' negotiations. For here may lie the answer on how to break the wage freezing order and thus stop the rapid pace at which living standards are now being lowered.

FDR "Woo's" Miners

6. Although Roosevelt's moves against labor have been hard and direct, he does not want to come into a head-on collision, especially with the Mine Workers Union. This union is openly opposed to his policies and it has the sympathy of the largest section of the organized workers in the U.S. in its struggle. Roosevelt knows that this situation is full of dynamite and possible political repercussions. Secretary of Labor Perkins' threat to the mine owners of reducing the price of coal unless they make some concession and Steelman's bargaining proposal that the mine workers be guaranteed fifty-two weeks of work, are all significant "wooing" gestures by Roosevelt.

Preventing the WLB from entering the case is the most significant of these moves, considering the fact that the WLB insists that its jurisdiction is all-embracing, from the hole-in-the-wall barber shop to the railroads. And yet, in the mine situation, it has so far kept hands off, DESPITE the requests of the owners.

7. The results of the mine workers' struggle will have a direct bearing on what happens in the labor movement for many months

to come. But it will also have an immediate effect on the negotiations now going on in many industries throughout the country, outstanding of which is the wage demand of over 500,000 railroad workers. The negotiations between the Westinghouse Electric Co. and the CIO, representing 75,000 workers, have broken down. The 175,000 members of the National Federation of Telephone Workers (independent) have condemned the wage-freezing order and are awaiting a favorable decision to their wage demands or else they "may quit in protest." Philip Murray is being embarrassed daily by CIO workers, especially by the steel workers, in various sections of the country who are pressing demands and going on strike.

The outward militancy of the workers has been kept in check, to one degree or another, by giving them some hope that the WLB would do something for them. But their long over-due cases are NOW FROZEN.

Yes, all eyes are turned to the negotiations of the United Mine Workers. If it was a rank and file controlled organization we could give you the answer as to what they would do. But it is not. Therefore all we can do is hope that the pressure of the militancy of the miners who are now in the mines will force their leaders to continue the struggle along lines that will be of benefit to the miners, and consequently of benefit to all the workers.

On the Issues at Douglas

LOS ANGELES—The election to be held at the Douglas plants will soon determine who will have the bargaining rights for thousands of unorganized aircraft workers on the West Coast.

In a recent Labor Herald, official organ of the CIO on the West Coast, Lew Michener, UAW West Coast regional director, announced that the UAW had withdrawn its NLRB petition for a corporation-wide election at the four Douglas plants here. It has proposed instead that the AFL and the UAW ask the War Labor Board to see to it that Douglas recognize the collective bargaining rights of each union for the members they have each signed up. Michener gives as a reason for this sudden withdrawal from elections that the UAW considers an election PRE-MATURE.

Why should the election be considered premature at this time? The UAW has been attempting to organize Douglas for several years. The Douglas workers are asking to be organized. They are sick of the paternal policy of the company.

The elections are certainly not "premature" on the ground that the Douglas workers are unwilling to be organized. They may be premature for the UAW because the Douglas workers are unwilling to be organized by a union which is unwilling to represent them, which has shown that it will not fight against the Little Steel formula. Douglas workers look skeptically at a union which denounces as Hitler agents their brothers in Boeing who fought for justice. Thus, on face value, the Douglas workers may judge the IAM-AFL as the more progressive union. For example, the IAM spoke up against the stabilization agreement when the local UAW, under the impetus of Com-

Local 9 Militants Petition For Election of Stewards

SAN PEDRO, April 10—The membership of Local 9 of the Shipyard Workers Union is beginning to stir against the dictatorial regime of Walter S. Pollard, the "union boss" appointed some months ago by the national office over the heads of the membership.

This is the meaning of a combination of recent events here, all of which came to a head last week. For one thing, it is seen that a rank-and-file petition has been circulating in all the CIO yards, asking that the men be given the right to elect their own shop stewards. At one of the yards, Bethlehem, a petition was made, the bounds asking for the restoration of local democracy and an end to the Pollard dictatorship. And LABOR ACTION has already reported the resistance of the Shop Stewards Council and machine shop men to Pollard's attempt to put over an opening wedge for the ten-hour day. The petitions piled up thousands of signatures in a few days and there is no doubt that more than ninety per cent of the men agree with them.

These are the first signs of mass opposition to Pollard since last October, when he took the reins. Even an office bureaucrat can recognize such signs, and Pollard promptly replied—in typically bureaucratic fashion.

First was the local executive board meeting last Tuesday. Instead of limiting the meeting to his stooges, as has been the case with executive meetings since Pollard took office, he invited down all shop stewards, committee men, former executive board members, etc., to be present for the show which he staged. At this meeting, acting as impresario, he pre-

sented his various appointees and committee heads one after the other to give carefully written reports of their accomplishments, exaggerating the improvements in administrative efficiency. And this was dressed up to the point where Baron Munchausen would have had to take a back seat. But, even at face value, that isn't the main or important thing.

These theatricals lasted for three and a half hours, at the end of which Pollard came to his point: a threat to any critics of his administration. With a comical show of "fairness," following his three-and-a-half-hour barrage and with midnight coming on, he asked any critics to take the floor, or else cease their criticism or face expulsion. This mockery of "democratic discussion" is typical of Pollard, based as it is on flibuster and intimidation.

Many militants commented that this episode was, in fact, the first victory for the rank and file since Pollard arrived. The dictator has shown that he feels the need to justify his presence in the area and to present a comprehensive report of his stewardship of their local. But he has not pulled the wool over the eyes of the union members. His smokescreen can only convince those already tied to him. The fact remains that the main issue right now is the restoration of democratic rights as the first step to making the union a fighting instrument in the hands of the membership.

Neither Pollard's tricky maneuvers, his theatricals nor his threats will stop the rank and file from achieving the democratic rights which are justly theirs.

Cleveland News

By RUTH LEONARD

A strike of street car men is in the offing here unless the City Transit System comes across with a wage increase. The Street Car Men's Union (AFL) asked for a fourteen-cent-an-hour increase. The Transit Com-

mission offered two and a half cents an hour, which was rejected by the union. The union made another offer to settle for eight cents an hour. This too was rejected by the city, and negotiations have been broken off.

The street car men are desperately in need of a substantial wage increase to meet the rise in the cost of living, a rise which has been particularly high in this city. The street car men have gotten results before through militant actions. They are not likely to back down this time.

Longshorers Lick Bridges Move To Enter C. of C.

SAN PEDRO, April 1—San Pedro longshoremen tonight defeated by a large majority the recommendation of the union's local executive board that it join the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce. This move to join the Chamber of Commerce came right from Harry Bridges and Philip Murray. A letter has been sent out by the national CIO office urging local unions to join their respective Chambers of Commerce. It is to be hoped the rest of the CIO will follow the example set by the longshoremen and vote down such a proposition.

As was to be expected, it was the Bridges men and the Stalinists who supported the recommendation to join. One militant got the Stalinists' goats by referring to them as "political chameleons." In case you do not know, a chameleon is a lizard that changes its color. The union brother who led the fight against the Chamber of Commerce proposition pointed out that he would never have believed it possible in 1934 and '36 that the longshoremen would ever seriously consider such a thing. "Times have changed," answered a Stalinist. Yes, times have changed for Bridges and his clique.

The War Labor Board here intervened in an unprecedented fashion to lower the wages of employees at the downtown Fisher Body training school. Trainees at the school were started at eighty cents an hour, a rate set for beginners by the union contract. The War Labor Board, in violation of the contract, lowered the rate to seventy cents an hour. The board's reason was that other war plant bosses had complained of the high rate for trainees at Fisher. To date, the union has not taken any action.

The Fisher Food Stores here have blossomed out with gay signs, informing the public that now that spring is here canned vegetable ration worries are over. The signs decorate a window display of good-looking fresh vegetables. The vegetables seem to lose their color, however, when their prices are investigated. Spinach a few weeks ago was ten cents a pound, but now it is thirteen cents; broccoli, nineteen cents; pre-spring price, now twenty-nine cents; green peppers, six cents winter price, now ten cents, and so on.

Election Results at Bell Aircraft Voided by UAW Executive Board

By ROBERT MASON

BUFFALO—On Wednesday, April 7, the executive board of the UAW met in Buffalo, reviewed the election procedure of the Bell Aircraft election and decided on a new election. At a membership meeting Wednesday night, President R. J. Thomas placed an administrator, Alex McGowan, over the local and ordered that a new election take place as soon as possible. The administrator must be removed within sixty days.

The executive board of the UAW absolved the union election committee of direct blame for the four technicalities on which the election was voided. Thomas blamed the violations chiefly on the inexperience of the election committee. The severest rebuke, Thomas handed to the Brodese administration for the disgraceful condition of the union books, which he blamed in large measure for the confusion surrounding the electoral procedure. The new election will be supervised by the international. As readers of LABOR ACTION know, the Progressives made a clean sweep of the election against the Unite and Win slate headed by Stalinist Alie Brodese and his crew of trained seals.

Under normal circumstances the election results would have held, but Brodese, following the Stalinist tactics, pursued a rule or ruin policy with his followers. He attempted to break the rules of the constitution and thus void the election. Then, im-

mediately after the counting of the ballots, Brodese protested the election. It was this protest which led to the intervention of the UAW.

Meanwhile, further confusion was thrown into the Bell picture by the startling news that two of the leading militants in the shop, Frank St. George and Larry Trainor, had been fired "at the request of the Army." The reason given by the Army was their "undesirability" with no other explanation or definition given. Certainly Trainor and St. George were "undesirable" to Larry Bell, but they were very desirable to every Bell worker interested in clean, militant unionism. Every Bell worker instinctively recognizes this as merely another vicious and undemocratic attempt to strike down union militants behind the back of the membership.

At present the case of Trainor and St. George is being handled by the international union, but there seems to be little hope of reinstatement. The rank and file must urge the UAW to effective action in this and similar cases or no union militant will be safe. Eventually, the leadership of the UAW, if it procrastinates in these cases, will find itself at the head of a union which has lost its "guts" and later its finances and members. Only the determined, united efforts on the part of the rank and file can halt this kow-towing to the big corporations and their governmental Charlie McCarthys.

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

UAW Loses Pullman -- Vote by Small Margin

Dear Editor:

In an NLRB election conducted a few weeks ago at Pullman Aircraft in Chicago, the company union won out by a margin of sixty-three votes over the UAW-CIO.

There were a number of reasons for this defeat of a bona fide union at this plant. First, comparatively high wages paid in a number of departments. Secondly, the company put on a high pressure campaign of propaganda against the CIO and intimidated CIO men in the plant. The large number of workers new to industry and to Pullman tended to be more taken in by the company's anti-union propaganda than would ordinarily be the case.

Pullman Aircraft workers are now tasting the bitter fruits of a defeat for unionism in the plant. Wage increases sorely needed by lower paid employees have been categorically refused, and company superintendents tell the workers that there will be a general wage cut in the immediate future.

Moreover, over 300 workers have been fired by the company, with more slated for drop cards in an attempt by the Pullman outfit to weed out all who might possibly be called by the draft boards in the near future. This firing splurge, which represents a move by the company to hoard a labor supply for its exclusive use, was also a direct attempt to smash completely the UAW-CIO militant group of the shops. Most of the key union men were included in the purge.

Meanwhile, the Pullman company union, armed with exclusive bargaining rights, has done absolutely nothing. No attempt has been made to draw up or negotiate a contract. No meetings have been held for workers in the shops. Instead the company stooge outfit has saddled the workers with a drive to raise funds for the Red Cross, just a few weeks after a similar drive was conducted officially by the company.

The name of Pullman has a distinctly bad odor in the history of labor. Ever since the days of Eugene V. Debs and the National Railway Union's great strike, Pullman has maintained a policy of rotten work-

ing conditions and clever anti-union propaganda.

Pullman Aircraft workers have learned a lesson already. They are still learning and will learn more as the company, given a go-ahead signal by the Labor Board election, proceeds to put the screws on them. But they had to learn it the hard way, and hard work will be necessary to take the first step in their own protection—a militant union with a contract guaranteeing uniformly decent wages and decent working conditions.

Aircraft Worker (Chicago).

Sees Fascism In Technocracy

Dear Editor:

I had an opportunity to attend a meeting of Technocracy, Inc., here in Akron recently. For some time this organization has been widely advertised by billboards, full page ads in the newspapers, etc.

I had rather good reason to believe that this organization contained definite fascist tendencies and my at-

tendance at this meeting sustained my convictions.

Their program contains all the demagogy of a typical fascist movement. There were the uniformed and militaristic members, the theatrical settings for the speakers' platform with the immense backdrop upon which was the emblem of technocracy, and other physical characteristics so well known to the fascist type.

The speaker was likewise convincing as to his ideological position in his lecture on the program of technocracy. He attacked the politicians, business and labor unions. "Politicians are sabotaging the war effort through politics as usual, business is too powerful for the country's good because they control the money, and labor is taking things too easy."

Their program is to conscript men, money and machines for total war. They shouldn't be too disappointed, for their program is about two-thirds realized. Men have been conscripted and the worker's money is rapidly being conscripted through forced bond sales, income taxes, and the constantly increasing cost of living. The real demagogy of their pro-

gram is illustrated by their belief that industry is powerful because it controls the money. That is true, but only a half truth—for the real power of industry and finance capital lies in the fact that they own the means of production. Control over money is only secondary and dependent upon the latter fact.

Also typically fascist is their advocacy of self-sufficiency for America, suppression of foreign language newspapers and radio programs, liquidation of hyphenated American societies, and discrimination against Negroes and other minority groups.

During the question period, the speaker confessed ignorance as to practicing discrimination against the Negroes but he admitted that no Negroes could join their organization except on a Jim Crow basis of segregation.

In other words, Negroes and Asiatics, for instance, would be Jim Crowed into Negro Technocracy, Inc., and Asiatic Technocracy, Inc.

Every militant worker will recognize this organization for what it is, an American fascist party with super-nationalist and super-imperialist goals. It holds out nothing for the

workers except heavier and heavier chains and super-exploitation for the benefit of the capitalist class. It might well become the front for monopoly capitalism as did its sister ideological pattern in Germany and Italy.

Mel Strong (Akron.)

LABOR ACTION

Announces a Series of Lectures on the War
By MAX SHACHTMAN
FRIDAYS AT 8:15 P.M.

April 16—Why the War Came.
April 30—Fascism and Democracy in the War.
May 14—United States in the War.
June 11—Russia in the War.
June 18—Socialism or the Third World War?

Place—Labor Temple, 14th St. and 2nd Ave., New York
Admission—25 cents per lecture.
Combination Ticket for All Five - - - One Dollar.

"Administrators" Lay Plans To Crush European Revolution

By EUROPACUS

The American Mercury publishes an article by Kingsbury Smith, well known in newspaper circles as the semi-official mouthpiece of the State Department. The introduction specifically states that "the author has consulted authoritative governmental sources" before preparing the article. There can be no doubt that this piece gives a correct outline of the plans of the United States government for Germany.

The central ideas of this plan are two-fold. The first objective is to take all measures to prevent revolutionary developments in Germany. The second is to destroy the economic and political power of Germany so that it will never again arise as a competitor to U. S. imperialism in continental Europe.

"The discharged soldiers of a defeated nation on the loose are considered ripe for revolution. That is the one thing the American planners feel must be avoided in Germany; therefore it is felt that a good many of the soldiers must be kept mobilized temporarily and used as labor battalions.... It is intended to limit relief measures in Germany to the minimum required to prevent revolution and chaos.... It is felt that we must prevent famine, disease and complete economic chaos in Germany because our planners are convinced these would mean communism not only for that country but for all Europe as well."

Unlike so many faint-hearted ex-revolutionists, the State Department sees clearly that the European revolution is threatening. It recognizes the menace to its domination in Europe as well as in America if German and European workers throw down their arms and form revolutionary councils and organizations. The specter of revolution is haunting the diplomats and the representatives of big business. Therefore a great part of their plan is directed toward the crushing and prevention of these movements. To establish order, THEIR order, is even now as much pressing a problem for them as the military conduct of the war. They do not intend to beat the enemy imperialists and then allow revolutionary events to threaten their domination abroad and at home. While some stupid liberal apologists for the war still want to make us believe that this is a people's war, this document proves that one of the chief aims in this war is the definite crushing of any attempt by the people of Germany and, more generally, of Europe, to take their destiny into their own hands.

They know that publication of such a plan and similar utterances of Allied statesmen can only serve to reinforce Hitler's propaganda. But they are not at all concerned about this. This time they are going to be "tough." They do not even attempt to veil their aims any more. What do they care if millions of soldiers will die on the battle fronts of the world in the meantime, so long as they are confident of ultimately holding all the trump cards?

A report which has just been smuggled out reveals once again the line of thought now prevailing in Germany. "Our friends inform us that after the defeat at Stalingrad there was general downheartedness which Goebbels' propaganda was unable to check. The opposition is gaining courage, and misgivings about Hitler are spreading. However, they say, the German people are panicky over post-war developments and Goebbels takes advantage of this fear. Among the opposition there is fear that a reactionary government may be imposed upon the German people."

In order to implement this policy, it is revealed that the American Army is already NOW preparing administrators to rule Germany as American Gauleiters. "A select group of army officers and civilian experts from the various government departments is being given special training to act as 'civil affairs officers' in the military government that is established in Germany. The War Department alone is planning to train more than a thousand American top administrators to help govern Germany." The American Gauleiters are being prepared at the United States Army School of Military Government at Charlottesville, Va.

This time the Army is going to do a thorough job. The Versailles Treaty was much too "liberal" a treaty. This time all of Germany will be occupied and run by the representatives of American imperialism especially trained for the job.

But administration of the country is not enough. So long as Germany still possesses its powerful industrial potential, so long as it still produces goods which would compete with American goods on the world market, more needs to be done. Therefore Germany's industrial machinery must be destroyed.

"It is considered essential to remove a great deal of machinery from the country.... It is intended to decentralize and reduce Germany's industries.... The industries left will be placed under strict Allied control.... It is also intended to restrict the benefits which Germany derives from the balance of her industries, her agriculture and the rest of her economic life. At first, these benefits will be limited to a point designed merely to assure self-subsistence."

In short, the plan which American imperialists have for Germany resembles, as one pea does another, the plan Hitler has for a Nazi occupied Europe. The country is to be stripped of its valuable machinery, which will be given to the "master race." The rest of the industrial output is to be directed in such a way as to leave just enough so that the people will not starve and will keep on producing. Germany is to be de-industrialized, that is, Germany's millions of workers are to be deprived of their livelihood. They will be forced to go back to agriculture, or starve. The "master race" is to hold the monopoly of political, military and economic power.

"It is planned to restrict supplies to the minimum required to prevent actual starvation. It is intended that the available food supplies shall be restricted even when harvest time enables them to start feeding themselves. The surplus above that needed to maintain self-subsistence will be diverted to other European countries.

Of course it is also intended to cut Germany into many small states: "Drastic decentralization of the country as a single powerful and political unit.... The rest of Germany must be separated from Prussian influence."

Insofar as political parties and freedom are concerned, the plan says exactly what you would expect it to say: "It is intended to restore gradually (When? In a hundred years?) —E.) the principle of freedom of speech and the press, though both these mediums of expression will be strictly controlled during the occupational period to prevent political falsehood or any attempt to sabotage the Allied plans."

Welcomed by Nazis

There is one man who will welcome the publication of this plan wholeheartedly and that is Nazi Propaganda Chief Goebbels. No better propaganda for Hitler can be found than this revelation of American plans for Germany. In fact, the publication of this plan at this moment only show that American imperialists are not much concerned over the obvious effects this sort of plan will have on the German people. They have time. They hope that in two or three years the might of Allied imperialism will be strong enough to crush a half-starved and desperate Germany.

They know that publication of such a plan and similar utterances of Allied statesmen can only serve to reinforce Hitler's propaganda. But they are not at all concerned about this. This time they are going to be "tough." They do not even attempt to veil their aims any more. What do they care if millions of soldiers will die on the battle fronts of the world in the meantime, so long as they are confident of ultimately holding all the trump cards?

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'India in Revolt'

If you haven't yet ordered and read Henry Judd's 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.

economy with its rationing, its job freezing and military command over civilians would become a permanent feature in America.

Sometimes it is naively said: "Let us once and for all finish this job in Europe; these people are not able to govern themselves, so American should maintain law and order in these countries." There is no greater fallacy than this. Plans of U.S. imperialism are not only right now a tremendous help to Hitler and Goebbels, they also lay the groundwork for World War III. Just as Hitler did not succeed in crushing completely the peoples of Europe, and is only able to keep them temporarily under his heel; just as hatred and resistance against Nazi domination smolder all over Europe, so the same hatred, the same resistance, will of necessity be the fruits of American oppression in these countries. Just as now different imperialists have temporarily formed an alliance in order to crush Nazi imperialism, so other alliances will be formed in order to threaten and to overthrow American domination. And the seeds of a new world war will grow at tremendous speed. The plans of U.S. imperialism for post-war Germany are thoroughly and well prepared. But it is not the first time in history that the peoples to be subjected to such plans have torn to bits these beautiful projects and disappointed the all-too-clever authors.

Europacus.

The India of the Western Hemisphere

Puerto Rico and the New Deal

By V. SEGUNDO

The economic problem of Puerto Rico, insofar as the bulk of its people is concerned, may be reduced to the simple terms of progressive landlessness, chronic unemployment, and implacable growth of the population. A policy of fundamental reconstruction should, therefore, contemplate the definite reduction of unemployment to a point, at least, where it may be adequately dealt with by normal relief agencies; the achievement of this, largely by restoration of the land to the people who cultivate it, and by the fullest development of the industrial possibilities of the island.

This is a quotation from the so-called Chardon Plan, presented by a group of island intellectuals to Congress in 1934. It could hardly be called revolutionary. But it recognizes the chief problem—absentee ownership—and points out its only cure: the return of the land to the people who cultivate it. It is Spain. It is czarist Russia, or China, or the colonial world. Here the first step to socialism is the "restoration of the land to the people who cultivate it."

It is a first step that the New Deal has not taken, and will not take. What the Roosevelt Administration has done can be called, in contrast

to the size of the problem, no more than gestures. The supervision of island affairs was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior. In 1935 the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration, a sort of local PWA, was started. It built a few groups of workers' houses which even in the official propaganda photographs do not look too much better than the hovels they supplant. One of the largest is named after Eleanor Roosevelt.

Absentee Ownership and Food

As Chardon said, one of the basic problems of Puerto Rico is its high birth rate. It is one of the most thickly populated areas on the face of the earth, with about two million people in about 3,400 square miles. The United States, with an equal population density, would have 1.5 billion instead of 135 million inhabitants. During the forty-five years of American occupancy, the island population has grown at the rate of about 40,000 a year. Only recently, after a long and bitter fight between liberals and the powerful Catholic Church, has it become legal to advertise contraceptive devices.

This very dense and growing population could support itself on the land, for Puerto Rico is very fertile. That is, it could if the people grew food. But the land is owned by American companies, and the island-

ers do not grow food. There are at present about 605,000 acres under cultivation, divided as follows:

Sugar	319,000
Coffee	200,000
Tobacco	20,000
Fruits and miscellaneous	66,000

Thus more than half of the land—and the best land at that—is devoted to sugar, the crop of the American corporations. Coffee, the second crop, is called "the small man's crop," and is largely in the hands of native small landowners. It is far less prosperous than sugar, largely because it is not included in the United States tariff wall. Only about one-tenth of the acreage is devoted to "fruits and miscellaneous," and even of this some of the fruit is exported—for the better profit of the United States, and the better starvation of Puerto Rico.

There are about 250,000 agricultural workers. Of these, only 20 per cent are farm owners or tenants (decreased from about 30 per cent in 1910). The rest are jibaros (landless peasants). This is the bulk of the population.

Wage Rates Low

Two of the three principal industries are directly derivative from agriculture—processing of agricultural products and shipping. The only other important industry is the finishing of textile garments by cheap hand labor, often by home work.

The work is superlatively good; in 1931, at the French Colonial Exposition, Puerto Rican hand embroideries won several Grand Prix in competition with all parts of the world. But the pay, of course, is not commensurate.

The Puerto Rico Department of Labor made a survey of wage rates on the island for the years 1937-38. The results (as cited in the WPA Guide) are worth quoting, for they give a graphic picture of pre-war conditions.

"Average earnings in urban districts for males ranged from a high of \$13 per week in the printing trades to a low of \$2.52 per week for dock workers. As a rule women received lower wages than men. Agricultural workers average lower wages.... Wages in these industries averaged for males from \$8.13 a week in sugar factories to \$2.37 a week in coffee growing. In only two trades (printers and dock workers) were the average hourly earnings over twenty-five cents, and in some cases women workers earned an average of two and a half or three cents an hour. Lowest wages earned by rural workers were in truck gardening. In this activity men worked 38.9 hours a week at an average weekly wage of \$2.26. Women worked 46.7 hours with a weekly rate of \$1.78, and children worked a full week of 48 hours, receiving \$1.50 per week."

Translating these figures into terms of human misery requires some imagination, but not too much. One other fact should be kept in mind. Workers are paid ordinarily in scrip, good only at company stores, where they pay high prices for shoddy goods. This practice is now illegal, but apparently it is a law for the books only.

Get a Few Crumbs

The early 'Thirties, when the New Deal came into power, was a particularly miserable period. There was a severe and very destructive hurricane in 1928, and another in 1932. The people were ground deeper and deeper into poverty. By 1934 unemployment reached a total of approximately 350,000, affecting 75 per cent of the population. The answer was revolt.

In 1922 one Pedro Albizu Campos had founded the Nationalist Party, calling for complete independence from the United States. During the early 'Thirties, in the words of the WPA Guidebook, "fervid nationalists clashed violently with constituted authority." In 1936 Albizu and the other leaders were sentenced to imprisonment. He is still in the Atlanta penitentiary, with four years more to serve.

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But conditions were such that it was necessary to offer a few crumbs as well as to knock in a few skulls. As in the United States, this was the role of the New Deal. In 1933 the Puerto Rico Emergency Relief Administration was established, with a role similar to mainland relief agencies, but on a lower level. The Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration, already mentioned, was established, and WPA was extended to the island. The Fair Labor Standards Act, passed in 1938, set a minimum wage in the United States of twenty-five cents an hour and a maximum work week of forty-four hours, and forbade "oppressive" child labor. This was theoretically applicable to Puerto Rico, but since it did not cover agricultural workers, intrastate commerce workers, or home workers, it had virtually no effect. As we have said, on all the island only printers and dock workers earned as much as twenty-five cents an hour.

The net effect of all this was profits for the American corporations—and starvation for the Puerto Rican workers. The people are starving now, and the newspapers blame the war. But the wage figures quoted above were for the years 1937-38, before the war started, and those figures spell starvation.

That is not to say that conditions are not now much worse. They are. An account of what the war has done to the Puerto Rican jibaro will be given in the next article, next week.

Draft Compels Mothers to Become Bread-Winners

Wanted! Day Nurseries, Not Advice!

By RHEA JAMES

Women are being high-pressured into taking war factory jobs all over the country. But there is one large section of the feminine population that even President Roosevelt counsels to stay at home. Nevertheless, this very considerable group of women will be compelled by wartime circumstances to seek jobs.

Estimates as to what size the army will be by the end of 1943 vary from eleven million to sixteen million. At present there are around seven million in the armed forces—at least four million more men will be drafted this year. Since only a small percentage of this amount can be drawn from among the eighteen-year-olds, the major portion of the men to be drafted will be married men with children. Bills to defer married men, which are occasionally discussed in Congress, may be dismissed as just so much electioneering. The military authorities are the deciding factor as to how large the army shall be.

How will mothers be able to look after their families after the breadwinner is taken off to the army? The most a private's wife can count on if she has two children is about \$70 a month. No family can eat and live properly on that amount of money these days.

In the "good old days" it was impossible to maintain a decent scale of living on \$100 a month for a family of three. How much more impossible it is now! Government statisticians place the cost of living at 30 per cent higher in October, 1942, than in 1939. Since October, 1942, the cost of food has taken phenomenal leaps. Some authorities say that living costs have risen 40 per cent since pre-war days. In his speech to the mine owners recently, John L. Lewis stated that the cost of living in the mining districts has gone up 140 per cent and that figure undoubtedly holds true for the industrial cities of the United States. In some of the cities where the war plants are situated, living quarters are at a premium—and it is to cities with war plants that mothers seeking jobs will have to go.

In any case, it will be impossible for mothers to obey the advice of President Roosevelt and Mayor La Guardia and President Roosevelt's National Citizens' Committee-White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, that "Mothers haven't yet been told that they MUST go to work in a war factory. And the advice to all mothers of young children is to stay home and look after your children. That's your job in wartime or peacetime. However, there are some who must work. For those we've opened an information and counseling service." (Mind you, not a nursery but a "counseling service.")

Nurseries Are the Need

The urgent need of the moment then are children's nurseries, all-day kindergartens and schools for looking after the child during the hours the mother is at work. That the problem is an acute one is widely acknowledged by all the authorities from the President down—the same authorities who are responsible for the lack of facilities. Literally thousands of committees have been formed, from the

presidential committee with the long-sounding title mentioned before, down to little neighborhood committees. Each of these committees scurries around uttering millions of words, wasting miles of paper on letters, telephoning, meetings, etc.—but very few nurseries have been started. A few of the large plants have nurseries that cater to a few score children, but they are woefully inadequate.

In June, 1941, Congress passed the Lanham Act appropriating funds for nurseries in war industrial areas. In March, 1943, words were flying thick and fast in an argument between Governor Dewey of New York and the federal authorities, trying to trace the blame for the fact that not a single nursery has been built. In August, 1942, President Roosevelt allocated \$400,000 from emergency funds to set up a service to determine the needs of care for children of working mothers.

Dewey Talks, But...

Governor Dewey of New York bitterly denounced the federal authorities for not living up to the promise contained in the Lanham Act. "More than a year ago, it became apparent that we would face a serious problem in the care of children of mothers working in war industries. At that time it was announced that this being a federal problem arising out of the war, it would be met by federal action. Funds were appropriated by Congress for such action and prompt results were anticipated."

"Two main federal agencies, the Social Security Agency and the Federal Works Agency, have been conducting a bitter struggle for control of the program."

"In addition, there have also been involved the Department of Labor, the Federal Housing Administration, the United States Public Health Service, the Food Distribution Administration, the Children's Bureau, the Office of Civilian Defense, the WPA, the War Manpower Commission, the Office of Education, the Civilian Labor Supply Division of the Army, the Civilian Labor Supply Division of the Air Force.

"During this entire time, the sole result has been a struggle for power over child care, accompanied by carloads of publicity. Not one child in this state has yet received aid."

The Governor's statement goes on to say that New York State request-

ed funds from the federal authorities for facilities for 5,400 children.

"Today, after a year, thousands of New York children are without care. While their mothers serve in the war effort, federal agencies engage in a struggle for power and child delinquency rises. The situation is intolerable."

So what did our indignant Governor do. He appropriated five million dollars of state funds for child care, with a loud splash of publicity. The CIO says that twenty million would be insufficient to cope with the urgent problem.

This noble action by Governor Dewey brought an equally noble gesture from the federal authorities, who said they would match whatever appropriation the state made, dollar for dollar. So the Governor promptly halved the appropriation to two and a half million, making a total available in New York State, at least on paper, of five million dollars.

To aggravate an already "intolerable situation," the WPA nurseries are being closed, as their funds are being withdrawn. Although there were too few of these nurseries to absorb the newly-gone-to-work mothers, at least they had an established apparatus. It is a typically bureaucratic and criminal waste of time, money and energy to close these down while planning to open others under a different auspices.

Delinquency Rises

Apologies of the ill effects suffered when mothers are forced to leave their children without proper care, juvenile delinquency in England has risen fifty per cent during the war. The causes are the drafting of women, exempting only mothers of children under fourteen, the disruption of schools by the drafting of woman-power and the closing of juvenile courts and recreational centers.

Already in the United States we can see the inception of a juvenile crime wave. Authorities all agree that the reason for it seems to be that mothers have relaxed their guidance because of accepting work outside the home.

"We must face frankly the fact that very few vacancies exist in nursery schools and agencies that care for children, and that state appropriations or enlarged city services are matters for future decision."

Thus the executive director of New York City's Mayor's Committee on

MAY DAY AND THIRD ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Labor Action - - Workers Party

Date: SUNDAY, MAY 2, 1943 at 5 P.M.

Place: MARINI'S, 9 East 22nd St.

Speakers • Italian Cuisine • After Dinner Dancing

\$1.25 Per Plate

Joint Auspices: LABOR ACTION - - WORKERS PARTY

Editorials

Open Covenants, Openly Arrived At

The first of Wilson's fourteen points (remember them?) provided for "open covenants, openly arrived at." It was a very good point, and there was consequently no chance that it would be accepted in capitalist diplomacy. The last war was shot through with secret agreements and treaties. Many of these were exposed by the workers of Russia when they dug into the archives of the Czar's government after they took power in 1917. Others were revealed in the years following the war in many books and investigations.

Secret diplomacy is as much a characteristic of this war as of the last. It is in fact a basic trait of capitalist diplomacy which dares not submit its commitments and plans to the democratic view of the people. We do not know to what secret agreements the people of the United States or of the world have been pledged in this war. The "war for democracy" does not include that democratic provision. However, we are certain they exist. And we are not speaking of details of military operation—disposition of troops and such.

Proof of what we say is contained in the announcement this week that the press would be barred from the International Food Conference scheduled to meet in Hot Springs, Va. This will not be the most important conference of the war. Yet its deliberations may prove of vital concern to the working class. It may, for example, discuss ways and means of starving out a revolutionary movement in Europe.

Roosevelt has often paid lip-service to open diplomacy. Other capitalist politicians have done the same. (Willkie, for example, gave the first of Wilson's points a plug on this week's Information Please radio program.) But there's a long way betwixt the reality and the lip-service.

Evidently Roosevelt considers it important that the people know no more about the Food Conference than the conferees choose to tell them. By the same token, it is important that the workers know what is going on in this and other negotiations. The demand therefore is in order: An End to Secret Diplomacy! Open Covenants, Openly Arrived at!

Not That Way!

Here's a case of labor starting out to do the right thing, but heading in the wrong direction:

In June, delegates representing 500,000 automobile workers, steel mill hands, shipbuilders and teamsters will meet in convention in Detroit to set up an Independent Labor Party.

Now, that is something that badly needs doing. And there is no better place to start the doing than in Michigan, where the CIO

speaks for 1,100,000 workers in basic industry.

The first reaction is to cheer the move unreservedly, but then we run into the rub. The whole thing seems to have been cooked up largely with the purpose of putting over a fourth term for Roosevelt. And that doesn't strike us as the way to undertake independent political labor action—to begin by backing a boss candidate. As between the boss candidates we don't particularly care whether it's Roosevelt's fourth term or somebody else's first term. **We do care that labor put up its own candidate!**

There is no doubt that the men and women who will go to the conference in Detroit genuinely want independent political action. There is, in general, a growing realization in labor's ranks that it must organize itself politically as well as economically. And do that it must! But it looks like the delegates to the Detroit conference are being sucked into another scheme to back a boss candidate—this time under an independent title.

Certain leaders of the labor movement, tied closely to the Roosevelt machine, want to divert the urge for political action into a vote-snatching device for Roosevelt. The ranks will therefore have to do a lot of plain talking at this conference. And we recommend as a theme: **The way to independent political action is class independence right down the line; a labor party organized to support boss candidates is not a Labor Party!**

An Arrogant Bill

The House of Representatives on April 9 passed the Hobbs anti-racketeering bill by a vote of 270 to 107. This vote sends to the Senate for action one of the most arrogant pieces of anti-labor legislation in American history.

The clauses of this bill submitted by Poll-Taxer Hobbs are so elastic as easily to allow the penalties provided—namely, **up to twenty years' imprisonment and \$10,000 fine**—to be applied to legitimate union activities and, of course, to striking workmen.

The amendment that would have pulled out some of the bill's sharpest anti-labor teeth—**backed by both the AFL and CIO**—was unceremoniously brushed aside by the majority of the "legislators of the people."

That at this late date the only essential economic class in society—the working class—has so little political power, is due to one fact and one alone. Labor is not standing on its own political feet; it entrusts its political fate to its worst enemies.

LABOR ACTION is going to shout this lesson from the housetops. Labor must have its own class party—an Independent Labor Party absolutely free from all connection with the bosses and their politicians and parties.

200 Attend Workers Party Forum on National Question

On Sunday, April 11, Comrade Max Shachtman, national secretary of the Workers Party, delivered a lecture on the problem of national liberation for the occupied countries of Europe. To an audience of some 200, Shachtman presented the point of view of the party as contained in the resolution recently published in The New Internationalist. (Readers of LABOR ACTION are advised to write us for a copy of this resolution.)

Opening his remarks with a general discussion of the war, its development and prospects, Comrade Shachtman went on to describe in special detail the situation in Europe and the pattern that socialist agitation would have to take. In brief, the outline of his argument was as follows:

As a result of the policies and practices of the social-reformists and the Stalinists—the first more concerned with saving capitalism and the latter with keeping the Russian bureaucracy in power than with defending the interests of the European workers—and finally as a result of the triumph of fascism, the working class movement, all its organizations, trade unions, parties, have been virtually destroyed in the occupied countries. The only organized mass resistance to fascist slavery is to be found in the movements for national liberation.

The national movement, however, is not as homogeneous and united as some of its pretentious spokesmen would have us believe. On the contrary, every class is represented—the ousted capitalists of the conquered countries and the workers and peasants who could not run away to a comfortable haven but had to stay

behind to feel the Nazi knout. Each of these groups participates in the national movement for different reasons and with different aims.

It is most important that American workers learn to distinguish between these two sections of the national movement. The first of these sections represents the ex-ruled of the occupied countries, who were either driven out by the Nazis or simply ran away to save their hides. They are people like Queen Wilhelmina of Holland and her rich plantation owners; Sikorski of Poland and the big land owners; de Gaulle and the French capitalists, who wish to do but one thing through the national movement—restore to themselves and their class the power and wealth they had before Hitler took these away. They want their countries liberated, not from fascism (many of them are fascists or near-fascists in their own right), but from foreign domination so that they can return to their positions as rulers and exploiters over the people of "their" own nation, and over the peoples of other nationalities as in the colonies.

Sikorski seeks a Poland in which the Polish ruling class will exploit not only Poles, but Jews, Ukrainians and Germans as well. Wilhelmina seeks the restoration of the Dutch Empire, in which millions of Indonesians can be worked to death for the profits of the Dutch plantation owners. De Gaulle wants the French colonial empire kept intact—and seeks the re-establishment of a French monarchy. King Peter and Mikhailovitch want the restoration of a Yugoslavia in which the Serbian

minority exploited and abused a dozen different nationalities.

On the other hand, the active section of the national movement, which makes the real sacrifices and daily risks life in a struggle against the foreign oppressors, is composed of the most courageous workers and peasants. They fight today for national freedom and for the freedom to speak and act as they please, but they do not think in terms of restoring the old rulers.

Comrade Shachtman elaborated on the role of the revolutionary Marxists in the national movement. Revolutionary socialists must support this movement, he said, because they are consistent democrats, and national independence is a democratic right. But more than this, they must seek to direct this movement into working class channels and to raise such demands aimed at the improvement of the economic and political status of the workers and peasants—higher wages, shorter hours, land to the peasants, relief from indebtedness, freedom of organization, speech and press—as will propel the movement onto the stage of a workers' government. Especially interesting and important in this connection was Shachtman's discussion of the duality of power that will exist when the former owners return to claim the factories which will actually be in the possession of the workers. In the resolution of this state of dual power in favor of the workers, said Shachtman, rests the genuine and ultimate liberation of Europe through socialism.

Without identifying the two ideas—that of national independence and the Socialist United States of Europe—the Marxists, continued Shachtman, will point out that only socialism can solve the problems of the European continent and its peoples. Socialists seriously interested in the practical achievement of socialism will not only support the struggle for national independence, but they will be its most consistent champions; the socialist federation proposed by them must consist of nations which are free to determine whether or not they wish to be part of it.

In reply to one of the questions by a member of the audience, Comrade Shachtman explained how the Allies might seek to intervene in Europe, not only to drive out the Germans, but to prevent the national revolutions from developing into socialist revolutions. They will seek, through the use of food distribution and other means, to choke off any attempt on the part of the masses to set up a workers' government. It is at this point that the American workers will have a great duty to perform—to aid their European brothers in the realization of freedom.

Demonstration--

(Continued from page 1)
to the slums and is blocked on every hand by Jim Crow laws... "Fifteen million colored Americans will not be pacified and rocked to sleep by nursery rhymes and fairy tales of the sweet by-and-by; as they live today, they want a full measure of democracy here and now. To be sure we protest being shelved down behind the railroad tracks, in the filthy, unkept sections of the city, where we are forced to deal with the lawless rent gougers and the racketeering merchants. We want decent homes and in decent communities, and when and where public housing projects are built with public funds, we want equal accommodations and in the same projects.

"We fail to distinguish the difference between the Jewish ghettos of Germany and the colored belts or black bottoms of America. What the colored Americans cannot understand is how democracy is going to work abroad when it never worked for them at home... Speaking for the United Automobile Workers, Vice-President Walter Reuther called for solidarity of the Negro and white workers to destroy discrimination and segregation. He showed how the UAW had faced the same reactionary forces when they started building the union, which the chairman had called "the best union in the world." He received a big hand when he pledged that his union would tell "any worker who refuses to work with a colored worker (that) he can leave the plant because he does not belong there."

Declaring that the Atlantic Charter was "still vague" and "too short," Reuther stated that the sponsors of the demonstration proposed to "bring it down to earth" with the "Cadillac Charter."

This charter, named after the square at which the rally was held, was drawn up by the NAACP and the UAW and adopted by the demonstrators. Prefaced by a preamble in support of the war effort, it calls for abolition of all discrimination in government bureaus and departments; abolition of discrimination and segregation in public housing and the armed forces; poll-tax and other political discrimination abolition; equal treatment of all labor, etc.

THE ARABS:

Atlantic Charter Voided for Them

By R. Fohan

In last week's LABOR ACTION we discussed the blow struck at Jewish rights in North Africa by General Giraud when he "abrogated" the Gambia-Cremieux decree of 1870 by which Algerian Jews were granted equal rights as citizens of France. Due to limitations of space we had to refrain from discussing a vitally important aspect of the North African problem: the Arabs.

It is amazing that in all the reams of articles printed by American correspondents from North Africa so few words creep in about the Arabs. Tunisia is after all their country; it is being ravaged by two groups of foreign powers, for neither of which the Arabs have any particular affection. Occasionally there is a reference in some dispatch to the fact that Arabs are dirty (because they have no money for clothes and soap?) but otherwise one could never imagine that there are eight million Arabs in North Africa.

ARABS "KEPT IN THEIR PLACE"

We cannot here enter into detail about how they have fared under French rule. Suffice it to say that they have suffered under an imperialist domination as brutal as that of the British in India, or the Belgians in the Congo or the Germans in Poland. This domination has made North Africa a land of misery and unrest; sporadic and desperate rebellions against French rule and for the independence of their lands have marked their life in the past decades.

The Allied "liberators" have been particularly careful to see to it that the Arabs were "kept in their place." At the very outset of the North African expedition, President Roosevelt made clear in a formal statement that those French colonies seized during the war would be returned to the French Empire afterward. Any illusion which the Arabs might have held about the Atlantic Charter applying to North Africa was thus immediately dispelled. And during the course of the North African campaign, the Allies have been particularly careful not to allow any arms to fall into the hands of the Arabs, who lack the training to distinguish between imperialisms.

When Giraud, therefore, annulled the decree which had set the Jews apart from the Arabs by allowing them automatic French citizenship, he defended this reactionary step as being necessary to placate the Arabs. Now, it is indisputable that there exist serious tensions between the Jews and Arabs in North Africa. These tensions have been aggravated by Axis propaganda; they have been steadily inculcated into the Arab population by a series of reactionary French administrators, such as Peyroulout and Nogue, over the past decade; and they are also the result of a complicated and unfortunate economic situation in North Africa whereby the Jews, as small business men who often acted as middle men between the Arab peasants and French imperialism, have appeared in the eyes of the former as the agents of the latter. Despite these acknowledged tensions, the Allied propagandists have steadily exaggerated the extent of Arab-Jewish antagonisms, for much the same reasons as the British exaggerate the extent of the Hindu-Moslem antagonisms. It is the old policy of divide and rule.

IF ARABS GOT THE FRANCHISE...

Nonetheless, how did the Arabs profit when the Jews were deprived of their citizenship by the Bonapartist Giraud? Misery may love company, but company doesn't alleviate misery. So that the simple question must arise: Instead of dragging the Jews down to the level of the Arabs, why not strike a real blow for freedom by also granting the rights which the Jews had held to the Arabs? That is, give citizenship and voting rights to the Arabs.

But, as wise old Shakespeare said, there's the rub. As the March 22 New York Times says: "The extension of the franchise to the Arabs as well as to the Jews would mean that the French would be voted out of office." But that's democracy; that's what the Atlantic Charter promises. And that is just where we see that the Atlantic Charter is nothing more than a piece of paper. The French would not grant the Arabs voting rights because they fear that they would thereby lose their imperialist grip over North Africa; and then in a clumsy attempt to placate the oppressed Arabs they take away the rights of the Jews as well.

And the American State Department gives its benign blessings to the tragic farce, occasionally turning to answer domestic critics with mutterings: "National independence? Why, yes, of course we American imperialists are for that... with a few minor exceptions, you understand... a few minor exceptions such as Puerto Rico, India, North Africa, Indo-China, a few countries in Europe, and a few colonies here and there where the natives have shown by their peacefulness that they clearly aren't civilized..."

Get the May Day Issue

Next week's issue of LABOR ACTION will be the May Day issue. We can't begin to enumerate all the material that this issue will contain in its EIGHT PAGES. But we guarantee you an interesting May Day LABOR ACTION. Be sure to get it!

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. 7, No. 16 April 19, 1943

Editor: Emanuel Garrett

Subscription Rate: 60 Cents a Year,
75 Cents for Canada, New York and Foreign

Re-entered as second-class matter May 24, 1940,
at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the
Act of March 3, 1879.

WORKERS PARTY PLATFORM

Against Both Imperialist War Camps! For the Victory of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples! For the Victory of the Third Camp of Socialism!

LABOR MUST DEFEND ITSELF!

- Hands off the right to strike! For the defense of civil rights and all workers' rights! Against any wartime dictatorship measures!
- \$1.00-an-hour minimum pay! Time and a half for overtime; double time for Sunday and holiday work.
- Wage increases to meet rising costs. No wage or job freezing! Equal pay for equal work!
- For a greater share of the increasing national income. For a higher standard of living!
- No sales tax on consumer goods! No tax on wages! Against forced savings!
- For control of price fixing and rationing by committees of working class organizations. Freeze rents and consumer goods prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living.
- No government contract without a union contract. The closed shop in all war industries!
- Maintain and increase all government social services!

SOAK TH ERICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!

- A government levy on capital to cover the cost of the imperialist war. Confiscate all war profits!
- Conscript all war industries under workers' control!
- Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the three per cent of the people who own 96 per cent of the national wealth!

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

- TO THE DRAFTEES!
- The right of free speech, free press and free assembly for the men in the armed forces.
- The right of soldiers to vote in all elections.
- The right of all youth, male or female, to vote at the age of eighteen. Old enough to fight; old enough to work; old enough to vote!
- For adequate dependency allowances paid by the government with NO deductions from the soldier's pay.

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 vigilante 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!

Melt the Freeze - -

(Continued from page 1)

all war profits; and that such costs of the war as cannot be met by taxing the current incomes of the bosses be met by a capital levy on the accumulated wealth of the rich.

Roosevelt motivates his decree, with its vicious effect on labor and its inconsequential effect on the bosses, with the argument that it is required by the menace of inflation. He argues that the purchasing power of the masses must be syphoned off because consumer goods are limited; and that an idle mass of purchasing power will depreciate the value of the dollar.

We are deeply concerned with inflation. It is a real and gruesome menace. But the solution is not Roosevelt's. His solution merely allows greater profits for the wealthy, and a tighter belt for labor. Intelligent planning, effective control of food production and consumption industries can provide labor with the ample necessities of life—even in this period of war.

Conscript the war industries, put them under the control of workers, and they will be able to plan production in such a way as to provide for all. Coordinated production and production programs can end the bottleneck in consumer products. And it can only be done by those who are not motivated by profits: LABOR!

There are daily evidences of the incompetence and mismanagement of the bosses and their colleagues in government. Tons of salmon are stored away by the Army beyond its needs—while consumers are deprived of salmon until some of this salmon is released from the hoard. There are a thousand instances of similar kind. And we are not merely referring to the stores hoarded by profiteers against future increases in price.

Capitalism is responsible for the whole mess. It produced the war. It has put the burden of that war on labor. And it proposes to increase that burden: by further restricting wages and by imposing greater taxes on the poor, while it makes a few feeble gestures in the direction of prices and profits. We see no reason why labor should continue interminably sacrificing for the greater glory and profit of the rich. Put the burden on the rich. Let labor raise its own demands:

BOOST WAGES TO MEET INCREASED LIVING COSTS! CONTROL PRICES AND RATIONING THROUGH COMMITTEES OF WORKERS AND WORKING FARMERS! CONSCRIPT WAR INDUSTRIES UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE WORKERS! SOAK THE RICH FOR THE COSTS OF THE WAR!

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