

Anti-Labor Rickenbacker Cashes In Nets \$226,000, Did NO Work!

It wasn't so long ago that Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker was traveling about the country denouncing the labor movement and the workers in general for their demand for wage increases to meet the rising cost of living. Rickenbacker became the mouthpiece for the policies of the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, by opposing overtime pay rates, wage increases and a general improvement of the living standards of the workers. His main effort was to create a division between the workers at home and the workers in uniform.

But the true anti-labor bias of the Captain was most graphically revealed in a speech where he opposed wage increases and at the same time denounced the Administration proposal for a \$25,000 yearly salary limit. He was for no limits on bosses' salaries!

While in Moscow recently on some "special" mission for the War Department, a report was made public about Rickenbacker's huge profits in a stock deal. These huge profits were made possible directly by the war and puts him in the class of war profiteers. The following story on the details of the stock deal is reprinted from the United Automobile Worker of July 1st:

Those speeches Eddie Rickenbacker delivered to business men's groups and assorted labor-haters a few months ago were worth their weight in gold.

Not gold in the sense of helpful truth, but gold in its actual sense—gold in the form of American dollars.

The dollars went into Rickenbacker's pocket.

While Rickenbacker was going through the country reading prepared speeches denouncing the "selfishness" of labor, he was reaping the benefit of wartime profits to the extent of exactly \$226,000.

These are the facts:

According to Standard Statistics, which reports corporate affairs, Eastern Airlines, Inc., of which Rickenbacker is president, gave him the right some time back to purchase 20,000 shares of Eastern Airlines at \$10 a share, and 5,000 shares at \$32, REGARDLESS OF THE PRICE IN THE OPEN MARKET.

By December 31, 1942, Rickenbacker still had an option to purchase 8,000 shares at \$10 and 5,000 at \$32.

According to the Securities and Exchange Commission report for April, 1943, Eddie Rickenbacker has picked up the 8,000 shares. These shares in the open market are today worth \$38.25 each.

Get out your pencil and start figuring. It comes down to this:

Rickenbacker paid \$80,000 (if he paid anything at all in cash) for \$306,000 worth of stock. That gave Rickenbacker a net profit, without a day's work, of \$226,000.

The present high value of Eastern Airlines stock has, of course, been created by the company's lush wartime prosperity.

The war has brought tragedy and suffering to millions of Americans, but to Rickenbacker it brought \$226,000 in easy profit.

The same war that has taken your son or brother, and may take his life, brought Eddie Rickenbacker \$226,000 in wartime profit.

P.S.—Rickenbacker in 1942 collected a salary of \$35,519 for Eastern Aircraft. For pocket money, no doubt.

With the necessary apologies to the United Automobile Worker, we should like to add our own P.S.: Mrs. Eddie Rickenbacker has, in the absence of her husband, carried on for him with anti-labor, pro-big business speeches. There is good reason for this. She shares in her husband's profits!

Michigan State CIO Delegates Adopt Militant Program: Against No-Strike Pledge—For Labro Party

By GEORGE BAKER

DETROIT—The plot of the Communist Party to capture the largest CIO state set-up in the country was decisively defeated at the sixth annual convention of the Michigan CIO Council held June 28 to July 1 at Masonic Temple.

In a four-day running battle, which had been prepared for on both sides for many months, the Stalinists were licked on every controversial issue: the no-strike pledge, labor party, miners' strike, incentive pay, labor unity and in the elections to the new state executive board.

This was at the same time a defeat for the top leaders of the CIO and the UAW, whose policies were repudiated, and whose speeches failed to line up a majority of the 1,200 delegates, overwhelmingly representing the UAW-CIO.

The leading core of the anti-Stalinist coalition was formed by the delegates from the more militant UAW-CIO locals in the state who for many months have worked together within their own international and in the CIO at large for a progressive union policy to meet the employers' offensive, such as the abrogation of the no-strike pledge, scrapping the Little Steel formula and for increases in wages to meet the rising cost of living, against incentive pay-piecework schemes, for support of the miners' strike and for an independent labor party in the state and in the nation.

Their main spokesmen include Emil Mazey, Briggs Local 212; Paul Silver, Local 161; James Lucas, Pon-

tiac Local 653; President Carey of Chrysler Local 7 and President Reynolds of Dodge Local 3, the two last-named being heads of locals which were recently involved in strikes.

Other anti-Stalinist forces united with this grouping to prevent Stalinist organizational domination of the convention and the new state executive board. These forces include supporters of the old state CIO president, August Scholle, a Philip Murray appointee as regional CIO director in Michigan, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, and some ex-socialists. There was no pretense of unity in this coalition on issues of policy, some of the supporters of the above mentioned groups voting with the Stalinists against the resolution to rescind the no-strike pledge.

The No-Strike Pledge

Despite the fact that the Stalinists, with the aid of speeches from Army men and high union officials, were able to carry a ritualistic resolution commending President Roosevelt's veto of the Smith-Connally bill and praising Philip Murray's leadership and policies, including the no-strike course, everyone understood that in practice there was a call for rescinding the no-strike pledge. After heated debate the resolution was adopted.

At the remaining sessions the Stalinists made innumerable efforts to get a roll-call vote, reconsider the question and introduce contradictory resolutions. On two occasions

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LABOR ACTION

JULY 12, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

FOOD OR PROFITS?

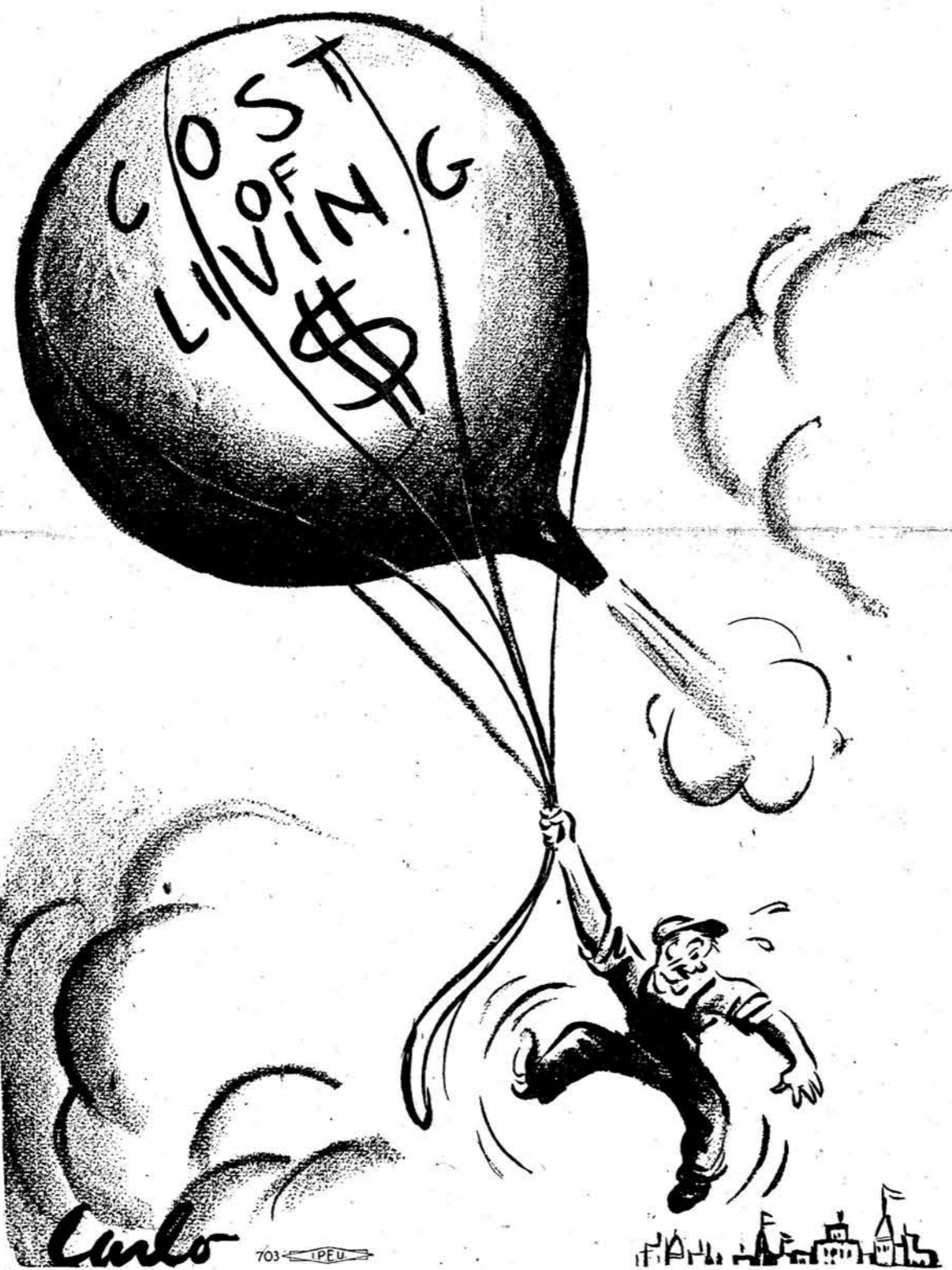
Big Business Profiteers and Their Political Lackeys Join Hands to Soak the People

By Gertrude Shaw

The Senate has overridden the President's veto of the anti-subsidy bill. The farm bloc has its own ideas on what will further the interests of big business farming.

The extreme crisis on the food front is due to one cause, and one cause alone. The largest private profit interests of the country dominate the food industry, as they do every other branch of the country's economy. These interests are bent on using the war to increase their fortunes, come what may.

KEEPIN' US FLYIN'



Highlights of the MOW Conference

Randolph Opposes March on Capital

Special to LABOR ACTION

CHICAGO—The National Conference of the March on Washington Movement has concluded its five-day sessions, June 30-July 4, here. One hundred and four delegates from various parts of the country met and adopted a series of proposals concerned with the increasing wave of Jim Crow on all fronts.

Not until literally the last hour of the final business session of the convention did the real sentiments and needs of the Negro masses assert themselves for a mass march on Washington to demand their social, economic and political rights.

D. Grant, a delegate from the militant St. Louis MOW organization, arose and moved that the conference set a specific date for a mass march on Washington. The delegate from the Detroit MOW, J. Butler, and others declared themselves strongly in favor of the march proposal.

vened again to ward off the adoption of this proposal which committed him and the MOW irrevocably to a march on Washington.

The proposal actually adopted, after only a brief discussion of the march proposal itself, left to the National Committee, headed by Randolph, any final decision on a date, or whether to march at all.

Thus the prospect of a march on Washington rests in Randolph's hands, which means that the MOW will not march unless the rank and file of the MOW and with the increasing support of Negro working class forces, inside and outside the labor unions, compel the MOW to carry through a march on Washington, the seat of Jim Crow. So far as Randolph is concerned, he will vote every time to vote for a march "in time," if necessary, but not actually to march.

This brief last-minute discussion of the march, which is presumably one of the chief purposes of the MOW, was the only one in which militant action was proposed. All the other sessions had the lackadaisical atmosphere of a wake.

Pacifist Good Will Program Adopted

The heralded MOW conference adopted as its main program a series of proposals entitled "Non-Violent Good Will Direct Action." It is this program and outlook of pacifistic, Gandhistic resistance to the Detroit Ku Kluxers, the Southern lynchings, poll-tax rulers and congressional hound-dogs; to rampant Jim Crow in the armed forces; to discrimination in the "defense" plants; and to segregation and discrimination against Negroes in all walks of life, which pervaded the atmosphere of the conference during all its sessions.

The resolution on "Non-Violent Good Will Direct Action" calls for a peaceful, non-violent campaign on jobs, on transportation, civil or democratic rights, against Jim Crow in the armed forces, and on constitutional rights (poll-tax, etc.). "Non-violent public pressure" is to be applied. Such obvious methods and procedures as pamphlets, bulletins, educational work and mass meetings are stressed.

"We have got to get rid of violence first," was the essential emphasis of various speakers. "If they hit us, we know they (the Jim Crowers) are

The picture has not been changed because the President has prevailed on the House of Representatives to give its very reluctant and very limited—if not nominal—agreement to the temporary payment of some food subsidies. Even if the Senate had followed the action of the House in sustaining the veto, the food crisis would remain unrelieved.

To hail such feeble and farcical gestures as a solution of the muddled food question is to play the part of the ostrich. To interpret such misleading maneuvers as a yielding by the rapacious big farm bosses to the needs of the people, is to understand nothing about politics.

Just how ominous the food situation is, is indicated by the recent increase

Sun Shipyard Election Puts CIO in Lead

PHILADELPHIA—The National Labor Relations Board election to decide the bargaining agent at Sun Shipyards practically ended in a dead heat, with sixty-one challenged votes holding the final decision.

The vote was as follows:

CIO	12,816
Company union	11,906
No union	864
Challenged	61

The CIO must secure a clear majority of all votes cast to be declared the winner. In the event enough of the challenged votes go to the company union or for no union, it will be necessary to hold a run-off election with just the CIO and the company union on the ballot.

The election culminated a long-drawn-out and hotly contested fight to organize the yards. The CIO drive started in 1935 with the chartering of Local 2, Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers.

A premature strike in 1936 was broken when the company obtained fire trucks to break the picket line and lead a "back to work" move-

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ment in ration point values on meat, canned fruits and other items. There is no meat to be had for love or money because the cattle kings are keeping millions of pounds of meat on the hoof for higher profits. The OPA scratches its head and produces a "solution"—RAISE THE RATION POINTS ON THE MOST POPULAR CUTS OF MEAT SO MAYBE PEOPLE WON'T ASK FOR THEM.

The high prices of fresh fruit put this indispensable food outside the reach of most working class families—the War Labor Board admitting a 57.9 per cent increase in the prices of fresh fruits and vegetables from October, 1942, to April, 1943. THE OPA "SOLVES" THIS PRICE PROBLEM BY RAISING THE RATION POINTS ON CANNED FRUITS SO THAT PEOPLE CAN'T BUY EITHER CANNED OR FRESH FRUIT. And pours oil on the fires by increasing the prices of canned vegetables.

So critical is the food situation that a milk strike is threatened by the dairy producers.

So tight is the control by the black markets that a strike by the kosher butchers of New York City against the poultry ring accomplished absolutely nothing.

So rapidly are prices rising that even the timid leaders of the CIO and the AFL, who hesitate to fight for the basic needs of their workers, have had to warn their smiling pal in the White House. They told the President that there must be a roll-back in prices or there will be an unrestrained movement by all workers for a roll-up in wages.

Mark Sullivan, shrewd Washington reporter for the New York Herald Tribune, observes: "To persuade the labor leaders not to make their demand, Mr. Roosevelt undertook to roll back prices of food. It was for this he used subsidies." Mr. Sullivan says that the President's insistence on present subsidies "ap-

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Chicago Gets 67 Subs at MOW Meet

CHICAGO—Sixty-seven subscriptions to LABOR ACTION were obtained at the National Conference of the March on Washington Movement in Chicago by LABOR ACTION agents. Three thousand copies of LABOR ACTION, containing articles pertaining to the MOW Conference, were distributed to delegates and visitors to the sessions and public meetings held by the MOW. The papers were accepted eagerly; favorable comments on the contents of LABOR ACTION were freely expressed. The number of subscriptions obtained is evidence of the interest aroused in the paper.

In addition, a quantity of The New International were distributed and sold.

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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Local 9 Rank and File Bucks Pollard

SAN PEDRO—For the first time in eight months of dictatorial supervision by Administrative Director W. S. Pollard, the membership of Shipyard Workers Union, Local 9, CIO, took over the monthly meeting, elected its own chairman and proceeded to conduct a democratic meeting.

run their own meeting. A large percentage of the members present were repair workers, many of whom were giving up double time in order to attend the Sunday meeting, and they were determined to have control of the meeting.

with the promise not only to organize and vitalize Local 9, but to organize the rest of the Los Angeles area shipyards into the CIO, is reduced to threatening to cancel all union meetings!

Local Works on Wage Demands An important step taken by the meeting was to set up a committee to prepare data on the tremendous increase in the cost of living in this area preparatory to demanding a raise in the basic wage scale to offset this daily wage cut.

tended by two and three hundred members. As a result of that discussion a committee was set up that became known as the "union-building committee."

Briefly, the report called for the establishment of regular meeting dates, attempts to solve the serious transportation problem, fuller attempts to publicize and make the meetings attractive, etc.

Pollard attacked the report on the ground that the committee had functioned for six weeks and had not succeeded in getting the 15,000 members of Local 9 to attend the next union meeting.

Pollard also attacked the committee on the phony alibi that it represented only two minorities, the Stalinists and the Trotskyists.

A proposal from the floor that departments in the various yards be organized, with their own officers and regular meetings be held to discuss conditions on the job met with general approval.

Sun Ship Elections--

ment. Utilizing the low morale of the men following the strike, company stooges organized the Sun Ship Employees Association.

John Pew, company president, labor-hater, reactionary and Republican political boss of Pennsylvania, threw every weapon and device known to union busters into the fight.

The CIO responded with stoppages, sit-downs, demonstrations, protest committees, strike threats and splendid solidarity between Negro and course, they were actually defeated in their no-strike policy.

Over a year and a half ago the company began building an additional yard with the announcement that it was to be solely for Negroes, affording members of the race a "splendid opportunity" to make good.

Every incident of discrimination against Negroes in CIO shops was the occasion of another company union leaflet. The riots in Mobile and Beaumont, the strike at Packard and similar incidents were played up.

The worst terror was unleashed against the Negro CIO men in an effort to make them feel that they were taking it in the neck and being left holding the bag by the white CIO men.

Despite all company efforts, the all-Negro yard was cracked by the CIO and this attempt to build a company union citadel on race hatred was smashed.

The Sun Ship workers now face the next stage of their fight. They must organize a well-run, efficient, rank and file governed local. The slim election margin can give real union men no real feeling of security.

WLB Hits Akron Rubber Workers

AKRON—Passage of the Smith-Connelly anti-strike bill by Congress is credited here with preventing a resumption of the big May rubber strike on June 30, when the War Labor Board again refused to grant any more than three cents an hour increase to 50,000 Akron workers.

tion, when voting before, on returning to work. But the board took two more weeks, that is, it waited until AFTER the anti-strike bill was safely in the bag, before venturing to announce its prejudiced opinion.

Small walkouts occurred at Goodrich and Firestone plants the night of June 30 after the "verdict" was announced, but were shortly called off on the plea of the local leaders, and the militants found themselves confused and leaderless for any major action.

Firestone and Goodrich locals denounced the board's decision as unfair and unjust, and demanded the

withdrawal of CIO representatives from the War Labor Board.

Even Sherman Dalrymple, president of the URWA, found it possible to indulge in some verbal denunciation, saying: "We contend they did not get a just decision. The workers were entitled to eight cents per hour increases under the 'Little Steel' 15 per cent formula and even with this, wage rates would still be nine cents below the rise in living costs."

Michigan CIO Militants Take Lead at Convention--

(Continued from page 1) motions to reconsider were overwhelmingly defeated.

The Labor Party Resolution

Paul Silver, chairman of the legislative and political action committee, introduced the pro-Labor Party resolution which in substance followed the one adopted at the recent convention of Labor's Non-Partisan League here. (See LABOR ACTION, June 21.) It called for "the immediate establishment of an independent party of labor and working farmers, Negro organizations, AFL, Railroad Brotherhoods and all liberal groups and called upon the state CIO president to establish a committee of seventeen members who favor an independent party, one from each congressional district, to work under one central director to obtain and coordinate the active participation of the AFL, Railroad Brotherhoods, independent unions, farmers' unions, political workers organizations." Within four months a convention to launch the party was to be called.

more along that line. It called for the appointment of a subcommittee which for ninety days will explore the sentiment for independent political action among the organizations of labor, professional people, farmers and other groups interested, and after that period will submit a full report of its activities and findings to the state executive board.

The modified resolution, in its warm praise of President Roosevelt, was a concession to the right wing of the anti-Stalinist bloc. August Scholle, who had spoken against the previous resolution, spoke for the revised resolution on the grounds that his previous objections had been removed.

standing, it was proposed and carried that the delegates would cast their vote on the same paper ballot they would use for election of vice-presidents. The final result was the adoption of the revised pro-Labor Party resolution.

If the supporters of the original pro-Labor Party resolution had been better organized and more aggressive at the convention, they could have carried their resolution. It is likely that if they had insisted on a recount when the chairman declared their resolution defeated, they would have gotten it and carried the resolution. The revised resolution is a big let-down from the original. The first presents clear-cut working class reasons for independent class political action, free of all ties with the old capitalist parties and "friends of labor."

The labor unity resolution declared that "the proper place to start to have labor unity is among the rank and file members of the unions and not from the top, where the quarrels over who is to have this or that job become a factor."

at the conference, Nat Ganley, of UAW Local 155, attacked the resolution and declared that it "practically calls for a rank and file rebellion against the (CIO) leadership."

R. J. Thomas took the floor and attacked the section of the resolution referring to public attacks of leaders of both federations on one another and denied the responsibility of the CIO leaders for the failure of unity negotiations.

Anti-Negro Riots Condemned

Early in the convention the delegates adopted a resolution on the recent anti-Negro riots here. The resolution stated that the "racial outbreak is the result of generations of intolerance and anti-racial feeling that has been fostered by employers and their agents both in government and in our educational system in order to more effectively exploit workers through a policy of 'divide and conquer.'" It condemned those groups which foster views of "race supremacy" similar to Hitler's in order to divide the workers and oppress minorities, and called for an immediate investigation by the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee into the causes of the riots, and particularly an investigation of the Ku Klux Klan and its successor organizations to determine what part they played in the riots.

Sperry Local 450 Ranks Need Real Union Contract!

Resentment and discontent ran high in the New York Sperry Local, No. 450, of the United Electrical & Radio Workers, when they were informed through a posted bulletin that \$2.00 was to be deducted from their pay checks on July 1 and \$2.00 more on July 23, to be applied on back dues retroactive to April.

Last spring the union obtained a maintenance-of-membership agreement which included check-off of dues, then established at \$1.00 a month, starting April 15. The matter of a contract was left pending, and still is.

At the membership meeting held at that time, the proposals regarding maintenance-of-membership, check-off and dues were presented and voted on as a unit. While many union members were in favor of the check-off, they wanted the payment of dues to start when the union had obtained a signed contract from the company.

When word got around about the bulletin, workers in building after building became very resentful. At the Bush 7 and 8 buildings feeling ran so high that the leadership was forced to call a meeting after work.

This kind of confusion could have been avoided had the local been holding regular membership meetings where information concerning the status of the contract negotiations could have been given to the membership and where the membership in turn could have discussed and decided on what kind of a contract it wants.

The demonstration around the payment of dues must be taken as a sign that the membership is tired of waiting for the contract—and that one must be signed soon. Regular membership meetings must be held and a local constitution drawn up. The local must begin to function as a full-fledged union.

St. Louis Joint Council Wants Labor Party for '44

The following resolution, adopted by the St. Louis Joint Council of the United Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Employees of America, CIO, is an important signpost indicating the direction which large sections of the organized labor movement is taking toward independent political action.

Whereas, the passage of the Smith, Connally Anti-Strike Bill is a vicious action against over thirteen million patriotic trade unionists, their families and other millions of unorganized workers, and is adequate proof that it is impossible for labor to depend either upon the Democratic or Republican Parties to solve the basic social problems of the workers of America; and

Whereas, union members are becoming more and more reluctant to participate in election campaigns in support of old-line politicians, or the candidates of either major political party; and

Whereas, labor is sick and tired of depending upon so-called "friends" in public office who are, in fact, only tools of the reactionary forces in America; and

Whereas, labor must have its own political party, entirely independent of the bosses and their influence, to successfully cope with present problems, and the multitude of new problems which will arise after the war; therefore be it

Resolved, that the St. Louis Joint Council, United Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Employees of America, CIO, representing 4,500 St. Louis distribution workers, hereby go on record as favoring the immediate formation of an Independent Party of Labor and Working Farmers; and be it further

Resolved, that the St. Louis Joint Council cooperate with other groups of workers and farmers in the nation who have expressed a similar desire for an Independent Labor Party; and be it further

Resolved, that the St. Louis Joint Council, United Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Employees of America, CIO, request the St. Louis Industrial Union Council to immediately explore the possibility of a city and/or state conference of CIO, AFL and Railroad Brotherhood delegates for the purpose of setting up a Labor Party to participate in the 1944 elections; and be it further

Resolved, that copies of this resolution be sent to all interested labor unions and the daily press.

Ford Instrument Workers Fight Piecework Schemes

Cooperating with a national campaign by the large manufacturers to impose piecework on the workers, the national officers of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America are quietly trying to extend the "incentive pay" system to all shops under their jurisdiction.

pamphlets favoring it. But Browder's championing of piecework followed soon after the heads of the General Motors Corp. and the Ford Motor Co. involved the War Production Board in a drive for this new glorified piecework system. Thus we see lined up against the legitimate wage demands of the workers in general the WPB, big business and the Communist Party.

Press Action

When the period for negotiating the contract of a local arrives, district and national officers of the union present the members with an ultimatum. The members must either accept one or another form of piecework or have their wages frozen.

In District 4 (New York and North-North Jersey) the leadership hit a snag when James Lustig, well known Communist Party follower, made a proposal for piecework to Local 425, in the Ford Instrument Co. in Long Island City, and was voted down by a large majority of the shop stewards, the executive board, and a committee of stewards set up to investigate the whole incentive pay idea.

The membership of Local 425 has long been a thorn in the side of the "Stalinist party-line" followers who dominate the UERMWA national leadership. The membership of this local has waged a two-year battle to have the union adopt a national program that would provide for a fight for improvement of pay and working conditions.

Before the last national convention of the union, Local 425 branded the policies of the national officers as "appeasement of big business." The members of this local were particularly incensed by the offer made by national officers to surrender time and a half and double time pay for Saturdays, Sundays and holidays when these days are not the sixth and seventh consecutive work days.

R. J. Thomas told the convention that while he did not know whether the national KKK was involved in the recent riots, "I'll prove to a grand jury that leaders of the Ku Klux Klan in the city of Detroit were leading the rioters on Woodward Avenue." He referred specifically to a former leader of the Packard local who was a known Klansman, and later identified in the convention as Harvey Hansen.

Militants Carry the Day The internal struggles on policy which took place at the Michigan CIO convention will continue at the coming national convention of the United Automobile Workers. The state convention revealed the growing fighting spirit of the workers in the plants who over the heads of their leaders are determined to fight for a better world through class organization on the economic and political fields.

In the elections for the new state executive board the anti-Stalinist slate was elected. However, none of the main leaders of the militant UAW locals was on the slate.

- In two and a half weeks since the conclusion of our sub drive, we are proud to announce that a total of 173 subs have been received. St. Louis came through with 22 subs on the Tuesday following the last week of the drive. This gives St. Louis 133 per cent of its quota. Good work! Chicago is following on the heels of Detroit with a total of 67 subs, obtained at the recent MOW conference held there, with a promise of more to come. The totals to date: Chicago 67, Los Angeles 22, St. Louis 22, Detroit 16, New York City 16, Buffalo 8, Cleveland 8, Louisville 4, Philadelphia 3, Baltimore 1, Dayton 1, Newark 1, Oklahoma 1, Pennsylvania 1, Sierraville, Calif. 1, West Virginia 1.

And again, Detroit! Since the beginning of the sub drive, Detroit has increased its bundle order by 6,000 copies, from 4,000 to 10,000. All cities please note: more papers must mean more subs. How about an increase from Akron? We haven't reported one from that city for a long time.

The orders for the prepaid sub card are coming in rather slowly. Remember...only twenty-five cents for a six months prepaid sub card to LABOR ACTION! Every LABOR ACTION reader should order a few and sell them to his fellow workers.

LABOR ACTION 114 West 14th Street New York 11, N. Y.

Enclosed find \$_____ for prepaid sub cards at twenty-five cents each.

Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____

Keep Your Draft Card from Feeling Lonely!

Carry a twenty-five-cent Prepaid Sub Card (good for a six months' trial sub to LABOR ACTION). Sell it to a fellow worker for twenty-five cents—it will be the best twenty-five cents worth he ever got in his life! All he has to do is put his name and address on it and drop it in the mail box. We do the rest. All YOU have to do is buy the Sub Cards from us at twenty-five cents each, in advance. Buy one, or four, or as many as you want.

LABOR ACTION, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

War Plant Contracts Big Boon to Bosses!

Monopolies Set To Loot Billions in Public Property

By JOHN BERNE

While you pay as you go, fellow workers, you must never forget how the wealth of big business grows.

We usually think of the war benefits to the bosses in terms of their immediate profits. This is only natural. For out of the more than one hundred and fifty billion dollar 1943 war budget and the over two hundred billion dollar 1944 war budget, big business and the captains of industry are filling their private war chests to the brim. Information on this grabbing of blood-soaked profits is being constantly published in LABOR ACTION.

There is, however, another aspect of war gains to the capitalist class that is being pushed into public notice. The government has constructed for the production of war materials, and now owns,

about \$10,000,000,000 worth of plants and equipment. Most of these very worldly goods are bound to be a post-war gift to the bosses.

What the \$10,000,000,000 Looks Like

It is hard to picture the enormous extent of these new government industrial possessions. But here's a rough idea: Government holdings in industry are now one-seventh of the combined 1939 industrial properties of the 90,000 manufacturing and mining companies in the country. In the aircraft industry the government now has invested TEN TIMES as much as all the pre-war assets of all the aircraft manufacturers put together. One mathematically-minded reporter said that the floor space of all government aircraft and accessory plants would accommodate a mammoth factory two hundred feet wide by thirty-three MILES long.

The government department responsible for all this streamlined industrial construction is the Defense Plants Corp., which is but one of the several branches of the lavishly spending Reconstruction Finance Corp., with Jesse Jones at the head.

Mr. Jones is reputed to be a man who does not get "tense over big affairs." Perhaps this will explain why these government properties that cost almost ten BILLION dollars of tax money are leased to the private corporations for the ludicrously low rental of one hundred MILLION dollars!

Thus, without a cent of investment and for a mere song, the bosses are using government property to make war materials for which they are paid handsome war profits. We must also not forget that private companies built these government plants

and manufactured this equipment under contracts yielding "many happy returns" to the contractors.

Bosses to Be Post-War Heirs

With few exceptions in the rubber and light metal industries, every so-called lease under which the bosses are now operating government war plants contains an option to the boss to buy the property after the war. The price is stated as "cost, less an agreed-on rate of depreciation." Sounds very fair, doesn't it? But we know our bosses and their politicians.

Already the fertile minds of the bosses and their faithful agents in the seats of government are concocting plans for knocking down the selling price of government plants. For instance, Edwin M. Martin, of the War Production Board, is talking about "LEGITIMATE REDUCTIONS IN PRICE BELOW COST LESS DEPRECIATION." For example, cost will itself be "deflated." Then there is such a thing as extra-special depreciation—also conveniently created obsolescence. Then, of course, the bosses must be compensated for delays in converting to peacetime production. In short, there is a long list of devices for the bosses acquiring ten billion dollars' worth of public property for little or nothing.

This same Mr. Martin of the WPB, paid by the government but apparently thinking for the bosses, prophesies that the government "will accept a negotiated DISTRESS PRICE" in some cases. After all the so-called "legitimate" deductions indicated above, presumably a "distress price" might mean that the government will have to pay something to the capitalist to take over a plant.

Bosses' Well-Laid Plans

Some people have the erroneous notion that the war plants are practically useless for peacetime production. Quite the reverse is the truth. After the last war, Charles Schwab, then chairman of Bethlehem Steel, stated on this subject: "In some plants it may be necessary to scrap

specialized machinery designed for the production of munitions. But even in these plants the buildings may be used, as well as standard machines like lathes, planers, milling machines and presses."

However, in this respect nothing has been left to chance. According to Hans A. Klagsbrunner of the Defense Plants Corp. division of RFC, "prospective operators themselves prepared the plans and designs for construction" of the plants and equipment. If these operators did not plan and design with at least one eye on their own post-war requirements, the jungle leopard has not only changed his habits but also his spots.

Furthermore, while the bosses will claim every possible reduction on the score of imaginary depreciation and obsolescence, don't think they will take over worn-out plants. Again let Mr. Martin of the WPB give evidence. In discussing the disposition of government war plants, he stated that "it will be OUR advantage to permit the newer, more efficient plants to be devoted to go into peacetime production, and the older, less efficient plants to be devoted to stand-by and emergency functions."

Aside from the interesting point incidentally raised as to "stand-by and emergency functions," undoubtedly referring to a coming World War III, whose advantage is Mr. Martin talking about? The Messrs. Martin have no scruples. They want the bosses to get the cream of the crop of this war's plants. Comes World War III—that is, if the workers of the world do not themselves bring a workers' peace to the world—and then perhaps fifty billion dollars instead of only ten billion dollars can be spent for brand new government war plants—for the immediate and ultimate benefit of the bosses, while the workers pay as they go.

Workers' Control of War Plants

The workers must remember that these ten billion dollars' worth of government war plants and equipment is public property—paid for primarily by the working people as they go. These plants should be turned over to the control of committees of workers. Only thus can the grabbing hands of the bosses be stayed.

And, under workers' control, in the post-war period these plants can be converted to civilian production to assure jobs to workers and goods to consumers. If the bosses are permitted to grab this ten billion dollar booty of public property they will operate it only if, when and as it pays high enough profits to do so.

Rickenbacker in Moscow! It Really Isn't So Strange

By WALTER WEISS

The naive New Republic of July 5 wants to know what "Incredible dunderhead" sent Eddie Rickenbacker to Moscow. (Newspaper reports say that Secretary of War Stimson sent him on a mission connected with military aviation, just as he has sent him previously on similar errands to other parts of the world.)

What is wrong with this newest of the missions to Moscow is not made very clear in the New Republic's little editorial, but their point seems to be that the USSR is a radical kind of place receptive to pro-labor emissaries, while Rickenbacker has gained a world-wide reputation as a reactionary and a labor-baiter. "It was about as sensible," they say, "as it would have been to make Tom Paine ambassador to the Vatican." This means, presumably, that a modern Paine should have been sent to Moscow, while Rickenbacker should have been sent, if anywhere, to the reactionary atmosphere of the Vatican.

Now we should like to suggest, as we have in other matters in the past, that the real dunderheads are on the payroll of the New Republic. Doubtless Marshal Stalin, as he is now being called in the American press, will welcome Capt. Rickenbacker as a true believer. How come?

Rickenbacker's Testimony

Back in March of this year, when Rickenbacker was waging his brave struggles against American unionism and at the same time against any \$25,000 limitation on the initiative of American executives, he testified before the Senate Military Affairs Committee concerning the Austin-Wadsworth compulsory national labor service bill. He said that he opposed this bill, feeling that the repeal of New Deal labor legislation would be a better way of solving the manpower problem. Specifically he suggested that everybody should work forty-eight hours a week without the overtime pay after forty hours and that those who could work longer should get incentive wages. In the course of his comments he had something to say about the Russian way of handling these matters.

At this point Representative Rankin of Mississippi (not a member of the Senate committee, to be sure, but invited in as another expert on labor-baiting) interrupted: "The crux of your testimony, and the part which should make the headlines, seems to me to be we should restore the incentive system in war industry

with which we won all former wars and throw out the communist system of Russia."

Rankin is an old-fashioned reactionary, a year or two behind the times. After all, he comes from the South, where the educational level is low. Rickenbacker was quick to set him straight, as follows: "Russia is already on the incentive system to a degree that no other country is. Every worker gets a basic wage sufficient for him to live on to the extent that necessities are available and beyond that he can earn as much as his productivity justifies."

Russia and Democracy

Thereupon the more or less liberal Senator Downey of California wanted to know if he meant that the United States should model itself after the Soviet experiment as it now exists. And Capt. Rickenbacker did not say him nay: "Well, if Russia keeps on the way she has for the last year or two, this war will end with Russia the greatest democracy of the world and the United States in the situation of pre-war Russia."

Earlier in his testimony he had said that even Soviet Russia had established the incentive basis for war production by paying war workers sums above their basic pay for additional production. This, he said, together with the removal of political commissars from control of the army showed that Russia had abandoned communism and had become a capitalistic nation.

The backward Rankin evidently misunderstood these words or could not believe his ears, so Downey helped along Rankin's education by speaking of the Soviet experiment "as it now exists"; and Rickenbacker then made his sledge-hammer statement: the greatest democracy of the world in the process of creation! Comrade!

If ever a statement deserved headlines, this one did. But the New York Times didn't think so. Eddie had got just a little too enthusiastic and had gone a bit out of bounds. However, the interested readers can find the whole story in the Times of March 20. We recommend it to the editors of the New Republic.

Stalin, Browder and Rickenbacker stand united on the quantity of democracy in Russia and on the virtues of incentive pay, a really big ingredient of democracy. What better credentials could anybody ask of a man bound for Moscow?

Stalin Sends Agents Here To Fool Jewish Workers and Whitewash Ehrlich-Alter Murder

By A. JACOB

Last week there arrived in this country a delegation of two from a self-styled "Committee for World Jewish Anti-Fascist Unity" with offices at Kuibyshev, Russia. The delegation consists of an actor named Solomon Michaels and Stalinist poet named Itzik Feffer. The avowed purpose of the committee, as well as of the delegation, is to bring about unity among world Jews for the struggle against fascism. It is, in short, to carry out the general Stalinist line of "unity of all peace-loving, democratic peoples" in support of the USSR and apply it to Jewish problems.

Knowing what the Stalinist finks mean by the word "unity," we can foresee what they would like to do among the Jewish masses. First of all there is the matter of the little unpleasantness caused by the recent shooting of Ehrlich and Alter. It was with them that Stalin negotiated, through his intermediaries, the GPU, about the formation of this committee in the first place. Unwilling to be pliant tools in Stalin's hands, they were shot. The present delegation was then substituted as leaders of the Kuibyshev outfit.

Ehrlich-Alter Murder a Barrier

Now it will be their job to cover up the bad impression left by the murder of Ehrlich and Alter and whoop it up for Stalin. And no wonder. Itzik Feffer is the same one who, during the purges, wrote poems dedicated to the "Great Stalin," describing him in such modest terms as the "sun, moon, stars, father-in-heaven and earth."

While the Ehrlich-Alter affair is of immediate concern, there are more important and far-reaching matters. For one, Stalin wants to annex the Eastern parts of Poland and create puppet states in the remainder of Eastern Europe. It is for this purpose that he substituted the Pan-Slav movement for the buried Comintern.

In this he only continues the old imperialist Czarist policy of extending Russia's oppressive rule over all Slavic peoples. This Pan-Slavism has always been opposed, not only by Marxists, but even by very mild liberals, as a reactionary imperialist tool of the Romanovs.

Trying to Placate Eastern Jews

Eastern Europe, as is well known, has a large Jewish population. They were the most militantly class and nationally conscious part of world Jewry. Most of the mass movements for national and social liberation found their fullest expression in Eastern Europe. Both the Zionist and non-Zionist mass movements have contributed to make the East European Jew a very politically conscious and vocal individual. Stalin needs the support of these masses for his plans of annexation.

Ehrlich and Alter would have been ideal for his purpose. With their prestige as leaders of the Bund, with their militant anti-fascist record, their support could have swung the class-conscious Jewish working class to his side. Their influence in America would also be helpful. But they held on to their ideals. So they were removed. But the job of getting public support of American Jews in Stalin's favor had to be done, so the delegation was dispatched and brought here.

As we see it, it is quite an ambitious program. It is nothing more nor less than a design to gain the support of the most oppressed people of the world for an ultra-reactionary program of Stalinist imperialism which in the long run will

only fasten a new oppressive rule over them. Stalin wants his future victims to rejoice over an attempt to extend his oppressive hand to them.

Who Supports New Movement?

Among the list of the sponsors for the reception for this "delegation" are many Zionists, including the leader of the "Hashomer-Hatzair" in this country, Moshe Furmansky!

Lately there has been a tendency on the part of both Zionists and Stalinists toward mutual friendship and drawing together for different purposes and with different objectives in mind. The Zionists hope to gain Stalin's support for their cause. The Stalinists, on the other hand, want to utilize this movement of national liberation for their own expansionist plans.

Assuming that the Zionists are really innocent and naive, do they believe that any oppressed minority can gain success and help from a ty-

rant's hand; that a totalitarian dictatorship as the Stalin can really help solve the Jewish problem and bring freedom to the Jews? Is there any evidence in recent history to substantiate this belief? The answer is a categorical "No!"

The "Hashomer-Hatzair," whose members consider themselves revolutionary socialists, will continue to support a policy which, as recently adopted by its sister organization in Palestine, accepts Stalin's theory of socialism in one country, accepts his version of the purges, hails his regime as great and declares him, in the words of Meir Yoari, the Palestinian leader of the Hashomer, as "a great builder and warrior." How long will Hashomer-Hatzair put up with this?

Under the mask of "unity," your name is being utilized to strengthen and extend Stalin's counter-revolutionary regime among the Jewish masses.

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

Food shortages get shorter. High prices get higher. The unprecedentedly big profits of big business become more unprecedented. The tremendous influence of the rich farm bloc on the reactionary Congress gets more tremendous—so much so that Congress cuts the appropriations for the already ineffectual OPA in order to make it even more ineffectual in keeping prices down.

Mayor La Guardia is still busy shaking his fists at and shouting about the black market in meat—and meat shops are still almost devoid of that commodity. So what's the use of the alleged three-cent roll-back in meat prices?

The New York Times reports that "huge quantities of new potatoes shipped here from the South to relieve New York City's recent potato famine have rotted in transit." That didn't exactly relieve the potato famine.

And so it goes. Probably the President will one of these days create another department in Washington with another well-paid "administrator" to add to the total mess. That is what happened the last time FDR became aware that there was such a thing as a food crisis in the country. He created the Office of Food Administration with "Administrator" Davis at the head—and the crazy merry-go-round continued as before.

A so-called solution—supported by confused and intimidated labor leaders as well as by FDR and other Washington leaders—is to give subsidies to business. The idea is for the government to pay such huge sums to the bosses to net them profits in the style to which they are accustomed, that they may stop boosting prices. THIS BUCKLING-UNDER TO WAR-PROFITTEERING IS TOO SHAMEFUL TO BE CONSIDERED BY ANY SERIOUS EXPONENT OF LABOR'S INTERESTS.

LABOR ACTION once again declares that to clean up the food mess, "private enterprise" must give way to committees of organized labor, organized housewives and organized working farmers. Then, instead of the consumers being muled for sky-high war profits, food will be distributed to the people at reasonable prices.

Certainly there is a shortage of labor. Haven't you heard about it? Certainly women must drop their babies and grab the lever of a machine. Haven't you heard about it?

But mostly the alleged shortage of labor is being skillfully used by the bosses to put it over on their workers as well as on consumers whenever possible. For should a peep of complaint come out of the mouths of the gypped people, the hypocritical answer invariably is: "There's a shortage of labor. Haven't you heard about it?"

It is noteworthy, however, that this alleged shortage of labor has not been acute enough to result in the employment of all qualified Negro workers. It is also remarkable that the alleged shortage of labor has not been pressing enough to prevent bosses from firing women workers as soon as it is known that they are pregnant.

Dr. Claude C. Pierce, interested in the subject of women in industry, returns from a tour of war plants and reports that abortions are increasing among women war workers because of the policy of firing women as soon as their pregnancy is learned. To hold on to their jobs, women are resorting to abortion.

This situation, combined with the increase in adolescent delinquency, has produced a boom in the abortion business. Not only do certain doctors engage in an "illegal" practice under conditions which are injurious to the women, but quacks without any medical training have formed abortion rings to capitalize on the need and misery of women caught in the net of boss cruelty or war morality. The deaths of women and girls who submit themselves to these unscrupulous charlatans are increasing daily.

THE DISHONEST JABBERINGS OF THE BOSSES AND THEIR POLITICIANS ABOUT WAR SACRIFICES ALWAYS RESULT IN SACRIFICING WORKING MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Organized labor must protect its people, first, last and all the time. Organized labor has to demand that pregnant women workers be allowed on their jobs as long as their health permits—with necessary medical supervision while at work. Furthermore, they must get financial support while having their babies. And lastly, women must be given assurance of re-employment after their babies are born—with retention of every seniority right.

It is the fear of losing their jobs which is driving so many working women into the death traps of the abortion business.

Running true to form, the wholesale attack on the Negroes in Beaumont, Texas—which resulted in so much injury to the Negro population and to their meager property—was started on the pretext that a white woman had been raped by a Negro.

However, a slight innovation was added this time. A reputable local physician examined the "wronged" woman. He found that there were no signs of rape. There were no bruises on her body. Furthermore, no fingerprints were discovered on a cup and saucer out of which the woman claimed the Negro drank some of her coffee before he attacked her.

In a word, this contemptible creature made a lend-lease of her so-called "womanhood" in the cause of race hatred.

She may have done this as an unconscious victim of the propaganda of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Christian Association, its modernized stooge. Or she may have consciously played this abominable role as a paid agent of the KKK and its stooges. In either case she was guilty of one of the most heinous sins on the calendar, namely, helping to keep alive the artificial hatred of white workers for their fellow workers of darker skin.

Where can the blame be placed for such baseness? Where, indeed, can the blame be placed for the entire disgraceful outbreak of race riots that have overrun the country?

To lay the responsibility at the door of the KKK and the American Christian Association—financed by the bourbon bosses of the South and the industrialists of the North to keep black and white workers from uniting and using their combined strength—is to tell only half of the story. Even fifth columnists don't explain the other half.

How about the so-called champions of so-called racial equality? How about FDR, the New Dealers, the press and radio "friends of the Negroes"? What have they done to end race hatred?

If only one-tenth of the money, the effort and the cleverness employed by the government, the press and the radio to make anti-labor propaganda when workers ask for a raise, were used instead to spread education on the race question and to make propaganda for inter-racial solidarity, the danger of these widespread riots would be greatly reduced. For the power of these agencies for shaping public opinion and action is stupendous.

But these "friends of the Negroes" are phoney. Their "belief" in race equality is only as deep as their need for the Negro vote and as their need for Negro support of their war. In their hearts, these hypocrites are as opposed to the solidarity of black and white working people as the KKK itself. EVERY ELEMENT OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM BANKS ON RACE DISCRIMINATION TO KEEP BLACK AND WHITE WORKERS FROM UNITING IN THEIR MIGHT.

That is why race equality can be realized only under a workers' government. With the government, the press, the radio, the movies, the schools, all under the control of the working people themselves, these powerful means for molding public opinion and action can be used to cement the bonds of mutual need and friendship between all workers. Artificial color lines will be erased when boss rule is ended.

Black and white workers, hasten that day!

Profiteers Force Food Crisis

(Continued from page 1)

peased the labor leaders" and "prevented them from demanding a general raise in wages."

But what real grounds are there for labor leaders to feel "appeased"? What reason is there for labor not demanding wage increases to meet the stratospheric food costs? What hope is there for a solution of the food mess in all this business about subsidies?

Oh, yes! Food subsidies will allow for a roll-back in prices, we are told. What of ALL prices? Oh, no! The President is speaking about a roll-back only of the prices of meat, butter and coffee. If prices of these three items can be rolled back, that will be very nice indeed. Then we can butter our meat, which we can't get at all, with butter that we often can't get, and wash it down with coffee.

Seriously speaking, the roll-back proposed by the President is so trifling that it won't be seen against the mountainous height of all prices. According to the calculations of the United States News, they might save the average family about fifty cents every week. Some saving!

How about all the other necessities of life? There are fruits and vegetables, canned foods and dairy products, shoes, clothing and household supplies? The prices of all these commodities roll up and up and up.

How about quality, on which every consumer is cheated? And the no-grading holiday that the food bosses are enjoying at our expense? All these and many other grievances are part and parcel of the food problem and of the high cost of living. It isn't a gesture of "appeasement" that the working people want but a real solution!

The workers must understand what this subsidy plan is all about, why Congress first rejected it, and why the House finally consented to a makeshift acceptance only after the President's veto message to the effect that he didn't want his hands tied in his attempt to "appease" labor with this gesture of a roll-back in prices, though the Senate still can't see the President's point.

The idea of the subsidy plan is to roll back prices without the bosses sacrificing any profits. So that the

bosses can keep on pocketing profits in the war style to which they are accustomed, the government pays—with a subsidy out of the U. S. Treasury, which, incidentally, is replenished BY TAXES EVERY WORKER PAYS—the difference between roll-back price profits and former profits.

The bulk of the subsidies go to big business farming, beef producing, dairying, processing. This is true of all government subsidies and benefit payments in general—THE BIG BOYS GET MOST OF THEM. For instance, of the 1943 increase in farm parity levels amounting to \$1,500,000,000, big business farming gets at least sixty per cent.

Then why, if the big boys get the subsidies, did Congress—dominated by big business and the farm bloc—oppose subsidies and submit to the President their anti-subsidy bill? The answer is that subsidies are small potatoes compared to the profits that come their way when the big boys set their own prices.

That is also why Congress has been trying so hard to shove the OPA off the map. Weak and ineffectual as OPA price control is, it still is a nuisance to the farming and industrial big shots who like things all their own way.

After the President's message, the House could no longer hold its former intransigent position. The "representatives of the people" saw the point. It is one thing to pass an anti-strike law over the President's half-heated veto, after every propaganda device has been used in an anti-labor campaign. It is another matter to ignore the strong injunction of the President not to tie his hands in making this gesture to "appease" not only labor but all elements whom the cost of living has made hot under the collar. The Senate, however, still holds out for a full measure of "rewards for private enterprise."

That the President has made only a political maneuver is very plain. For nothing has been changed basically. Big business is still in complete control.

The beef producers who keep millions of pounds of meat off the market for higher prices continue their strike against meat-starved people in

the armed forces and in civilian life. IN FACT, THESE ARE THE VERY BOYS REPRESENTED ON THE WAR MEAT BOARD IN WASHINGTON.

The "big four" of farming still practically own and control the land and the bounty thereof—AS WELL AS THE STRINGS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND IN CONGRESS.

No, nothing has been changed! So why should the workers wait around, do nothing, allow themselves to be pauperized by high prices, while the President tries to "appease" the labor leaders with an empty gesture?

The supporters of Roosevelt blame the reactionary Congress for the food crisis. The Republicans blame the New Deal. All this is simply the politics of politicians who alike are dominated by the private profit interests causing food shortages, black markets, skyrocketing prices.

The people themselves must buck these interests. To check the power and lust of big business monopolies in the food industries—bloating themselves on the life blood of the people—the working people must get into action.

The small and independent farmers, the farm workers, organized labor in the processing industries and the organized housewives can and must cooperate to bypass the food monopolists who strike at the stomachs of all of us. If the packing and processing industries were nationalized and put under the control of the organized workers there could be no such thing as this strike of powerful meat producers—who are keeping the workers pot empty while supplying the black market.

For organized labor, controlling the processing of meat, would naturally deal direct with the small and independent farmers and cattle growers, get cattle slaughtered and, through cooperative markets, make meat available to the housewife. The same is true of the processing of milk and dairy products. The same is true of all farm products.

BIG BUSINESS MUST BE BY-PASSED BY THE WORKING PEOPLE!

Unity with Labor--The Only Hope for MOW

By HARRY ALLEN

On the basis of the recently concluded March on Washington conference held in Chicago, it is necessary to review briefly its history of the past year in order to understand the proceedings and actions of the present. It is now clear that any decision with respect to an actual march on Washington will remain entirely on paper unless the rank and file of the March on Washington Movement and its supporters generally can exert enough pressure to compel militant actions and a march over the head of the straddling and opportunist director of the MOW, A. Philip Randolph.

The fact is that the program of action and proposals adopted by the national conference at Chicago mark a noticeable retrogression, in view of the events of the past year—Detroit riots, Beaumont lynching, Army discrimination, etc.—from the MOW policy conference held in Detroit last September 26-27.

A Real Perspective and Program—In the Past

In his keynote address to the Detroit conference, Philip Randolph, adapting himself verbally to the moods and needs of the Negro masses

in order the better to be able to head off an actual march, declared:

"We must develop a series of marches of Negroes at a given time in a hundred or more cities throughout the country, or stage a big march of a hundred thousand Negroes on Washington to put our cause into the main stream of public opinion and focus the attention of world interests.

"The mobilization and proclamation of a nation-wide series of mass marches on the City Halls and City Councils to awaken the Negro masses and center public attention upon the grievances and goals of the Negro people, and serve as training and discipline of the Negro masses for the more strenuous struggle of a March on Washington, if, as and when an affirmative decision is made thereon by the Negro masses of the country through our national conference."

"A March on Washington as an evidence to white America that black America is on the march for its rights and means business.

"The picketing of the White House following the March on Washington, and maintain said

picket line until the country and the world recognize that the Negro has become of age and will sacrifice his all to be counted as men, free men."

Those assuredly were strong and brave-sounding words. They are even truer today. Indeed, a word from Randolph to the Negro masses that the MOW will really march would rally countless Negro numbers and wide labor support for the march. But Randolph will not give the word. Only the masses can still make the march a reality.

The truth is that the National Conference of the MOW did not act in a manner to assure a determined struggle under MOW leadership against Jim Crow. Why is this so?

Randolph Leads MOW—Downhill

To begin with, between the nine-month period of the Detroit conference and the Chicago national conference, Randolph and the MOW leadership have brought the MOW movement steadily downhill with their 1943 version and practice of Uncle Tom hat-in-hand. That is, with their almost complete reliance and faith in petitions and appeals to the Roosevelt Administration for the re-

dress of grievances of the Negro masses.

Steadily the mass following which the MOW had developed at the inception of the movement, culminating in great demonstrations at Madison Square Garden, New York, the Coliseum in Chicago, St. Louis, etc., has disappeared. As the MOW leadership failed to direct the Negro masses into militant action for their economic and democratic rights (with local exceptions, carried on independently of the national leadership, as in St. Louis), the masses became despairing and disillusioned with the MOW.

Hence the real masses of Negro people, much less the Negro workers, were not truly represented at the Chicago national conference. The MOW has increasingly moved away from such a base as it did have in the organized labor movement and among the Negro proletariat generally; and toward a middle class base, viewpoint and practice. This development accounts for the pacifist, "non-violence" phobia that saturated the proceedings of the conference for several days.

Middle Class Leadership Runs MOW

Middle class elements—intellectuals, teachers, preachers, etc.—dominated and made up the great bulk of the MOW delegates at Chicago. However, these Negro middle class "leaders" (presumably, too, the most advanced of the middle class Negroes) cannot possibly (no more than can middle class elements generally) successfully build and lead a movement on behalf of the masses.

In a conference presumably representing the interests of 15,000,000 Negroes in America, of which ninety per cent or more are working men and farmers of various descriptions, hardly any reference of significance, except for an occasional hosannah by some speaker, was made to the working class and the organized labor movement as the real or potential source and force for carrying through the struggle for Negro economic, social and political rights. Yet it is precisely membership, participation in and leadership of the MOW by Negro workers and unionists which alone can yet possibly transfer the MOW into an active, militant mass movement for Negro rights.

How limited has become the vision of the MOW leadership (which Randolph's hand-tailored conference of delegates endorsed) is indicated in the decision of the conference to carry through its educational and "public pressure" campaign of "non-violent good will action" in the cities of Richmond, Washington, New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago.

But Detroit—where anti-Negro violence and murder raised their bloody head; Detroit, the seat of KKKism in the North; this great industrial city with tens of thousands of Negroes, is not even regarded by the MOW conference as among the first cities to receive its attention and "educational" efforts. Protests from some of the delegates did not change this part of the program of "action." "Good will" had indeed penetrated the spirit of the delegates.

Nevertheless, the pacifistic doctrine enunciated at the conference did not really represent even the attitude of the middle class gathering, much less the sprinkling of worker delegates. Murmurs of protest outside the conference proceedings and in the conference itself demonstrated this fact, as did also the motion in the last hour to set a date for the march.

St. Louis Mass Action—Real Way Against Jim Crow

For example, T. D. McNeal, president of the St. Louis MOW, proclaimed:

"In one 'defense' plant employing 15,000 workers, there were no Negroes employed. To the company, a MOW delegation declared:

"If you don't give us jobs, we will take the issue to the streets, and keep it there until we get what we want. We will build a mass picket line clear around your plant and keep it there." This militant threat of mass action resulted in five thousand jobs for Negroes at this plant.

Delegate McNeal then further stated: "Mass pressure, a picket line, now will be thrown around the Bell Telephone Co. to force employment of Negroes."

Basically, the delegates recognized that only a mass March on Washington would bring the issue of Jim Crow graphically and dramatically to the attention of the entire people of America, and for that matter of the world; and serve as a means to help eliminate, so far as is possible under capitalist society, aspects of Jim Crow.

"Seat of Jim Crow is Washington" A delegate from Buffalo, representing a body of union steel workers (CIO), expressed the real feelings and desires of the Negro masses when he declared, in voicing drastic and outright opposition to the resolution on "Non-Violent Good Will Direct Action":

"The seat of Jim Crow is the seat of government at Washington. It is there we must go!"

In reply to the chief spokesman of the non-violent technique, he further pointed out that the Negro unionists in Buffalo were instrumental in helping to build a strong Steel Workers Union, "not by running away from the blows of the scabs and the company, but by unbroken mass solidarity to the fullest extent needed."

Negroes Want to March

It is significant to note that no motion or resolution came before the convention calling upon and specifying the Negroes of the labor union movement to become the organized base and leadership of the MOW, locally and nationally, along with the adoption of the militant methods of struggle carried out by the labor movement.

In an even more fundamental sense the MOW conference demonstrated its inability to comprehend the objective conditions which, if understood and taken advantage of, make for a deep, wide and effective struggle against Jim Crow in its worst forms.

This truth is instinctively recognized by the Negro masses, who re-

alize that if they don't break down Jim Crow during the war, Jim Crow conditions will exist in even more aggravated form after the imperialist war. That is the reason why the Negro masses at the outset rallied in vast numbers to the MOW, as it gave initial evidence of leading the Negroes in mass actions, in a mass march, if need be, on Jim Crow's chief seat, the government at Washington.

The solution of Jim Crow evils, even partially (as well as of the problems of labor) lies in who has or controls state power, the government. This was implicitly recognized initially by the MOW when it talked big words of a mass March on Washington.

If the march has failed to materialize, it is because the middle class, reformist and, apparently, pacifist outlook of Randolph and the MOW leadership today fear for their ability to direct or control the Negro masses should they once proceed to independent demands and actions upon the government powers.

A New Leadership Must Arise

The present weak organizational state and outlook of the MOW came about inevitably, as Randolph's leadership of the MOW is examined and understood.

Specifically and precisely this meant and means today that the MOW ranks must develop their own working class leadership of the organization. Through independent local militant actions, they can still carry through the tasks and purpose for which the MOW was organized—an organization of mass action against all evils and representatives of Jim Crow. The methods of the St. Louis MOW must become the spirit and practice of all the MOW, thereby putting the needed pressure on the present MOW leadership to move toward national militant actions.

The national conference of the MOW graphically demonstrates that the only hope of the MOW for the future is for Negro workers in the basic industries, especially those in the unions, to enter into and dominate the policies and practices of the MOW. Unless the entry of such Negro workers—the best educated, conscious and militant forces of the Negro people, the ones best able to lead the Negro struggle also in their communities—takes place very rapidly; unless they soon assume local leadership

of the MOW units (until they can achieve national leadership and replacement of the middle class MOW leadership), the MOW will go the road of all movements led by confused and straddling middle class elements—to an untimely end or a barrier to progress of the Negro masses.

In view of the hopes placed in the MOW by great numbers of Negroes and in view of the original potentialities for a powerful mass movement for Negro rights, the MOW conference proceedings and decisions must be recorded fundamentally as a failure, even partially a tragedy. The responsibility for this failure rests primarily on the Randolph leadership. If the basic policies and leadership cannot be transformed, the MOW is going to get nowhere.

Which Road for MOW?

The rabble-rouser of the MOW, Dr. Charles Ervin, director of the Eastern Region of the MOW, in his opening speech entitled, "Why Negroes Assemble at Chicago," spoke many truths. Only they will prove to be bitter gall to MOW followers and the Negroes generally as they come to observe the impotence of the MOW with its "new" policy of "non-violent technique" and "good will action," plus the straddling policy adopted on the mass March to Washington—which in fact means no march at all.

The Negroes, Ervin declared, may properly proclaim for themselves the doctrine espoused by Karl Marx for the working class, "Negroes of America, unite!" he paraphrased Marx. "You have nothing to lose but your chains!"

True, but not quite enough. Negro workers, come closer to Marx, to Lenin, to Trotsky. Workers, Negro and white, "Unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains!" Therein lies the true historic destiny of the laboring masses of America and of the world.

The present MOW policy for the Negroes spells failure in the struggle against Jim Crow and its causes. With or without the MOW, the Negro masses must aim quickly to get on the road of militant mass action; insist on a MASS MARCH ON WASHINGTON; and, in time, take the road with other workers toward political power. Thus the conditions will be laid for the complete abolition of Jim Crow.

Editorials

Profits, Wages And Prices

In the last issue of LABOR ACTION, we published a story based on the report of the Department of Commerce which showed that all corporate profits, AFTER TAXES, had increased eighteen per cent for the first quarter of 1943. The announcement of this fact by the department only confirmed what we have been writing for a long time.

Now comes Representative Engel of Michigan with an announcement that on the basis of a study which he made of corporate earnings of forty-eight different companies, he found that profits on war contracts, again AFTER taxes, ranged from five per cent to 53.88 per cent in 1942!

In sharp contrast to this enrichment of the great industrialists, the monopolist combines, the war profiteers, is the condition of the overwhelming majority of the people faced with wage freezing and excessive living costs. While the scurrilous New York Times continues to lie by saying the wages of the workers have surpassed the rise in the cost of living, thereby justifying prices rises and wage freezing, the facts are clear that the cost of living has gone way beyond any wage increases which workers have received.

Newsweek's column, "Washington Trends" (June 28), comments on the bankruptcy of the Administration's policy on wages and prices, and points out that the WLB is in a dilemma because, while it adheres to the "Little Steal Formula" lim-

iting wage increases by fifteen per cent, the cost of living has increased "some twenty-four per cent since January 1, 1941—and food prices have jumped forty-six per cent...."

Even the ultra-conservative United States News, in reporting Economic Stabilizer Vinson's rejection of a panel proposal for an eight cents an hour wage increase for railway workers, points out that the whole problem of the WLB wage policy is up for question. Says the United States News:

"WLB's 'little steel' formula, which has become a guidepost of wage policy, is based upon the theory that workers are entitled to fifteen per cent higher wage rates than they were getting on January 1, 1941.

"Living costs, however, appear to have outrun the formula. Latest Bureau of Labor Statistics data show food costs to be rising at a rate of twenty per cent a year and the general cost of living to be 24.1 per cent above the January, 1941, level."

This is the situation which faces labor: mounting profits for big business, a mounting cost of living making a shambles of the wages of the workers, and a hold-the-line order by the President virtually freezing the already low incomes of the people.

A 'Liberal' Speaks

The New York Times for June 16 reports the following remarks from the Hon. Ellis Arnall, successor to Talmadge as Governor of Georgia: "It burns me up to read about strikes in coal mines and defense industries at a time when American boys are trying

on far-flung battle fronts to preserve our way of life for us. I have no patience at all with a man who puts his own selfish interest above loyalty to his country and values a dollar more than the life of one of our soldiers. It would be all right with me if such agitators were tarred and feathered and horse whipped."

After his election Arnall was hailed as a great "liberal" and a marked improvement over Talmadge. Perhaps the liberal weekly, The Nation, will snuggle up to Arnall. In the recent issue this weekly took the position that the miners had no right to strike, no matter what their grievances.

An Example To Be Followed

LABOR ACTION recently ran the story of how San Pedro housewives forced the manager of the Banning Market to close its doors and then lower its prices by twenty and twenty-five per cent. It had been charging prices way above ceiling.

Their method was so simple, so easy, that it cries out for similar action by housewives all over the country.

Some seven hundred and fifty women—tired of being robbed, and determined to put a stop to it—met and decided to boycott the Banning Market unless prices were placed within ceilings. A committee of women went into the store and delivered their ultimatum to the manager, while the bulk of the women demonstrated their united will and strength outside. Result: prices came down.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of Shipyard Workers Union, Local 9, CIO, gave assistance to the angered housewives. The Ladies' Auxiliary has its own High Cost of Living Committee and seems on the way to militant organized action on the food front.

Many unions throughout the country have Ladies' Auxiliaries. This is no time for timidity. Ladies' Auxiliaries must get help from the unions themselves to organize efficiently—so that they in turn can give much needed assistance to the mass of unorganized housewives bursting to do something to stop the robbery that is being perpetrated on them daily.

The housewives of San Pedro have set an excellent example. Now is the time for the labor movement to follow this example by a nation-wide organization of the unions, their Ladies' Auxiliaries and consumers into a powerful weapon in the struggle against profiteers and high prices.

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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 THE RICH—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 ninety-six 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.

Randolph Fails--

(Continued from page 1)

the program of "action" to the conference, she further avowed: "Good will is our philosophy.... It must become our religion."

MOW Rolls—Backward

Thus in July, 1943, when the fate of the world, of humanity, and specifically of all the exploited masses—white, Negro, yellow, brown—in the imperialist and colonial nations, is being settled by fire and sword, by guns and cannon, by bombing planes, by arms in hand—the MOW conference could visualize and put forward a program of Negro emancipation through the medium of "non-violent" technique; through the adoption of variations of civil disobedience; through the meekest pacifism; through Gandhism—a proved method of failure for the Indian masses.

Yet, in fact, one of the principal speakers, the Rev. E. Stanley Jones, Quaker, in outlining the "technique of non-violence," further cautioned his audience that they can only carry out such a program if they obeyed their leaders implicitly and were extremely disciplined. Rev. Mr. Jones declared that the road toward the abolition of Jim Crow in the United States was the same road as Gandhi had forced on the Indian masses. Moreover, "as a last resort, after every other method has failed, we will take the road of civil disobedience." Thus has the MOW rolled backward from its great beginning and struggles for Negro rights.

The convention "implemented" this resolution organizationally by spe-

cifically and particularly declaring for cooperation with such groups as the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a religious, pacifist organization, and other groups holding to a non-violence philosophy.

The MOW convention adopted several other resolutions, the more important of which were to limit membership in the MOW to Negroes; to support of the war; a demand that President Roosevelt meet with a delegation of the MOW; for Negro representation at the post-war peace conference; revision of the Atlantic Charter to include Negroes, and other anti-Jim Crow proposals. It is to be noted that nearly all the resolutions base themselves on or imply support of the war and continued reliance on the Administration to achieve Negro objectives.

Panel discussions on the Negroes in America, Africa and the West Indies were highly informative.

Officers elected were: A. Philip Randolph, national director; B. F. McLaurin, national secretary; Aldrich Turner, national treasurer, all of New York City.

Next Week LABOR ACTION

Will Feature—

AFTER THE DISSOLUTION OF THE COMINTERN

New Stalinist Plans to Undermine the Labor Movement

By Max Shachtman

Nat'l Sec'y of the Workers Party

Not So Fast, Kremlin Joe!

Drew Pearson reports that when Wendell Willkie was in Moscow, Stalin asked him why the United States didn't do something about Nazi espionage in Argentina. "Why don't you clean up the Argentine government," Joe asked Wendell, "or take over the country—do something to turn the Axis out of there?"

The fact that Argentina, nominally at least, is an independent country and not part of the United States did not faze the "protector" of the little peoples. Stalin's conception of how to clean out the Nazis is to have the United States send down an army to overrun the South American republic and to establish a United Nations' military dictatorship in Argentina. After all, during his pact with Hitler, that's the way he took Eastern Poland and the Baltic states.

Of course, it does not enter Stalin's bureaucratic skull that in this way the people of Argentina will not get their long-dreamed-of democracy—and if it does occur to him, he is not particularly interested.

In Stalin's way of thinking, there is no room for the people acting on their own behalf, organizing and driving out not only the German fascists, but the native ones as well, and setting up a truly democratic workers' government.

"Take over the country?" Not so fast, Mr. Stalin—the Argentine workers may have something to say about that first.