

# Workers' Power— The Way Out for The Italian Masses

News from Italy, following the upheaval of the masses and the collapse of the fascist regime, has been very scant and not always reliable, after passing through the fine-grained sieve of at least two censorships.

But there are enough facts available to show that the revolution which has begun in Italy is still going on and is passing through familiar phases.

## WHY MUSSOLINI COLLAPSED

The fall of Mussolini did not "create" the revolution. It was the revolution that brought about the fall of Mussolini. This murdering blatherskite collapsed amid the ruins of his system which looked so invincible the day before, because the masses refused any longer to fight for Italian imperialism and its German master-partner.

The fascist system was so rotten, and inherently weak, that it could not withstand even the silent pressure of the people in civilian clothes and in uniform, their lack of enthusiasm for the war, their lack of confidence in the regime.

The people didn't suddenly acquire their hatred of the war and of fascism the minute it was announced that Mussolini's regime no longer existed. That is a ridiculous notion. It was the gradual rise of this hatred that made it impossible for Mussolini to speak and act for another day as the representative of the interests of Italian capitalism. Then, as soon as the people saw that they had put the finishing touch on Mussolini and his gang, they showed their hatred and opposition OPENLY.

For years we have been hearing all sorts of crackpot theories about fascism being some kind of anti-capitalist movement. Some great minds even said fascism is a new and stable social order that destroys capitalism. Some have even called it "Black Socialism." How hollow all these theories sound now!

Mussolini and his mobsters were subsidized and brought into power by the big trust magnates of Italy. The fascists served these capitalists loyally. In so far as they succeeded in murdering and imprisoning and exiling the best labor leaders, and crushing the organized labor and revolutionary movements, they served capitalism effectively. But they were servants, or, more exactly, gangster-policemen of capital. The minute the Italian capitalists saw that to keep these policemen in power meant to go down along with them, big business kicked them out unceremoniously and without encountering any serious opposition from their hirelings.

## FASCISM—A MOVEMENT OF RUBBISH

There is, however, an honest profound and encouraging lesson to be drawn from the collapse of Mussolini & Co. Before Hitler came to power, the great revolutionary leader, Leon Trotsky, described the fascists as a mass of human rubbish which a militant and united working class could sweep into oblivion with a single stroke.

The Stalinists and Social-Democrats in Germany prevented the masses from uniting and from acting militantly; and Hitler

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# WLB Rejects Ship Workers Pay Rise

By ERNEST LUND

The War Labor Board has turned down the demand of the CIO Shipbuilders Union for a nine per cent general wage increase for the nation's shipyard workers. This action follows several weeks of deadlocked negotiations between the union and the shipyard corporations, during which the latter have tried their best to break the back of unionism in the East Coast yards.

The refusal of the pay raise by the WLB is the board's answer to the union, whose leaders have been telling the workers to "leave everything in the hands of the national office and the WLB."

All of the important East Coast contracts are piled up in the files of the WLB. These include the contracts for Federal Shipbuilding of Kearny, N. J., Cramp of Philadelphia, New York Ship of Camden and dozens of others.

The local negotiating committees were turned down by the corporations when they asked for a wage increase. Opposing any kind of action to force the profit-swollen corporations to give their workers enough pay to keep up with rising prices, the national leaders of the union asked that all deadlocked contracts be filed with the WLB. Here the union leaders expected to make deals through their clever lawyers to gain something for the workers.

## Leaders Fumbled Wage Confab

However, even in dealing with the WLB, the John Green administration of the union showed less understanding or courage than any local negotiating committee. Every experienced union negotiator knows that it is necessary to open negotiations by asking for the maximum demands of the workers.

The national leaders of the union, however, went before the WLB with a cringing and whining appeal in which they pointed out that although the cost of living has gone up eighteen per cent since the last pay adjustment in May, 1942, all they were asking for was a nine per cent raise! The conduct of the Shipbuilders Union officials stands in marked con-

trast to that of the United Mine Workers. The latter made the whole country aware of the just demands of the miners. They talked tough and acted tough. They treated the WLB with the contempt it deserves.

Today there is hardly an honest rank and file union man in the country who does not understand that the miners' case is just and who is not ready to back them up. With a little more heat under the John L. Lewis machine that runs the union, the miners will still succeed in forcing the Roosevelt Administration to grant them their just demands.

## Owners Use Connally Bill

However, the decision of the WLB in the shipbuilders' case has not created a stir. Many papers have not even taken notice. Why should they? They rely upon the John Green leadership, supported in many local by the even worse Communist Party-line boss, to hold the shipyard workers in check.

Meanwhile the companies continue their arrogant anti-union attitude which they have adopted since the Smith-Connally bill was passed. In one yard after another the militant shop stewards report that the mood of the men is turning toward a feeling of hopelessness and lack of confidence in the ability of the union to do something for them.

These militant shop stewards now have a doubly hard job. On the one hand they must fight the "do-nothing" policy of the national officials and on the other they must fight all sorts of anti-union sentiment and remarks in the ranks of the men, which is created by the leaders' "do-nothing" policy.

The more active union men are now talking daily about the need of sending real fighting delegations to the national convention of the union in New York in September. Reports from a number of yards indicate that the militant shop stewards are plugging for the election of delegates pledged to repeal the "no-strike" pledge, recall the CIO members from the WLB, and repeal the Smith-Connally bill by forming an Independent Labor Party.

# LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 9, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

# HARLEM NEGROES PROTEST JIM CROW DISCRIMINATION

By W. F. CARLTON

"Shame has come to our city and sorrow to the large number of our fellow citizens, decent, law-abiding citizens, who live in the Harlem section."

Thus the first citizen of New York describes the demonstration in Harlem of the Negro people which has resulted in half a dozen deaths, scores of wounded, and hundreds of arrests.

So that, according to Mayor La Guardia, when the Negro people demonstrate, shame comes to the citizens. Shame

did come to La Guardia himself when he insulted the Negro people by signing the contract for the Metropolitan Insurance Company housing project which expressly stipulated the exclusion of Negroes.

Shame does not come to the decent, law-abiding citizens in the White House in Washington and the decent, law-abiding citizens in Congress who have insulted the Negro people by segregating them in the Federal Government, by segregating them in the Army, in the Navy, in the Air Force and in women's auxiliaries.

Shame does not come to Secretary of War Stimson and Secretary of the Navy Knox when the men they have inducted into the Army and Navy are shot down by military police and Southern civilians, are Jim Crowed and ill-treated on their way to the camps, are segregated in the camps themselves, persecuted, maltreated and lynched without any protection from the government.

We have not seen shame in the industrialists and men of business who in the very City of New York will not employ Negroes, and only when they are compelled to and have no other means of evasion, grudgingly give them work in industry, that same industry which is supposed to be doing all that is possible to win the great "war for democracy."

All these things can be done by the "decent, law-abiding citizens" who merely continue the three hundred year old persecution of the Negro people which has always characterized American capitalist society.

But when the Negroes in Harlem become exasperated to the utmost limit by the combined persecution and hypocrisy of their lords and masters, and decide that they will show their resentment in the only way that seems possible to them, then is the time when La Guardia goes to the microphone and informs the public that this indeed is a shame.

This, and not the persecution, is the scandal. This, and not the hypocrisy, is the disgrace. Not those who insult the Negro people, not those who insult the intelligence of the Negroes by the perpetual bawling and yelling to them about the "war for democracy."

No! According to La Guardia, the demonstration against these things, that is the shame.

## WHAT KIND OF DEMONSTRATION WAS IT?

The Mayor himself has informed the public that the upheaval in Harlem was a demonstration. A demonstration against what? Since when is it shameful to demonstrate against lynch law, segregation, discrimination and hypocrisy in high places, masquerading before the people as "war for democracy"?

In this truly shameful hypocrisy, La Guardia is only one of many. All the press, all the worthy citizens, not only in New York, but in Detroit, in Mobile, in Beaumont and in San Francisco, all get together and in one loud, clear and mournful voice shake their heads and say to the protesting Negro people, "What a shame!"

The people in Harlem are exasperated beyond endurance by the situation of the Negro people in the United States as a whole and the continuous contradiction between being persecuted by democracy, and then being told that they must die for that democracy.

But the Harlem people have certain special grievances of their own. The overcrowding in Harlem can be borne with patience and forbearance by those who read about it in the newspapers. The people of Harlem can no longer endure it. They can no longer bear the overcharging for inferior food which is dumped upon the Harlem community by the "decent, law-abiding citizens" who cannot dispose of these goods anywhere else.

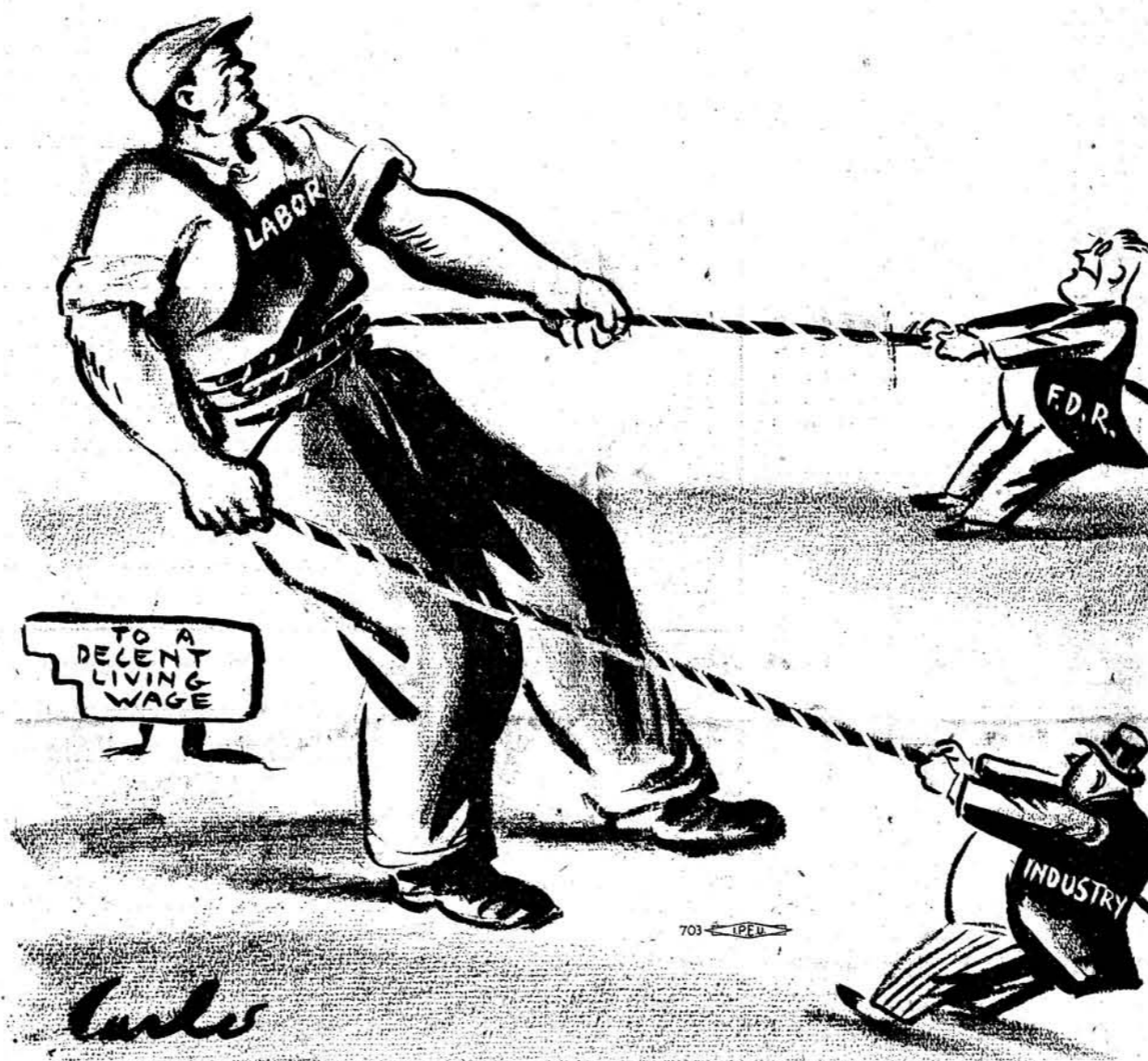
The people of Harlem cannot reconcile at all the constant shrieking in the press about the manpower shortage and their inability to get work. All this seems to the people of Harlem particularly shameful. When they do get work in industry, it is more often in New Jersey than in New York.

The people of Harlem now have made all manner of protest against the savage brutality of the police under the command of that "decent, law-abiding citizen," Police Commissioner Valentine, under the patronage of that equally "decent" and equally "law-abiding" citizen, Mayor La Guardia.

At a meeting of the New York City Council on June 25, Councilman A. Clayton Powell said that New York had recently wit-

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## FIGHTING THE SQUEEZE PLAY



## How Monopoly Works for Big Business

# Wages and Rail Profits

By GERTRUDE SHAW

The vast majority of railroad workers have not received a wage increase since 1941.

Brushing aside this most pertinent fact, crafty spokesmen for the railroad monopoly are talking hard and fast to convince the special board holding hearings on the railroad unions' demands for wage increases, that such increases should not be granted.

For instance, the vice-president of the New York Central beats his chest, and assures the workers that he is looking out for their interests in refusing the wage increase. For, don't you see, "any further wage increase for railroad employees will invite the disaster of inflation, with consequent injury to wage earners themselves."

However, the ghost of inflation no longer scares the workers—for two very good and sufficient reasons.

One is that the purchasing power of the dollar has decreased and prices have become inflationary WITHOUT WAGES GOING UP!

The other reason why workers don't scare when the bosses pull their inflation puppet-ghost out of the closet, is that the workers see that inflationary prices and big war profits go together—so that when bosses cry "cheese it—inflation," they only voice their objection to parting with even an inchy-binchy bit of those profits by increasing workers' wages.

So the railroads—like all the bosses—have tightened their purse strings against wage increases—even though railroad workers are now comparatively worse off than other groups of workers. IT IS A WAR-FATTENED PURSE THAT THE TRANSPORTATION MONOPOLISTS ARE GUARDING.

## Fat Railroad Profits

A. F. Whitney, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, testifying before the aforesaid special wage board, said that last year the Class I roads of the country had an all-time stupendous net operating income of \$1,480,940,760—after deducting taxes and all the other deductibles. This year, Mr. Whitney said, railroad dividends are being boosted by FORTY-FIVE PER CENT.

The financial pages of the papers bear out Mr. Whitney. For instance, the take of the Pennsylvania Railroad for the five months ending May 31 was \$1.82 net per share—as against only \$1.21 a year ago, OR AN INCREASE OF FIFTY PER CENT. Wall Street has confidence in the railroads coming in with a pirate's loot this year—for, since the beginning of the year the market prices of railroad stocks have risen by from one-third or one-half.

As to some of the methods used by the railroads in getting their "just rewards," there is a report, dated September 8, 1942, by Thurman Arnold, former assistant United States

Attorney General. This eye-opening report would have been completely suppressed by the boss press—presumably as unfit to print, or as giving information to the enemy. But the Railroad Brotherhoods pushed the report out into the light of day.

Mr. Arnold found that the financial giants behind the railroads made a little deal with twenty-three domestic air lines to stop the free development of air freight transportation—so as not to take away from the railroads any business they don't want to give up. The effect of this "progressive" agreement—whereby the air lines pledged to charge at least twice as much as the railroads, and actually charge seven times as much—is that "all cargo on the domestic air lines of the United States is the exclusive monopoly of the railroads."

Grover Loening, technical consultant for a government department, is quoted by Mr. Arnold as follows: "This monopolistic contract exerted a very great influence in retarding the development of air cargo carrying in the United States, so that we find ourselves today in this war emergency having to make literally frantic efforts to catch up to a position that we could have well had many years ago..."

The full-page ads of big business—which are charged to the government on cost-plus contracts—would have the innocent reader believe that the bosses are making all kinds of "sacrifices" for the war—and that without them there would be no economic development, no industrial progress. The Arnold report clearly shows how the railroads have "sacrificed" for the war and how they have "furthered" the improvement of transportation.

Artificially High Rates

The railroads have forced artificially high rates not only in air transport but in all transport "without

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## Labor and a 'Cost-Plus' Wage

The Harlem events, which are of such crucial importance for the labor movement and the entire American working class, have made it impossible to use the article on the Cost-Plus Wage. It will appear in the next issue.



NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Detroit D. A. Acts as a One-Man Klan Jury

By T. R. COBB

After rejecting a demand by the Mayor's interracial committee for a grand jury investigation of the Detroit anti-Negro riots of June 21, City Prosecutor William E. Dowling established himself as a ONE-MAN KLAN JURY with the shocking and inflammatory statement that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People instigated the riots in which twenty-five Negroes were murdered by hoodlums and police.

Dowling then denied that the KKK had anything to do with the riots or the recent anti-Negro strike at the Packard Motor Car Co., which R. J. Thomas, UAW president, laid directly at the door of the Klan.

"I can't just call a grand jury on rumors and hearsay," Dowling said, and proceeded to rattle off the following series of unfounded Ku Klux Klan konkoktions. We quote him from the Detroit Free Press of July 27:

"The Sunday night of the riot, a gang of colored boys and girls ranging in age from thirteen to twenty years went to Belle Isle with the expressed purpose of driving the white people from the island.

"Next, they attacked a man and his wife who were eating a picnic lunch, beat him up and ate the lunch. They went on around the bridge and one of the colored girls was pushed into a white girl who was accompanied by a sailor. A fight started and it spread across the bridge.

downtown to a club and had it announced over the public address system that a Negro woman and her baby had been thrown into the river.

"Then it started. By 4:00 a.m., 400 stores owned by whites in the colored district had been wrecked. . . . A street car had been stopped and fifty white factory workers were taken out and beaten. It was 5:00 a.m. before the whites started to retaliate.

"The NAACP has been fomenting trouble with their crusades in the colored neighborhoods from the start.

"They sent in their thugs to start trouble at the Sojourner Truth situation and then protected them when we tried to bring them to justice. They were the biggest instigators of the recent race riot and if a grand jury is called, they will be named in the first indictment."

What Was Dowling's Aim? Dowling also asserted that there weren't more than six hundred Klansmen in the whole state of Michigan.

Now, where did Dowling get all this "information" about who started the riots? Did he go straight to the local office of the Ku Klux Klan?

Did he have a personal chat with the Grand Imperial Wizard over a small, fiery crowd? Does he have an active acquaintance with the six hundred members of the Klan in Michigan, a figure that nobody, not even the FBI, has made public?

Can this be the reason that Dow-

ling has resisted even a blue-ribbon jury of prejudiced white business men?

Dowling's reference to the Sojourner Truth battle of two years ago, in which Negroes defended their right to move into a federal housing project, reveals an unmistakable Klan touch.

At that time an observer took down the license plate numbers on cars belonging to whites who came to prevent the Negroes from occupying their own homes. His survey unearthed the fact that the white mob was composed, not of neighborhood objectors, but of organized groups that had come from all over the Detroit area to do their dirty work! Yet Dowling has the gall to blame the Negroes for "instigating" this "trouble" too!

Prosecutor Joins Rioters

It is clear what Dowling is driving at. He wants to lay the groundwork for a definitive terrorization of the Negro citizens of Detroit.

He wants to shield a police department guilty of fifteen murders of Negroes so that it can once more go into the Negro neighborhoods with uncontrollable greased triggers.

He wants to disarm and confuse the thousands and thousands of Detroit unionists who were revolted by the pogroms, who work side by side in harmony with their Negro brother unionists, who are willing to defend the Negroes and their joint unions from race-hating, labor-hating fascists and Kluxers.

Upon the United Auto Workers

Union—its membership and leadership—the greatest union of white and Negro workers in the whole world—rests the responsibility of averting a new disaster. It must speak out now with bold and unmistakable voice.

A Labor Program

Firstly, it must organize a gigantic "Never Again" demonstration and parade of all Detroit trade unionists as a living symbol of labor's solidarity against fascist attacks on minorities and the unions. Such a demonstration would serve notice to the Klan and its protectors in the city administration that labor will not tolerate for one moment the recurrence of new outbreaks.

Secondly, it must undertake its own investigation of the riots. Only the UAW can seek out the truth without shielding criminals or concealing the facts.

Thirdly, it must call shop stewards' meetings to discuss the question of physical defense of ALL unionists from ALL hoodlums and similar scum. Unless this is done, the

breach between white and Negro workers will be widened by the formation of two separate groups, each preparing for its own defense and eventually for their mutual destruction.

These three points, especially the last, constitute a minimum action program for the decent, progressive-minded unionists of Detroit.

For the UAW it is crucial. The corporations and their fascist stooges in the Klan, the America First Party, the National Workers League, the Christian American Association et al. have at last fired their big UAW-busting gun: race hatred. They have said, in effect: "With black and white workers at each other's throats, the UAW is cooked. With black and white voting blocs forming in the UAW it will go up in a puff of smoke. With black and white workers dropping out of the union because of the confusion and turmoil, we shall have destroyed the UAW and restored slavery to the factories of Detroit."

WHAT WILL THE ANSWER OF THE UAW BE?

Little Luther on Cost-Plus

"What," Little Luther wanted to know, "is cost-plus, Daddy?" "That, may lad," Mr. Dilworth replied, "is the most efficient way of getting our war material produced. The government pays a manufacturer the cost of production plus, let's say, a ten per cent margin."

Stalinists Form Gangs Against India Freedom

From the London New Leader of July 10 we take the following story: "Indian 'Communists' have cooperated with Muslim League members to form a semi-official 'People's Volunteer Corps,' which will be dispatched to all areas where demonstrations demanding Indian independence take place so that they can bring them to an end."

Europe in Revolt

A Review of Political Events

WORKERS' SOVIETS FORMED IN MILAN

ITALIAN WORKERS CALL FOR SOCIAL REVOLUTION Hundreds and thousands of workers have demonstrated in the streets of Italy. A general strike has broken out in the North. Workers committees have been formed in Milan. The Italian revolution has begun!

For the first time, the heading of this column is practically correct. Italy is in revolt, not only against Mussolini and top officials of his erstwhile regime, but also against the King, against Badoglio's military dictatorship—against all the reactionary power that be.

Revolutionary socialists had been called utopians and mistaken idealists because of their unshakable faith in the power of the European working class and because of their conviction that it had tremendous hidden energies. The name-callers shrugged their shoulders in the name of "realism" and "Real-politik."

Once again the "realists" have been confounded, for Italy is in revolt. But it is not Italy alone. The revolution which had only just started a week ago in the streets of Milan, has already had its repercussions all over Europe. Once a single tyrant has fallen, the seats of others begin to shake.

ITALY WILL BE PART OF PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENTS

The problem of power is sharply posed in Italy. The veils of deceit have fallen. There are alternatives, to be sure: either workers' power, or a variety of capitalist regimes. But the latter must fall because they cannot solve a single need of the mass of the people.

The workers of Milan, despite twenty years of fascist oppression, despite the rise of a new generation inculcated with the doctrines of the Black Shirts, despite the lack of free political education, have shown an amazing maturity. Only five days were needed to show them that in order to defend themselves they must create their own organs of power: the revolutionary workers' committees.

In other revolutionary situations, a much longer period was needed to overcome the first enthusiasms and illusions following the collapse of a hated dictatorship. Here, some of the

old enemies had fallen, but the masses have already recognized their new ones. Without leadership and without large-scale, well-knit organizations, the workers have, nevertheless, acted spontaneously and with inerring instinct.

The movement is still limited to the industrial North. There is still the grave danger that the revolt may not engulf the rest of the country, and most important, the predominantly agricultural regions of the South. The peasant is much slower to learn; he needs the active help of the working class.

The spreading of the revolution from Milan, Genoa and Turin to other towns and in the army to the smallest villages of the Campagna is a vital task. Isolation would mean death to the rising revolutionary wave. The Italian revolution fights against tremendous odds. There are powerful armies at its doorstep.

Europacus.

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A Little Tale from Akron- With a Moral at the End

Gather 'round, Akron rubber workers, and hear a simple tale with a moral at the end!

Do you remember how, a few weeks ago, that anti-labor rag, the Akron Beacon Journal, came out with an editorial denying that excessive profits were being made in war industries? Remember how it stated that "rumors" of excessive profits were no doubt started by subversive elements? (Gosh, they seem to be just everywhere nowadays, don't they?)

Well, we are happy to report that the well known radical paper, the Wall Street Journal, has spilled the beans again. Yep! And about the Firestone Tire & Rubber Co., too!

According to the Wall Street Journal, Firestone profits for the period ending April 30, 1943, were \$6,387,797, whereas for the same period last year they were only a pitiful \$5,193,024. A little figuring with a pencil, so simple that even a time-study man could do it, will show that Firestone's profits were TWENTY-THREE PER CENT HIGHER this year than last!

Remember how the Beacon Journal raved over that inflationary twenty-three per cent increase in company income? Remember how it thundered about this increase violating the Little Steel formula? I'll say you don't! In fact, do you remember anything about these profits AT ALL?

It was a different story, wasn't it, when it was recently a question of granting you a justly-deserved eight cents an hour increase? How the Beacon Journal wept! How it shrieked! How it tore its hair! How it swooned away at the impudence of the rubber workers! It had itself quite a time, didn't it?

The reason the Beacon Journal howled like a dog with its tail in the crack of the door was that the most sacred "right" of it and its cap-

italist masters—the right to its ALMIGHTY PROFITS—was threatened a little, profits which are possible at all only because of the exploitation of the working class.

What did you read about the profits of General Tire & Rubber Co., where conditions are so bad even the Beacon Journal has to protest occasionally about them? Very little, we dare say.

Let's turn to that r-r-r-revolutionary sheet, the Wall Street Journal, again. My, my, it would seem that whereas General made \$642,210 for the six months ending May 31 last year, it made \$962,265 for the same period this year. By employing our special glycol-cooled, rubber-cushioned, shock-proof pencil, which we employ these days in computing corporation profits, we find that this represents a profit INCREASE OF FORTY PER CENT over last year.

FORTY PER CENT! Curious, isn't it, that this neat figure—so indicative that business in that good old city of opportunity, Akron, Ohio, is doing right well out of this bloody war—isn't smeared all over the front page by the Beacon Journal. Curious, that is, unless you forget how Editor Jack Knight crusaded for wage freezing for workers and promptly turned three shades of purple when there was a suggestion that his income be frozen at \$25,000 per year.

Well, that's all for this time, boys. Except—stick around close and one of these times we'll tell you how fare those paupers, Goodrich and Goodyear. . . . What's that? The moral? Oh, yes.

MORAL: If you want to know the truth, read LABOR ACTION. Buy your shopmate a sub—two bits for six months. Do it now.

Don't worry about Jack Knight—he won't starve for not getting that two bits. He's got closets full of them. Remind us to tell you about THAT some time.—B. L.

St. Louis CIO Defeats Stalinist Gag on Labor Party

ST. LOUIS—An attempt of the Stalinists in the CIO to gag debate on an Independent Labor Party kicked back on them at the St. Louis Industrial Council meeting last week when the matter was made a special order of business at the July 28 meeting of the organization.

The gag move was made in the form of a motion to table. However, in reporting on the resolution, Otto Miller, chairman of the resolutions committee and considered as a wheelhorse of the Stalin forces, made a long statement of "reasons" for tabling which gave an immediate opening for sponsors of the Labor Party.

The meeting was thrown into turmoil when Art McDowell, international representative of the Textile Workers' Union, charged that Miller's statement of "reasons to table" constituted debate, and pointed out that a motion to table cannot be followed by debate on the matter contained in a resolution.

Harold J. Gibbons, international representative of the URWDEA-CIO, who sponsored the Independent Labor Party resolution, assailed the attack on democratic procedure contained in this maneuver. Miller, in his one-sided debate for tabling, had defended the "friends of labor" which the resolution had charged were false friends.

Gibbons answered by pointing to the records of the New York absentee congressmen who were missing when the Smith-Connally veto was overridden. He pointed out that Senator Pepper, star speaker at the 1942 CIO convention, said when the Smith-Connally bill became law that if more harsh laws were needed to curb labor they would be passed.

McDowell made a motion to cen-

sure the chairman of the resolutions committee for political trickery, charging that there is "a certain minority in the CIO whose first instinct is to gag debate" on a proposal Boss Stalin has turned thumbs down on.

The proposal to table was accepted and the motion to censure the Stalinists' political flinching was lost, but by that time the council had come to its senses and unanimously agreed to making the question a special order of business at the next meeting. Non-Stalinist delegates who have placidly followed the Stalinist line were shamed by the attacks of McDowell and Gibbons on the outrageous gag maneuver and were glad to correct their original deviation.

The shamelessness of the Stalinists was later illustrated by sarcastic references to the breaches in the no-strike agreement by the militant unions. Beagle of the NMU, following the report of a one-day stoppage by TWUA-CIO at the Bemis Bag Co., said that the council had voted to disassociate itself from unions having work stoppages. Oscar Erhardt, council secretary, and member of the United Gas Workers, angrily denied that the council has done any such thing—that it had voted only to disassociate from those who gave personal support to John L. Lewis. Erhardt's union was recently involved in short strikes which were required for slapping down obstinate employers.

By this time the delegates were beginning to get nauseated with an overdose of Kremlin Joe's strike-breaking medicine, and someone called for the gong to adjourn the meeting. The Stalinists are said to realize they made some first-class errors in their maneuvers to kill action on a Labor Party.

tions from Washington and back. And each time the negotiations broke off, the union leadership hastened to renew its no-strike pledge.

Well, dear readers, what do you think happened? One fine Tuesday the grievance committees of the two basic departments served notice on the union and the management that

they would strike if the contract covering pay increases was not signed by the end of the week.

Guess what happened? A new contract, covering a closed shop and pay increases, was hastily signed that very week.

Draw your own conclusions.

T. M. (Cumberland, Md.)



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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

Protests Discrimination Against Women

Dear Editor:

For the past couple of months, I have been getting LABOR ACTION at my plant, North American, and want to express my appreciation of this fine labor paper. It is certainly one of the few publications now that prints the workers' point of view.

We women at NAA were given golden promises when we applied for jobs—equal pay for equal work, opportunities for advancement, the same type of work as an A or B classified male worker; but because she is a female, she can get no more than the minimum classification.

Very often a woman takes over entirely the work on an A or B jig which paid a man ninety or ninety-five cents an hour (indeed a very high wage for skilled work) yet she can make no more than eighty cents. Certain foremen have even answered quite bluntly when complaints were made: "Why, the men are B workers and the women are C workers."

Women even more so than men are shuffled around from job to job like cards in a deck so that they do not become too skilled. Many of us hardly see the money we earn there. We pay our household help or our

girls to watch the children almost the same seventy-five or eighty cents an hour that we can get at NAA. And after spending over \$20 a week on food (for meals that used to cost no more than \$10), it hardly seems to be worth our energy and time to go to work.

The company is taking advantage of our newness in industry and our humility as employees. If we women want to be able to command the same respect and the same wages as men, we have to take a lesson from them and acquire some of their independence and spirit and unity.

M. F. (Los Angeles.)

How to Get a New Contract from the Boss

Dear Editor:

This is a story of a no-strike pledge, or how to get a new contract.

The contract between Local 1874 of the Textile Workers Union of America (CIO) and the Celanese Corporation of America expired October 1, 1942. The Stalinist-dominated leadership of the union hastened to assure the management and the community, through speeches and newspaper ads, that the union was not going to strike—all of this in the name of sacrifice and unity.

The company was not quite so interested in national unity, nor was it ready to sacrifice its profits. For six months it dragged the negotia-

A. W. T. (Detroit.)



# Henry Ford Versus Karl Marx

—By Susan Green

Under the above controversial heading the Bank of New York, a Wall Street house, ran a memorial "ad" on the financial pages of the press, the occasion being the death of Edsel Ford.

The "ad" itself consists of a quotation from an editorial in the anti-labor New York World-Telegram. This editorial asserts, of course, that Marx, the socialist, was wrong and Ford, the capitalist, is right. Needless to say, the editor arrives at this conclusion by misrepresenting Marx and by heavily sugar-coating Ford.

How would a jury of workers decide the case of Ford vs. Marx?

## EDSEL'S WILL ON THE STAND

A very material bit of evidence in this case is none other than the will of Edsel Ford, late of the Ford Motor Co. THE ATTORNEYS FOR SAID DECEASED ESTIMATE THE ESTATE AT APPROXIMATELY \$200,000,000—a pretty penny, indeed!

Interesting it is to note that Edsel—whose fortune the editorial assures us was acquired because the principle of "security of opportunity" flourishes for all—saw his opportunity to by-pass the government on inheritance taxes and left the bulk of this money to the Ford Foundation, "an inheritance tax-exempt organization."

This immediately arouses the justified suspicion that Edsel had during his life accumulated another fortune directly in the names of his wife and children—for surely he would not leave his loved ones penniless and unprovided for. THEREFORE, NOBODY KNOWS WHAT EDEL'S WEALTH REALLY AMOUNTS TO. However, one can surmise.

Next appear in evidence some facts about workers' wages. The most rocky estimate of the average wartime wage of labor cannot exceed \$40 a week, or around \$2,000 a year. This gives the bosses every benefit of every doubt—and practically disregards the 16,000,000 workers who get around \$16 a week. And remember these are wartime wages.

Information on the possibilities of abundance for the whole population must also be brought into this case. Here it is: After World War I many economists believed that on the basis of the means of production and labor productivity then prevailing, IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR EVERY FAMILY IN THE COUNTRY TO LIVE ON THE SOCIAL LEVEL OF A HOUSE AND A \$5,000-A-YEAR INCOME. That was a quarter of a century ago. In the last twenty-five years the technological improvements and the increase in labor's productivity have been almost phenomenal. So that today the latent potentialities for a good life for the whole population are tremendous, going far beyond the possibilities of twenty-five years ago.

## THE ESSENCE OF THE CASE

Therefore, if the case of Ford vs. Marx is to be stated in its essence, it is this: Will you, workers on the jury, decide in favor of a system that permits the Fords to amass fabulous fortunes while depriving the majority of our 130,000,000 people of the good life, making them constantly battle against the wolf of want (\$40 a week for a worker and his family is no bed of roses)?

In this case of Ford vs. Marx, the Bank of New York, the New York World-Telegram and the Fords mean by their petty phrase "security of opportunity" the right of the few to filch peacetime and wartime profits at the expense of the many. Whereas Marx and the revolutionary socialists who follow him fight for the welfare of the many against the gluttony of the few.

To this formulation of the case the Ford supporters come back with the stock-in-trade argument that the capitalists further progress. The quoted editorial from the New York World-Telegram asserts that "the pioneering in the mass production of motor vehicles has created opportunities for millions in the stimulation of the oil industry, the development of a nation-wide highway system, the rebuilding of communities."

## THE SOCIALIST IS NOT FLOORED

This argument does not floor the socialist—he doesn't consider it an argument. Ford drew on the inventive genius of all mankind and utilized the brain and brawn of mental and manual workers—TO EXPLOIT THEM. A socialist government—with the workers instead of the capitalists in control of industry—can use the same assets and get better results because economy is planned on a national non-profit-seeking basis. Furthermore, a socialist government will employ the resources of the nation for no other purpose than to provide for the people the very highest standard of living—a standard upon which there will be no "freezes"—no "lines"—no "ceilings."

The memory of the working class is not as short as the Fords would like it to be. Workers remember that along with his boasted \$5.00-a-day wage, Ford maintained one of the worst sweat shops in the country, one of the most brutally efficient labor spy systems, one of the most gangster-like anti-union set-ups.

It is many, many decades since there has been any justification at all for the capitalist class. The capitalist class now hampers progress, in its quest for profits. And nothing has made this fact more clear than the war. For the government, to fight a war to establish the supremacy of the American capitalist system as a whole, has had to reveal and somewhat curtail the individual monopolists sitting on the lid of progress.

Thus, workers on the jury, the case of Karl Marx is further strengthened by the well known fact that the formula for synthetic rubber was tucked away in a safe, of no use to the world, because of the profit schemes of the international oil cartel—that the shipbuilders, for their own profit, install outdated engines instead of the newest and best—that the railroad monopoly in its own interest holds up the development of air, motor and water transport and the laying of pipelines. THESE ARE ONLY A FEW INSTANCES OF HOW CAPITALISM NOW RETARDS PROGRESS.

## BOSSSES, WAR AND FASCISM

Furthermore, would you call this war progress? What's the use of developing highways and rebuilding communities that are subject to instant destruction by bombing? The responsibility for the war must be laid at the door of world capitalism, of which the Bank of New York, the Fords, and their lackeys, the Peglers and the press, are a part. ON THE OTHER HAND, ALMOST A CENTURY AGO KARL MARX CALLED ON THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD TO UNITE IN INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM TO MAKE IMPOSSIBLE SUCH A CATASTROPHE.

Finally, workers on the jury, let me remind you that in every country capitalism has arrived at the critical stage where it turns to the use of fascist methods to maintain itself over the seething, discontented masses. Thus Henry Ford is known to subsidize and support anti-Semitic and fascist elements in this country. In the interest of "national unity," all this is hushed up—but by no means ended.

In the final analysis, the case of Henry Ford vs. Karl Marx resolves itself into the case of FASCISM VS. SOCIALISM, THAT IS, FASCISM VS. REAL FREEDOM AND SECURITY.

# Here Is the Suppressed OWI Report On Living Conditions in Mining Areas

The story of how the Roosevelt Administration, as represented by the OWI and the OPA, suppressed reports made to them by their investigators on the conditions of the American miners, merely because these reports bore out to the hilt the contentions made by the Miners Union in their fight for wage increases, has now been made public.

The OWI representatives likened the conditions in the mining areas to slavery, and their reports were suppressed by independent investigations made by OPA representatives who toured the mine fields.

The reports were kept secret during the high point of the miners' fight. They were then turned over to the office of Interior Secretary Ickes, where they now repose. Excerpts from the voluminous documents were made public in the Akron Beacon Journal by its Washington correspondent, Clifford Prevost, on July 11. We publish them below:

1. "Company stores do not have much meat. The miners are put out about their inability to secure sufficient meat to keep them going. Company store prices are outrageously high in many instances, but on the whole, the more isolated the community, the higher the food prices.

2. "Company store practices are invested with various rackets, the worst being the payment of wages as credits in the form of scrip. Practically every mine company uses scrip—and this scrip can be used only in company-dominated or owned stores. The miner must purchase his clothing, food and other essentials through the company stores, and must pay the outrageous prices.

3. "Company houses have little glass in the windows, no electric lights, no gas for cooking, no running water, no bathtubs... Most company towns are built around the colliery and are impossibly dirty, contain no grass and are devoid of any recreational facilities."

## VISION FUTURE STRIKES

In another section the report stresses the miners' loyalty to Lewis and states bluntly that the situation has not been clarified and that future strikes may be expected, strikes which might

last over a period of months. The WLB is regarded as an "agency of the New Deal is being used by the President to crush the UMWA and John Lewis. They knew long before the crisis that the WLB had stacked the cards against them and Lewis."

"The main issue discussed at union meetings is the high cost of living, and they damn Mr. Roosevelt, the WLB and OPA," the report continues. "The men are hot. They have a feeling the government has forgotten them. This resentment runs very deep and words and promises from Washington alone will never cure the economic disease infecting the mine areas."

When Ickes ordered all mines on a six-day week, with time and a half for the sixth day, this automatically increased the pay of the miners. However, the report says, "the companies use every chance to shut down the mines once during the week to avoid paying overtime. This is a gross abuse of the government order and is deeply resented by the men."

## MANY HAVE AILMENTS

The miners told the investigators that they couldn't "bail out of town" as they have only scrip. Further, the study of occupational diseases reveals that many of them have tuberculosis, silicosis and other diseases which bar them from employment in war industries in nearby centers.

Continuing, the OWI report says: "Scrip is the key to the power the company has over the miners. If scrip and easy credit could be abolished, the companies would lose their slave-power over the miners. However, there is another aspect of the problem which must be dealt with. Every coal company in the area owns the entire land area in and around the mines. The only 'open' or public property in a mine valley will be the road which runs through it.

"The company owns the land, owns the coal, owns the mine. The company owns the houses, owns the wells, owns the company store, and owns everything on the ground. The miner, working on easy credit and scrip, lives in a company house, rents electricity from the company, secures his water from the company, buys coal from the company, and in general suckles at the breast

of the good company. No miner can buy off the company town because his scrip is only good in the company store. The miner is therefore chained to the company town.

## STARS IN WINDOWS

"The miners not only feel worse off than the average worker, but they know they are worse off. I passed house after house in this area—miserable tumble-down shacks of one, two and never more than three rooms. Yet these houses were invariably decorated with (a) Red Cross sticker and (b) a Service Flag with one, two, three and four stars. I passed many three star houses, one four star house, scores of two star houses—and practically every remaining miner will have at least one son in the services. It is absolutely amazing to see how the miners are represented in the armed forces of their country. That, in the reverse, is one reason they are so bitter about the treatment they have received and are receiving from the Administration.

"They feel that the aims of the war are phony, especially when their conditions become worse and worse. Accidents are frequent in the mines, and there are scores of mine widows in this area—women who have seen their sons and boys go down into the pits, to return lifeless masses of flesh ground under the coal.

"The boys are getting fed up with the delays in negotiations. Many of the people I talked with here say that Mr. Lewis knows what he is doing their faith in him is greater than ever before. But at the same time they wish they could go out on a big strike and finish it once and for all. Their temper is quiet now—but they mean business today more than ever before. There is an undercurrent restlessness which may assume the proportions of a revolutionary ferment if the present situation continues to irritate the issue.

"The war is of great interest. As I said before, the sons of the miners in the Army write home frequently, and there is a deep personal identification of these people with the war. They are, however, quite cynical about such things as the four freedoms—and frankly, an underpaid man getting little meat has a right to be cynical."

# Diplomat Davies Knocks Himself Out

With the help of the Stalinist publicity machine and the capitalist press, ex-Ambassador Joseph Davies has become the outstanding defender in this country of the notorious Moscow Trials.

He did not discover that the Moscow Trials were legitimate and that the defendants were guilty until he came back to this country from Russia. While he was there, and while he was watching the trials in the court, he thought they were a travesty of justice, a juridical farce, a preposterous procedure based on preposterous charges. But back in the United States, he was struck with a revelation: the charges were proved; the defendants were guilty of the charges; the trials were perfectly all right.

What were the charges? The Stalinist prosecutor and court declared that the "Trotskyist-Zinoviev-Bukharinist bloc of wreckers, vipers, scum of the earth, etc., etc." were agents of Hitler, that is, of fascism, that is, of capitalism. The defendants were charged with working "for the restoration of capitalism" in Russia. They were depicted as enemies of socialism. On these charges, they were shot. Okay, said Davies. You see, said the Stalinists, even Mr. Davies says the Trials were okay.

Now comes the same Mr. Davies to deliver a complete knockout blow against the Moscow Trials, the Stalinists who conducted them and the American Ambassador who justified them. It sounds impossible, but here it is, black on white, in a syndicated Davies article published in the New York Times of August 1, 1943.

What Mr. Davies says in this article about the dissolution of the Comintern is not very important and not very interesting. What he says about the fight between Trotsky and Stalin, however, is decidedly important and interesting. Let us quote: "...the Comintern was created. There can be no doubt that its object, in part, was to build up a military agency to attack their enemies from within, by organizing internal strife through class war. It also confirmed the Trotsky program of world revolution, and Soviet aid to class war outside of Russia, as necessary to successfully maintain a communist state in a single country (the Soviet Union).

# Railroads - -

(Continued from page 1)

regard to carrier costs or the value of the services rendered." This is accomplished by deals and combinations, in the art of which capitalist "enterprise" is very efficient.

The tremendous increase in the volume of rail traffic due to government war orders has, of course, actually reduced the ton-mile costs of transportation because of the heavy car-loadings per haul. But the railroad magnates, being all-out for war profits, this does not constitute a reason either for reducing rail rates or for paying higher wages to railroad workers.

Mr. Arnold cites a most interesting instance where the railroads did reduce their rates. Before Pearl Harbor—to enable the steel interests, closely connected with the railroad monopolists, to sell to the Japanese at an attractive price, steel now used against American boys—the railroads charged only seventy-four cents per hundred pounds for transportation

from Bethlehem, Pa., to Portland, Ore. THE MOST OBLIGING UNCLE SAM WAS THEN PAYING ALMOST TWICE AS MUCH, OR \$1.43 PER HUNDRED POUNDS, FOR TRANSPORTING THE SAME STEEL PRODUCTS THE SAME DISTANCE.

So here we have another species of MERCHANTS OF DEATH, the railroad monopolists. However, it is not exactly right to say "another species." The big bosses are all one—one for profits—one against labor. Whether in steel, in copper, in oil, in transportation—they are knit together by interlocking ownership and by the tentacles of high finance. All benefit from the machinations of each.

THE CRISIS THE WORKERS TODAY FIND THEMSELVES IN CALLS FOR UNION MILITANCY AND FOR A PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM LEADING TO WORKERS' CONTROL OF ALL INDUSTRY AND TRANSPORTATION.

"After Lenin's death, in 1924, and even before, the continuance of this policy became a matter of bitter political controversy. It was the issue in the fight between Stalin and Trotsky for the mantle of Lenin.

"Trotsky was willing to sacrifice friendly relations with the foreign countries in order to promote world revolution, based upon class struggle and violence. Stalin opposed Trotsky. His platform was based upon the principle of 'first things first,' and that they should direct their energies to developing their system at home; that to assume that this could not be done without success of the world revolution was to 'confess incapacity' and 'uncrown Russia.'

"Stalin won... "By this action (dissolving the CI) Stalin put the last finishing touch, so far as the Soviet Union was concerned, to Trotsky's program of international world revolution through violence and class war... "

"It was the last chapter in Trotsky's battle to commit Russia to a policy of permanent revolution, and to militant and active promotion of subversive class warfare against neighboring governments in a war against capitalism." It now appears—and for once Mr. Davies is absolutely right—that Trotsky's "crime" consisted in advocating "a policy of permanent revolution." Perhaps a revolution to maintain capitalism? No, says Mr. Davies—and again he is right—Trotsky wanted to carry on "a war against capitalism."

If this is so, and it most certainly is, what happens to the very foundation of the charges made against Trotsky and his comrades in the Moscow Trials? Trotsky could not possibly be guilty, as a distinguished corporation lawyer and business promoter like Mr. Davies ought to know, of favoring a war to restore capitalism or to maintain it at the same time that he favored and tried to conduct a war against capitalism.

Davies' picture of Trotsky's program is essentially correct. Trotsky was a sworn, unflinching enemy of capitalism and capitalist oppression to his dying day. The Moscow Trials' picture of Trotsky's program was and remains a filthy, monstrous, reactionary, that is, a typically Stalinist, lie. Mr. Davies has unwittingly struck a knockout blow against this lie, against the Moscow frame-ups, and... against himself!

# Democracy in Portugal

On July 30, the Lisbon radio warned striking Portuguese workers, "irrespective of sex," that unless they returned to work immediately they would be "incorporated into a labor battalion on Cape Verde Island" and there forced to slave "exclusively on heavy manual labor."

Thousands of workers in shipyards, railway yards and electrical plants have gone out on strike because of miserable wages and poor food. These stoppages for increased wages and for larger allotments of better foods have shut down many factories in other industries.

As an inducement to the workers to return to work, the dictator-ridden Portuguese government promised to send them factory canteens loaded with food. But the workers, familiar with their government and its deeds, rejected the plea. They knew the government promises to be worthless.

Following the workers' rejection of its demands, the government paraded its armed forces through the streets of Lisbon as a warning that it would use force to compel these workers to return to their jobs. If this demonstration of its armed power failed, the dictatorial regime of Salazar will arrest the striking workers and deport them to Cape Verde as slave battalions.

We have no doubt that the Portuguese financiers and industrialists, who profit from their fiercely exploited workers, will hail the actions of their government as a true mark of its devotion to profits and "order."

# The Meaning Of Italian Fascism

—By Sam Adams

The sudden collapse of Benito Mussolini's fascist regime in Italy has brought forth a flood of happy comments and editorials in the American press about the virtues of democracy and the evils of fascism. If one wants to be charitable about it, one could say that this expression of the mouthpieces of American big business is all to the good. But their present comments are suspect!

It is a matter of record that for many years the leading newspapers in this country were extremely sympathetic to Mussolini and the fascist regime. This is especially true of the New York Times, which went out of its way to praise the Italian dictator and his murderous gang.

## BUSINESS BEHIND MUSSOLINI

It is also a matter of record that American finances (chiefly through the House of Morgan, as the spokesman for Wall Street) were poured into Italy for the express purpose of saving Benito's tottering regime during the early years of its formation.

First, American sympathies for Great Britain and then actual entry into the war brought about a change in the attitude of big business and its press. But it was not really a change in ideas or program; it was merely the pressure of the war which caused them to speak out cautiously against Mussolini and Hitler. And, insofar as Mussolini was concerned, the argument went something like this:

"You were all right up until the time you joined with Hitler. If you had stayed out of the war, or if you had joined with us your regime would have been okay with us. We would have found nothing wrong with your 'brand' of fascism. We could have gone on loving you as before."

But since Mussolini became a war "enemy," the big business friends of fascism and Mussolini's sympathetic press in this country were compelled to speak out against him.

## THE CAPITALISTS AND FASCISM

What was their real attitude? Fascism was all right for Italy. It was efficient; it permitted no waste; trains ran on time; there was no unemployment; and, most important of all, Mussolini liquidated internal strife.

Reading the press we see the recent arguments to the effect that fascism is bad only because it is based on one-party rule, stifles criticism, and rests on a one-man dictatorship.

The argument about the efficiency of fascism is a phony. Fascism is not a new society, as some picture it. It is a dictatorship of big business. The chief aim of this regime is to destroy the labor movement, and all the aims of fascism, no matter under what name they go, are calculated to effect this dictatorship of big business.

What does the efficiency of fascism consist of? Trains running on time? That is nonsense! When the capitalist press speaks of efficiency, it is not at all concerned with the destruction of the labor movement, the dissolution of the trade unions, workers' political organizations, fraternal societies, cooperatives, a free press and the "right to meet and organize. These movements represent the power and organization of labor.

Through such organizations the workers are able to fight for their economic and political rights. They are able to defend themselves against profit-mad and profit-hungry big business. They are able to fight and defend themselves against low wages, poor working conditions, excessively long hours of work and against labor-baiters.

Through their organizations the workers are able to fight for the democratic rights of workers, for higher wages, better working conditions and shorter hours. Through its organizations the working class is able to fight for the rights of the unemployed.

When big business and its press lauds the efficiency of fascism it is because fascism destroys the economic and political labor movement. We have no doubt that these are a nuisance to big business and all bosses. And we have no doubt that the existence of the labor movement is a sign of inefficiency to them. It interferes with their lust for profit. Thus, when they speak of efficiency they mean the destruction of labor.

## FASCISM SOLVES UNEMPLOYMENT

Mussolini and Hitler solved unemployment! Yes, they certainly did. Mussolini forced the unemployed to fill swamps, dig ditches and build public works. For this the workers were paid a miserable wage merely to keep them alive.

Hitler solved the unemployment problem by tying the whole working class to the war machine. We have no doubt that big business would like this efficiency. They would like to force labor to work for low wages, long hours, under any conditions.

No wonder they loved fascism—it was so efficient for their purposes!

What fascism really accomplished in Italy, as in Germany, was this: Having destroyed the labor movement, it guaranteed a labor force for its boss, big business. By this, it guaranteed big profits for the capitalists of both countries. It banished internal strife by organizing hoodlums against the workers to beat back any signs of resistance by labor.

## A SIGN OF SICKNESS

Fascism was loved by the capitalists of all countries. And don't kid yourself about it, American capitalists, if they had the power to do so, would like such a regime in this country. There are many fascists and fascist organizations in America working to bring about what Hitler and Mussolini did in Germany.

If fascism is a one-man dictatorship, if it means one-party rule, it is because the nature of its work in destroying the labor movement requires it to be anti-democratic.

There are many other features of fascism, but the above is its most important: it saves a tottering capitalist system for the bosses by physical assaults on the working class and its organizations, thus maintaining and guaranteeing profits for big business.

The real tip-off on fascism is that Italy, after twenty years under that system, had the lowest standard of living of any important European country!

## Have You Read 'India in Revolt'?

If you haven't read Henry Judd's magnificent pamphlet, published by the Workers Party, lose no time in getting your copy. With India in the news daily, no worker should be without detailed knowledge of the situation in that country. Order from the Workers Party, 114 West 14th Street, New York, N.Y. 25 cents per copy; 20 cents in bundles of five or more.

## CALIFORNIA READERS:

Hear **DAVID COOLIDGE**

Labor Secretary, Workers Party  
Labor Editor of Labor Action

Speak On **"IS THIS LABOR'S WAR?"**

In San Pedro:

FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 8:00 P. M.

Eagle's Hall, 631 Ninth Street

Admission: 25 Cents

In Los Angeles:

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 8:00 P. M.

Embassy Auditorium, Room 201, 849 So. Grand

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



# Toward Workers' Power in Italy --

(Continued from page 1)  
 came to power without a struggle. Now we can see from the Italian events that fascism does indeed represent only a mass of rubbish.  
 The first little tempest, and it is swept away! It is a movement that cannot withstand a really serious crisis. It is an expression of the decay of capitalism and not of its consolidation. In Italy, after twenty-two years in power, fascism collapsed under the weight of popular pressure, and throughout the country there weren't five hundred blackshirts who would assemble for a fight to preserve their regime.

It is not fascism that is invincible. The united, aggressive people are invincible! Where fascism is in power, the masses of working people can overturn it in no time at all. Where the fascist gangs are organizing to take power, they can be crushed in the egg without any trouble whatsoever, the minute the united working class decides to do so. It is a great lesson which we have to learn in this country, too.

### Who Is Badoglio?

Badoglio is only a stopgap. He represents no mass force save a disintegrating army composed of soldiers who want peace, who want to go home, who want freedom. Badoglio will never succeed in posing as a democrat and an enemy of fascism. He owes his rank of marshal to Mussolini; he owes his title of Duke of Addis Ababa to Mussolini; he owes his decoration of Order of the German Eagle to Hitler; he owes his present existence to the reactionary officers' corps and the terror-stricken Italian capitalists and their King.

Is Badoglio interested in peace and freedom for the masses? Of course not. He is interested in preserving the rule of Italian capitalism and the monarchy. In their name he is maneuvering hopelessly between Hitler and the Allies for the purpose of getting the best possible terms on which to get out of the futile war, which is doubly futile now for Italy.

That is why he stalls for time, trying at the same time to show that he is capable of mastering the country, by putting down the "popular turbulence" with a policy combined out of force and empty promises about the future.

The masses do not want empty promises, because they have eaten them for over twenty years. They want not only peace, but freedom, and Badoglio plus the House of Savoy can guarantee neither one.

### Masses on the March

The masses are still uncertain of their road and of their power. That is not surprising. A prisoner re-

leased from twenty-two years of confinement in a windowless cell blinks a little in the light of the sun. Some of the younger people, especially in the South, greeted the fall of Mussolini with demonstrations bearing the banner of the House of Savoy.

In the North, in the industrial centers, where the old socialist, communist and trade union movements had their greatest strength, workers—we do not know exactly how many—poured into the streets with the red flag of socialism, with the socialist anthem, the International, on their lips, and with the cry of "Soviets!"

It is reported that in some sections Soviets have already been formed. Is the Communist Party behind this move? Nonsense! The Stalinists want anything but a Soviet movement and a Soviet republic in Italy! They would fight it tooth and nail. They have already come out for negotiations with Badoglio and the King, if these are possible. They are united in Italy in a bloc with the capitalist democratic parties whose slogan is: Give in to Allied imperialism.

After the first mass demonstrations throughout the country, there seems to have been a slight lull. That is understandable. The workers feel that the iron police hand of fascism is off their shoulders for the first time. They are looking around. They are taking their bearings. They are sizing up the situation. Some of them may look with hope to the new regime, but most of them regard it with suspicion and distrust. They are aware also of the great difficulties.

### Threat to the Masses

The armies of Allied imperialism threaten from the South; the armies of German imperialism threaten from the North. They surely realize, also, that until they have perfected their own revolutionary forces, organized them, centralized them, worked out a clear-cut program, the remnants of the armed forces under Badoglio still represent a power to contend with. But those are forces that are falling apart, while the forces of the workers are certain to come together and consolidate.

The Italian revolution is at its beginning; the Italian revolution is a beginning. Given a favorable development, the revolution would explode tomorrow in the Balkans, the day after tomorrow in France, and then the center of reaction in Europe, German fascism, would not be able to resist the overwhelming tide. That would seal the fate of Stalinist totalitarianism, and mark the end of the ambitions of Anglo-American imperialism.

That is why Italy must be watched with hope and the most ardent wishes of the international working class for a socialist victory.

The Italian revolution is the beginning of the European revolution. The European revolution can, must, will be victorious, if not today then tomorrow. Its victory will end the old order throughout the world, and usher in the new.

Italian capitalism understands this. German capitalism understands this. The spokesmen for Anglo-American imperialism understand this. On one point, all of them are united: "Order" must be established in Italy—Axis order or Anglo-American order.

# Harlem Protest --

(Continued from page 1)

nessed "a continuous succession of unwarranted brutalities perpetrated upon Negro citizens in our city." Many of these, said Powell, had resulted in deaths. He said that he had taken up each of these cases by mail with Police Commissioner Valentine. One letter had been acknowledged. The rest had been ignored.

"I now say, fellow councilmen," continued Powell, "that the riots of Detroit can easily be duplicated here in New York City. If any riots break out here in New York, the blood of innocent people, white and Negro, will rest upon the hands of Mayor Fiorello La Guardia and Police Commissioner Valentine, who have refused to see representative citizens to discuss means of combating outbreaks in New York."

The Negro people in Harlem on Sunday and Monday knew what they were demonstrating against. They were making known their feelings to the government in Washington which continually calls upon them to fight for democracy and at the same time sits quietly while the worst indignities are committed against them in the name of democracy.

For them this question of the government in Washington is symbolized in the Army and the treatment of Negroes there.

The Negro people were protesting against conditions in New York City and the conduct of the police force described by Powell.

The Negro people were demonstrating against the exorbitant prices which every shop in Harlem thinks itself justified in charging them.

### What Brought the Protest?

For several months the police department has maintained a twenty-four hour picket in the lobby of the Hotel Braddock, the second largest hotel in Harlem. The Negroes say, they have said it in the Negro press, that they know many places in down-

town Manhattan where, as far as they can judge, a permanent picket is very much needed. Harlem is very much stirred by this official slander of the Negro people.

When Private Bandy stopped a cop from rough-handling a Negro woman in the Braddock Hotel, it was no accidental incident. It represented to every Harlemite who heard it merely another example of the especially malignant persecution and slander which the Harlem people have been suffering during recent months. And when on top of it, the cop shot the Negro soldier, is it any wonder that the rumor spread and the Harlem people decided that they would show in no uncertain terms that they were not going to put up any longer with the continuous provocation of the "decent, law-abiding" officials who rule them.

The crowds heard that Bandy had died. It didn't matter whether he was dead or not. Bandy was a symbol.

Crowds of Negro service men and civilians milled around the hospital where Bandy and Officer Collins who shot him were being hospitalized.

### Was It a "Race Riot"?

It is perfectly clear that the masses of the Negro people in Harlem, far from being thoughtless hoodlums, to quote Mayor La Guardia again, were people stirred to resentment and action at the insult which they felt had been directed at the whole Negro race in the treatment of the Negro soldiers.

We do not propose to go here into any detailed account of the demonstration, except to point out that the smashing of the shopwindows was also a protest and expression of resentment against those petty profiteers, themselves robbed and cheated by big business, who in turn rob and cheat the Negroes by high prices and poor quality goods.

The press and La Guardia take excessive pains to say the demonstration was not a "race riot." The demonstration was not a racial demonstration in the sense that the Negroes did not direct their protest indiscriminately against whites. Nor did white gangs invade Harlem.

The Negro people of Harlem showed extreme intelligence and understanding in what they did. They were not against individual white citizens in the streets. They were protesting, in the only way they understood, against their unbearable conditions. The protest was, in the fullest sense of the word, a racial demonstration, a demonstration against the wrongs and injustices perpetrated against the Negro people.

M. S.

### The Silence of "Leaders"

Since the Detroit events, Roosevelt has not said one single word. He now has imitators. On the Harlem demonstration, Philip Randolph has imitated his master, Roosevelt, and observed a dignified silence. The rest we can foretell in advance. White, Randolph and all such will appoint committees, "inter-racial committees." They will haggle over whether one new playground or two new playgrounds should be built. They will send a letter full of signatures to the OPA asking for a ceiling on rent. In other words, they will do exactly as they have always done. But the Negro people are becoming tired of words and promises.

What is to happen now? LABOR ACTION during the last weeks has pointed out that the situation all over the country is grave, that the masses of the Negro people must organize themselves both for protection against the hoodlum elements such as the Klan and the official hoodlums; that they must organize themselves to fight against segregation of the Negro in the armed forces of the nation—against all forms of oppression.

The Harlem demonstration is to us nothing shameful. It is in reality a demonstration of the masses of the Negro people against their position in American capitalist society. The tremendous stir of oppressed peoples all over the world at the present time, the ferocious appeal to violence and destruction of the ruling classes, the incessant mouthings of "democracy" and the need to "die for democracy," coupled with the shameful betrayals of democracy at home and abroad, these things are pulling the Negro people from sullen hostility to spontaneous protests against the crimes and hypocrisy of capitalist democracy.

There is nothing shameful about that. What is shameful is the fact that those who pose as the protectors of democratic law and order are the very ones who lay the basis for the persecution and condone others who more savagely follow their lead.

We say to the Negroes, therefore, that to demonstrate against tyranny

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and injustice has always been one of the greatest and most admired virtues of mankind. The moans and wailings of La Guardia, Walter White and the whole capitalist press will not alter that.

The fact that the Negroes did not attack whites indiscriminately shows that they are on the verge of finding the correct answer to the problems which have plagued the Negro people for three hundred years.

What they have to do in New York and elsewhere is to organize this rebelliousness against tyranny and the insults to their intelligence, and direct it into such channels as will bring their grievances and their wrongs forcibly before the American people and the people of the whole world.

### The Need for Organization

Let them organize themselves to create their own committees and to direct properly the passionate desire for freedom and equality which now stirs all Negro youth. Let them organize themselves to march on Washington, and themselves place before the resident and Congress their shameful conditions. Let them demand their rights in the name of that very democracy for which they are being called upon to die. Let them make it clear, by the tightness of their organization, the determination of their demonstrations and the resoluteness with which they present their demands, that nothing on earth will prevent them from making themselves free and equal citizens in the community, in every sphere of life, particularly the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and factories which are controlled by the government.

Let them make this clear to Roosevelt so that he must emerge from his diplomatic silence and is compelled to make clear statements on the Negro question and pass and enforce laws which guarantee to the Negro people their racial, economic, political and social rights.

The Negro people and Harlem and elsewhere must stop looking for

leaders among big names who are always in the capitalist press or filling up space in the Negro press. These are the very ones whose leadership must be avoided at all costs. True leaders are people who do what the masses of the people want them to do. And if the Negro people look for these among themselves, they will find them.

### Where the Future Lies

Negroes also must look for allies among the great masses of the white people who are sympathetic to their point of view. Quite recently, the United Mine Workers of America put on a magnificent demonstration for their just economic rights. Of these 500,000 workers, 100,000 were Negroes.

The Negroes must go to Lewis and to unions whose leaders have shown both in words and in deeds that they support the aspirations for equality of the large masses of the Negro people. They must inform these of their situation, of their determination to fight injustice, and they must demand that these labor leaders and unions come to their assistance in what, after all, is only the eternal fight of the poor against the rich.

The Negro workers where they are strong enough must not only take upon themselves the organization of the defense of the Negro community. They are the ones best fitted to act as representatives of the Negro communities to the white workers in the labor unions.

There is absolutely nothing shameful, nothing disgraceful in demonstrating against tyranny and showing to all the world that the Negroes will no longer put up with all that they have borne for so long. What is required is to use that energy, that determination and that magnificent spirit in such a way and in such a manner as to win concrete victories and build a firm alliance between the masses of the Negro and white people and all those who suffer from the tyranny, the persecution and the cruelties of capitalist society.

Next week's LABOR ACTION will carry another article specifically devoted to the problem of the labor movement and the Negro question.

## Editorials

### Again, Detroit

The deliberate refusal of the Detroit authorities to probe the recent murderous attack on Negroes has, as was forecast weeks ago, a sinister purpose behind it. The authorities mean to prevent a real search for the guilty pogromists. By this, we do not mean the individuals alone, since they are not the decisive elements in the Detroit massacre. But it would shed some light on the conditions and forces that were responsible for the fascist-like attack on a racial minority in the most concentrated industrial city in the country.

The report on Detroit, which appears in this issue of LABOR ACTION, is of immense importance because it reveals the deliberate intervention of the city prosecutor, William E. Dowling, against a grand jury hearing.

The bitter denunciation of the Negro people by this "defender of law and order" is couched in the language of a Negro-baiter, and calculated to instigate new attacks on a more or less defenseless minority.

His attack on Negro organizations and the Negro press is too much like the Klan propaganda to be accidental.

His threat to indict the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as responsible for the outbreak and for the fight over the Sojourner Truth Housing Project is a challenge which the Negro people should meet. If they meet it they will prove that Dowling is a liar, a Negro-baiter, a mouthpiece for the Klan ideal, and, above all, an instigator of new attacks on their people.

But this challenge to Prosecutor Dowling cannot be left to the Negroes themselves. It must be taken up, as the Detroit correspondent correctly points out, by the whole labor movement of that city, and that means, in the first place, the United Automobile Workers of America.

The future of labor in Detroit, as elsewhere, depends on a decisive defeat of all racial chauvinism, fascist racial doctrines, pogroms against national and racial minorities, no matter whom it involves or how they are instigated.

Labor can be destroyed by racial and national disunity. The only group served by such disunity is big business, which rides rough-shod over a divided working class.

The workers in Detroit and in the country at large await a fighting and intelligent program from their labor leaders.

The labor officialdoms are still dangerously silent. Yet never was it so necessary to speak bluntly and fearlessly, and more, to act with genuine resoluteness against the paralyzing threat of labor disunity.

### Whither the Jews?

The presence of Representative Will Rogers, Jr., in England in behalf of the emergency Conference to Save the Jewish People of Europe has forced the problems of the European Jews onto the pages of the press of this country.

It is Rogers' aim to force through some kind of action on what he calls the "paralyzed Allied leadership." Otherwise he fears that Hitler, who is reported to have already exterminated over two million Jews, will see to it that none of the four million remaining Jews within his grasp come out of the war alive.

"Paralyzed Allied leadership" is an extremely mild criticism. None of the Allied powers is ready to do anything formidable in behalf of these victims of fascism. It would seem that four million people could easily be absorbed in the immense territories under the domination of the United Nations.

But outside of futile talk and pious lamentations by the Allied representatives dealing with this question, nothing real has been decided by them. It is obvious, how-

ever, that we are not dealing directly with raw materials, minerals, territorial gains, markets or profits. If these were involved in relieving the European Jews, we are certain that the Allied statesmen would have acted long ago, or would do so now with a speed that would amaze the liberals.

The fact is that the Allied powers are practicing a form of anti-Semitism in their adamant refusal to take a single positive action in behalf of the European Jews. Instead of taking concrete steps to solve the problem, they have conjured up only the difficulties involved and have bent their wills to the demands and protests of open and shameless anti-Semites.

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