

# TEXTILE WORKERS UNION SCRAPS NO-STRIKE PLEDGE!

## UAW Fights Communist-Led Farm Equipment

CHICAGO—After months of rumors of the unprecedented raiding plans of the UAW-CIO, this big union has finally opened an all-out drive to "absorb" the tiny Communist-dominated Farm Equipment & Metal Workers Union—also CIO. This drive opened in February at the Caterpillar plant in Peoria, the biggest but weakest link in the Farm Equipment chain.

The executive board of the Caterpillar local led off first by announcing its adherence to the UAW, whereupon the majority of the board members were expelled by the FE national office and the local was put under the dictatorship—pardon, we mean administration—of Gerald Fielde, Stalinist boss of FE.

But the UAW was ready with seventeen organizers who, within a few days, signed up a majority of the 17,000 Caterpillar workers. The FE union, with legal bargaining rights, had never been able to get a majority of these workers into the union.

### FRANKENSTEEN ON SPOT

Plans have been announced for Reuther, Frankenstein and Thomas, the top UAW leaders, to speak in this drive; and Frankenstein has already appeared at a mass meeting in Peoria.

According to the rumors which have heralded this campaign—and which are being borne out step by step—Frankenstein is to be put in charge of the growing Agricultural Implement Division of the UAW. His Aircraft Division may fold up after the war and this may be a deal to keep the "honorable vice-president" in charge of an important division.

Or it may be a Reuther maneuver to put Frankenstein on the spot in relation to the Communists. In any case, Brother Frankenstein is now in the middle, leading a raid on a Stalinist CIO union.

According to the rumors, which have now reached the pages of the gleeful Chicago press, the drive is coming to Chicago next, to "absorb" the FE union locals in the International Harvester plants.

### HARVESTER LOCALS NEXT?

If Caterpillar and the various Harvester locals should go UAW, the FE union would be reduced from 40,000 members to less than half that size. There would be very little FE left. Except small and scattered locals, entirely unable to support an international union.

The Communists, who exclusively man the FE national offices, are running about like chickens with their heads cut off. First, they all rushed to Peoria and talked as big as Mussolini. Now they have abandoned that sinking ship and come back to Chicago, on the verge of nervous breakdowns. Their every move and pronouncement only weakens their position, because they have nothing to stand on. They richly deserve the fate in store for them—to be removed unceremoniously from all positions of leadership in the union movement.

They deserve this because they are also guilty of a trade union line of kow-towing to the corporations, the government and the Democratic politicians all along the way, instead of standing up and leading the workers in their efforts to build a strong labor movement.

They also deserve this for their undemocratic actions in (1) expelling opposition leaders of the Tractor local; (2) introducing lies and slander into the campaign for McCormack-Harvester's delegates to the convention and (3) seizing bundles of LABOR ACTION from a lady distributing them at the McCormack gate.

## Remember the Madison Square Demonstration?

By SOL RAYO

The Workers Party has a tradition of fighting against Nazism which goes back many years and of which it is justly proud. February 20, 1945, marks the sixth anniversary of the demonstration of over fifty thousand people, led by Workers Party members, at that time part of the Socialist Workers Party, which was in the demonstration against the Nazi Bund meeting at Madison Square Garden

in New York City.

Every other organization without exception—the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, the churches, the synagogues, the Mayor, the liberal newspapers—were against such action by the people. Every professional patriot who screams bloody murder against the German people today raised a restraining hand to

(Continued on page 3)



Max Shachtman Speaking at the Madison Square Demonstration

### At Yalta, the Big Three Decided on

## A Partition of Europe

### POLAND:

They altered the borders of the country over whose independence the war began. They granted to Stalin all territory east of the Curzon Line. They included land that had never belonged to Russia. They recognized Stalin's hand-picked Lublin Committee as the Provisional Government of Poland. The "broadening" of the government is to come only after Stalin's GPU completes its purge of all opponents!

### GERMANY:

They decided to give German territory to Poland to compensate for the Russian grab. They have agreed to give a piece of the country to France. They agreed to enslave millions of German workers. They decided to set up a joint military rule of the country. They decided to punish the "Nazi criminals," but said nothing about the German capitalists, industrialists and financiers whose agents the Nazis are.

### GREECE:

They said nothing about British atrocities in Greece. They decided that all the powers shall share in the suppression of the "liberated" countries.

THEY DID ALL THIS AND MORE, IN THE NAME OF THE ATLANTIC CHARTER, WHOSE PRINCIPLES ARE THAT THE PEOPLE SHALL DECIDE. WE SAY—

## Hands Off Europe— Let the People Decide Their Own Fate!

## Local Fights for Contract

By JAMES SHEA

CLEVELAND—Although Cleveland union officials promised to carry the fight for contracts with municipalities to the Supreme Court, the chief hope for official recognition (and that a slim one) seemed to be legislation. The decision by Thomas Meaney, president of the Streetcar Men's Union and other local officials to continue the fight was made after Common Pleas Judge Alva Corlett ruled that the Cleveland Transit Board could not legally sign a contract with any labor organization. Corlett based his judgment on the fact that there is no law specifically granting the city authority to do so.

This was immediately recognized by some unionists as the old run-around always given labor in the courts. Labor can expect nothing and will get nothing from courts controlled, lock, stock and barrel, by big business. However, the union should continue with the fight; if only to show the collusion between the courts and capital. A drive should be begun immediately to incorporate into the city charter provisions for contracts between the city and labor organizations. The aid of all labor unions in Cleveland should be enlisted. The complete support of all Cleveland working men would ensure its success.

This case, which has been before the courts for over a year, was watched by labor and capital all over the country. This decision, coming at this time, just before the annual negotiations between the union and management, is an attempt to put the union in a compromised position.

CLEVELAND — Discrimination against three Negro nurses by the U. S. Army has been protested to gov-

ernment officials by Miss Pearl Mitchell, executive secretary of the Cleveland chapter of the NAACP. These nurses were informed by Major Edna Groppe of the Army Nurse Corps that "we have no facilities for Negro cadets in Army hospitals."

These three cadet nurses were among the top twenty of their class, who are eligible to receive the last six months of their training in Army hospitals "if they so desire." Miss Louise Pringle, chief nurse at City Hospital in Cleveland and president of the official organization of Negro nurses, said that this case was "typical of Army treatment of Negro nurses."

"This is only an example of the injustices done to Negro nurses nationally. We have 2,000 Negro nurses available for military service. Only 219 have so far been accepted from the entire nation and many who have attempted to join have been discouraged."

It so happened that the two big cases next on the WLB's agenda were those of the textile and the packing-house workers.

Public members of the WLB decided that the least they could get away with in the textile case was a fifty-five-cent minimum and a few fringe demands. And the packing-house workers, extremely restless, would have to be given a little something, too.

Stabilizer Vinson, however, has tied up these two cases and many others as well.

Meanwhile we have been treated to a big publicity campaign against the black market in meat. For the first time a so-called ceiling has been placed on livestock. We needn't tell our readers how much effect this has had on their pocketbooks and their diets. But the big packers, whose profits were, even in 1942, up 335 per cent over pre-war levels (this according to an OPA study), have had their

showing that steel profits are four times as high as in the pre-war period.

In this way Vinson "proved" to the workers that higher wages mean higher prices, a higher cost of living.

3. Having "proved" his point, Vinson ordered the WLB to grant no more "fringe" demands—vacations with pay, night shift bonuses, etc.—before checking with OPA as to the effect on prices.

Vinson and the WLB have been arguing about his order for two months now without reaching a decision. Here is a new method of delay which must delight the WLB experts on stalling.

4. Not being a complete dope, Vinson decided that his pill needed a sugar-coating. For sugar he decided to use an old idea (1943 model) of Dr. No-More-New-Deal Roosevelt—a "rollback" of prices. He figured that the labor leaders and liberals would fall for that.

The first mighty concrete blow against the No-Strike Pledge was delivered by the Textile Workers Union. Its Executive Board, meeting in New York at the same time that the powerless WLB granted a meaningless 55 cents an hour minimum wage for the industry, announced that "it had released 100,000 members in 53 mills" from the onerous pledge.

This was the answer of the union after having been given a repeated run-around for many months by the WLB, Director of Stabilization Vinson and President Roosevelt, who has remained adamant in his refusal to lift the freeze on wages.

The resolution of the Textile Workers Union denounced the position taken by the government on wages, pointing out that the textile industry pays the lowest wage of any basic manufacturing industry in the country.

Substandard wages have been the rule in the textile mills of the country, especially in the South. All the efforts of the union for more than a year to increase wages and raise the minimum wage have run against the stone wall of the WLB and Roosevelt.

### Took Right Step



EMIL RIEVE

### Run-Around Expert



WILLIAM H. DAVIS

Now that the WLB has lost all power to act, Emil Rieve, union president, declared that it was a waste of time to even bother about the Board.

Rieve further disclosed that the union had been "deluged by requests for walk-outs in telegrams by the bushel." This statement is the clearest explanation of the true feelings of the textile workers.

### WLB ACTS TOO LATE

The most ludicrous aspect of the whole situation was the frantic effort made by the WLB to halt the action of the Textile executive. After kicking the case around for months and weeks, it rushed through its decision knowing full well that the union was completely fed up with their stalling. The decision grants a fifty-five cents an hour pay base for numerous jobs in the industry. But...

The WLB has no power to put into effect even this measly increase. Under the ruling of Stabilization Director Vinson, all decisions of the WLB are subject to his review. If he determines that any wage increase might affect the price structure of any given industry, that ends the wage increase—or the increase is taken up by granting price increases to the profiteering industrialists. (See story by Walter Weiss on this page.) No money is actually involved in the Board's action.

Testimony as to the utter meaninglessness of the increase granted is supplied by William H. Davis, Chairman of the WLB, who opined that the WLB felt that the workers should have an even higher minimum wage than the one he ordered. Then he added: "But the board must use its best judgment (I) as to the extent to which substandards of living can be corrected without creating unstable unemployment conditions." The same old blarney. But any old argument goes to keep from giving the workers their due.

If he thought, however, that this rise (granting a wage increase at the thirteenth hour) would influence the union, the result has thus far turned out differently. After hearing of the Board's decision, President Rieve stated:

(Continued on page 2)

## Vinson Vetoes Raises, But Profits Climb

By WALTER WEISS

When the War Labor Board, after a year of stalling, granted the steel workers a few measly cents, Economic Stabilizer Vinson was deeply disturbed.

He couldn't veto the raise because—even Phil Murray would have been unable, in such a situation, to hold the workers in line on the no-strike pledge.

And we don't mean the steel workers alone.

So—

1. Vinson approved the insignificant wage increases.

2. At the same time he found a way, with OPA assistance, to grant the steel monopolists price hikes on five products. Since then a sixth product has been added to the list. And trade papers are confident that soon an OPA "study" will justify more gravy for the companies.

All this in spite of an OPA report

subsidies raised as part of the program.

The latest campaign, which is still rolling, is the clothing rollback. On January 23, OPA and the War Production Board promised to cut clothing prices six to seven per cent. This was front-page news.

It's a neat trick. The textile and packinghouse workers mustn't rock the boat by insisting on excessive demands. If they do, meat prices will go up and clothing prices won't go down. They will be raising the cost of living for themselves and everybody else. Get it?

This Vinson is a clever fellow, isn't he?

### SCANDAL IN TEXTILES

On the very day of the front-page rollback announcement Emil Rieve, president of the Textile Workers Union, released a scandalous story about the wage and price situation

in textiles. It did not make the front pages.

Rieve's story revealed part of a "confidential report" by a textile lobbyist to his employers. Later, on February 11, the New York daily, PM, printed the whole report.

The lobbyist boasted of having held extremely satisfactory conferences on both wages and prices with "Assistant President" Byrnes, Stabilizer Vinson and OPA Administrator Bowles.

The latter two gentlemen admit the conferences but indignantly deny that the lobbyist, Jacobs, was able to influence them in any way.

The exact degree of honesty in these denials isn't too important. All of Mr. Roosevelt's administrators have always shown the tenderest regard for the profiteers in an event, since they themselves come from the same circles.

Take Mr. Bowles, formerly a big

(Continued on page 2)



By David Coolidge

# MASS ACTION:

JOTTINGS FROM A CROSS-COUNTRY TOUR

On the train on my way to California, I read an advertisement of the Pennsylvania Railroad in the Chicago Defender. "America's Leading Railroad" wants to hire some more Negroes. They are short of help. Do they want these Negroes for conductors? No. Do they want them for engineers, firemen, telegraphers, clerks, stewards? No. That's not what the war's being fought for. It's being fought for something nobler, something more sublime: democracy. Negroes don't enter that door. That entrance is marked "white only."

No, the Pennsylvania Railroad wants more Negroes for their kitchens and as waiters in their dining cars. To entice Negroes to join up

the Pennsylvania tells us about one Negro family in their employ; the Lamberts. This family has served the Pennsylvania "faithfully" for a total of 147 years.—IN THE KITCHEN AND DINING CAR. But this is a real success story. For the Lamberts have been promoted. They advanced from dishwasher to cook and waiter during the course of their 147 years of "faithful service." Only one of them became a waiter, however; the others have remained in the kitchen.

### ONLY MENIAL JOBS

The Pennsylvania ad says: "The company likes the calibre of the family; (I'll lay odds they do. The slave-owners liked their kitchen help also, so long as they stayed in the kitchen) the family likes the character of the company." I don't

know about this, I haven't talked to the Lamberts. But I'll lay odds again that some of the Lamberts would like to get out of that kitchen.

Why haven't some of the Lamberts or some other Negroes been promoted to dining car steward, to inspector, or put in charge of the commissary department? Just one reason: they are Negroes. Any job outside the kitchen or carrying a tray is a "white man's job." Senator Eastland of Mississippi says that this is what the war is being fought for and evidently the Pennsylvania Railroad agrees: to keep the Negroes in the kitchen.

That's what the slave-owners thought and many Northerners, too. It took a few slave revolts and a civil war to change some people's minds.



## Out of the Past 'Big Bill' Haywood: American Labor Titan

William Dudley Haywood was born to working class parents in Salt Lake City in 1869, when the West was still the frontier of America.

Bill Haywood was well over six feet tall, a man of great physical strength. In his youth he had lost the sight of one eye, over which he wore a patch. His hands bore the scars of hard toil. He was self-educated, having read Darwin, Shakespeare and Voltaire by candlelight in lonely Western mining camps after a day's work.

When he was fifteen, he left home to go to work in a mine. An old miner, a member of the Knights of Labor, was his first teacher in the principles of trade unionism.

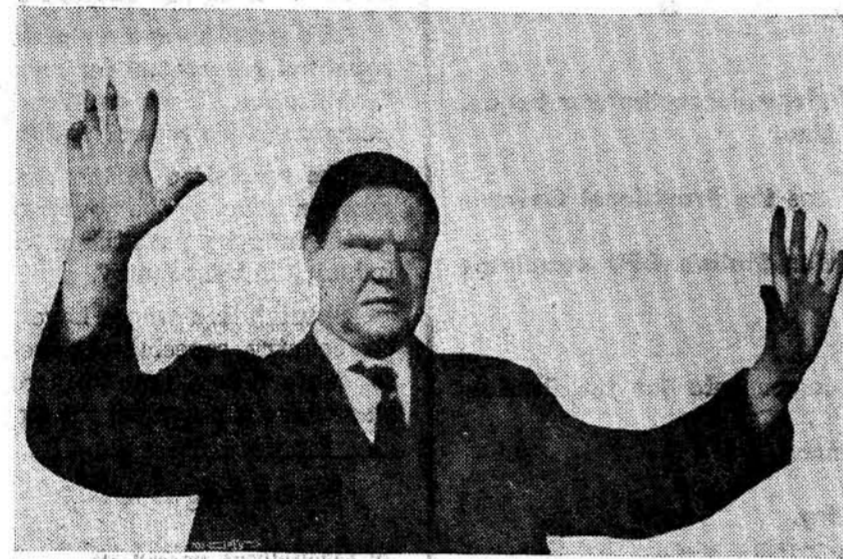
In May, 1886, seventeen-year-old Bill Haywood read the account of the arrest of eight anarchists accused of throwing a bomb into the meeting at which one of them was speaking at Haymarket Square in Chicago. The sentence of hanging for seven of the eight anarchists, who were clearly innocent, made a deep impression on him. He wrote in his autobiography "It was a turning point in my life."

### WESTERN MINE FEDERATION

Some time later, in Silver City, Idaho, where Bill went to live with his wife and two children, he joined the Western Federation of Miners. In 1898, he was elected a delegate from the Silver City local to the convention of the WFM. At that convention he saw Sam Gompers, who had come seeking the affiliation of the WFM to the AFL. Haywood described him as "this undersized individual that called itself the leader of labor." His contempt for Gompers was an expression of his belief in industrial unionism as opposed to the narrow craft set-up of the AFL.

Haywood became the secretary-treasurer of the Western Federation of Miners and was an organizer, speaker and writer for the union. He engaged personally in almost all the bitter struggles of the Western Miners to better their working conditions. The workers called him, informally and affectionately, "Big Bill." The employers and their sheriffs treated with cold deference, which masked a desire to get him out of the way.

In 1905, the convention which established the Industrial Workers of the World found Bill Haywood present in the company of his friend and comrade, Gene Debs of the Socialist Party. Debs was soon to come to his defense in flaming articles in the "Appeal to Reason." Bill Haywood, with the other leaders of the WFM, was arrested and charged with the murder of ex-Governor Stuenkel of Idaho. Haywood was the central figure in the biggest labor case since the Haymarket martyrs. He took the



He Became Disillusioned in "The Workers' Fatherland," Russia

opportunity to depict the struggles of the miners for a decent life. The trial and his acquittal made him a national figure.

When the trial was over he was offered money to appear in lecture halls and theaters all over the country. He turned down the lucrative offers and instead made a speaking tour under the auspices of the Socialist Party. He spoke to 45,000 in Chicago, 37,000 in Milwaukee and to huge audiences in other cities.

From 1908 to 1917, the IWW, with Bill Haywood at its head, organized the unskilled workers in great numbers. But American entry into the war in 1917 brought down upon the IWW the police power of the state and the hysteria of "patriotic" mobs. Bill Haywood and 100 other leaders of the IWW were arrested for their anti-war statements and tried in Chicago under the Sedition Act. They were convicted, given fantastically long sentences and sent to Leavenworth Prison.

In 1919, Haywood was released on bond. He joined the Communist Party, which had been formed by left-wingers who had left the Socialist Party.

While in Los Angeles the other day, Eddie Rickenbacker was interviewed by one of Hearst's anti-labor newspapers for his opinion on the labor draft.

"It is both undemocratic and too late," said Rickenbacker. (The "undemocratic" aspect would be okay if it weren't "too late.")

"If we go to forced labor," he added, "we are running the risk of dictatorship and nullification of the Bill of Rights." (This nullification of the Bill of Rights and dictatorship would again seem to be okay to Rickenbacker if it weren't too late.)

This opposition to the labor draft doesn't mean Rickenbacker has changed his stripes. You can't trust the axiom, "I look to see what Rickenbacker's doing, then I do the opposite," as you can see by the reasons he gives.

The defense lawyers were attempting to get the case reviewed by the Supreme Court, but there was small hope of a favorable outcome. Haywood and his friends decided that he should leave the country to go to revolutionary Russia, rather than spend the rest of his life in jail. He was on the deck of the ship as it passed the Statue of Liberty. He wrote in his memoirs: "Saluting the old hag with her uplifted torch, I said: 'Goodbye, you've had your back turned on me too long. I'm going to the land of freedom.'"

He did in Russia in 1928, completely disillusioned about the "Workers' Fatherland," hating the Stalinist bureaucracy and their exploitation of the workers in the name of their fake socialism. In his last years he was desperately anxious to return to America to participate in the movement of his native land.

One-half his ashes were buried under the Kremlin Wall. The other half was sent to Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago, where the Haymarket martyrs, whose victimization had so impressed the young Haywood, are buried.

## NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

# Progressive UAW "Rank and File" Issues Its Own Newspaper

By T. R. COBB

The first issue of the Rank and File, the newspaper published by the National UAW-CIO Rank and File Steering Committee and just received at this office, marks a memorable and tremendously important event in the annals of American labor history.

It is an event that reflects the resurgence of fighting trade unionism in the United States, an event that was shaped and brought to fruition out of the very lives and needs of the rank and file members of the United Auto Workers of America.

The story of the organization of the Rank and File Caucus at the 1944 convention of the UAW in Grand Rapids is of itself one of the brightest spots in a half decade of labor retreats and defeats.

As early as the Buffalo convention in 1943, militant rank and file leaders began the struggle to save their union from the crippling effects of the no-strike pledge and the WLB perpetual run-around. From the lowliest production worker and the highest skilled tool and diemaker alike came identical expressions of bitterness and resentment:

**A PLEDGE FOR NOTHING**

The top leaders of the UAW and the national CIO had given President Roosevelt an unauthorized pledge not to strike—in return for which prices were to be held in line.

But the cost of living was allowed to soar upwards at an alarming rate while wages were frozen under the vicious Little Steel formula.

The top leaders of the UAW and the national CIO promised the rank and file equitable adjustment of their grievances by the War Labor Board and a "sympathetic" President.

But the War Labor Board proved anti-labor to the core, stalling interminably and deliberately, while the corporation big shots laughed up their sleeves and provoked wildcat strikes by their open arrogance.

This was the background for the first efforts of the restive rank and file. Such figures as Emil Mazey of the Briggs local and Tom De Lorenzo of the Brewster local led its opening battles, but the time was not yet ripe for a full-scale offensive. That day came quickly, however.

**RANK AND FILE ORGANIZE**

By the time of the Grand Rapids convention in late September, 1944, whole sections of the UAW were in open revolt against the suicidal policies of its top leadership. Fresh, intelligent, militant leaders sprang up from the ranks to take positions of prominence alongside of those who were already up to their necks in the fight.

And this time they were ORGANIZED.

Somewhere and somehow they had relearned and put into practice the old lesson that had once built the UAW into the most powerful union in the world—IN ORGANIZATION THERE IS STRENGTH!

The rest is history—history that lives today in a surging and ever-growing movement of true rank and file sentiment and ambition.

## Wage Rise Vetoed; Profits Aided--

(Continued from page 1)

advertising man. He has been accused by the cotton textile mills of intending to cut their profits to \$325,000,000 a year! Does he ask them what would be wrong with that? Does he remind them of their patriotic duty to make sacrifices for the war effort?

He does not. He assures them solemnly and honestly that he has no desire to interfere with their profits, and he gives figures to prove this.

In peacetime, he says, the mills were earning \$60,000,000 a year. In 1944 their profits rose to \$340,000,000, almost 500 per cent above the peacetime level! (These, by the way, are the lowest figures we have seen for textile profits.)

Having recently given the mills an extra \$100,000,000 yearly in tempo-

rary price increases, the OPA is worried that it went just a little too far. It wants to cut total profits to—\$325,000,000 a year.

Such profits are, surely, big news. But the New York Times of February 18 buried the story in its business section.

Similarly buried has been the story of what the great six or seven per cent rollback will actually amount to. PM of February 18 reports that the program has been killed by various technical tricks. PM, to be sure, is a liberal newspaper, but the business papers (not read by workers) have been saying the same thing for some time now.

On February 7 the Journal of Commerce, which usually complains about OPA's control of profits, quoted a War Production Board official as

saying that the low-price textile order "has been emasculated to the point that it is hardly recognizable."

On February 15, the textile editor of this same paper wrote:

"It is becoming more apparent that the low and middle price apparel program... is likely to register its greatest immediate effectiveness in the fields of publicity and politics. As one market observer stated yesterday, the program itself seems to be getting weaker and weaker."

He goes on to say that the rollback announcement of January 23 served to ease the public's mind and to offset labor's demands for revision of the Little Steel formula.

Of course! Those were its purposes. The same thing has happened many times in the past. Everything from peanut butter to cigars has been

rolled back—in the newspapers! **HELP POOR CONGRESSMEN!**

Our underpaid congressmen, having "stabilized" the workers with some assistance from Roosevelt and his gang, are now thinking about raising their own pay. Why not? Stabilization is only for workers, and surely congressmen aren't workers.

Yet it stands to reason that if a congressman can't meet the rising cost of living on his \$10,000 a year, a textile worker on fifty cents or even fifty-five cents an hour is in a desperate fix. Fake rollbacks, however numerous, and the no-strike pledge are not very nourishing.

LABOR ACTION believes that the workers are coming to understand what must be done about this situation, even if the union leaders don't.

## Detroit Negro Housing Situation

By MARTIN HARVEY

**DETROIT**—The Negro housing situation is still simmering in "this city. The most recent development was the attempt of the Detroit Housing Commission to throw cold water into the pot to keep the housing situation from boiling over.

On February 15 the Housing Commission approved a resolution recommending the immediate construction of 1,000 Negro housing units in the Oakwood section of Detroit. The previous day Charles F. Edgcomb, secretary and director of the Housing Commission, had told the City Council that the commission had no real solution to the Negro housing problem "and is not likely to have one." At the same time he said that the commission would recommend the construction of 4,000 units in the Oakwood section.

Despite the fact that Edgcomb had told the Council that 4,000 units would not materially affect the 13,000 applications for Negro housing now on file, the figure was finally cut to 1,000 units. The 13,000 applications are being increased by 600 every month.

This decision of the Housing Com-

mission, which can only be considered as a face-saving gesture, is just another episode in the continual buck-passing that has attended the discussions of the housing situation.

Edgcomb had previously dumped the housing problem into the lap of the City Council. The august city fathers immediately dumped it right

of all this simulated activity? One thousand units recommended.

The president of the City Council, John C. Lodge, remarked that "We will never solve the problem. At least there will be no solution in our lifetime." If the Negroes of Detroit will wait for a solution to the housing crisis from Lodge and his brother politicians, they will find no solution "in their lifetime." The answer is to sweep these gentlemen out. They have had their opportunity. They have had many long years to talk and to act. In all those years the crisis only grew until today it threatens the social and physical life of the city.

It remains only for the Negro people to unite with the labor movement, the UAW-CIO, and challenge the control of these capitalist politicians. It is time for the workers

of Detroit to stop playing around with Democratic and Republican politicians. Let the working class try its hand at running the city.

## You Should Read Plenty for All

The Meaning of Socialism By ERNEST LUND

Get Your Copy Now! Price 10c

WORKERS PARTY 114 West 14th St., New York 11, N. Y.

## Readers Take the Floor...

### Mont'y Ward Worker Likes Labor Action

Gentlemen: After reading a friend's copy of LABOR ACTION, I am convinced that it is the only newspaper that is not printed for capital's interests. I regret that I didn't become acquainted with your newspaper at the time of the Montgomery Ward dispute. Being a former Local 20 member, I would have enjoyed seeing the truth about Mr. Slavery Avery in at least one paper in the country.

I am enclosing a money order covering the cost of one year's subscription.

E. L.

its rights, it will get weak and nervous, just as the French labor movement did before 1939. It will become prey to its enemies.

Of course, I have confidence that American labor will wake up to its danger before that point is reached, and in the UAW we can see signs of life right now.

But here are two paragraphs from the letter of a Southern worker which I have just received, and which are typical of the feelings of many good union men, weighted down by the present-day bargaining methods.

Chicago, Ill. R. G.

due to some of the fence-walking "decisions" the board has handed down since that time.

The president of the company is just as sweet as ever. He just sits there and smiles nicely, pretending that he has forgotten what our demands were. And when we read something about a new seniority clause, he says: "I don't think we should put all of those new clauses in the contract. It would just complicate things more. Now let's see what the old contract had to say on that." Then he reads the clause from the old contract and says: "Now that's a good clause. We never did have any trouble because of it. I just don't think your new clause is fair." This sort of bunk I will listen to all day tomorrow until I will begin to feel like an anarchist and be tempted to rid the world of one stinker by performing a brave deed. But instead I will probably just sit there and make wise-cracks and antagonize the b—, which in turn keeps me from getting a raise (if I got a nickel I would be making .80 per hour and I would be wealthy).

## No-Strike Pledge--

(Continued from page 1)

"The order issued by the War Labor Board merely confirms the union's position that the board is no longer a free agent able to make its own decisions.

"In effect, the board says that it recognizes that the cotton-rayon textile workers receive sub-standard wages but that it cannot give them what equity and justice demand because Stabilization Director Fred M. Vinson has tied the Board's hands."

### PACKINGHOUSE CASE

If the action of the Board in the textile case is bad, the same holds true for its decision in the Packinghouse case. The Packinghouse Workers had recently threatened to take a strike vote and action. They were persuaded from this by the promise that the WLB would decide their case. The board did, but in the same

out again into the lap of Mayor Jeffries.

The Mayor was even quicker than the Council and passed it right back. Now the Council has it right back where it started from—in the Detroit Housing Commission. The net result

evasive way as in textile. While granting a few measly pennies to the packinghouse workers, this is what it did not do, according to the United Press report:

"... Denied were UPW demands for one week's severance pay for each twenty-six weeks' service, annual sick leave of thirty days after one year's service, a full rate for learners, three week's vacation after 15 years service, pay for holidays not worked and pay for union stewards and committees for time spent handling grievances."

The lesson is once again brought home:

Labor should get off the WLB. Labor should rescind the No-Strike Pledge!

The Textile Workers Union took a noble step forward; the whole labor movement should follow its lead!

## L. A. Business Manager's PRESS ACTION

by Sol Rayo

"Money, money, money, the root of all evil." What can we do about it? What can YOU do about it? LABOR ACTION has a problem. We want to expand the circulation of the paper. That "root of all evil" is what we are after.

LABOR ACTION's recently concluded subscription campaign has brought many new readers to the paper. Ours is an appeal to these new readers. Circumstances, personal situation or other considerations may prevent you from helping in an active way like distributing the paper among friends and shopmates to spread the ideas of LABOR ACTION. Your desire to help LABOR ACTION can be shown in another way. That way is to contribute whatever sum, large or small, you can afford.

LABOR ACTION is supported COMPLETELY by the contributions of sympathizers and supporters of its program. We have no "Moscow gold." We have no advertising. We have no "angels." We depend upon the re-

sponse and support of our readers.

When you read an article and think, "These people are saying the right thing. These people are standing up and fighting for the right ideas," turn that sentiment into something substantial. Contribute to spreading LABOR ACTION's program as widely as possible.

Address all moneys to: LABOR ACTION, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

Some confusion has developed during our campaign over what our subscription rates are. During the drive they were twenty-five cents for a six-month introductory sub and fifty cents for a year. Now, after the campaign, the twenty-five cents introductory offer still stands. A renewal for another six months, however, is thirty-five cents. Any kind of year's subscription is sixty cents except for foreign countries and Bronx and Manhattan boroughs of New York City, which are seventy-five cents.

### Reader Sends Note From Southern Worker

Chicago, Ill. To the Editor of LABOR ACTION: What are the no-strike pledge and the "impartial" government agencies doing to organized labor? They are eating the heart out of our unions and leading us in the direction of domestic fascism. If the labor movement doesn't stand up and fight for



# LA Reader on Nat'l Slavery

This letter was originally written to the Senator, but on thinking the matter over, this worker decided it would be a waste of time. We agree. The letter has so many things of interest in it that we are printing it.

The Honorable Hendrik Shipstead  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.  
Dear Sir:

The sinister drive to shackle American workers with the totalitarian labor draft prompts me to write you this letter. I am certain that my writing it will do little good since our representatives so obviously represent organized wealth once they take office. However, I am equally certain that many millions of workers in the United States are, like myself, waking up to the two-party farce that has been going on for many decades and that we are going to do something about it by forming an independent Labor Party.

Whatever the "opinion" polls purport to show, nobody I know who works for a living is taken in by the sudden "labor shortage." We have witnessed hundreds of mine workers kicked out on the street by various mines the moment the ore season slackened and their stockpiles were built up. Now we see these same mines bawling through the local newspapers that they "fear a critical labor shortage when the 1945 ore season opens." The same conditions apply to the railroads. We also have personal experiences as to the waste of labor and the hoarding of labor in the cost-plus industries.

### A LOT OF LYING

Who is kidding whom? Who is lying? Why do all the kept men of the press and radio conduct a systematic campaign to condition our minds to acceptance of industrial serfdom and then, as I myself heard them (some of them) say in broadcasts last week, "There is no labor shortage. The labor draft was designed to control and suppress strikes?"

I think that particular commentator tipped off the real nature and purpose of the labor draft. Many of us remember that Reader's Digest some time during the thirties carried a condensation of the Mobilization Day plan. I think that the article was entitled "M-Day." As we remember it, Senators Austin and Wadsworth, then connected with the Wall Street firm of Elinor Root & Co. (if memory serves correctly) had a lot to do with drafting this bill or act in 1923, about the same time that Hitler was preparing his odious Mein Kampf. Complete national service was the gist of this M-Day draft. Labor quite naturally was to be the principal victim of the totalitarian plan.

You know better than I that Senators Austin and Wadsworth have been exceptionally active in pushing a National Service Act. I, like many more up here, refuse to be taken in by the sugar-coating these gentlemen try to impart to their anti-democratic, anti-labor assaults. The truth is that they are long-sighted and are taking steps to control the inevitable social crisis that will develop once the artificial stimulus of war wears off.

It is generally admitted, even by the Republican Party spokesmen, that the PAC's marshalling

of the labor vote re-elected the President and some 100 representatives and senators. It seems that Murray of the CIO had the bait of a wage raise for the steel workers dangled under his nose.

What do we working people do when such a situation develops? We begin thinking. We wonder how we are going to crawl out of the chains of the unilateral War Labor Board and otherwise rid ourselves of the bonds so smoothly wrapped around our limbs by labor's most publicized "friend" and his Republican and Democratic brethren. Since our economic weapon has been shattered by the no-strike pledge and the War Manpower Commission and similar enervating devices, we must resort to our political weapon. We must organize our own political party and keep it free from all but dirt farmers and small-pay workers. The need for this is especially urgent in view of the unseemly haste and hysteria manifest in the drive for the labor draft.

### TOWARD A NEW FUTURE

So, faced by the contradictions of the present economic system, knowing that the country will not stand up under the coming depression, with its millions of unemployed veterans and other workers and that concentrated wealth will go down in the struggle, our "friends" in the legislatures show which side they stand on and prepare to break up organized labor. They know only too well the lessons of Italy and Germany. The prelude to fascism in those unhappy countries was destruction of the trade unions. Organized labor is the base of popular resistance to big-money fascism; hence organized labor must be unorganized with castor oil and concentration camps.

The labor draft is the thing. Then you can frame and jail and fine and transport labor militants. You can shift unionists from one job to another, break up their unions, slash wages, make fatter profits, declare juicier dividends! In the meantime, sic the soldiers and sailors on their "striking" home folk; vote yourselves an increase in salary, you congressmen, of thousands of dollars a year, but the labor to the Little Steel formula; slap down the Kilgore bill in true reactionary style but a week later vote a 28-billion dollar tax refunding measure and a 100-billion dollar war surplus property steal for your big business Bergens.

Well, I must end this letter. You can't draft labor's vote. We're on the beam at last and an independent Labor Party is our answer. We are on to the golden boys of press and radio, to the gilded lilies in the labor officialdom, and especially we are on to "the Chief" and our other "friends" in the political arena. You can fool some of the people some of the time, but—

Yours for a better world,

Joe.

Minnesota, February 14.

# POWER POLITICS = HARD PEACE

By JOE LEONARD

The only sound foundation for lasting peace is truly free and democratic nations. This principle was partially written into the Atlantic Charter but has been disregarded by its authors ever since.

India is starved and beaten so that it will continue to be the "crown jewel of the Empire, sir."

Puerto Rico fights for independence against the United States, which has reduced the population to permanent famine, and the red, white and blue hand of Uncle Sam is not hard to see as the real punching force behind such South American dictatorships as that of Vargas in Brazil.

Now, with the defeat of Germany in sight, the two authors of the Atlantic Charter, in amicable agreement with Joe, the Kremlin butcher, are talking of partitioning, policing, teaching 'em a lesson, hamstringing the economy, bringing 'em to trial, shipping them off to the Russian salt mines as slaves, etc. Let us look into the idea of ruining the German economy, the German industrial capacity.

### ECONOMIC POWER RULES

It is generally recognized that economic power, which is the capacity to produce, is the basis of political power. Within a country the wealthy industrialists are the real rulers, and within a continent, like Europe, the most industrialized nation is the one that will tend to rule the others. The many small countries cannot be really independent where so much greater power rests with just a few nations.

Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin want to prevent Germany from again dominating Europe. The fly in the ointment is that the imperialist politicians talk of themselves protecting the smaller nations.

Well, even Ripley says you can believe it or NOT. And after a look at what Churchill thinks democracy is in Greece and India, and Stalin thinks it is in Romania and Poland, and Roosevelt thinks it is in North Africa and Puerto Rico, we choose NOT to believe.

Everybody knows, and nobody likes to think about it, that this war, like the last one, is between the Have Nations and the Have-Not nations. What they have, or have not, is colonies, trade routes, markets, access to cheap raw materials, colonial slave labor, etc. If anybody wants to see who wants war, let him look at the financial pages of any big newspaper. "Blank Corp. Announced Record Profits." "Dash, Inc. Stock Hits New High." And then, worst of all "Market Slow Due to Peace Scare." PEACE scare!—not everybody hates war! Already the politicians are talking of a Third World War. ALREADY.

A free democratic nation is not merely one whose leaders speak the national language without a foreign accent. Quisling in Norway speaks the language well enough. It's what he says that hurts. To be really free and democratic today a nation must be free of the capitalist system, free of the class of people who are afraid of peace. As long as these people are the real rulers of the country, as long as the wealthy bankers, land owners and factory owners control the economic life of a country, there cannot be full democracy.

If one country has much greater wealth than another, it will dominate the poorer neighbor. What chance has the small, independent merchant against the big corporation? That's the chance that a Balkan state, or Austria, Finland, Belgium, Poland, even France, has against England, Russia and the U. S. The only way the little merchant can stand up against the big corporation is by forming a co-operative. The only basis for a free and democratic nation is a socialist basis, a working class basis, a co-operative economy, an industrial democracy. A nation cannot have true political democracy when it is ruled behind the scenes by economic big shots.

### STRONG NATIONS RUN SHOW

It is the same way between nations. A Socialist United States of Europe would preserve each nation's RIGHT to independence, yet would protect the little nations from being swallowed up by

a big power. And there is another very important advantage.

The only way Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill can think of to start out the post-war world is to sabotage the German chemical factories, blow up the steel mills, the airplane factories, the synthetic rubber and gasoline plants. In modern total war any factory is a war factory, so the Big Three plan to subject Germany to total devastation. Of course, it will not be the rich industrialists and financiers among the Nazis who will have to live through the famine in this desert. It will be the millions of German workers and their families who will learn again to hate the Americans, the British and the Russians. They will learn to hate countries that only TALK of democracy, and they will feel sure that all the lies Hitler told them were really true. Is this the way to build a lasting peace?

### A NEW SLAVERY

Even in America, with the highest standard of living the world has ever known, one-third of the nation is underfed, poorly housed and ill clothed. Will smashing the German machinery help raise the standard of living in poverty-stricken Europe? They do not even have food; after the war, the politicians are saying, the Europeans will have to depend on us for food; if they don't do what we say, we stop sending food. Nice, peaceful plan, eh? And just to make sure that no one tries to undersell American machine-made goods, so they can BUY food, we'll smash all their machinery. Nice way to build a better world, isn't it?

Machines and mass production are the secret of modern advanced civilization. Anyone who proposes to smash thousands of factories is not talking of building a peaceful new world, but of going back to the old slave world. In fact, the politicians talk of sending the Germans as slaves into Russia.

These are the same politicians, in America, who plowed under the cotton while the people were cold. Are these the politicians we are going to listen to, to tell us what to do with Germany?

# WORLD POLITICS

By REVA CRAINE

## Struggle in Belgium

A recent editorial in Le Peuple, (Belgian socialist paper) declared that while "the big democracies may well be victorious on the fields of battle, the reign of democracy is by no means assured in our country... one realizes more clearly each week that the war has left capitalism intact in our country. Let us have no illusions."

The editorial goes on to warn that the enemies of democracy and social reform inside Belgium are not attacking openly, but that they continue their anti-labor and anti-democratic activities in more subtle ways.

"They do not contest the rights of the public powers in matters of national economy. They merely prevent them from exercising them."

"They do not revolt against the social laws, but they set about sabotaging the financing of them."

"They do not talk about the new order any more, but they are already beginning to attack what was good in the old order for fear of the radical reform which the country is demanding."

"Until the day when the lessons of this war have been obliterated by cunning and confusing propaganda, these same people will consider themselves strong enough—with the support of all those who have escaped from an inadequate purge—to settle their accounts with democracy. Fascism is dead, but the fascist mentality still exists; it is hiding its face..."

"We shall see organs of national union, with no political aim, springing up. They will show a fine contempt for all political parties and will publish malicious rumors about all the left wing men. They will address their remarks principally to the middle classes, flattering their prejudices and stirring up their discontent. They will defend the sacred rights of property, the collaboration of classes, order and authority. If need be they will set the country against the government. They will never mention banks or trusts. The money which is going to support them will not have been paid in vain."

Such is the warning of the Belgian Socialist Party against the danger of a resurgence of fascism in that country, unless drastic action is taken against the benefactors of fascism, the trusts and the banks and the entire capitalist class.

On February 10, only a few weeks after this warning was sounded, a new government was formed in Belgium to replace the one that Pierlot could no longer hold together. This "unity government" is built around the four major political parties, the Socialists, Liberals, Catholics and Communists, and is headed by Achille van Acker, a so-called Socialist.

Three days later the new Premier outlined his government's policy in a very brief speech. This is how he dealt with the major problems facing the country:

**UNEMPLOYMENT:** Everybody in Belgium wants to work he said. Unemployment will be solved by the conscription of labor.

**THE COAL SHORTAGE:** "The output of coal must be increased and it will be." **METHOD:** Recruitment of workers required for the coal mines. The recovery of Belgian industry depends on the cooperation, loyal cooperation at that, of the industrialists, declared the "socialist" Premier.

Having undertaken to head a capitalist government, the "socialist" van Acker must carry out capitalist policies. That is why no mention is made of the trusts and the banks, no attack leveled on capitalism. As for the collaborators and those of "fascist mentality," the purge is to be eased even more. The government intends to release many of those now imprisoned and to make it easier for those retained to be let off easy. All the vigor of the new regime is to be reserved against the working class, for van Acker does not intend to tolerate for a minute demonstrations like those which occurred last November, parades, riots or strikes.

While in words the Belgian socialists recognize the danger of fascism, they are powerless to do anything effective to stop its advent because they are in practice collaborating with the supporters and beneficiaries of fascism, the capitalist class. In this, they are once again repeating the policy which has paved the way for fascism.

## Situation of Greek Seamen

(ITF) The leaders of the Federation of Greek Maritime Unions, who are preparing to return to Greece, report in their journal:

"The question of unemployment is already very acute for Greek seamen owing to the fact that our shipping has sustained great losses which so far have not been replaced. The reconstruction of our merchant fleet alone will be the means of absorbing all unemployed seamen. In addition, the reconstruction of shipping is most essential for our national economy, since it constitutes one of the main resources of the country's finances. The transfer of the various insurance funds for the benefit of our seamen in Greece and the families of those abroad who have been impoverished during the occupation. The conclusion too of the collective agreement is long overdue, having been postponed so far by the shipowners, with the clear purpose of taking advantage of the poverty and numbers of the seamen at home, and using them as cheap labor."

This confirms what we have long contended—namely, that the owners of the means of production in all countries, be they shipowners, factory owners, mine owners, land owners are alike in their attitude toward the workers and their organizations. The alleviation of such conditions is one of the things that the Greek people were fighting for.

# Of Special Interest to Women

By SUSAN GREEN

The mountain labored and brought forth a mouse. This is the saying that came to mind on reading the new WPB-OPA program regarding textiles and clothing.

The first aspect of the plan that hits one smack in the face is that it will be April before new supplies begin to come in, in dribbles, and it will take until September before the plan is "wholly operative." That means that for the rest of the winter and for spring and summer buying, pretty much the same condition will probably prevail, both as to supplies and as to prices.

Yet the plan of the WPB and OPA glosses over this period and does nothing about reducing prices on existing supplies.

When the price cuts do come in, they will amount to only SIX OR SEVEN PER CENT. Yet OPA Administrator Bowles himself admits that the cost of clothing has increased ELEVEN PER CENT in the last eighteen months. Just why Mr. Bowles picked the number "eleven" out of the hat is hard to say, when every housewife knows that she is paying as much as 100 per cent more on many items of textiles and other clothing. But even on his own basis, Mr. Bowles does not hold the line.

Another loophole is the ever-present question of quality. Though the WPB-OPA order has many words on this subject, it winds up with the conclusion that "quality controls will be imposed WHERE FEASIBLE"—and you know what that means in practice!

Indefinite indeed are the benefits to accrue to the consumer. But very definite was Mr. Bowles on the subject of profits. He was very emphatic that the textile and clothing business all up and down the line—WHICH HAS MADE AS MUCH AS TEN TIMES PRE-WAR PROFITS—will continue to make more profits than in pre-war days. It is easy to understand why the working people can't really go into rhapsodies over the profit system.

Has anyone ever stopped to think what would become of our vaunted "civilization"—such as capitalist civilization is—if all the workers in the service trade would refuse to do "menial" labor? Restaurants, hotels, office and apartment buildings, stores, subways, laundries, dry-cleaning establishments, all are kept clean or "serviced" or operated by the "menial" workers. Without them, dirt would so clog the wheels of modern life that it would come to a standstill. Food could not be served outside the home; hotels could not be run. But why go on? The point is amply made.

These so important service jobs are "manned" to a great extent by women, white and black. Indispensable as is their labor, they are treated like the scum of the earth. The measure of this is the wages they receive.

The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor recently made a survey showing that wages of women workers in service trades scrape a bottom of TWELVE AND FIFTEEN CENTS AN HOUR. For a forty-hour week, the munificent reward is \$4.80 and \$6.00!

The survey pertained to eleven states which have no minimum wage laws. Of course, male workers also come in for all the "benefits" of unrestricted exploitation. But there is nothing like the exploitation to which women workers are subjected. Restaurant, hotel, laundry and store workers average eighteen cents an hour in eighty-eight cities. Waitresses get less than twenty-five cents an hour. And so all along the line.

Pressure is being exerted by organized labor to get minimum wage laws passed in these unacceptably backward states. This is good. But it does not mitigate the real need to give these women workers a sense of the importance of their labor and of their belonging to the whole body of labor—and above all to help to organize them into powerful unions through which to fight for their rights as useful workers and as human beings!

Eleanor Fowler, secretary-treasurer of the Women's Auxiliaries of the CIO, writes a column in the CIO News. Her column in the January 22nd issue begins as follows: "It is significant that four of our eight women members of Congress have been chosen to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives. Their appointment emphasizes the very great concern which American women have with building a secure peace."

The first mistake Mrs. Fowler makes is in the word "our." How come that the eight women in Congress who are all either Democrats or Republicans, having run on capitalist party tickets, committed to a capitalist government—how come that they can be called "our," meaning belonging to LABOR? The mere fact of womanhood has nothing to do with classes or with politics.

But the great error Mrs. Fowler falls into is the old bewhiskered one that women are somehow better equipped than men to bring about a better world and lasting peace. In her own column Mrs. Fowler proves how false this assumption is. She states her belief that "The groundwork [for peace] has been laid in the Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks agreements." Her belief in these scraps of paper only show that a woman can be just as deluded about the capitalist system and its international machinations as a man.

While the great nations are competing for world power and pockeying for position in a mad game that can only prepare the ground for the next war, Mrs. Fowler—along with other well-intentioned people of both sexes who refuse to see world capitalism for what it is—clutch frantically at agreements already discredited by the very ones who made them.

Neither sex nor color nor race nor creed has anything to do with the qualifications of people to represent labor in the struggle for a better world and lasting peace. The best qualified people of both sexes to speak for the working masses are the revolutionary socialists. They look at capitalism with the eyes of realists. They see that it holds no future but of more devastation and more wars. They are fighting to sweep capitalism off the stage of history, to make way for a socialist world based on human needs and aspirations. MEN AND WOMEN ALIKE WORK FOR THIS END.

## The New International

Those interested in the Negro problem will not want to miss the January issue of *The New International*. David Coolidge and J. R. Johnson introduce a Workers Party discussion.

James T. Farrell, noted novelist, author of the "Studs Lonergan" trilogy and many short stories, contributes an unusual feature, "The Languor of Hollywood."

Also in this issue is an article on airpower by Walter Jason.

You can get your copy by sending twenty cents to *The New International*, 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y.

# Anti-Nazi Demonstration--

(Continued from page 1)

the anti-Nazis of New York. Despite this universal opposition, masses of men and women rallied to our call to show the Nazis that these were not the streets of Berlin. The story is a dramatic one.

It was a balmy, spring-like evening in the midst of winter. Many hours before the time set for the demonstration members of the party had gathered at the headquarters for last-minute instructions and to provide themselves with home-made, defensive weapons. The last of the thousands of leaflets calling the workers and anti-Nazis of New York to picket Fritz Kuhn's rally were distributed.

Tension and exhilaration filled the rooms. Everyone was nervous and excited. Conversations were loud, appetites were nil and each person was stretching and flexing himself as if in preparation for battle.

### DEMONSTRATORS GATHER

In organized groups we dispersed to the scene, where we found cops and cops—here a cop, there a cop, everywhere a cop. More cops were gathered together to protect the Bund meeting than had ever been assembled before for any occasion in the history of New York City. Along the streets housing Madison Square Garden plain clothes detectives lounged on stoops. Fat, beefy ones; dark, thin ones—every nationality and race. But all of them bore on their faces the mark of Cain and could be seen a mile off for what they were—dicks.

Everywhere in the streets surrounding the Garden were spectators, more or less sympathetic, waiting to see what would happen. In the roadways more and more workers gathered. Banners and placards were unfurled. Each group around a placard developed a fierce and fighting pride to keep their sign high and flaunting through the night against the attacks of the police. All the signs of a storm were there. The horses of the mounted cops were fidgety and pawed the ground, the "fatfoot" cops jumpy, talking in nervous, little knots, trying to assume an elaborate nonchalance. Enemies sized up enemies.

More people came. Fifty thousand demonstrators and thousands on the sidewalks, who, as the evening progressed, joined the workers in their struggle. All was set. Soon the battle would begin.

### COPS CHARGE CROWD

The rear of the crowds in the tightly packed streets began to push restlessly up against the front lines. Suddenly from the confined masses of people a group broke through the cordon of police. A shiver went through the crowd and a spontaneous

shout. The mounted cops rowled their horses into a charge against the first "bulge" and hacked and beat them back into the confined area. People surged through at other points. The cops rode them down in vicious Nazi style—to protect the Nazi celebration!

A group of war veterans emerged with placards and attempted to march up to the entrance of the Garden in order to picket. Again the cops rode them down, despite their protests that they were war veterans exercising their democratic right to picket.

Above all the throbbing and violent struggle rose the organized chants of the demonstrators. "Down with the Nazi terrorists!" We demand the right to picket! And in the intervals could be heard the heartfelt, utterly sincere cursing of the cops by everyone.

The cops sat grim faced on their horses. Occasionally a cop on foot would be sucked into the crowd and come out a sadder, wiser and changed man. Oh, those "bulls" were scared!

### WORKERS PARTY SPEAKS

Some distance behind the first rows, speakers of the Workers Party were hoisted up on the shoulders of

comrades. Max Shachtman, national secretary of the Workers Party today, and others spoke to the crowds. In the minds of thousands we stamped our organization as a genuine, militant, fighting, anti-Nazi organization. Thousands took our paper home for the first time.

The demonstration ended with a march of thousands down the streets of Broadway in the theatrical district. But the cops in a mood of spiteful, cruel viciousness went after the tail of the parade now that the demonstration was over. It was a foray that did not turn out so well. They got as good as they gave. We left, heads and spirits high.

Nothing can spoil or erase this page from our history. We stood up and fought Nazism when any and every other organization or person with a pretense of anti-Nazism said: "Don't demonstrate. It's not nice. Be respectable. Stay home." They would have let the Nazis have a field day and feel that they have terrorized the anti-Nazis of New York.

We put the fear of the organized, aroused workers in the hearts of the Bundists and showed how to fight Nazism. Let every member of the Workers Party cherish that night. Let every sympathizer and anti-Nazi bow his head to us!

Interracial Alliance Committee Sponsors

## DAVID COOLIDGE

LABOR ACTION COLUMNIST  
Noted Negro Writer and Organizer

in a series of lectures and discussions on

### THE SOCIALIST PROGRAM FOR TODAY

EVERY SECOND MONDAY BEGINNING FEBRUARY 19, 8 P.M.  
AT THE YMCA, 1000 EAST 28th STREET (Room B)  
near Central Avenue

Monday, March 5 <b>THE WORKERS AND THEIR TRADE UNIONS</b>	Monday, April 2 <b>SOCIALISM AND A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT</b>
Monday, March 19 <b>THE WORKERS AND RACE PREJUDICE</b>	Monday, April 16 <b>IS STALIN'S RUSSIA A SOCIALIST COUNTRY?</b>

ALL WELCOME!

## LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

Published Weekly by the  
LABOR ACTION PUBLISHING ASSN.  
114 West 14th Street New York 11, N. Y.  
(Third Floor)

Vol. 9, No. 9 February 26, 1945

ALBERT GATES, Editor  
MARY BELL, Ass't Editor

Subscription Rate: 60 Cents a Year

75 Cents for Canada, New York and Foreign

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



# Nat'l Service Act Means A New Slavery

By Mary Bell

While at this writing, Roosevelt has not yet appeared circled with the halo of Yalta, wearing the mantle of the Big Three to make a personal appearance to speak again for a slave bill, he and the Navy and Army chiefs appear to be losing the present round for a work or fight bill. The Senate Military Affairs Committee ignored the plea of Secretary of War Stimson and another written directive of the President to pass the May-Bailey bill and voted it down 12-6.

Undoubtedly, the men in Congress who are there by virtue of the labor vote, knuckled under to the heavy pressure of labor, unanimously opposed to "work or fight" with the exception of the Communists.

The fight is not yet over, however. A substitute, less drastic bill is being introduced by Senators O'Mahoney, Kilgore, Wagner, Chandler (D.) and Ball and Ferguson (R.). This bill would give the War Manpower Commission statutory powers to transfer labor. It would penalize employers rather than labor. It would offer transportation to transferees. But it is still a COMPULSORY measure. It is still a slave act, however modified.

And regardless of this "softened" slave bill, and the failure to pass "work or fight" legislation as yet—work or fight already exists! Men who leave war jobs are being transferred to Camp Ellis, Illinois, where they are given a month's training in the army, then a choice of either going back on the job or continuing as soldiers. This is being done without a partial national service act! This is being done under current manpower controls! This is a fascist technique!

Strengthening the controls of the WMC, which are already used to draft workers who leave war jobs, only means the government will sink its teeth deeper into the freedom of labor. We have no doubt that Roosevelt will ask again that more drastic controls be imposed on labor.

## WHY THEY INSIST

What is his motivation? Stimson complained in his plea to the Senate that the United States alone has no compulsory service law. Our Allies, Russia and Britain, have had national service legislation since the beginning of the war. And moreover, our enemies, the Nazified countries, are fighting us with weapons made by slave laborers. A national labor draft is indeed a totalitarian measure, and its adoption by our Allies means only that they, too, are moving in the direction of totalitarianism.

Roosevelt wants compulsory work for private profiteers because the voluntary method will mean transfer of workers to places where higher wages prevail, or to peace-time industries because of the outbacks. Slave labor means you do not need to raise wages or revise the Little Steel Formula. You can force labor to work for any wage. Freedom of labor under capitalism means freedom to work or not work, freedom to leave one employer and work for another, freedom to work or starve.

Compulsory labor means abolition of even this questionable freedom—the best capitalism has to offer, however—and chaining the worker to his job. This means enslaving the worker even more to produce for private profits, and then—especially and most quickly in the war industries—summarily dumping him when munitions are no longer needed and the plant shuts down. Capitalism does not guarantee him a job nor adequate unemployment compensation.

## DRAFT THE PROFITEERS

So, because Roosevelt, being a servant of the capitalists, cannot and does not want to force them to guarantee adequate wages and compensation for unemployment out of their mountaintop profits (all made in the name of the war for "democracy") he wants to force the workers to stay at their jobs. The controls are for the post-war period, too. Work-or-jail, no strikes, a dead calm of labor-management collaboration—these will aid American imperialism to carry on its trade and money-making without disruption.

Labor's answer should be: Draft capital not labor. Since capital makes the profits, since it and not labor benefits from the war, let it pay for the war. Let the government take over all war industry. Let industry operate under workers control and supervision of production. Let profits—since they profess it's a war to "destroy fascism and preserve democracy"—be eliminated.

Guarantee the workers a high standard of living out of the blood-profits of industry. Guarantee them high unemployment compensation in the post-war period.

## DRAFT CAPITAL, NOT LABOR.

## Review of 'The First Round' Points to Need of

# Labor Party for Fight to Finish!

By ALBERT GATES

The Political Action Committee, more popularly known as the PAC, organized by the CIO at its sixth constitutional convention in November, 1943, is a new phenomenon in American political life. It took the country by storm when it appeared in the 1944 presidential campaign as a well-knit, firmly organized labor battalion in behalf of President Roosevelt.

The labor-baiters seized the opportunity for a nation-wide anti-union campaign, on the theory that any political activity by the workers is bad. The political activity of the PAC was bad, in our opinion, but for reasons altogether different than those expressed by Dies, Hearst, McCormick and the whole host of reactionaries. As a result of the reactionary pressure, the PAC was twice investigated in Washington (then exonerated by the FBI) and generally condemned by the big business, anti-Roosevelt press.

But as a result of enormous energy, organization and expenditures, the PAC succeeded in rallying millions of votes in behalf of a capitalist candidate for President and hundreds of national and state politicians, as well as local machine hacks and ward-heelers of the two old parties. These very activities helped to make many workers in this country politically conscious, although in a capitalist direction.

## WHAT THE BOOK PORTRAYS

So vast was the activity of the PAC that a book has just been published describing its formation and activities. This book, *The First Round*, by Joseph Gaer, a member of the PAC staff, is not the kind of history of a movement that we frequently meet. It is not an all-embracing analysis of the origins of the movement, its political and organizational development, in an effort to place it in the history of American labor. It is, rather, an advertisement for the PAC, popularly written, and containing for the most part a series of pamphlets issued during the campaigning days of the PAC.

In any case, the book is lively, simply written, containing considerable punch precisely because it reprints the extremely well-written pamphlets which the PAC issued during the period of its active campaign. By so doing, the book reveals exactly what was wrong with the PAC from the point of view of the

long-term interests of the American worker and his union movement.

American labor has shown over a period of years, great ingenuity in developing methods of struggle (the sit-down strikes, industrial unionism) that would strengthen it in the fight against big business, which has at its disposal the government, the police, the yellow press, the radio, the movies and even the church. On the economic field it is capable of rising to great heights in the struggle against rapacious bosses representing the big monopolistic firms and other giant corporations.

## POLITICAL AWAKENING

Politically, the American worker has not kept pace. Whereas he knew well what to do in an economic struggle and what to do around a conference table with a boss, when he went out to vote he usually voted for this same boss or some politician hand-picked by him. And while the American worker would never think of selecting the boss or his agent to represent his (the worker's) viewpoint or demands in a labor dispute, he would and does vote for him on the political field.

In recent years, however, the American worker has been growing up politically. Slowly but surely he is beginning to understand that, just as it is necessary for him to be organized economically in his trade unions, he must be organized politically through his own party, with his own candidates and with a program for labor.

These rumblings for independent political action grow louder and louder. This is what scares the two big capitalist parties, the Republican and Democratic. This is what scares the politically backward labor leaders, who are tied hand and foot by the capitalist politicians. They work with might and main to prevent the workers from organizing politically.

It is true, as Mr. Gaer writes in *The First Round*, that "labor has always been in politics." He cites the example of Gompers. Gompers, however, never tied himself to one capitalist political party, as did the PAC. No, under the AFL watchword, "Reward your friends and punish your enemies," he had his feet in the mire of both capitalist parties.

Gompers, however, had this much in common with the Greens, Murrays and Hillmans of this day: he too fought against independent labor politics when that means that labor should organize its own party with

its own candidates and its own labor program in the interests of all the people.

"PAC started out with a program. It had a plan. It carried out its activities in an orderly fashion. It established a national organization which, in turn, cooperated with CIO international unions and their administrative units in the states and in the cities. These joined hands with other labor organizations, with farm organizations, and with many civic, religious and professional groups."

All of this is unquestionably true. It is also true that the material issued by the PAC was well written, graphic, pointed, punchy and intelligent. But... the well organized propaganda which unquestionably had a great deal to do in causing the fear of the reactionaries and the attacks which followed, was contradictory.

## PROPAGANDIST FOR FDR

The PAC has become the strongest single propagandist for capitalist politics in the ranks of labor. To fortify its campaign for Roosevelt, it naturally had to campaign against genuine, independent political action by labor through its own party, and played no small role in preventing the organization of such a party during 1944.

The First Round contains figures of PAC funds and expenditures. We are, of course, uninterested in the attacks of a Dies Committee on the matter of funds. We do not think that the fund, from the point of view of capitalist politics, is very great, because we know that capitalist parties and politicians spend ten and twenty times the amount of money labor spends in elections. Our objections to the funds raised and spent by the CIO's political arm arise from our consciousness that this money, coming from the blood and sweat and tears of the workers, was used for anti-working class results.

## SOME "ACHIEVEMENTS"

PAC raised a total of \$1,371,978.90 from unions, individuals and the National Citizens PAC! It spent the total sum of \$1,047,955.11!

Forming a major part of its activities was the enormous amount of literature issued:

16 pamphlets	2,044,900 copies
8 leaflets	57,600,000 "
14 misc. leaflets	3,749,000 "
21 posters	415,000 "
3 24-sheet posters and billboards	1,500 "

## HOW THE GERMAN WORKERS BEFRIENDED BRITISH LABOR

With the demand raised all over Europe for the blood, sweat and tears of the German people, it is interesting to hark back to a time when the German trade union movement was still in existence and comparatively free.

In the England of 1926 the results of the world-wide reduction of Britain to a second-rate economic power came to a head in a bosses' offensive against labor and its unions. The result was the great general strike of that year. International solidarity of the working classes of Europe was at a high pitch, mainly among the rank

and file and not the leadership.

Sir Walter Citrine, one of the top men in the betraying leadership of the British strike movement, pretends to forget the aid the German workers manifested to the British strikers. Scott Nearing in his important book on the general strike reminds us of what happened. Showing what real labor solidarity was, he wrote:

"The German Transport Union refused to handle coal for Britain, refused to bunker British ships and took measures to prevent ships from carrying strike-breakers... Great mass meetings were held throughout Germany and collections were taken

up largely through the agency of the Workers International Relief. A single street collection netted over \$10,000.

Citrine, of course, conveniently forgets all this in his support of the Russian demands for slave labor to rebuild the devastated parts of Russia.

The solidarity of German labor with the striking British workers was a high moral act, showing how well they understood the meaning of international labor unity and solidarity.

The present speeches and acts of Citrine, Thomas, Hillman and Rus-

10 fier st'm's	14,570,000 "
5 misc. items	2,563,000 "
6 badges	136,650 "
bulletins	20,000 "
3 letters	40,000 "

And the net result? In the short period since Roosevelt has been in office, he reorganized the millionaires club at the State Department by changing the personnel, but not the club itself. It is still a millionaires' club.

Roosevelt is behind the determination of Stabilization Director Vinson to keep wages down, to keep them frozen, to keep unchanged the Little Steel formula, which the whole labor movement is fighting.

Finally, Roosevelt is the author of the demand for a National Service Act to enslave American labor for private profit!

This is what we mean when we say that the PAC was organized for the wrong purpose and carried out bad policies for the American worker, policies which already have had harmful results. Roosevelt's fight for a slave labor bill alone is the answer to the PAC's claims. The PAC to date has not spoken as an organization against the National Service Act. And that still isn't all. Almost all the senatorial and congressional candidates endorsed and supported by the PAC voted for the May-Bailey limited National Service Act! Neither Murray nor Hillman can gainsay these facts!

## FOR A SECOND ROUND

But the book, *The First Round*, is an excellent proof of what labor could really do in the field of politics. It demonstrates beyond a doubt that if labor expended this energy, money and organization building a great labor party of its own with a militant labor program, nothing could stop it.

If all the work which went into the pamphlets, leaflets, advertising material, the meetings and the speeches were directed to real independent political action, toward the formation of an independent Labor Party, nothing could stop it—nobody could stop it.

Labor would then truly be on the political march—not for capitalist politicians and capitalist parties—but in its own interests.

Such a development in this country would truly mark the "Second Round." And the "Second Round" is what labor really needs to make lasting political and economic progress.

# French CP Now Critical Of de Gaulle

By Carl Davis

The French Communist Party has made another small turn which emphasizes its complete dependence upon the foreign policy of Stalin's Russia. It has made public, through a statement of its appointed leader, Maurice Thorez, that all the decisions of the Yalta Conference are completely acceptable to it and that it does not share with General Charles de Gaulle and his cabinet their reservations and opposition to the Crimean gathering. What is so strange about this?

The answer lies in the whole nature of the European political situation, the course of Russian foreign policy and the struggle of power politics as personified by the United States, Great Britain and Russia.

Prior to the Yalta meeting, the three powers had been following more or less separate roads, each intent on strengthening its own respective position in Europe. Despite the fact that they, France included, are party to the Dumbarton Oaks agreement for a new world power organization (similar to the ineffectual League of Nations), bilateral treaties were inaugurated. First, Russia and England signed a twenty-year treaty. Then Russia and France signed a similar treaty. England and France already had such a treaty.

## CHANGE IN RUSSO-FRENCH RELATIONS

Up to the time of the French treaty, Russia's relations with that country and its appointed titular head, de Gaulle, was friendly at first (during the North African campaign); after Teheran, somewhat cooler. But when de Gaulle went to Moscow to sign the treaty, and referred to Stalin's prison camp as "dear and powerful Russia," the friendship between Russia and France rose to a feverish height.

The Communist Party in France followed a militant policy in the sense that it defended the Resistance Movement, its right to bear arms and its demands for economic, political and social reforms. It severely criticized de Gaulle's regime and conducted itself generally as an opposition party.

That policy lasted until the Franco-Russian treaty was signed. With customary suddenness the line was changed. Was it changed as a result of a discussion in the Communist Party of France, after due deliberation and consideration by its membership? Of course not. The line was changed in Moscow, brought to France by Thorez and simply announced as the new party line. That's the way of totalitarian parties allied to totalitarian states.

Thenceforth the French Communists supported every important measure proposed by de Gaulle. They agreed to disarming the resistance movement. They discovered a hundred and one reasons why this movement should dissolve. They defended the government in its determination not to carry out any radical reforms and in general acted like any capitalist political party.

## YALTA: A NEW POLITICAL STAGE

The imperialists who now rule France are indignant that they were left out of the Yalta meeting. They want to take their place as equals in the dismemberment and enslavement of Germany, as well as in the partitioning of Europe. But since the Allies continue to treat France as a defeated power, even as they talk about helping it in its comeback and reserving a place for it as the fourth power, de Gaulle is rebelling. He refused to meet Roosevelt. He has been critical of Yalta because he was not asked to participate in the conference. He acts like a spoiled child who does not understand his place in the home of the United Nations.

The French Communist Party, which up to Yalta completely supported de Gaulle, has now publicly criticized him. Again the position taken by Thorez was not the result of a party discussion or decision, but of an order emanating from Moscow. It reads: The decisions of Yalta must be supported! The tasks of the communists all over the world is to replace all previous policies with a new one: complete endorsement of the line of Moscow-Teheran-Yalta!

Therefore, says Thorez, "France will have the place that she legitimately deserves. That place will be what we make it (No, it will be what the U. S., England and Russia make it—C. D.). We are glad of it and we do not share the reserves and regrets of those who are astonished that France was not called to that conference."

It is added, however, that while the French communists do not accept de Gaulle's foreign policy, it will continue to support him on domestic policy which, as the New York Times stated, is: "To postpone far-reaching economic reforms until after the war."

## Part IV--Conclusion: Workers Party Program

# Behind Jones-Wallace Fight

By MAX SHACHTMAN

## PART II OF PART III

Who must take the responsibility for raising production, providing employment and the means of maintaining a constant production?

The government must take this responsibility. We need a government that will not hesitate to take the boldest steps required by the interests of the working people—the overwhelming mass of the population. Our measuring rod is not the interests of "free enterprise," of the tiny minority of big monopolists and their agents, but the interests of the tens of millions of common people.

First off, an immediate cessation of the sale of government-built and government-owned plants and facilities to private capitalists, a sale that has already proved scandalous.

## CONSCRIPT WAR PLANTS—NATIONALIZE

Then, the conscription of all war industries. The government did not hesitate a moment to conscript more than 11,000,000 men into the armed services for the prosecution of the war. It conscripted their lives, in other words. Let us have a government that is not even one-hundredth as "radical" in working for the "interests of the nation." Not millions of lives, but the war industries should be conscripted, taken over by the government, and taken over really in the interests of the masses.

The government conscripted lives by the millions, but it shrinks with horror from the idea of NATIONALIZING the banks, the big monopolies and corporations, the transportation system, the mines. These big capitalist institutions like to refer to themselves as "public servants" or "public services." Very well, let them really serve the people, if by "the people" is meant the useful men and women who work to produce the wealth of the nation.

By these proposals we already indicate HOW a planned program for jobs, high living standards and security is to be carried out. But it is necessary to go further.

## FOR PLANNED PRODUCTION

For planned national production, a government needs financial resources. We want to obtain them in such a way as not to throw

the burden on the economically weakest shoulders—the shoulders of the workers, little farmers and middle class people, but to place it on the economically broadest shoulders, where it belongs. A most important additional reason for this is to reduce the financial power of the big capitalists, bankers and monopolists who invariably employ this power to support reaction, including fascist reaction at the "right time," against labor and the common people as a whole.

First off, therefore, there should be not less than a one hundred per cent tax on all war profits above five per cent on invested capital. It is a monstrous shame that these profiteers should be allowed to coin super-profits out of the blood of the dead and wounded in the war, which is precisely what they are doing now.

No individual income should be allowed to exceed \$25,000 a year. Roosevelt talked about such a ceiling. What is needed is not talk about it, but deeds. Nothing in the world can justify a higher individual income than \$25,000 a year when right now there are more than twenty-one million workers who still earn less than \$1,000 a year, with all that this means in terms of human misery.

Finally, the government must have a graduated capital levy on all accumulated wealth above \$50,000 to cover the enormous war costs and to provide jobs and security. This is merely the application of the principle of the progressive income tax to accumulated wealth. The only ones it can affect are the monopolists and their hangers-on. The ones who will benefit are the tens of millions.

## A FIVE-YEAR CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The government must use its power to inaugurate a 250 billion-dollar five-year program of housing, public works and rural electrification and modernization. Its war program, which is a program for destroying dwellings, industries, public works—and people—is far in excess of our modest proposal.

All these proposals, however, would bring about little if any improvement, if they were left in the hands of the profiteers of "free enterprise," the social bankrupts, the warmongers, stock-jobbers, fixers, chiselers and the vast army of bureaucrats who operate to keep them all at the top of the social ladder. The effective and progressive execution of this program demands:

Workers' control of production. If it is the Knudsens and Wilsons and Sloans and Fords and du Ponts and Morgans who are in control of the "planning" and of production in general we cannot possibly have a serious change, except for the worse. The organized workers must be in control, not just here and there, but on a national scale. They must have the decisive voice in hiring and firing, so that they do not remain at the mercies of the reactionary employers. They must have the right to examine company books, to see to it that there is no concealment of profits and no monopolistic fixing of prices. It is more than sufficient, for the time being, that a fixed maximum of profits is drawn by the employers out of industry. On everything else they have proved to be bankrupt. The workers themselves must control production.

To bring about jobs and security for all, Wallace tells labor to rely on—Roosevelt. But there is more than enough practical experience to show how deceptive such reliance is. Wallace himself, as mild a capitalist reformer as we know, was dumped off the last Democratic presidential slate by Roosevelt. And the same Roosevelt even hastened to inform Congress that he would approve the taking of the RFC out of the jurisdiction of Wallace as Commerce Secretary.

## LABOR SHOULD RELY ON ITSELF

Labor needs nothing more than reliance on itself. It is the strongest and most representative organized force in the country. It alone is capable of putting into effect the elementary program, the plan for jobs and security, that we have outlined. The FACT is that no capitalist government, regardless of who was at the head of it, has taken, has been able or willing to take, one-tenth of the simple, clearly-indicated measures that are so urgently needed if economic life is to be organized for human well-being, instead of for human suffering in peacetime and mass destruction in wartime. This program is a program for a workers' government! Only such a government can make it a reality.

A workers' government demands, as the very first step in its realization, a workers' party. Labor needs, first and foremost, a party of its own, an independent Labor Party.

In his New York speech, Mr. Wallace said that "the people who are fighting me" are the ones who "want to push you and me into

the futility of a third party. I think we can win within the framework of the Democratic Party."

What serious evidence is there that labor "can win within the framework of the Democratic Party"? The continued domination of that party in Congress by the Southern reactionaries? The failure even of Wallace to be nominated for the Vice-Presidency at the Chicago convention of the Democrats? The Roosevelt appointment of the big corporation stooges for the State Department? The treatment, again even of Wallace, by the Democrats in the Senate? We mention these four points. Four hundred far more significant points could be mentioned.

The truth is that Wallace wants to keep labor in the Democratic Party trap, chained to the futility of capitalist politics. One of the reasons he is needed by the Democratic Party is to keep labor in its trap.

## BREAK WITH CAPITALIST POLITICS

Labor must break out of it. Labor must put an end to the policy of futility to which its leaders have condemned it. Labor must organize its own party and challenge the parties of capitalist bankruptcy for control of the nation and its destinies.

Vital questions are at stake. They concern nothing less than a decent job for all, a decent standard of living, decent homes, decent education and decent care for all, an end to the nightmare of insecurity, want, fear, suffering. No real progress toward realizing a program that guarantees what labor aspires to and longs for is possible until the big step forward has been taken of organizing labor into an independent political force.

Wallace is also "long" on words and "short" on action. He wants, in fact, to keep labor from taking the only action that can set it on the right road, to keep it tied to the Democratic Party's apron-strings.

Jobs, high living standards, rising national production and income security and abundance—these demand a program of action for a workers' government. That is the position of our Workers Party.

A workers' government to carry out this program of action—that demands an independent Labor Party based on the fifteen million democratically-organized workers of the country. There lies the road ahead.