

Support the Struggle of the UMWA-

THE MINERS' CAUSE IS JUST!

From \$1 an Hour to \$1 a Day!

By ROY GOULD

CHICAGO—Negro workers in the Chicago area, engaged in essential war work and earning over one dollar per hour, are being dismissed from their jobs upon insistence of U. S. government agencies and ordered back to Mississippi to work in the cotton fields at one dollar per day. This is the job freeze in operation.

In the most recent case the U. S. Employment Service at Joliet, Illinois, directed war plants to dismiss William Williams, William Greene and Sam Adams. It was required to do so by the Federal Farm Extension Service in Mississippi—a subsidiary of the War Food Administration.

One of the men was working as a machine helper at \$1.06 per hour and was dismissed for having left without permission, his Mississippi job which had paid \$1.00 per day.

The Joliet CIO Council and the NAACP have taken up the defense. However, instead of getting to the root of the evil—the freezing of workers on their jobs—these organizations are trying only to get the jurisdiction of the three men transferred from the Mississippi to the Illinois Farm Extension Service. This would not restore the men to their factory jobs, but would get them agricultural jobs in Illinois.

Thus, the Federal government, un-

der guise of the President's War Powers, is supporting peonage and re-establishing a new set of fugitive slave laws. Although they have not yet actually tried to extradite runaway slaves they are taking away their other means of livelihood and forcing the runaways back under threat of starvation. Such practices were supposedly abolished by the Civil War and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.

(LABOR ACTION has previously detailed how the planters of Southeast Missouri are using the manpower controls to put in bondage the day laborers and share croppers of that region. See LABOR ACTION for Feb. 19, 1945.)

The constitutionality of the War Manpower Commission has frequently been questioned. Every worker who is tied to his job—to make profits for private enterprise—knows that this is wrong. Everyone condemns slave labor in Germany. Now the U. S. capitalists and their government begin to imitate Germany—they are bringing Hitler's methods here.

Free American workers: Members of the CIO in Joliet are being forced into ordinary slavery. The CIO and the NAACP are only half way taking up the challenge. It is up to us, fellow workers. Put an end to the job freeze. Put an end to using the war as an excuse to enslave us.

Roosevelt's Production Awards



BULLETIN—With thirty out of ninety areas already polled as we go to press, the overwhelming majority of miners have voted in favor of a strike to back the demands of their union in the NLRB-conducted election. The contract will have expired at midnight Saturday. The operators have offered a \$1.00-a-day increase to the miners, but have shown no inclination to accept the proposal of a royalty of ten cents a ton to provide miners with medical facilities, hospitalization, insurance, etc. Whether the "no contract, no work" credo of the miners will be invoked remains to be seen.

By MIKE STEVENS

Soft coal miners in 700 mines cast their ballots on Wednesday, March 28, in a government-conducted strike vote. There is no doubt in anybody's mind but that the overwhelming bulk of the soft coal miners in this country will have voted to go on strike when their union agreement expires on April 1st, unless the coal owners meet their union demands.

In the meanwhile, contract negotiations between the United Mine Workers and the miners entered their fourth week. Also looming on the horizon is the hard coal miners' union agreement which expires on April 30. The wage scale committee of the hard coal miners is already in session, and the union has asked for a strike vote to be taken among the hard coal miners.

GOVERNMENT SEIZURE?

The government would like to crack down on the miners' union right away, but it knows that the miners are not in a very pleasant or passive mood.

While the profit-gorged owners don't want to give up anything to the miners and fear a strike (but under the Smith-Connally Act the workers cannot go on strike wherever there has been a governmental seizure of property), nevertheless they, too, fear government seizure of the mines. Government seizure may be prolonged. It brings to the fore consciousness of the validity of nationalizing the mines, taking them away from their owners, abolishing profits, running them for the benefit of the men who work them. A prolongation of negotiations by seizure also jars them with the fact that while pay increases may be retroactive, price increases the owners will demand are not.

Lewis has dispelled the illusion—if such examples as the Montgomery Ward seizure were not strong enough—that seizure by the government benefits the workers. The government continues to hand over profits to the owners.

The union leadership may accept extension of the agreement after April 1, continue negotiations, and run the whole gamut of governmental boards in order to present their side of the story to the public and to try to show that they are really trying to reach a settlement without resorting to a strike.

But the real decision will come from the mine workers themselves. If the negotiations continue after April 1st and the owners keep stalling and refusing the demands of the miners, the miners will go on strike. Of, if the government "takes over" the mines and continues the same game as the coal owners, as it undoubtedly will, the coal miners will go on strike, whether they have the sanction of their union leaders or not.

It is not John L. Lewis who is pushing the miners into action. It is the coal miners themselves who are insisting that their union leadership do something about the miserable conditions under which every miner works and lives.

When the coal miners went to vote last Wednesday, they were given a

ballot which contained an "explanation" of the means that exist to settle disputes without going on strike. The miners were not fooled by the governmental agencies listed. They know that all of these "agencies" lead up to blind alleys of confusion, red tape and finally burial grounds for all workers' demands. Following this "explanation" on the ballot the miners read the following: "Do you wish to permit an interruption of war production in wartime as a result of this dispute?" This is where the miners placed their "Yes."

The miners voted "Yes" because they, better than anyone else, could see through this "impartial" ballot. They were not swayed by the radio and newspaper propaganda because they knew the lies a little better than others. They were told that they were making a lot of money, that they were absentees, that their union demands were un-American and that the industry cannot afford them. But the miners know better.

TEN CENTS A TON

The most talked about and abused demand of the miners in the present negotiations is: the ten cents a ton royalty to be used for "medical and surgical service, hospitalization, insurance, rehabilitation and economic protection." The mine owners and the newspapers claim that this is un-American and besides it would raise the price of the consumer's coal.

The miners know that this is a lie. Secretary Kennedy of the UMW has stated: "In the South and in many sections of the Northern portion of the coal industry the operators for many years paid a royalty from five to ten cents per ton into a common fund for the purpose of keeping the United Mine Workers out of those fields. In other words, the fund was raised for the purpose of protecting their employees from the UMW." Congressmen and newspapers did not claim it was un-American then, nor did they cry for the poor consumer.

"This demand of the miners need not raise the price of coal. Profits in the coal industry have increased a thousand fold in the past few years. Dividends for 1944 were 8.4 per cent over the previous year. Coal profits in 1944 rose so high that even the business papers admitted that more profit was being shown in the coal industry than in the railroads, where everybody was admitting fabulous fortunes were being made. Wall Street stocks in the coal industry were quoted at figures 280 per cent above the August, 1939, level. During the debate in the Senate last year on the Smith-Connally bill it was brought out that one company, the Glen Alden, from 1939 to 1944 had over 1400 per cent rise in profits after taxes were deducted, from about \$300,000 to \$4,400,000.

Since 1939 the company's sales rose only forty per cent. In other words, coal is being mined at a cheaper rate, the owners are being paid more money by the government and the consumers, the company-owned stores are robbing the miners and the safety of the mines and of the miners' homes is being neglected.

(Continued on page 3)

Strike Vote at Cramp's Ship

PHILADELPHIA—Banner headlines in this city's daily press saying, "Cramp's Warned to Produce or Lose Navy Work," was the Navy's answer to a motion passed at the meeting of Local 42, CIO Shipbuilders Union, filing 30-day notice to strike unless the company backed down in its newly composed "prison house" regulations.

These new regulations were posted on Saturday March 17, in open and direct violation of the company's contract with the union. The contract provides that all major changes in working conditions must be first discussed with the union and agreed upon. The first notice the union received of these, drastic new regulations was when they suddenly appeared on the bulletin boards.

PENALIZING WORKERS

The new "prison house" rules set up a system of so-called demerits which are given workers by their foremen and supervisors for violations of a list of twenty-one different possible offenses. When a worker receives 100 demerits he is automatically fired.

The system of demerits decrees that a man "using abusive language" to his superiors will get fifty demerits.

Using abusive language is, therefore, the sole privilege of foremen and supervisors when speaking to the men. However, the men are expected to be careful in their choice of words so as not to abuse the tender ears of management. Other demerits are as follows: "loafing"—20; "loafing in the toilet"—40; being "off the job"—40; being late—5, and so forth. Once a man has demerits marked up against him, he can only "work them off" by "behaving" himself at the rate of 10 per month.

The demerits are to be handed out after a "hearing" before a committee of foremen! The management must have thought they already had a slave labor bill passed when they arranged for this kind of "court martial" procedure. Everyone knows how much of a chance a worker has when brought before a foremen's committee under charges by another foreman.

UNION'S ACTION

The meeting of the local 42 membership on Sunday, the day following the posting of the new regulations, voted to serve a 30-day strike notice under the Smith-Connally Act. It is

(Continued on page 2)

Negroes Lead California Rent Strike Over Discrimination

Goaded into action by the high-handed and discriminatory practices of the Richmond, Calif., Housing Administration, the United Negroes of America, an all-colored organization, has been conducting a rent strike at the federal public housing projects in Richmond since January 15.

The history of the Richmond Housing Administration is as wretched a record of arrogance, disregard for the tenants of the project, outright illegality and racial discrimination as can be found anywhere in the country.

The investigation by the United Negroes of America reveals that although the Negroes in Richmond constituted approximately twenty per cent of the total population of the city in March, 1944, they had received less than six per cent of federal public housing and none of the FHA housing. This investigation reveals that at that time 26,811 dwelling units had been released for oc-

cupancy by FPHA, of which Negroes had received only 1,472. A total of 6,000 dwelling units had been released by FHA in Richmond and none for Negroes.

This situation caused the worst imaginable congestion of Negroes living and working in the city of Richmond. There were hundreds of instances where as many as fourteen people were living in one bedroom unit and where families of ten or twelve people were living in a trailer six by ten feet.

PROTEST AT CITY COUNCIL

At the time the UNA conducted this investigation, twelve buildings or ninety-six apartments had been ready for occupancy for three months but the Richmond Housing Administration had steadfastly refused to release any of them to Negroes. The UNA, therefore, marched as many people as could jam into the City

(Continued on page 2)

Coal Companies Can Pay Miners' Royalties-Easily

We hear a good deal about the unreasonable demands and threats of the coal miners, little about the profits of the mine owners.

Let's examine the profits of a few typical coal companies—profits after taxes. First, two bituminous companies:

	1939	1943	1944
Pittsburgh Coal Co.	\$ 35,800,000	56,300,000	60,900,000
Peabody Coal Co.	—1,070,000 (loss)	1,770,000	3,310,000
	(April, 1939-40)	(April, 1943-44)	
Sales	\$22,270,000	43,040,000	
Profits	380,000	1,950,000	

Now a few anthracite companies, likewise typical:

Glen Alden Coal Co.	Sales 42,800,000	59,400,000	69,300,000
	Profits 300,000	3,300,000	4,400,000
Lehigh Coal & Navigation Co.	Sales 22,000,000	32,400,000	37,400,000
	Profits 20,000	2,690,000	3,380,000
Lehigh Valley Coal Co.	Sales 16,700,000	21,000,000	24,500,000
	Profits —1,550,000 (loss)	1,130,000	1,840,000

Pittsburgh Coal reduced its debt from over 18 millions in 1939 to less than three millions in 1944. Look back at the profit figures and you will see that they do not tell nearly the whole story. Pittsburgh Coal also increased its working capital (funds for ready use) from 9½ millions in 1939 to over 14½ millions in 1943. Other companies have similar records.

Their plans? To modernize and mechanize and thus cut their labor costs. They can do all this and still show profit increases of 1,000 to 1,500 over pre-war figures. The industry is more than willing to admit, Business Week informs us, that its recent gains are due to shortage of other fuels and to "government approval of compensatory price increases to balance... higher labor costs."

For the five companies listed above, sales in 1944 were twenty-three per cent higher than in 1943; profits (and, as we have seen, they don't tell nearly all) sixty per cent higher.

The miners were given some wage concessions in 1943 and the owners some more than "compensatory" price increases.

Senator Taft Represents His "Constituents"

By M. HOWARD

The war-wealthy meat packers have been putting on a good show in Washington these last two weeks in an attempt to get more profits by upping already high meat prices. In a hearing before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, lobbyists for these "poor" profiteers have accused OPA head, Chester Bowles, of bias against them and have demanded an upward adjustment of one to two cents per pound on the price of choice livestock. They argue that due to present ceiling prices on meat, they can't possibly make any profit!

OPA head, Bowles, has fought hard

against them. He has also fought hard against CIO pressure that the ceilings be lowered. He's obviously the man-in-the-middle, who's trying desperately to maintain the policies he set up in the first place. In fact, he's fighting so desperately that he has already allowed interim price concessions to the meat packers!

TAFT: PUPPET ON A STRING

Speaking on behalf of the meat packers has come a long procession of driving senators who haven't forgotten the packers' campaign contributions which helped them into office. Foremost among these is Sen-

ator Taft (Republican from Ohio), who has gone to bat again and again during the testimony, claiming that OPA is directly violating the law when it doesn't allow a reasonable margin of profit to processors of agricultural products. Twice he has cited the particular plight of E. Kahn's Sons & Co., Cincinnati meat packers, who, he claims, just can't get along if OPA doesn't raise ceiling prices on meat.

Two things stand out if you take a good look at the alleged "plight" of this firm:

1. E. Kahn's Sons & Co. earned \$220,000 profits in 1944. This is what

they mean when they say NO profits!

2. Louis W. Kahn, president, and Albert H. Kahn, treasurer of the firm, each contributed \$500 to the Republican National Committee last year, and \$100 to help Taft win his own bitterly contested primary fight!

The connection between politics and price control couldn't be put more clearly. The meat packers pay the money that gets the senators elected, so that when so-called emergencies like this come along the senators will fall all over themselves to protect the meat packers' interests.

In spite of exorbitant profits earned in 1944, senators like Taft will tell

the long sad tale to the Senate Banking and Currency Committee that the meat packers just aren't earning enough to get along, and that if OPA doesn't raise the price of meat to help them out, they'll just have to continue diverting choice meat into black markets, where they can earn some money. In fact, they think it's perfectly legal to deal in illegal black markets, when the OPA is committing such "illegal" acts as not allowing them a "reasonable" margin of profit!

Kahn's Sons & Co. isn't the only one of the meat packers who have

(Continued on page 2)

By David Coolidge

MASS ACTION:

CAPITALIST PRESS AND THE MINERS

Labor could learn a lot about how to carry on working class propaganda by paying attention to the way the ruling class does the job in its own capitalist press. Not from the Hearst or McCormick papers, which are merely the asinine, vicious and puerile babblings of two old men and their paid street-walkers, but from a paper like the New York Times. Here is an "impartial" journal, "independent" and giving "all the news that's fit to print."

In a leading editorial on the UMW and the coal negotiations entitled "Believe It or Not," the Times opens up as follows: "If there is a strange spectacle anywhere in the world today, it is the spectacle of the government of the United States solemnly preparing to poll the coal miners, under its official auspices, on the question whether they want to cripple the American Army and the American Navy with a wartime strike."

"And further: "... here is the government of the United States moving with all its majesty and the logic of some character out of Alice in Wonderland, to ask the coal miners whether they would or would not like to wreck the whole war effort in the event that they are dissatisfied with the action on their wage demands."

THE TIMES' SECRET

Then the Times lets its readers in on a secret, evidently known only to the Times. "This fantastic situation is all in strict accordance with the Smith-Connelly Act, the so-called 'anti-strike law.'" It seems the miners didn't know about the Smith-Connelly Act. They just filed that strike notice because they wanted to give the employers an opportunity to change their minds and let the government an opportunity to enter as "conciliator."

What is important about this editorial is the fact that the Times editors know how to prepare propaganda in the interest of the capitalist class, which the Times serves. Some workers and labor leaders will read this editorial and exclaim that "The Times is unfair to labor," "The Times has distorted the dispute between the miners and the coal operators," "The Times is more reactionary than Smith and Connally."

All of which is pure nonsense and beside the point. As spokesmen for capitalist "free enterprise," the Times editors know precisely what they are about. They are not primarily concerned with the law or the Smith-Connelly Act. They are primarily concerned with strikes, with the stopping of production. They know that the chief function of a strike is to halt production.

A halt in production has two features, both of which are very disagreeable to the capitalist employer and to the capitalist press, the mouthpiece of the employer. One thorn in the side of the employers and stockholders is that a halt in production may have an effect on profits, which may affect the big salaries and dividends. Also the strike might be won by the union if it is strong enough and militant enough to confront the employer (and the employer's government) face to face for a show-

down. In that case, the employer will be forced to raise wages, which also affects profits, dividends and the big salaries.

This is really what the Times is talking about. The Times and the rest of the capitalist press did not adopt this attitude for the period of the war. This is their permanent attitude in connection with strikes and even in the matter of labor organization. This was the attitude of the capitalists as far back as the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when the workers were hauled into court and convicted for "conspiring to raise their wages." And all they had done in this instance was attempt to form a union.

SPEAKS FOR CAPITALISM

The Times is particularly concerned now with strikes because the ruling class, for which the Times speaks, is engaged in the Second Imperialist World War. Out of military victory in the war the capitalist ruling class in the United States expects to attain world domination for United States capitalism, financial and commercial.

It is or should be understandable to any worker why any banker, manufacturer or capitalist journalist, seeing such a prize within grasp, will writhe in agony and fury when confronted with the possibility of a strike and the stopping of production. The fact that a part of Poland and a half dozen little countries are tossed into the Russian wolf pen, or that "democratic" Britain will come out of the war with all her millions of colonial slaves accounted for, does not destroy the central fact that the capitalist ruling class and its government at Washington fight the present war for imperialist domination of the world.

It would never do of course to say this; that is, it would never do to tell the masses of the people the truth. The capitalist ruling class is class-conscious; it knows how to carry on the class struggle, in peacetime and in wartime. With them the politics of war is basically identical with the politics of peace. Even the use of armed force, which is the chief characteristic of wartime politics, is not peculiar to the wartime functioning of the ruling class. This class never hesitates to use armed force in peacetime to defend its class interests against the demands of the working class.

The Times therefore, all the capitalist press and the government, which Karl Marx called "the executive committee of the ruling class," construct their propaganda in such a way as to further and protect their class interests. What other meaning can be given to the demand for the no-strike pledge, the Little Steel wage formula, job-freezing, the Smith-Connelly Act and the new Roosevelt-sponsored totalitarian slave labor bill?

FOR WHOM? AGAINST WHOM?

Whose interests do these measures serve and protect? Which class? Which class are they directed at and against? Which class makes unlimited profits and disburses to itself unlimited cash dividends while Davis, Vin-

son, Byrnes and Roosevelt "hold the line"? Which class raises prices through the black market and other devices of "free enterprise" while the OPA pats itself on the back? Bill Green, Johnny Green, Phil Murray and R. J. Thomas should answer these questions for the membership which pays their salaries.

The Times says that the government is preparing to ask the miners whether or not they want to cripple the Army and Navy. Or whether, or not they would like to wreck the whole war effort. Unfair? Biased? Perhaps, but that is beside the point. The point is WHO is "unfair" and for what purpose? Who, which class, is ignoring the miners' side and to what end? The Times does a little tear-jerking too in this editorial. "And so we are treated to the spectacle of the same august government passing out rations on Iwo Jima with one hand and strike votes with the other."

This is good capitalist propaganda. It has been a complete success up to now. That's what the Times is published for. That's how it makes its profits. It is a factory producing capitalist propaganda. It pays dividends, too. Every daily paper in the U. S. does the same thing. (The Daily Worker is different only in that it doesn't pay dividends, unless they carry lend-lease to Russia on their books as dividends.)

NEED A LABOR PRESS

Of course the capitalist press ignores the miners' side. But they don't ignore the coal operators' side, the automobile manufacturers' side, and the steel corporations' side. The capitalist press defends the class which supports it with "earnings" filched through the unpaid toil of the working class.

The CIO News, the American Federation of the AFL, the papers of the railway brotherhoods, and the publications of the CIO international are doing the same thing. They are all defending their interests.

Labor must have its own daily papers to print its own side. The capitalist press distorts and lies. We do not need to distort and we will not lie. We can and must tell the truth. The imperialists must lie. They must lie about the war, they must lie about their profits, they must lie about the miners and all the other unions, that stand up and fight Churchill and Roosevelt must lie about Yalta. Stalin must lie about his slave dungeons, his deportations, his anti-union depredations and his murders.

The whole propaganda of imperialism is a mass of distortions, trickery and lies. The imperialist governments are staffed with distorters and liars who go under the name of "diplomats." The capitalist press is staffed by liars and distorters who go under the name of editors, reporters, correspondents.

One problem of the working class today is to have our own working class press to tell the working class truth, to spread working class propaganda, to fight for labor and not for Roosevelt. There should be no whimpering over the "distortions" and the "unfairness" of the capitalists, their press and their government.

Meat Profiteers' Lobby--

(Continued from page 1)

cheat workers out of the meat they need.

That isn't the only place the meat packers' profits come from. They come from exploitation of the packinghouse workers they employ, who have one of the lowest wage scales of any basic industry in the nation, who suffer from incorrect and inequitable wage policies within the industry itself and who haven't had a raise in three and a half years.

Long before the packers thought up the idea of insisting that any limit on their earnings (profits) by a government agency is a direct violation of law, they had been going through all kinds of gymnastics to see to it that the WLB (a government agency if we ever saw one) kept a strict legal limit on the wages of the workers who processed for them the meat from which they made their tremendous profits. Not since 1941, during which time the packers'

profits have done their real soaring, and the price of meat has risen eighteen per cent, has one tiny wage increase been granted the packinghouse workers.

In spite of their long, hard fight for wage raises, rates for the packinghouse workers still average fifty-four to eighty-one and a half cents an hour, which comes to about \$28 a week! They work with heavy, sickening smells in the midst of blood, fertilizer, glue, filth and muck. They have no protections from the sharp tools and acids they use, and many of them fall prey to occupational diseases such as tuberculosis, "cattle fever," pneumonia, arthritis and mal-ta fever.

Yet senators from their districts, like the meat packers' friend, Taft, lobby for profits higher than the 150 million odd dollars the packers already make. Taft didn't lobby for wage increases when the United Packinghouse Workers Association, CIO, asked the WLB for a ten, then a five and a half cent wage increase for its members, who could hardly afford to pay OPA prices for the meat they themselves had processed. He didn't blink an eyelash when those raises were denied, and a few fringe increases recommended in their place. He isn't lobbying now for War Stabilization Director Byrnes to allow the packinghouse workers the shameful fifty-five cents an hour minimum (just one cent more than their present minimum) that the WLB finally decided they should have.

There's only one answer to problems like these of profits being made in millions, while one cent is almost granted to labor.

Support our program of a one hundred per cent tax on all war profits, and fight for a \$5,000 annual income to all workers' families.

Draft capital—not labor!

SEATTLE READERS, ATTENTION:

HEAR:

DAVID COOLIDGE
Nat'l Labor Sec. of Workers Party
SPEAK ON

ROOSEVELT VERSUS LABOR

at the
FINNISH HALL
Yesley Wy

Friday, April 10

8:00 P. M.

Auspices: Cooperative Commonwealth Party of Washington

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Report on San Pedro Local 9 Elections

SAN PEDRO—An election for officers of Local 9, Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers which put the Communist slate into leadership, has just been concluded. This election was held by mailed ballot.

The mailed ballot was quite a disappointment to the Stalinists and their numerous followers and hangers-on of the "Victory Slate" who sponsored it and put it over with an automatic majority at a membership meeting.

There were many justified criticisms concerning the complicated character of the ballot. It contained complexities for officers, executive board, business agent, city council—over 100 names in all. Equally complex was the nature of the instructions issued to voters. Each voter had to remove the ballot from one envelope; place it after voting in a second envelope; then insert it in a third; write his name and book number on the return envelope, without which the ballot was voided, etc. Despite all this the Communists and victory slaters pushed the mail ballot through. Result: almost one-fourth of the ballots received were voided! Only about 3500 votes of the 12,000 mailed out were validated.

There were two slates in the election: the Victory slate of the sell-out Stalinist-Communists and the New Broom slate headed by Lee Bailey.

VICTORY SLATE PROGRAM

The Victory slate had as its chief point the retention of organized labor's ball and chain, the no-strike pledge. After several years of no-strike pledge powerlessness with the employers and the Roosevelt government unleashing "an unparalleled drive against the rights of labor" with lay-offs of good union men regardless of seniority, the sell-out Communists have again given notice to management that no matter how much or how hard they attempt to bust the union, they, the Victory slaters (!) will repeat over and over again the pious phrase: "we reaffirm the no-strike pledge." Meanwhile union conditions won after years of struggle are being sacrificed and the union membership is suffering. But this means nothing to these lads who follow the "party line."

The candidates for president supported by the Victory slate was Jimmy Dougan. Dougan who hadn't attended a union meeting for years, who had been inactive during the whole period of the struggle for autonomy, who hates the Communists because he still entertains the illusion that they are for the "overthrow of the government," who doesn't even understand that the Communists have turned completely phoney and want to keep everything the way it is with

the capitalists on the top and the workers on the bottom, who dislikes the Communists because he thinks they stand for equality of Negro and white—this man is the Communist choice for president!

The reason why the Communists supported Dougan was that the only other strong candidate was Lee Bailey who was linked to the progressive and militant forces in the local. These forces have been against the no-strike pledge, all along, and put up a fight on the I. U. G. repair differential. Rather than support a man who has been associated with militants, the Communists supported a reactionary.

The original Communist candidate was C. R. Brown whom the Stalinists attempted to convert into their number one stooge. Brown had attained the pinnacle of power at the last national convention, where he rode high on the shoulders of the Stalinists through the very gates of the GEB itself. This potentate slipped on a very small banana peel: he forgot to pay his union dues. Of course payment of dues would be an act of elementary gratitude from one in Brown's position, but what the Lord giveth he taketh away and in strange ways. Brown, who was also named administrative director of the local for the period preceding the election, will trudge back to the yard, lunch pail in hand, a sadder and a wiser man. Moral? Those who easily rise to power with some power clique and have no base in the devotion and loyalty of the membership because of their union activity can be deposed as easily as they have arisen. In the long run and often in the short run, opportunity doesn't pay.

AUTONOMY AND "I. U. G."

Other points of interest in the Stalinist-Victory slate program were: for the I. U. G. repair differential and the restoration of autonomy. On these points the Communist attitude is very clear—very clear against both.

When the mass meeting of 5,000 members was held on the repair differential a half hour before the close of the day shift, the sell-out Stalinists

told everyone they could get hold of to stay away.

"Why that's a work stoppage," they exclaimed, "production will suffer, and besides we gave a no-strike pledge to our commander-in-chief." When the repair workers replied that it is they who were suffering because there is a repair differential up and down the coast with the exception of California, and when they turned out 5,000 strong for the meeting, a few Communists turned up and tried to prevent a motion to request of the GEB permission to take a strike vote. Twenty or thirty Communists voted against the motion, 5,000 voted for the motion.

This is typical of the Stalinist and Victory slate "struggle" for the I. U. G. repair differential. They are for it in words but when it comes time to do something about it, all they can think about is the no-strike pledge, production, "win the war first, boys, after that we may have to tighten our belts a bit, boys, but what the hell, we won didn't we?" Or did we?

On the question of the restoration of autonomy the Stalinists were again for it in words but against it in deeds. The Progressive Group was the only organized force fighting for the restoration of autonomy. They circulated petitions for democratic election of shop stewards; petitions requesting the GEB to restore the autonomy; secured the election of the only non-Pollard appointed delegates to the national convention a year ago; fought for the rescinding of the no-strike pledge, etc. It was because of this militant activity that the Communists were opposed to the restoration of autonomy; for they were afraid that these militants might be elected to office if the autonomy was restored and then—what would happen to their darling no-strike pledge?

"NEW BROOM" PROGRAM

So much for the Communist or Victory slate program. What about the program of the New Broom slate? Unfortunately, the New Broom program differed from the Stalinist Victory slate program in only one respect: it didn't even mention the no-

strike pledge! Everything else was just about the same: repair differential, observance of by-laws, a few words about union progress, etc. but absolutely no mention of the militant and fighting demands that labor needs so sorely in order to regain all the ground lost in the past few years.

With such a program, Lee Bailey and the others on the New Broom slate didn't stand a ghost of a chance to beat the Stalinists with their numerically superior and well oiled election machine. It's about time the progressives in local 9 wake up and realize that you can't beat the Stalinists at their own game. They have to be fought out in the open on the basis of program. Rather than an omission of basic programmatic differences, a campaign fought openly on the basis of these differences is the only way the present Communist dominance in Local 9 can be broken.

Not only is it the only practical way to dislodge the Stalinists but it is the only proper and principled way. Such a campaign presupposes the participation of the membership on these hotly contested issues. And they will participate, for these issues concern their very lives and livelihoods. If the membership remains passive and indifferent because those who aspire to leadership in the local haven't enough gumption to stand up for the things they believe in, then the superior machine will win out in the elections, and right now the Stalinists have the superior machine and probably will have it for a long time to come unless the progressives stir their stumps and take such questions as the no-strike pledge straight to the membership in a serious and forthright campaign. There is no other way.

The best thing that can be said about this election, in which the Stalinist Victory slate again came out on top in a majority of offices, is that with the installation of the officers elected, autonomy is automatically returned to Local 9. The long years of Administrative dictatorship are over. The terrible blunder of the GEB, of keeping the membership powerless for so many years, converting the local into a mass of indifferent dues payers, has at last run its course.

Now, in the face of the gathering offensive of the employers against labor, it is time for the progressives and militants in the local to get together and formulate a program they will take fearlessly to the membership, a program that must contain a demand for the withdrawal of the no-strike pledge, the withdrawal from that mockery of mockeries, the War Labor Board and, so that labor can stand on its own feet and begin to find its own struggle for emancipation, a labor party.

Yes, We Remember Monty Ward's

"Government seizure and operation have been a mere shadow boxing and thinly veiled cover to a continued operator management. A mere telegraphic notice of seizure followed by appointment of the existing management and personnel as government management has constituted the practical extent of so-called government operation. This is to invite and does invite the operators to adopt a "do-nothing attitude" in negotiations, they knowing full well that they have nothing to fear by the camouflaged procedure which has left them practically unimpaired in their operations."—UMW Journal, March 1.



Richmond, California Housing Strike--

(Continued from page 1)

Council chambers and demanded that the Council order release of these apartments and also that it remove the Housing Administration.

The Council tabled the demand for removal of the Housing Administration, but it yielded to this mass pressure and released nine buildings for occupancy by Negroes.

On January 15, Mr. Brown's organization called on its members, as well as on all other tenants, both colored and white, to withhold their rent until the Richmond Housing Administration is removed and replaced by an administration which will show some concern for the men, women and children who live in the Richmond projects.

Brown reports that between 2,500 and 3,000 people have been withholding their rent since January 15, two-thirds of whom are Negroes. Despite this fact, and despite the fact that within the last year nearly every organization and every labor union in the San Francisco Bay Area has at one time or another asked for removal of this administration, Brown reports that the Richmond city administration has steadfastly refused to take action.

Until March 2, no effort had been made to picket the project offices in Richmond and make a public appeal

to all tenants to withhold their rent. But at that time the UNA placed one or two pickets at each project office with placards calling on all tenants not to pay their rent. Due to this action, the Federal Public Housing regional office promised to look into the matter, but as no action of a satisfactory kind was taken, Brown told our LABOR ACTION reporter that a mass picket line will be thrown around all housing offices on April 1.

When picketing started in March, LABOR ACTION's reporter was on the scene to get the reactions of the tenants. One old lady, working in the Kaiser shipyards, stated that she had been paying \$35 a month for a one-room apartment (with kitchenette and bath).

"They (the management) treat tenants as if they owned the apartments and you are a dog," one worker said.

"I hope they get fired," said another. "They're the most gawd-awful bunch in the world. Locking people out in the street with little babies in their arms."

"If the people of this community don't say something, there's no telling what they'll do next."

So far, according to the UNA, the housing administration has not dared to evict a single tenant for refusal to pay rent. The OPA has filed suit

against the administration for overcharging tenants. The United Negroes of America has filed suit on behalf of two tenants who were previously evicted and had their homes padlocked by the Housing Administration, an illegal procedure.

The United Negroes of America is an independent, all-colored organization, headed by Grand President William R. Brown. Mr. Brown states that they have made every effort to cooperate with all other organizations, white and colored; to get action on the housing situation in Richmond. Labor and civic organizations have passed resolutions for removal of the management, but have refused to initiate or support any mass action, such as the rent strike. Mr. Brown charges that a local branch of the NAACP was organized in Richmond after the formation of his own organization, but that its leaders have acted as stooges of the housing administration and have done everything in their power to sabotage the

rent strike.

The great weakness of the United Negroes of America, as pointed out to Mr. Brown by representatives of LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party is that they exclude white workers from membership. Many white workers who talked to the LABOR ACTION reporter on the picket line seemed in fully sympathy with the rent strike, but when informed that it was being conducted by an all-colored organization stated that there was nothing they could do about it. Mr. Brown states that these workers can get their own organization to form a united front with UNA on the rent strike and other actions of a similar nature. However, this does not bring white and Negro workers together to fight shoulder to shoulder on problems which affect them all.

LABOR ACTION will continue to follow the Richmond rent strike closely and give you full information of future developments.

NEW YORK FORUM:

BARBARISM OR SOCIALISM?

The Choice for Humanity—Peace Through Socialism or World War III?

MAX SHACHTMAN
Nat'l Sec'y, Workers Party

Sunday, April 8, 8:15 P. M.

Adm. 25c

HOTEL DIPLOMAT

43rd St. near 6th Ave.

Terrace Room

Cramp Ship--

(Continued from page 1)

rumored that the motion has the endorsement of the national office of the union, headed by President John Green.

On March 20th, two days after the union's action, the navy released a statement in Washington warning that it would close down Cramp's yard unless production was improved. The ability of the yard to meet its production schedule has long been a subject for controversy between the Navy and certain Cramp officials. This issue is further clouded by rumors that behind the whole matter is a struggle for control of the corporation by two different groups of Wall Street operators, the Harriman gang

and the Bethlehem-Fairchild gang. Regardless of the explanation for the queer conduct of certain Cramp officials from time to time, the management has been notorious for its incompetence in running the yard and its utter stupidity in labor relations. The new "prison house" regulations is only the last of a long list of such stupidities.

Few responsible spokesmen of the union will take the Navy's warning seriously for there is little likelihood that the yard will be closed down at present. Experienced union men will realize that the Navy's threat has but one purpose in mind, to discredit the union and help the company put over its new discipline.

A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF LABOR

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ALBERT GATES, Editor MARY BELL, Ass't Editor

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From the PROGRAM of the WORKERS PARTY

- For the defense of all democratic rights! Against wartime dictatorship! Abolish wage-freezing and job-freezing! Restore full and unrestricted collective bargaining rights of the unions! Rescind the no-strike pledge! Repeal the Smith-Connelly anti-strike law! Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the plutocratic three per cent of the population who own ninety-six per cent of the national wealth! A one hundred per cent tax on all war profits above a five per cent maximum on invested capital! Immediate renegotiation of all war contracts to cut the fabulous profits to this level! Government planning to guarantee the highest national production and income, a year-around job and a minimum annual wage to all, and a rising standard of living!

"Workers of the World, Unite!"



Carlo 700-1000

WORLD POLITICS

By REVA CRAINE

Belgian Miners' Strike

In a recent column we reported the activity of the Belgian revolutionary socialists (Trotskyists) in connection with the mine workers' strike. While the reformist and Christian Union leaders were trying to get the workers back into the pits without any gains, the Brussels section of the Revolutionary Communist Party issued a leaflet containing the following, which explains the reasons for the strike and calls upon the rest of the workers to support the miners' struggle: "THE MINERS WANT TO KNOW WHERE THE COAL IS GOING. "The miners of Limbourg, the Center and Charleroi have gone on strike. "They are demanding an increase in wages, clothing priority, an increase in the pension, the re-employment of union delegates who have been arbitrarily sacked. "These demands are completely justified, except in the eyes of the conservative and reformist papers, which are already blaming the miners and their union leaders as being responsible for the lack of coal. Yet the Belgian miners have worked hard since the 'liberation.' In spite of the absence of several thousands of their comrades, their production has exceeded that of their French comrades by fifty per cent. "In reality, it is not the lack of coal which is disturbing the reactionaries and reformists, but the fact that the miners are thinking of intervening in the control of production. "THE MINERS WANT TO KNOW WHERE THE COAL IS GOING! "The miners want to know what scandalous profits the coal barons are accumulating in the midst of the general poverty! "Workers in industry, in the yards and offices! Transport workers! Housewives! Small shopkeepers! The miners' struggle is that of the whole population against the incapacity of the government and the rapacity of the bosses. "If the miners call on you for aid, be ready to support them by all appropriate means! "Together with them you will establish a serious control over production and the distribution of coal."

Belgian Dock Workers

The dock workers in Antwerp went out on strike a few weeks ago in protest against the low wages on the docks. After a promise of an increase, they returned to work. The promise was not kept. When the workers started another stoppage the authorities locked them out for fifteen days. Only a mass protest demonstration at the Town Hall caused the lockout decree to be lifted. In connection with this strike, two members of the RCP of Belgium, Diels and Lowet, were arrested because they had warned the dockers that the promises of the authorities would not be kept unless a formal agreement were reached and their organization recognized. A protest movement is now under way to demand the release of the two men.

British Miners Reject Plan

The condition of the British coal industry has been notoriously bad for many years. Due to the lack of modernization, inefficient methods of operation and the general mismanagement by the mine owners, productivity has fallen to lower than the 1914 level and the industry has been unable to keep up with the wartime demand for coal. The coal operators appointed one Robert Foot to investigate the situation and bring back suggestions for a remedy. He labored and labored and finally brought forth the Foot plan, which starts out by declaring that "the only possible basis for the organization and policy of the industry is that of National Service." Of course, "National Service," according to Foot, means to be applied only to the miners, since he goes on to say that "the best people to run the coal mines are the coal owners." The miners of Britain have for a long time understood what was wrong with the mines and have had incorporated into their union program a demand for the nationalization of the mines. They know that only in this way will it be possible to reorganize the mining industry, introduce the necessary technical improvements, increase productivity and, by eliminating the profit of the mine owners, increase the wages and living standards of the coal miners. The National Union of Mine Workers therefore has rejected the Foot plan, which in essence calls for the centralization of the industry through the creation of a monopoly which would be in a position to raise prices on the home market, and increase production rates through the time-honored method of the employers, the speed-up, by the extension of "National Service" after the war. The British mine owners hope to get into a favorable position to compete with American coal at the expense of the mine workers' living standards.

(Continued from second column.) foreign workers has also been reported. We are certain that the German masses will soon display that will to struggle and their healthy working class desires which always characterized them. This is only the beginning. The German masses will not only fight their fascist enslavers. They will fight against any foreign enslaver. They will not trade their enslavement by a Hitler for an enslavement by a Stalin. We are for a hard peace. We are for a hard peace against the fascists and the German capitalists, the sponsors of the Hitlerites. But that hard peace can only come from the German workers. We are against any peace imposed on the German people. We are for the right of the German people to rule themselves, to decide their own fate. The German workers are our brothers. Their struggle for freedom is our struggle. A victory in this struggle is a victory for the American workers, for the workers of all countries. Enslavement of the German workers will mean the enslavement of the workers of all other countries; it will be a death-blow to the idea of working class solidarity and the principles of the labor movement. American workers! Fight against the enslavement of your German brothers. They are the victims of German fascism! They are the victims of betrayals! For a hard peace against the German ruling class! That can only come by giving the German masses freedom to deal with their own ruling class.

SOME DANGEROUS LIES ABOUT THE GERMAN WORKING PEOPLE

By ALBERT GATES The onward rush of Allied armies through the Reich and the evident collapse of the German armies in the West puts the question of "Hard or Soft Peace?" for Germany on the order of the day. The official policy of the Allies, as stated in their meetings at Moscow, Teheran, Quebec and recently emphasized at Yalta, calls for the "hard peace"—dismemberment of Germany, heavy reparations and the enslavement of millions of workers. The official details are lacking, but the suggestions are not. A great campaign is now going on to convince the peoples in the Allied countries to support the enslavement of the German masses. The arguments for the destruction of the country and the enslavement of its millions are false and hypocritical, especially when they are advocated by the international Stalinists. We are now being told that the German people are by nature brutal, militarists, sensualists and murderers. If this were true, then anything that is done to the German people would be justified. Thereby another tragedy is being prepared for a country which once boasted the largest and most advanced labor movement in the world. The tragedies of the German people have been many. The defeat of the German revolution of 1918-19 made possible the continued rule of German capitalism, of the industrialists and financiers, the Junkers and the militarists. German reaction, aided by social-democracy and international capitalism, retained its power and prepared the tragedy of Hitler, but not without the help of Stalin and his Russian bureaucracy.

STALINIST HYPOCRISY In 1923, the German revolution was betrayed by Stalin in his own national interests by calling off the German revolution. This defeat opened the way for the development of Nazism. In 1932, Stalin again pursued such policies in Germany as guaranteed the victory of the frightful fascist movement, which had suffered a sharp electoral defeat. The policy of the Stalinist Communists was: No united struggle against Hitler. They stated that they could not unite with the social-democrats in a common struggle against fascism because the social-democrats were a greater danger to Germany than Hitlerism. They even welcomed the victory of the Brown Shirts because fascist totalitarianism would prepare the masses for a Stalinist dictatorship, saying: "After the fascists come our turn." In 1939, Stalin made his alliance with Hitler which began the Second World War and heaped the most devastating of all tragedies upon the world and the German masses. Behind the actions of Stalin's Russia stood international capitalism supporting Hitler, financing him in part and doing business with the German capitalists whom Hitler served. Now all these forces which are jointly responsible for Hitler try to absolve themselves of their crimes by holding the German people responsible for fascism and its deeds. The loudest of all are the Stalinists—and for good reason: the German workers have many things for which to repay Stalinism.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PEOPLE The most insidious doctrine that comes out of the war is the one which holds the peoples responsible for the crimes of their rulers. The German people and, in the first place, the workers, are no more responsible for the war than are the masses in England, America, France and Russia. In all these countries the rulers are responsible for the tragedy of the war. Did the workers put Hitler into power? Did the people agree to Hitler's early seizure of European countries? Did the masses create the Munich pact? Or are the Russian workers responsible for the Hitler-Stalin pact? Are the Russian workers and the German workers responsible for the German-Russian invasion of Poland? Are the American workers responsible for lynchings? Or, to put it so simply that even the Stalinist dunces can understand it: Are the Chicago workers responsible for the Memorial Day massacres of the striking steel workers? The people in general and the workers in particular cannot be held responsible for the crimes of their ruling classes and their governments. That is one of the important teachings of socialism. Only those who identify the interests of the capitalists and workers, rich and poor, exploiter and exploited as one can uphold such an insidious theory.

One-Tenth of the Nation

Signs of Negro Revolt. By J. R. Johnson

The press in recent days has been filled with reviews praising "Black Boy," a novel by Richard Wright, the author of "Native Son," a book which had an enormous circulation some years ago. The new work is an autobiography, a record of Wright's Negro childhood and youth in the South. It is not my purpose to review the book here, except to say that it is, in my humble opinion, a successful attempt to portray in terms of an individual life, what living in America means to a modern Negro. On the jacket, Bennett Cerf, a critic, is quoted as saying of the book: "Beautifully written, with the impact of a battleship." It is the impact with which I am here concerned. For this impact is in reality the impact of a tenth of a nation upon the contemporary American consciousness.

LAST YEAR another book that dealt with the Negro question made, in its own way, its own effective impact upon the United States. It was called "Strange Fruit." Written by a Southern white woman of liberal ideas, Lillian Smith, it dealt seriously and honestly with race relations in the South. Hundreds of thousands of copies were sold. A "SCIENTIFIC" WORK Toward the end of 1943 the scientific and sociological world, and not they alone, were startled by two solid volumes entitled "An American Dilemma." The dilemma was the Negro question.

The history of this book is significant, especially for labor. It was a serious scientific study, taking years of research and organization. Every accepted writer, every economist, every sociologist, white and Negro, who had knowledge or ideas, was invited to cooperate. This took money and the money, some quarter of a million dollars, came from the Carnegie Endowment Fund. In other words, big capital paid for it. Its choice of an investigator to coordinate the material was also striking. It said openly that it could not trust an American, however able and however honest, because the deeply ingrained and traditional racial prejudices of the United States would affect his judgment. This does not mean that necessarily the writer would be anti-Negro. He might try

NOT to be anti-Negro, but this too would not be conducive to scientific accuracy. The capitalists wanted the facts. (What it would do with them was its own business.) For the same reason, the Carnegie Fund said it did not want an Englishman or any European from the imperialist countries. It therefore chose a Swede, Gunnar Myrdal. The book was very large and cost \$7.50 a copy. It was not intended obviously for the general public. To the surprise of many, despite its solid treatment of the subject and the all but prohibitive price, it was a popular success. The first edition disappeared. It is being widely read today.

SIGN OF THE TIMES Now all this is not accidental. It is a sign of the times. Why should these talented writers choose these subjects? Why should they write so well about them? Why should the general public grasp at them so eagerly? It is because they are a manifestation of the social crisis in the United States. As the contradictions of capitalism in the United States multiply and sharpen they bring to the fore all the sores inherent in a rotting society.

One of these, the major problem of capitalism in general, is unemployment. The books, the solutions, the arguments pour down upon us. But in every country capitalism has special problems. In the United States such a special problem is the Negro question. Hence this presentation of it from so many different points of view, and the enthusiastic response of the public. But literature is only one phase of this crisis. The other is more important. The public has not been stimulated only by ideas and by an intellectual interest in the problems of the day. The Negroes themselves in the March on Washington agitation, in their violent protests in Detroit and Harlem, have made the American people aware of them and their resentment. In its struggles with rival imperial-

The Miners' Strike Vote--

(Continued from page 1) During the last coal negotiations it was proved conclusively that the company-owned stores were charging sky-high prices and breaking all OPA regulations. To avoid such a scandal this time, and to keep the rest of the workers from sympathizing with the miners, the OPA has recently reclassified the company-owned stores in mining communities from the No. 3 OPA margin bracket to No. 1. Under this new category the company-owned stores can charge the miners the highest retail prices in the country and still be within the law! In many communities the miners are forced to depend for practically all the necessities of life on coal company stores. In West Virginia alone, 171 coal company-owned stores do an estimated volume of business of \$20,000,000 a year. The regional office of the OPA in Cleveland in the case of Koppers Coal Co. found that the company was not only making a really handsome profit in their stores but that additional profits were concealed through tricky bookkeeping methods. But the OPA in Washington has gone ahead and reclassified the company stores, and the figures on which it bases its decision cannot be revealed to the public! During the first eleven months of 1944, 1,135 coal miners were KILLED in mine accidents and there were a minimum of 80,000 non-fatal accidents. Mining is difficult and dangerous work. Death, disease, accidents and old age are taking more and more miners away from the mines each day. How easy it would be to make the mines safer, the miners' homes a little healthier, the cost of living somewhat in proportion to the earnings. But that is not the way capitalism works. They want to destroy the unions and the workers' solidarity, now that it can be done under the cloak of a war emergency. Human flesh is cheap and anything that stands in the way of high profits will be fought by the mine-owners and all others of their class.

UNRRA: How Polish People Were Cheated

By Ray Mantlev

"If we lose the peace, it will be because we haven't played our ace right, and that ace is food." This statement was made by Walter Cronkite, United Press correspondent just returned from Europe.

The tasks of the UNRRA is to supply this morsel of bread that will "win the peace." Its job is to buy off the anger and discontent of the European masses with a doughnut and a cup of coffee. It is a weapon in the hands of U. S. imperialism to thwart any revolutionary activity, and to maintain control over the areas it "liberates."

STALLING OVER POLISH RELIEF

A few months ago the U. S. proposed that the facilities of UNRRA be extended to Poland. This was seemingly a very innocent proposal, and yet for months the appointed committee was kept stalling and never left American shores. The government of Stalinist Russia, recognizing the great political prestige which the wielder of this economic weapon would acquire, refused to allow the UNRRA committee into the liberated Polish territory.

This week, John P. Gregg, head of the committee, resigned, and Michael Menshikov will be the head of a temporary committee to administer UNRRA in Poland. This arrangement is evidently a little more satisfactory to the Russian government: Menshikov is a Russian and, besides, he has promised to have nothing to do with the Polish government in exile in London.

At the very outset of the war, business in Poland was totally disorganized. Agriculture, the most productive sector of the economy, was completely out of joint. The people left their fields unplowed and unsown. Beets and potatoes were left to rot in the ground, while the people tried to escape from the falling bombs. Conditions became worse with the German occupation. The Nazis tried to enforce a system of requisitioning and tried to collect regular quotas of foodstuffs, leather goods, clothing and other products.

CONDITIONS UNDER NAZI RULE

The peasants didn't want to sell their food. The currency wasn't stable and, besides, they didn't want to sell to the invaders. The German occupation forces tried, therefore, to stabilize the prices. Price ceilings were established and those who broke them were severely punished. In Warsaw, a butcher was hung in the display window of his shop. A piece of meat was attached to his hand, and a card was hung around his neck. On it was written: Thus will be punished anyone daring to demand more than the fixed prices.

Germany decided to use the Polish cooperatives, finally, to accomplish the ends that she had thus far been unable to attain. The cooperatives sucked the countryside dry, and Germany controlled the cooperatives. Trains not belonging to a cooperative and bringing food to the cities were confiscated.

The purpose of the Nazis was clear. They wanted to make Poland economically and politically dependent on the Reich. They wanted to get agricultural products for their people back home. In order for Germany to accomplish these noble aims, the peasants and workers had to suffer great hardships. The food conditions under the occupation were not exactly conducive to good health. Below is a table for the week ending September 7, 1941.

POLES		GERMANS	
Margarine—Children under six	4 1/2 ozs.	Margarine—All over six	8 1/2 ozs.
Sugar	8 1/2 ozs.	2 1/2 lbs.	
Macaroni or flour	3 1/2 ozs.	3 1/2 ozs.	
Oatmeal	1 1/2 ozs.	1 1/2 ozs.	
Sago or potato flour	1 1/2 ozs.	1 1/2 ozs.	
Jam	5 1/2 ozs.	5 1/2 ozs.	
Soup cubes	3		
Pudding powder	1 packet		
Synthetic honey	4 1/2 ozs.		

"An inferior race needs less food and less culture than a superior race. Never can the German live in the same way as the Pole or the Jew." These were the actual words of Dr. Ley, as reported in the Essen National Zeitung on February 4, 1940.

UNDER RUSSIA

When the Polish people were "liberated" by Russia they did not fare much better. Russia, already in the war several years, looked with hungry eyes at the stocks of supplies still existing in Poland. She carried off all she could. In the city of Lwow alone, \$75,500,000 of goods were seized. In the entire Soviet occupied area \$320,000,000 worth of goods were confiscated and sent to Russia.

Thus the Polish people have been deprived of their foodstuffs, first by Germany and then by Russia. Now the U. S. wants to edge into the situation. While the powers squabble among themselves, the Polish masses suffer.

A Lieutenant-Colonel Speaks Against

Peacetime Military Training

By MARY BELL

"The Case Against Compulsory Peacetime Military Training," by Roscoe S. Conkling, Lt. Col., J. A. G. U. S. A., World War I, Lt. Col. Army of the U. S., World War II. Published by Post-War World Council, ten cents.

At a time when the Army and Navy brasshats, some of the brasshat legislators and the President are trying under cover of the hysteria created by radar and robot bombs, to pass universal peacetime military training legislation, an indictment by a man who has been a high-ranking officer in both major world wars deserves special comment.

Roscoe Conkling's indictment of the system of militarism begins with the fact that he had to resume civilian status before he could speak out against peacetime conscription.

"Recently revised Army regulations provide that (emphasis supplied) 'Except as authorized by the War Department, efforts by any person in the active service of the United States... to procure or oppose or in any manner influence legislation affecting the Army... are forbidden.'"

Conkling tried to obtain the permission of his superior officers to present his case. His application found its way to the wastebasket. Ten million men and women in the armed services are similarly disfranchised! So much for the vaunted "democracy." The Army is supposed to imbue in young manhood! Meanwhile the four-star generals and Navy gold-braids continue to beat a tattoo for conscription.

Conkling vigorously scores the attempt to steamroller a training bill through while the world is war-conscious, while the GI's who are fighting on the world's battle fronts are away and cannot express their feeling, which will undoubtedly be one of abhorrence of war and anything related to it—especially peacetime conscription.

"Defense," the shibboleth under which all armies are raised, under which all wars are undertaken, is shown by Conkling to have been used by Hitler too. "In the early days of the Nazi regime," he writes, "it will be remembered, Hitler's abhorrence of the mere thought of aggression was vehement indeed—vocally."

BENEFICIARIES OF CONSCRIPTION

Most potent are his arguments concerning the self-interest of the regular Army and Navy in passing a bill.

"With the expansion of our Army to 10,000,000 or thereabout, regular captains and lieutenants have been promoted to brigadier generals; majors, lieutenant-colonels and colonels to major-generals, lieutenant-generals and generals. Reduce that army to 1,000,000 or less and, with exceptions here and there, generals again become colonels, lieutenant-colonels and majors. Their pay is decreased, their authority contracted and their social positions receive a jolting setback.... The reduction of base pay together with longevity accumulations and 'incidentals' aggregating six, eight, ten, twelve or more thousand dollars annually, to base pay of \$333 a month for a colonel, \$300 for a lieutenant-colonel, \$250 for a major, and correspondingly reduced 'incidentals' cannot be thrust out of mind, however conscientious the effort."

It should not go unnoticed, too, that it is the non-fighting major-generals and the desk strategists who are spending their time and our money in drawing up plans to militarize our young manhood.

Conkling does not forget the civilian proponents, those who make fabulous profits from the sale of military products, uniforms, quartermasters' supplies, "constantly obsolescing air, sea and ground vehicles, armament, etc."

Nor the ideological profiteers in the campaign, exemplified by the Fortune magazine poll which "purported to indicate public favor for peacetime drafting of boys as they become eighteen years of age."

Nor the legislators like Representative Wadsworth who, when not shouting for complete regimentation of all Americans through National Service legislation, lauds the "civic, democratic and physical" aspects of regimentation of the youth.

With the lives of unborn generations mortgaged to the near-\$300 billion public debt of the United States, it is of great interest to know the cost, which will be borne by the taxpayer, for this proposed Reserve army. The uniformed "planners" of rank estimate that it will cost about \$1 1/2 billions per million trainees; about \$1,000 to \$1,500 a "head."

All signs point to a lessening of the present relatively easy burden of taxation upon the corporations. Readers of LABOR ACTION know who will foot the vast military bill. This huge military budget, supported by the people, was what Karl Liebknecht, in the most famous anti-militarist

FRD:
"I
Hate
War!"



pamphlet of all times called the "Douloureux," or the sickness of all the European nations.

Conkling asks: "Does America need a peacetime army of 2,500,000 or more men—almost thirty per cent of its male citizens between eighteen and twenty-six constantly under arms? It would be fatuous to suspect the 'army planners' do not know the answer is overwhelmingly negative."

The author of the pamphlet makes short shrift of the "selling arguments" for peacetime conscription. Democracy? "...When we consider the barrier of rank set up between them (enlisted men—Ed.) and commissioned officers—necessarily, perhaps, in war but strictly observed in peacetime as well—the plea of 'inculcating the democratic spirit' falls flat, as every soldier or sailor who has served 'in the ranks' well knows." This is from a man who served as lieutenant-colonel in both wars!

Civic affairs? "In wartime, as we learned in the pre-election period of 1944, soldiers and sailors are permitted to learn about 'civic' affairs back home just what government boards and bureaus in power decide is good for them and nothing more."

Morals? "And even to suggest sojourning in

Henry Kaiser

doesn't do it.

Tom Girdler

doesn't do it.

Westbrook Pegler

doesn't do it.

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Labor and Management in the Post-War

By Frank Snyder

Whatever dreams the trade union officialdom may have about the stabilizing role to be played by labor-management committees in the post-war era are certainly not providing the same contemplations of bliss for management.

Instead, management, in its cautious old way—in fear that it will punch the wrong cash register key—is remarking the dangers lurking there. At most, management would hope to retain the "best" features of the labor-management committees; but with the realism management is noted for in such matters, it is not going to allow itself to be disappointed if these boons are denied it. Meanwhile it will "take" labor for what it can. Management's fantasies are viewed in the January Modern Industry magazine.

MANAGEMENT'S VIEWS

Management's views are briefly stated. "The dangers can be avoided if labor-management cooperation is regarded as a production tool—a device for more efficient and profitable operation of a plant, and not as part of the collective bargaining machinery."

Hence it is with fervor that it cites the activities of the labor-management committees in respect to stopping absenteeism and turnover, recruiting, suggestions from employees, conservation, salvage, safety, etc. But even about these activities management is wary lest "worker participation on safety and health committees will be translated into excessive union demands for improved working conditions." There is nothing management dislikes more than to mistake a sale.

Highlighting management's enthusiasm over labor-management committees during the war, and this is the "best" feature, are the "contests which pit plant against plant, department against department," worker against worker, in the drive toward higher and better production (profits). Zing! No hesitancy about that sale. Any device which will intensify the speed-up needs little qualification to the boss.

Management's greatest qualms derive from the fact that it knows (unlike those trade union officials who apparently would like to forget) that the union movement did not arise to increase profits for capital but to check capital, which resorts to any and all methods to return a minimum to labor. The workers know this too. For even in those plants having a glorified labor-management committee "there has been a noticeable slackening in workers' suggestions. Managers see in this decline an increasing reluctance on the part of workers to submit ideas that may eliminate their jobs." And again, "employee participation in suggestion systems may give the union movement powerful weapons in bargaining on such issues as severance pay for technologically unemployed." To management it is clear that the interests of capital and labor are irreconcilable. The differences always creep up.

However, management now senses its greatest use of the labor-management committees as a device for reconciling labor to post-war economic collapse and for compromising labor protest activity by tying labor's welfare to capital's welfare. With slogans of "loyalty will pay," labor-management committees are dramatizing post-war products and post-war planning committees, seeking markets for products, setting up unemployment committees—"to assure displaced workers of their return to the plant upon resumption of normal conditions and to convince present workers of the post-war security of their jobs."

NO JOBS GUARANTEED

Thus in an economy which, if it were planned, could provide \$200 billions of consumer goods for the nation, the best that capital can do is to plan unemployment—and this it intends to do with the cooperation of labor. This is the maximum deceit of both capital and those union officials who have hired themselves out to the labor-management committees. Of capital because it knows full well that it cannot guarantee jobs in an economy contracting from \$200 billions to \$80 billions in income, and of the union officials for allowing themselves to accept capital's solution to the depression for labor.

This is the most dangerous aspect of the labor-management committees. Labor (with Little Steel formula wages) must not allow itself to be appended to capital (with heavy war profits) to accept depression and capitalist crises. Capital must be told that the war is its war and that it alone is benefitting. Labor should break off its union with capital. It must rescind the no-strike pledge and settle its disputes in the tried and tested way of sending notice from the union hall and taking action in the factory. It must launch itself on an independent political course which alone can lead to the socialist solution of obtaining for labor the fruits of the productive capacity labor has created.

An Open Letter from the Workers Party to the Y. P. S. L.

Dear Comrades of the Young People's Socialist League:

The Workers Party sends you and your convention warm fraternal greetings. Like ourselves, you have great responsibilities and weighty problems to resolve. For you, as for us, what is involved is the building up of a strong, effective revolutionary socialist movement in this country. Each of us has approached this task from different directions and in different ways. You have exercised your right in the past to make a critical evaluation of our party. We wish in this letter to take the liberty of expressing our views about the YPSL. No better occasion could offer itself than your Detroit convention, at which the future of the YPSL will be decided at least for the next period.

A socialist youth movement as a purely independent organization is of course an absurdity. The organization of the socialist youth has always been—and properly so—linked intimately with a party, whatever the terms of the relationship may have been. From its inception, the YPSL has been affiliated with the Socialist Party. In the history of this affiliation, the youth movement has almost invariably stood at the left wing of the party or worked together with the left wing of the party and for the victory of its ideas.

The question of the future relationships between the YPSL and the Socialist Party is now uppermost in the minds of the young socialists in this country. In one way or another, the discussions and decisions of your convention will deal with this question. It is a decisive one.

SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE WAR

The Socialist Party in the past few years, and particularly in the crucial period of the Second World War, has steadily deteriorated, both from the standpoint of its influence in the working class and the standpoint of its socialist character. In general, the members, and especially the militant left-wingers, in the YPSL have sought to resist this deterioration to the maximum of their ability. It is a fact that they have not been successful.

During the war, and in all the vital problems raised by the war, the clear-cut, consistent socialist and internationalist position that a party like the SP had the elementary duty to espouse, was not in evidence. The consolidation of the party that was mandatory upon it in the crucial period was not being living through, did not take place. The firm discipline—no bureaucratic stolidity, but democratically-organized and democratically-maintained disci-

pline, without which no socialist party can hope to be effective—disappeared entirely. More accurately, it was relaxed completely against the right wing and directed exclusively against the left wing.

A socialist party is tested decisively in wartime. The SP has failed to pass the test. The party, as an organized, clear-headed political force, has virtually ceased to exist. In effect, the SP is known today only through the words and actions of its most prominent leader, Norman Thomas. "Official" Socialist Party policy has no meaning for him. He makes policy for himself and by virtue of the subservience of the rest of the party leadership, who dare not speak up against him when he flouts or contravenes "official" policy, it is his individual politics which come to be known in public as the politics of the Socialist Party. This fact is only too well known to you. The result is that the SP has come to be the party of Norman Thomas. As such, it has practically nothing in common with the revolutionary socialist principles and aspirations of the militants of the YPSL.

If Norman Thomas is a law unto himself in the party, with his constant veiled threats to resign if any attempts are made to enforce party discipline, he is not an exception. Other party leaders and spokesmen go their own way and do as they please with impunity. As you know, in Michigan and Illinois in particular, many of them are constantly at work to find some way or other of dissolving the party entirely into some opportunistic combination.

Up to now, the YPSL militants have resisted and combated this disintegration. They have collaborated with some of the left-wing elements inside the SP itself. They have set themselves the goal of winning the party to a left-wing program, a left-wing leadership and to their conception of what a truly revolutionary socialist party should be.

If you are to cast up a sober balance sheet, these efforts have ended in failure. The left wing is weaker today in the SP than it has been in a long, long time. Its prospects for victory in the SP are more remote than ever. If anything, it is the right-wingers and the "tired radicals" in the party who have recently taken the offensive against the left wingers, above all against the YPSL militants, notably in Chicago.

The question arises: What to do now? Shall the YPSL militants devote themselves indefinitely to the work of winning what remains of the Socialist Party?

The most obvious danger in such a view is this: The left wing-

ers can exhaust themselves, to no practical end, by substituting a PURELY INTERNAL STRUGGLE against hardened right wingers and deadweight dues-payers for EFFECTIVE INDEPENDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE. This means: no realistic perspective, disorientation, a waste of valuable energies. It can only end in the gradual breaking up of the YPSL itself.

We in the United States are, in a sense, more fortunate than our comrades in other countries. We have more time at our disposal for the building up of an effective revolutionary socialist movement. But this time is not unlimited. It must be utilized to the maximum, because every day is precious and the task is deadly serious.

To continue any longer with the work of "reforming" the Socialist Party, and therefore affiliation with it, is a waste of precious time.

JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY

We therefore place before you an alternative. We ask that you give it the most earnest consideration.

Our Workers Party is a revolutionary socialist organization. It has come into being along a different road from yours. In many ways it traditions and its methods differ from yours. These facts need not be ignored.

But between the Workers Party and the militants of the YPSL there is a fundamental bond which, in our view, is decisive. We do not have important differences on basic program and aim. And it is program and aim that should unite revolutionary socialists into one movement.

There is an additional bond between us, and it is of great importance. Like ourselves, every thinking member of the YPSL has noted with abhorrence the ravages wrought in the labor and socialist movements by bureaucratism. Every one of us lays greater store by workers' democracy than ever before. Our party is proud of the fact that bureaucratism is not tolerated within its ranks in any form or for a single instant. Our party is proud of the fact that it looks upon the free discussion of party problems, party principles and policies, not as an "occasional" affair, or as a "luxury," but as an integral part of its daily life, as an indispensable element in its development. The unity in action which we have achieved is based in large part upon the most jealous maintenance of party democracy.

We propose to you:

Join ranks with the Workers Party!

Let us be more concrete. We propose to you:

That the YPSL shall fuse with the Workers Party and operate as its youth organization. The terms of this relationship are of course fully subject to discussion between us. We ourselves hold to the principle of complete organizational autonomy for the youth organization which is linked with the party politically.

We know that many of you have significant differences with the Workers Party, particularly on questions relating to historical estimations, more particularly on the question of historic Bolshevism or Trotskyism and of aspects of the Russian Revolution. To us, this is the least disturbing aspect of the problem of our relations. In our party it is possible to discuss these historical questions, and even their topical political implications, in a free, comradely and scientific manner, free of bigotry, heresy-hunting and threats of excommunication. For our part, we welcome such discussions, not only between organizations but inside our own movement. We ask only that those with whom we discuss likewise refrain from intolerance and bigotry, and confine themselves to the methods which are in the best tradition of revolutionary Marxism.

Both of us have the same problem to solve, the same task to perform. There must be built up in this country—and, with our aid, also internationally—a strong, effective, serious revolutionary socialist movement, its roots deep in the working class; its activity constant, disciplined, consistent; its inner life a model of the democratic social order to which we socialists aspire.

We propose to you that we solve this problem by performing the task jointly, in one movement. We are not concerned with petty "maneuvers," with "clever tricks" in regard to the militants of the YPSL. Our proposal is made to you openly, with candid recognition not only of what unites us but what still divides us, with the sincerest wish for the closest union of the best revolutionary socialist forces in the country.

The fusion of the YPSL and the Workers Party would not mean that our job is accomplished—far from it. But it would mark a real leap forward in the building of the movement to which we are both devoted, with the most fruitful results in the immediate future. The decision is in your hands.

With revolutionary socialist greetings,
THE WORKERS PARTY,
Max Shachtman, National Secretary.