

Just Remember The War Labor Boards Of 1917

By MICHAEL CORT

War labor boards? Well, we've had them before. William Green and Phillip Murray aren't the first to "demand" such boards. Samuel Gompers, first President of the American Federation of Labor, not only demanded but received such boards during the first world war. Those boards were used to lead the workers around by the nose for an entire decade. Let's look at those boards and see just how they contributed to making the "world safe for democracy" twenty-two years ago, before Green, Murray and Hillman succeed in fastening the ring in labor's nose this time.

The National War Labor Board, with jurisdiction over all disputes arising in fields of production necessary for the conduct of the war, was established by President Wilson in March, 1918. But that was only the second act in a three act tragedy that opened in the Spring of 1917 with Gompers' capitulation to the War Department, and ended with the anti-strike legislation of 1920.

So, our story really opens in the Spring of 1917. At that time the War Department, through its war production contracts, was the dominant factor in the industrial and labor scene. Its functions and activities in the field of labor included adjustments of disputes, fixing of wages and hours, and direct action on housing and the cost of living. There was no aspect of the labor problem which it did not enter; the War Department was in the process of becoming the largest single entrepreneur in America. Just as today.

In the Spring of 1917 the War Department let contracts for the construction of 16 army cantonments throughout the country, and set completion deadlines that were all but impossible to meet. Under cover of "national defense," the contractors came into head on collision with the unions by stretching hours to 10 and 12 per day, cutting wages on unskilled labor to 30 cents and skilled labor to 45 and 50 cents, and filling the jobs with scabs and finks when ever union men protested. Enter Mr. Gompers.

Gompers Gets What He Wants

Samuel Gompers walked onto the scene with his mouth full of phrases about saving Democracy by blood and the sword, and pledged labor to this crusade. "What labor desires," he said, "is that it have a voice on any board set up by the government to deal with labor and war production." Wilson recognized Gompers' proposal as an easy way of dealing with labor. If Gompers wanted a few pats on the head... fine. If his ego required easy access to the office of the President of the United States... better yet. If his soul yearned for labor boards... excellent. Labor, bound and delivered, was cheap at twice that price.

In June, 1917, Gompers appointed John R. Alpine, vice-president of the AFL, as labor's representative on a three-man labor board set up by the War Department. The other two men on the board were appointed by the Secretary of War. This board was to have jurisdiction over the 500,000 workers employed under War Department contracts. Its decisions were binding and there was no appeal.

Thus Gompers calmly gambled labor's destiny in a game where the cards were stacked against him two to one. As it turned out, the cards might just as well have all been in the bosses' hands, for the majority of the board decisions were by unanimous vote. Alpine's servility was such that, according to War Department records, seldom did both of the boss representatives attend the sessions. They were so certain of Al-

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ON THE WAR FRONTS

by GEORGE STERN

From all indications the military time-table of the war is not going to wait upon the seasons this year. The British appear to expect the postponed Nazi invasion sometime in February. Meanwhile either for purposes of a grandiose feint or because he is actually contemplating a totally different strategy, Hitler is moving considerable forces south-eastward, through Hungary into Rumania.

In anticipation of either of these moves or of both, Roosevelt's speech last Sunday served notice on the Axis that U. S. "non-belligerency" was moving rapidly into a more active phase. In shrewd, deceptive language, Roosevelt launched an attack on the Nazis that was worth a dozen bombing raids to the British.

Meanwhile, however, Europe is being covered over with that fog of rumor and speculation which we have come to associate with the Nazi method of preparing military moves.

First of all, it is a notable fact that all the reports of the German troop movements southeastward have come from German-controlled points—mainly Budapest. In place of the normal secrecy that would accompany such movements, these have been surrounded with ostentatious public notice. The Hungarian railway authorities announced revision of train schedules to accommodate the German troops and material. In Rumania, likewise entirely under German control, arrival of these forces has been acknowledged.

Only after their arrival in Rumania has the cloak of real military secrecy descended upon them. All kinds of inspired reports speak of German troop dispositions along the Bessarabian Frontiers. Stalin's gingerly-held southwestern outpost. Others re-

fer to preparations for German action against Greece via Bulgaria. Still others regard the forces mainly as forces for occupation of Rumania. Their actual numbers have ranged in these reports from 60,000 to 600,000.

Even if the latter figure is correct and even if all three of the reported purposes of their movement were more or less accurately reported, it still would not mean that Hitler is not concentrating his main forces along the Channel for an invasion of Britain.

Certainly there is every reason to expect that Hitler plans this Spring—and early this Spring—to attempt reduction of the British Isles. Hitler knows that Roosevelt's threats are by no means empty but that they will take time, precious time, to carry out. Before U. S. aid to Britain can assume sufficient proportions to tip the scales of aerial predominance, Hitler will certainly stake his present superiority on a single, gigantic drive.

American aid to Britain cannot assume decisive proportions this spring and summer. And precisely this spring and summer will witness collisions of decisive importance. Bourgeois military experts appear in general to have shifted their views on the chances of a successful Nazi invasion of England. They now believe Britain can withstand it. The Kremlin's military specialists appear to share this belief. Before long before another New Year rolls around, events should have provided the answer.

Whatever the outcome, the battle will only have been another in a long and widening series yet to come. It will decide nothing final, that decision rests ahead, and rests with the victimized peoples of the earth.

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AUTO UNION ISSUES CALL FOR GENERAL MOTORS CONFERENCE

Grace Carlson In Chicago, Flint, Detroit This Week

Grace Carlson's national tour includes the following lectures during this coming week:

CHICAGO: "Roosevelt vs. Hitler—The Struggle for Empire in Latin America," Hamilton Hotel, 18 South Dearborn St. Friday, January 3, 8 p.m.

FLINT, Mich.: "The Right To Life," Carpenters Hall, Pengeley Building, Tuesday, January 7, 8 p.m.

DETROIT: "War By Spring?" Arcadia Building, 3513 Woodward Avenue (Hall 5), Thursday, January 9, 8 p.m.

(See complete schedule of Comrade Carlson's tour, on page 2 of this issue.)

Labor Defends Ousted Minn. Educator

Red-Baiters Attack His '35 Appointment Of Grace Carlson

ST. PAUL, Dec. 27—Grace Carlson, candidate for U. S. Senator from Minnesota on the Trotskyite Anti-War Party ticket during the last elections, became the storm center of the ouster proceedings initiated by the reactionary state administration against John G. Rockwell, suspended state commissioner of education.

During a hearing on Rockwell's suspension held by the State Board of Education yesterday before a crowd of 350 people in the State Office building auditorium, M. Ted Evans, assistant attorney-general representing the state board, quickly turned the inquiry into an investigation of Rockwell's appointment of Dr. Carlson in 1935 to a post in the state educational department.

Comrade Carlson recently resigned the post to take up full-time work for the Socialist Workers Party.

Evans opened the attack with a question as to whether Rockwell knew that Grace Carlson had attended a "Socialist" meeting in New York.

"Yes," answered Rockwell. "I knew she was going to a Socialist meeting."

When Evans appeared to be planning to open another line of questioning, Rockwell wheeled on him and demanded:

"Why don't you go ahead with that? I would like to see some semblance of procedure."

Evans returned to this line of questioning, asking whether Rockwell had recommended Dr. Carlson's appointment.

Rockwell answered that he had, and described her as "the most superior and capable employe in the department."

The ouster of Rockwell, instituted by the four-man board majority who are appointees of the reactionary Governor Stassen, is an effort to retaliate against Rockwell for his pro-labor sympathies. Rockwell served under the previous Farmer-Labor party administration.

Dr. Carlson, leading figure around whom the state board and Stassen are attempting to justify the ouster attack against Rockwell, begins a national speaking tour for the Socialist Workers Party, starting in Milwaukee, January 2.

Top Leaders Of Auto Union Hemmed In From Two Sides

While UAW Board Honeymoons With "Defense" Commission, Bosses Make Hay, And Workers Press Board For Action

By JOHN ADAMSON

DETROIT—Much to the embarrassment of its leadership, the United Automobile Workers of America is beginning to play the most important role of any of the CIO unions in the unfolding "national defense" program. Like the top officialdom of the CIO, the UAW Executive Board is growing uncomfortable under the conflicting pressures of the Morgan-DuPont "Defense Commission" whose war program it supports and of the automobile workers, whose union the war program undermines.

Against its own wishes the UAW leadership stands today at the head of the two biggest labor organization drives: Ford and the aircraft industry.

The Ford drive, tossed and bandied about for over two years, was finally thrust on the UAW leaders by an indignant membership.

The drive in the aircraft industry, officially launched almost a year ago, has been vegetating all this period. But the Vultee strike changed all of that. It came like a flash on the scene and in one day accomplished more than the union officials had accomplished in one year. From coast to coast the aroused aircraft workers, inspired by the example of the Vultee men, are demanding union organization.

These organization campaigns face today more formidable opposition than even the General Motors workers or the workers of "Little Steel" encountered three years ago. We are living in a war period. Besides the ordinary hazards of union organization when challenging industrial giants, these drives, if pushed to the very end, lead to a direct head-on collision between the union and the entire Roosevelt war machine. The Vultee strike, involving one of the smaller and less important aviation companies, gave labor grim warning of this ominous condition.

And it is not only a question of organizing the unorganized workers and raising the present standards. Like beasts of prey, the manufacturers are in full cry against the present conditions: the 40-hour week, the right to strike, etc. The manufacturers' campaign to house-break the labor movement is hitting on all eight cylinders.

The UAW Executive Board feels

the hot breath on its neck even closer to home. The General Motors workers, comprising over one third of the entire union membership and, by every consideration, the most decisive and best organized section of the union, is literally seething with dissatisfaction. The Flint locals — Buick, Chevrolet and Fisher Body — are up in arms against the International for its cowardly G. M. policy and its vicious sell-out of the Flint Fisher Body local. The Fleetwood and Cadillac locals of Detroit are insistently demanding action on their months' old grievances. The Detroit Chevrolet Forge local is taking a strike vote on a wage cut given its hammer men. The Cleveland Fisher local is calling for immediate negotiations on a new contract. The Flint Fisher local wants Reuther removed as G. M. Director. Half a dozen "unauthorized" departmental strikes have swept through the Flint and Detroit G. M. plants, etc., etc.

But a short six months ago, the G. M. workers apathetically approved the present contract. Today, they feel the impact of the practical consequences of this agreement and the timid conservative policy that inspired it—a mountain of unsettled grievances, endless delay, red tape and buck passing, demoralization of the union stewards, and the re-introduction of the murderous speed-up on the lines. The G. M. workers are face to face with the new unyielding attitude of the

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Hillman Groggy In 2nd Round

By OUR SPORTS EDITOR

A short hard-traveling body blow had Sidney Hillman, so-called "labor representative" on the Defense Commission, hanging on the ropes at the end of the second round of Hillman's non-title bout with the War Department over the awarding of war orders to labor law violators.

Our readers will recall that, in the first round, "Canvasback" Hillman peddled the bike all over the way while billions of war orders DuPont, and other open-shop Wagner Act violators, including a \$123,000,000 contract to Ford.

When the second round opened, however, Hillman appeared nettled by the taunts of the ring-side labor spectators, who kept yelling: "Stand still and fight, you bum!" Hillman therefore attempted to carry the fight in the second round, opening with a light left tap to the face: a protest to the War Department against a new Ford contract for \$1,367,500.

Influriated by the temerity of its opponent, the War Department opened up with a volley of right hooks that drove "Canvasback" to the ropes. The final mighty belt, which had Hillman laying half out of the ring, was the following announcement of

the War Department, issued December 27:

"After careful consideration of the protest against the award previously made to the Ford Motor Company of a contract for the production of 1,500 light reconnaissance cars, the War Department announced today that the award would be allowed to stand."

While his handlers were working frantically to revive the semi-conscious Hillman in preparation for the third round, he was heard to murmur through puffed-up lips: "Don't that guy know this fight's supposed to be fixed?"

Hillman looks in bad shape. Betcha his seconds throw in the towel. Well he was only a set-up for the War Department, from the start.

Follows Demand Of Flint Locals

Conference Will Convene In February; May Initiate A New, Militant Policy

FLINT, Mich., Dec. 28—Repeated pressure from the ranks of the Flint auto workers, who refused to accept the decision of the GM Council and Walter Reuther denying a request for a General Motors conference of the UAW, has forced the International Executive Board to reconsider its position and to grant the membership its demand. A GM conference will be held the first week in February.

Members of the leading bodies of all Flint locals of the UAW attended the International Executive Board meeting last week in Cleveland, and insisted there that they grant the conference as a democratic means of thrashing out the many problems now facing the GM workers, and to find a way out of the present impasse. These officers refused to accept the offer of the Reuther-Thomas-Addes-Frankensteen leadership to hold a conference based on representation only from local union officers. They insisted on a delegated conference based on per capita, and this also was forced through the Executive Board meeting.

The February conference should give the progressive militants in the GM locals a good opportunity to voice a demand for a policy of militant action against the ultra-respectable policy of Walter Reuther, who is so busy playing the role of Knudsen's "little helper" in an attempt to land himself a job in the defense set-up, that he can't find time to fight for union conditions in GM.

WHY BOARD ACTED

The International Board as is well known, is split into two cliques. On the one hand there is the Reuther-Thomas group, which is loyal to Hillman and Roosevelt, and on the other hand there is the Addes-Frankensteen clique, which thus far has followed a policy dictated by John L. Lewis and is definitely leaning on Communist Party support. Both groups voted for the infamous "outlaw strike" policy, and both groups were instrumental in putting over the miserable sacrifice of the 17 militants in the Flint Fisher 1 lockout several weeks ago.

On the question of the GM conference, however, the Addes-Frankensteen group saw an opportunity to get at Walter Reuther, and therefore supported the demands of the Flint locals for a conference.

The truth is, however, that neither of these cliques have offered a program of action. They will attempt to use the conference for their own clique interests. At the least sign that the rank and file is getting up on its hind legs and heading for militant action, these clique bureaucrats will unite against the rank and file.

CONFERENCE TASKS

For the progressive unionists in GM, this conference means much more than the petty politics of the Reuthers and the Frankensteens. It is an opportunity to make heard their many grievances against the company, and against the do-nothing policy of the leadership.

The conference, first demanded by Buick Local No. 599, is called primarily to consider proposed changes in the GM contract.

This demand of the Buick local has high-lighted the many faults of the GM agreement, which was sold to the membership and forced upon them against their better judgment, but at the insistence of Reuther and the whole executive board.

The main questions involved in the needed changes in the GM contract are the following:

1. THE STEWARD SYSTEM
This demand has been a constant desire of the rank and file, who

realize that in the steward system they would have the most adequate method of representation of the rank and file, and provide a sound basis for the settlement of grievances in the huge plants of GM. This demand has always been shelved by the leadership with vague promises about the future.

2. THE "D" LIST. In the GM contract the company is still allowed to employ out of seniority a bunch of scissorbills and relatives. These are used as a buffer against the union, and give a place of special privilege to a company dominated group. The rank and file demands this "D" list be abolished and all employees hired and laid off according to seniority.

3. WAGES. Wages in GM have not increased in proportion to the needs of the workers. Today rising prices and cost of living demand higher wages. GM profits continue to pour in by hundreds of millions. The workers can and must get at least a 10 cent an hour blanket increase. The Chrysler increase in wages shows it can be done.

4. THE SIX-MONTH CLAUSE.

The GM contract provides that an employee's seniority does not begin until he has been in the plant six months. This makes it possible to hire a man, work him five months and three weeks, and then lay him off, preventing him from acquiring seniority. To make it possible for new workers to get the protection of seniority, the militants in the union are demanding a 30-day clause, so that a new man acquires seniority after 30 days employment.

These are the main problems of the GM contract. Many other questions related to the contract will of course also be discussed at the conference.

Progressive unionists are preparing, in addition, to voice questions at the conference concerning union policy in general. Especially important will be the question of the action of the Executive Board in the Fisher Body 1 dispute with the company, in which the Board, represented by Reuther, Thomas, Frankensteen, and Addes, agreed to a vicious solution with the company which forced four key militants out of the plant, took away their seniority, and applied extreme penalties on all the other men involved in the dispute.

There will undoubtedly be demands to oust Walter Reuther as GM director of the UAW. Frankensteen and Addes will, of course, look favorably on this for factional reasons. Progressive unionists will have no hesitation in bouncing Reuther if possible, but for other reasons. To them Reuther represents the cowardly policy of inaction which has typified the whole board during the last year and more.

Whether Reuther is ousted or not, the rank and file delegates at the conference are determined to throw out his policy.

(The text of the resolution adopted by UAW Local No. 581, Fisher Body, appears on page 2 of this issue.)

The Negro Struggle

By ALBERT PARKER

In an interesting series of articles in the *Pittsburgh Courier*, W. Robert Ming, Jr., Professor in the School of Law at Howard University, has dealt with the legal and technical aspects of the case of the S. S. Philadelphia sailors who were kicked out of the U. S. Navy because they signed a letter protesting intolerable Jim Crow conditions.

After demonstrating that the Philadelphia case shows how freedom of speech has been stolen from those in the Army and Navy, Professor Ming goes on to point out how much power this puts in the hands of the "brass hats." If the public outside can't get information about conditions in the armed forces from the only possible source—that is, from those inside—how can it possibly do anything to correct or improve those conditions? This means that if the soldiers can't speak about conditions to the public, the officer caste can do just about anything it wants.

Professor Ming goes on to show that the officer caste has still another weapon to keep the mouths of conscripted soldiers shut, in addition to the power to discharge those who speak up. The right ("ephemeral though it be") of a conscript to his former job depends on his getting a certificate from the Army "indicating satisfactory completion of the training course." Under the present conscription set-up, a worker who would protest to the world outside, would certainly not get such a certificate. "This possibility of dual punishment places in the hands of the officers of this great peace-time army tremendous power without adequate controls and safeguards for the protection of the selectees."

Where the Criticism Falls Down

But these articles in the *Pittsburgh Courier* are at their weakest point when the writer attempts to indicate how full rights for Negroes may be obtained and the right of freedom of speech and other civil liberties restored. For in his discussion of this, which is the key question, he admits himself to legal procedure and ignores the actual character of the courts and other institutions of the government.

How is the power of the officer caste to be limited? Operating under the Articles of War, they do just what they please, replying to criticism from the ranks with arrests and discharges, and to criticism from the outside with haughty contempt (the Philadelphia mess attendants were kicked out "in the best interests" of the Navy and themselves, says Rear Admiral Nimitz).

Says Professor Ming: "Practical solution of this problem created by the conflict between Army regimentation and civil liberty is possible. One simple device to secure the desired end would be to provide for review by civil courts of actions by court martials or punishments inflicted on members of the armed forces by officers..."

What are these civil courts anyhow? Fair and impartial; or the instrument of the ruling capitalist class? If Professor Ming doesn't know from his own personal experience, let him ask workers who have been out on strike. Let him ask a poor man who has tried to sue a rich corporation. Or let him look up the decisions of the courts with regard to the Negro people, the courts' approval of segregation in education and on trolley cars, their approval of the poll tax and the white primary laws and the other legislation aimed at maintaining "white supremacy."

If we consider here not the words about "justice" that are written into the laws, but really understand how they work, then we can understand that workers in the armed forces, colored or white, would get no better treatment from the civil courts than they do from the military. In fact, the consistent refusal of the civil courts to interfere with military decisions, is proof that they approve segregation, discrimination and denial of freedom of speech as practiced by the officer caste, and don't want to interfere with it.

If you really want to abolish Jim Crowism, if you really want to protect the rights and improve the conditions of the soldiers and sailors, there can be no half-way measures: the officers will either have the power to do what they want, or they won't. Either you go the whole hog and take control of military training away from the officer caste completely—or you waste your time and bat your head against a stone wall. Any program which falls short of military training under control of the workers themselves is one which leaves the reactionary officers with full power, and is therefore completely ineffective and useless.

A Correction

In our pamphlet on the Philadelphia men, issued before their discharge, we feared because of the silence that surrounded the case that the boys would be framed-up in a court martial. We said, "The court martial, when it takes place, will be conducted behind closed doors. (The men) will not be permitted to use lawyers from the outside..."

According to Professor Ming, however, this is not legally correct. His explanation not only clears up this point, but shows why the boys escaped court martial and even worse punishment than they received.

"Public opinion was aroused (after news of the arrests leaked out) . . . You know what the Navy did in the face of this public outcry. They turned down the recommendation (of court martial) of the captain of the Philadelphia. That was dangerous—if these men had been subjected to a general court martial they would have been entitled to the assistance of outside counsel, and a public hearing, a statement of charges, and the other protections which our legal system has devised for the safeguard of the defendants, even if they are members of the armed forces.

"Instead the 'brass hats' decided that these men should be discharged from the Navy—not 'honorably' . . . but rather, they were to be given 'undesirable discharges.'"

The War And Coming Revolutions

The Germs Of Workers' Uprisings Infect All Warring Nations

By ART PREIS

The first symptoms of a new wave of workers' revolutions are appearing in Europe and, in the first instance, in Italy. Churchill and the "democratic" ruling class have been quick to label it the "Italian disease"—as if this penetrating germ can be exorcised by incantation and prevented from spreading.

The hasty reassurances exchanged among the "democratic" capitalists concerning the peculiarly Italian character of the coming revolution remind one of nothing so much as what happened in Europe when, in the 14th and 15th centuries, the ravages of syphilis spread. The French termed it the "Italian disease"; the Spanish, the "French disease"; while the Italians were absolutely certain that it was the "Spanish disease." No country would claim it!

The capitalists in each country today likewise label the "disease" of proletarian revolution as one which can strike elsewhere but not in their own country. But in their hearts they know differently. Proletarian revolution was no "Russian disease" in 1917—it spread across Europe, even though it was drowned in blood.

The first military defeats sustained by Mussolini have sufficed to expose the basic weakness of the fascist grip on Italy.

While no direct manifestations of the crumbling fascist rule have as yet been able to seep through the totalitarian prison walls of Italy, the admissions and protestations of the official Italian press and spokesmen are revelatory.

It is quite clear that the Italian masses who, since the last war, have suffered a standard of living as low as any in Europe, are now launching an irreconcilable struggle against conditions which the present war has brought to the intolerable stage.

FASCISTS TRY TO APPEASE MASSES

Mussolini's regime, unable to gloss over the appalling living conditions, makes haste to lament with the masses. A campaign suddenly blossoms forth against the "hoarders and profiteers." Not the fascist regime and the capitalists it serves, but anonymous hoarders and profiteers, whose presence had up to this time eluded the all-seeing eyes of the secret police, are held responsible for the plight of the Italian people. *Regime Fascista*, newspaper edited by Roberto Farinacci, former secretary of the Fascist party, declares—without naming names—that these profiteers should be shot.

"We do not live by bread alone," says *La Vita Italiana*. "There are many other things of prime necessity. With things increasing at this rate, are wages and salaries to remain unaltered?" *La Vita* of course offers no answer to its own question, but hopes to mollify the masses by echoing their feelings.

But most of all, it is the increasing

in the cause which his arms are supposed to uphold.

Leland Stowe, in a dispatch to the *New York Post* of December 26 describing an interview with Italian prisoners of war in Greece, writes:

"There is an enormous difference between the attitude of officers and common soldiers. Virtually all the officers profess confidence in and loyalty to Mussolini, and most of them attempt to justify the invasion of Greece. The higher ranking professional militarists show obedience to the regime and unquestioned patriotism. Young lieutenants, aggressively fascist, are frequently defiant and arrogant, sometimes sneering and discourteous.

"On the other hand, the Italian soldiers are mostly a spiritless, pitiful assortment. They are ragged and miserable, and only a few have a vestige of self-assurance left. Again and again, they say frankly, 'We've had enough.' They seem to have no shame over having thrown down their weapons. They want nothing except food and for the war to end and to get back to Italy."

But it is mere wish-thinking, when the Churchills brand it an "Italian disease."

It is precisely the knowledge that this is not an exclusively "Italian disease" which brought forth Churchill's recent incitement against Mussolini and not against the entire ruling class of Italy. Churchill calls for the spread in Italy of a "mild" "non-infectious" form of the revolutionary "disease," one which would leave intact the Italian Royal family, the army generals, the police apparatus, the fascist machine, the profiteers and capitalists—the hunger and misery of the Italian masses. Above all, a "disease" which would contain no danger of spreading beyond the Italian borders into the British Empire.

For while Italy at the present moment appears most susceptible to revolution, conditions in England also indicate no great immunity to this contagion. The British ruling class fears this more than a thousand military defeats.

BRITISH "DEMOCRACY" PUTS THE SQUEEZE ON

We can expect that Churchill, like Mussolini, will shortly be forced to denounce the "hoarders and profiteers." On December 26, the British press announced that Lord Woolton, Food Minister, is expected to introduce a further reduction in the food rations in January, 1941. Even the cheapest, poorest meat scraps are to be rationed, under the new regulations, and the present allowance of one shilling ten pence (about 35 cents) worth of meat per person per week, is to be reduced to one shilling six pence (about 25 cents) worth. This, for the first time, will also affect the soldiers, sailors and airmen, who up to now have been permitted a much larger allowance than civilians.

More and more, the British ruling class is introducing those extremes of exploitation which they have hitherto condemned on the part of the Nazi and fascist regimes.

The following item appeared in the *N. Y. Post*, December 19:

"LONDON, Dec. 19 (AP)—Be-

between 30,000 and 40,000 British women will have to work in the fields next year to keep agricultural production up to present standards, Minister of Agriculture Hudson said today. There are now 9,000 British women land workers."

The compulsory toil in the fields invoked against the working women of Nazi Germany is here forecast for "democratic" England.

A Columbia Broadcast correspondent, Larry Lesieur, in a broadcast from London, December 12, stated that Liverpool shipowners "complain that the young dockworkers have been drafted into the army and they are asking that the workers return in the form of flying squads of soldiers to unload ships under military discipline.

"Ship owners also would like to have about 3,000 more workers around the ports to create a reserve of men and competition for jobs, but naturally the unions are against this."

These representatives of the British ruling class are asking, in other words, for slave workers, toiling at the point of a bayonet, and for permanent unemployed reserves to hold as a threat against the employed workers. In this is revealed the real "war aims" of the British capitalists,—aims which differ not a whit in kind from those of the German capitalists.

GLARING EXTREMES BETWEEN RICH AND POOR

While the Lancashire garment strikers were whipped back to work with prison threats, the *New York Times* on December 22, published the following:

"MANCHESTER, England, Dec. 22 (UP)—Corporate profits of Lancashire's cotton spinners this year will be the largest since 1921, a United Press survey disclosed today.

Milo M. Thompson, chief of the Associated Press London Bureau, who has just returned from England, describes the luxury and comforts of the bomb shelters for the rich in London, such as that of the Savoy Hotel, and contrasts it with those for the ordinary people. The rich sleep in "the beds of luxury you read about in the mattress advertisements." They have dance floors, orchestras and bars. There is no crowding; all the comforts of home and aristocratic club are there.

The ever present nurses and physicians in such places add to the feeling of security. It is easy there to forget the hundreds of thousands cramped in their chill Anderson shelters, the millions who sleep in ordinary basements, and the great army of those who are glad to have concrete subway platforms or the cobblestones under the arches below them if only they are safe from the death and dismemberment rained from above." (New York Post, Dec. 23).

POVERTY FOR NOW; PROMISES FOR LATER

It is a sign of the complete degeneration and incapacity of the British ruling class that it permits this fantastic spectacle to go on. Future historians will record that not all the previous contrasts between rich and poor drove the British masses toward revolution as much as did the luxurious underground playground shelters of the rich.

Nor is it that the British ruling class is unaware of the danger. Every week Harold J. Laski, Raymond Postgate and other "labor" supporters of the war wall in *The Tribune*: "We wonder if Mr. Churchill is aware that, in spite of all the talk, there is no evacuation scheme . . . no improvements of shelters . . . The outcome of the war may well depend on the speed and efficiency of adequate sheltering . . ." But to no purpose. The ruling class continues to rhumba at the Savoy.

However, the ruling class is perfectly willing to make promises.

Churchill, on December 18, speaking at Harrow, exclusive school for the British upper classes, declared that "the advantages and privileges which hitherto have been enjoyed only by the few shall be far more widely shared"—when the war is over.

Hitler, a few weeks ago, stated that he will introduce the "perfect socialist state"—when the war is over.

Thus it is, that each in turn, offers the benefits of a mild inoculation of "socialism," to offset the dread "plague," the workers' revolution.

But the inoculation will not work. The "Italian disease" will spread.

War and revolution—they were inextricably connected in 1917.

Women And The Class Struggle

They Play A Decisive Role In The Labor Movement

By MARY DANTE

The role of the woman worker has always been a decisive factor in the history of the trade union movement. At first the boss utilized her as a source of cheap labor and later to replace men who were engaged in union activities. He used every means available to create hostility between men and women workers. It was not long before women recognized the fact that they had a serious economic problem to solve. Some effective means of resisting the boss was necessary. The only answer was organized unions such as those the men had.

So we have the daughters of native New England farmers in Dover, N. H., 1828, organizing one of the first walkouts by women, against wage reductions and monthly payments. These textile workers organized street parades and protest meetings to publicize their demands. Women textile workers of Lowell published a paper in 1845 called the "Voice of Industry." This newspaper was devoted to publicizing conditions of women workers in the textile industry. The militant organization of textile workers gave an impetus to the women workers in the printing, shoe and tobacco trades. Social and educational gatherings were initiated by groups of organized women workers. These groups became centers of hundreds of workers where they spent their free time.

For many years women were organized into separate local unions with no national or international affiliations. This was only because they were refused entry into the international unions of the men workers. Recognizing the significance of the self-organization of the women workers and

the role they began to play in the labor movement, the Knights of Labor, in 1881, admitted women into their organization. Years later, 1918, the AFL admitted women into all their national and international unions.

Women, united with men, have contributed their share of hard work and sacrifice to the organization of many unions, some of which today are among the strongest in the American labor movement.

The ten hour day, then the eight hour day, labor legislation, higher wages and better conditions enjoyed by workers today, are the result of the militant struggles of men and women workers. Women alongside of the men faced tear gas and machine guns of the bosses' police on the picket lines. Others were sent to prison because of their militant action during strikes.

Through such experience the working woman also began to take an active part in politics. Increased exploitation, continuous struggles with the boss, seeing the armed forces of the government in action against the workers, opened her eyes to the real meaning of this so-called "democratic" system of government. Such material forces as these impelled her toward the working class political parties and away from the "democratic" parties of the boss.

The importance of the woman in the home to the working class movement, is no less than that of the woman in the factory. Marriage is no escape from the problem of earning a living. Gone are the days—if they ever existed—when a woman can say that she is going to be married and will not have to worry any

more because she is secure. Whether as the wife of a worker or as a woman in the factory, she is just as much an integral part of the working class. In it her interest lies and she must fight for its emancipation. More than ever, as a wife, she constantly finds herself affected directly or indirectly by the successes and failures of the trade union and labor movement as a whole. She and her children will always be affected by the wage cuts and working conditions of her husband.

During a strike in which her husband is involved her role is doubly important. The morale of the striker depends much on the understanding and cooperation of his wife. She must stand firm behind the striker-husband and give him courage to carry on his struggle against the boss in order to give her and the children a better life.

The boss doesn't care one bit about the welfare of the worker's wife and family. During a strike he will suddenly display a pretended interest in them in order to persuade the wife to make her husband return to work, thus using her as a means to break the strike. The movies, church, schools and even personal contact are the instruments available to the boss to use in contacting workers' families.

Every wife should understand and have confidence in what the striker is fighting for. Her place is with him on the picket line and at the union headquarters. At strike headquarters there are any number of things the wives can do. Arranging mass meetings, money-raising affairs, organizing food and clothing committees, are only a few of the

Why Browder & Co. Now Yell For U.S.--USSR Amity

Stalin's general staff appears now to be convinced that Germany cannot successfully invade Britain. This is the conclusion to be drawn from the latest article estimating the military developments signed—like most of the previous ones—by "Colonel Vasilyev," published in *Trud*, and cabled from Moscow to the Stalinist press here.

Had Germany launched an invasion last Summer, immediately after the French defeat, says the article, (*Daily Worker*, Dec. 29) "there is hardly any doubt that they (the Germans) would rout England's armed forces in comparatively short time. However, Germany at that time evidently considered herself unprepared for the operations against English territory with the aid of land forces . . ."

As for the present situation, the article says: "Lately the question of invasion of England has again been the subject of lively discussions. Estimating the situation in the Anglo-German theater of military operations, one draws the conclusion that irrespective of the methods of conduct of the war by Germany, the struggle will retain a protracted character."

Which is a cautious and diplomatic way of saying that Germany cannot succeed, in the estimation of Soviet military experts.

German aerial warfare, says the article, "did not achieve decisive results."

Neither is Germany succeeding in her attack on British communications lines: "In spite of the fact that the losses of the British merchant fleet are 'severe,' the total tonnage of British merchant vessels nevertheless exceeds the required minimum."

"But British successes," the article concludes, "cannot yet be called the turning point in the course of the war." It is clear, however, that this Soviet article considers that that turning point is likely.

In this estimate of the war by Soviet military authorities we have the clue to the suddenly-launched campaign of the Communist Party and its front-men for American "friendship with the Soviet Union." A letter by Corliss Lamont to the *New York Times*, urging a Soviet-U. S. rapprochement, speeches by Browder and Foster cautiously launching the same line—this is preparation for a new turn by Stalin back toward the "democracies." But as long as Hitler has his teeth, Stalin will remain respectfully ready for new deals like the partition of Poland.

Stalinist preparations for a possible new turn in the United States are already evident in the slogans raised here on military questions. In Britain and its colonies the Stalinists are ultra-radical. For example, in Canada the Young Communist League recently issued a manifesto which says to drafted men: "Trainees, form camp committees, to protect your daily interests . . . Fight against the fascist officers' clique in the army..." (*Daily Worker*, Dec. 15).

In the United States, however, no slogans remotely resembling this are raised. Here there is not a whisper of soldiers' committees from the Stalinists. After all, the United States is the unquestioned dominant figure among the "democracies," and the one which Stalin will have to court, if Germany loses the initiative in the war.

One Sabotage Case They're Not Pushing

There's been lots of talk about labor's "sabotage" of the war program, but here's one story of sabotage that they haven't been yelling about.

Fort Sill, Oklahoma, was for a few years the home of the Army's Field Artillery School. The site was considered unsatisfactory as the years went by. It was an area of subnormal rain fall, and the water shortage was getting worse with the years. But the school had a normal garrison of about 3,400 men, their water supply could be supplemented by bringing in water, and the usual inertia of the army kept the school there. But the situation was conceded to be bad.

Yet, in September, when the Forty-fifth National Guard Division, comprising Oklahoma, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Arkansas, was ordered to active duty, an astonishing thing happened. Fort Sill was selected as the site for the Division's tent camp! Every army officer who knew his business knew the trouble with Fort Sill—but nevertheless it became the site for the tent camp which was eventually to house some 30,000 to 40,000 men.

A total of 8,500 men and officers were sent into camp. Construction was started on hospital buildings, recreation halls, utilities, etc. The camp was prepared with much labor to house more than 21,000 men in short order. Work went on. Soon the number in camp reached 14,000 soldiers. To make a long story short, the tent camp—its cost is estimated at \$5,000,000—was well on the way to completion, and many additional projects connected with it were completed.

Finally, in mid-December—i. e., nearly three and a half months after the camp was selected—the water situation became so bad that the camp had to be abandoned. The Division will be transferred to Abilene, Texas—as soon as a tent camp has been constructed there.

A crew of Oklahoma businessmen are at the bottom of it. They stood to gain and did gain from the selection of Fort Sill. They had friends among the officers who had a say in it. They're not weeping about the "mistake," they made plenty out of it.

There are no indignant articles in the press about Fort Sill. Nobody is pointing the finger of indignation at those Oklahoma businessmen.

Can you imagine what would happen if a trade union made an honest mistake which cost one percent of what this Fort Sill spree cost?

