Some Folks Get the Gravy From this War--And Some Folks Get the Wage Cuts

AN EDITORIAL -

On the front page of this issue of LABOR ACTION, you will find a number of articles which give facts and figures on war

In almost wearisome detail, they recount case after case in which the great corporations of America are coining tremendous profits out of the contracts which they have gotten from the government for war production.

There are plenty of additional figures on profiteering. If we were to print all of them, we would cover our four precious pages with tiny agate type and still not exhaust the list.

From the giant U. S. Steel and Bethlehem companies to the little two-by-four operators who get sub-contracts fourth hand (that is, after four chiselers have gotten their paws into them) the capitalist class is getting plenty of gravy out of this war.

And what about the nation's workers? Haven't they also been aetting "theirs"? "raven't they also been getting wage raises? Listen to the words of the ultra-conservative Business Week on this subject:

The national average of hourly earnings resumed its climb in September. However, the real wage figure, which is obtained by dividing the average hourly earnings by the cost of living, declined again in September for the second consecutive month.

"In short, the increase in the cost of living is wiping out recent gains in hourly earnings."

Read those words again__"The real wage figure . . . declined again in September for the second consecutive month." That is, the workers suffered cuts in REAL WAGES, even though wages rose nominally.

That tells the story: That, plus the figures about war profitearing, tells more about what is really going on during this war, than a dozen speeches by any politicians possible could.

LIBERALS GET INDIGNANT

We can picture the indignation of some liberal newspaper which feels that there is "excessive profiteering" going on at present, and that if the profits of the big corporations aren't "reasonably controlled" the workers may not be willing to make "their sacrifices, too."

We, for one, cannot become so indignant. BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT PROFITEERING IS SOMETHING THAT IS A NOR-MAL PART OF CAPITALISM AND CAPITALIST WARS. We know that the bosses can't conceive of any war in which they didn't try to profiteer. War profiteering is merely an aggravated form of their usual peacetime activities. That's why they go to war—so that they can increase their profits internally, and, even more important, find new places to make additional profits outside of their borders.

When Bethlehem Steel Co. holds up the government with a bit of financial blackmail, it is merely repeating what it did in the last imperialist war and what it will do in every future imperialist war that takes place.

"BUSINESS AS USUAL"

For the bosses, this war is "business as usual"-only a lot more of it. For the bosses, this war is a special opportunity to continue with their main object: increase their wealth and profits -by getting rid of their German rivals and at the same time trying to clamp down on the American workers.

The American workers will let themselves be trapped into a blind alley if they fall for this clap-trap about "limiting profits to a reasonable rate." The only reasonable rate the bosses know is the limit. The only reasonable rate the workers should know is— GET RID OF THE BOSSES AND THEIR PROFITS ALTOGETHER!

There is no middle ground.

The Art(!) of Diplomacy

Diplomacy of the big powers is often referred to as an art. This may be confused by some to mean a cultural achievement of sorts. Actually what is involved in diplomacy is a good deal of horse trading, chicanery and the like. After the World War, historians of every nation busily engaged themselves in studying the archives of the warring governments and they found that they had carried on in the above manner, prior to and during the war, for the purpose of improving their political and military positions. Voltaire, the great Frenchman,

knew what he was talking about when he called diplomacy a great lie. We are now informed by Pearson and Allen, the Washington columnists for the New York Daily Mirror and other papers throughout the country, in a release of December 15th, that a good deal of skullduggery went on behind the scenes in the State Department during the American-Japanese discussions. According to these columnists, the State Department has its share of fascist appeasers, like the English Cliveden set, and these people sought an arrangement with Japan, immediately prior to the attack on Hawaii and the Philippines, at the expense of China and other countries. It should be recalled that this is not the first time the State Department appearers have acted in this way. They played ball with the Vichy government, with Franco's Spain, and continually refused to grant an all-out right of asylum to the hundreds of thousands of victims of German and Spanish fascism who now linger in concentration camps throughout Europe and parts

The chief appeaser of the Japanese, according to Pearson and Allen, is Maxwell Hamilton, chief of the State Department's Far Eastern division. They relate how Hamilton, in opposition to advisers in his division, sought to bring about an agreement with the Japanese. When these advisers wrote an open letter to the President warning him of Japanese war preparations, Hamilton "bawled out his subordinates,

said they had no business interfering." HULL, TOO, WANTED AN AGREEMENT

The Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, throughout the negotiations with Kurusu, believed that he could work out an amicable arrangement with the Japanese, in spite of the warning he received from Kilsoo K. Haan, a Korean, former member of the Japanese consular service, that as far back as August, Foreign Minister Hirota announced "a total war preparation to meet the forces of the United States." All this, according to Pearson and Allen.

The agreement Hull believed he had obtained with the Japanese called for a three-month commercial truce. The State Department worked out a plan for halting Jap troops in Indo-China, in return for which the United States would resume the sale of essential raw materials and other products for "CIVILIAN USE!" No mention was made of China, other than that the status quo would remain.

All this took place about two weeks before the actual outbreak of

The high point of the Pearson-Allen story is that when Churchill received word of the Hull plan he "hit the ceiling." 'After all, Great Britain has something to say about the Far East, where she has enormous interests and not a few colonies. Then, too, the Chinese learned of the plan and they protested vigorously against any deal made by the State Department which would leave China at the mercy of the Jap-

Thus, another appeasement plan of the State Department fell through by the realities of the present world situation.

LABOR ACTION

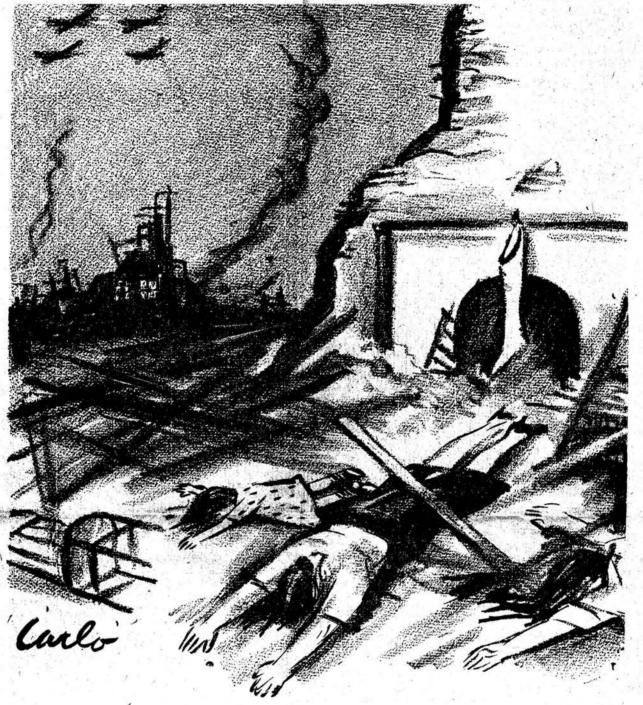
DECEMBER 29, 1941

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

LABOR TAKEN FOR A RIDE AT CAPITAL CONFERENCE

Twas the Night Before Christmas and All Through the House Not a Creature Was Stirring, Not Even a Mouse . . .



When the widely heralded industry-labor conference concluded its deliberations this week by accepting a three-point "peace" program outlined by Senator Thomas, and backed by President Roosevelt, three salient facts stood out:

(1) The industrialist bloc showed on every occasion, including their half-hearted acceptance, under protest, of the Roosevelt decision, that they intend to carry on their war against organized labor whenever and wherever possible!

Labor Board similar to the National

Defense Mediation Board from which

its CIO representatives recently re-

signed because the board revealed

itself during the captive coal mine dispute to be a stooge for the union-

(3) But this time, in entering an-

other mediation board set-up, organized labor gave up in advance the

one weapon which enabled it to

block the reactionary decision of the

National Defense Mediation Board

and win a real victory for unionism

in the captive coal dispute. This

So labor, because of the short-

sighted leadership of its top offi-

cials in the CIO and the AFL who

are operating on a theory of "na-

tional unity at any cost," finds it-

self back on the merry-go-round

they conceded nothing at the confer-

ence, see a chance to stall off labor,

over and over again, always trying

to strangle the unions, and yelling

that labor is breaking "national

unity" if labor oeesn't submit to this

And the main factor which will

keep the industrialists and their al-lies in the government from succeed-

ing in their union-busting plans, is

the inevitable growth of rank and

file pressure, as in England during

wartime, when conditions become

Thus, as we pointed out last week.

any decisions of this conference, in

fact the whole Labor Board which

patch-work to seek a compromise on

the inevitable and conflicting inter-

The industrialists at the conference

understood this basic fact better, than the CIO and AFL leaders, who

have a utopian pipe dream that labor and capital can live together in

That is why the industrialists

fought bitterly against any War La-

bor Board even having the right to

consider a union demand for a

ests of labor and industry.

oppressive in the plants.

A Patch-work

While the industrialists, knowing

hating steel barons.

weapon is the strike.

of mediation boards.

(2) Organized labor was pledged to bind itself to a War

Bosses Show Their Teeth in Washington

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The conference in Washington between labor and big business reveals once again how determined big business is to strangle labor at least for the duration of the war and the honeymoon period of big war profits.

One of the two main goals of industry and finance for the past two years of war preparation has been to manacle labor and the unions. The other goal is to increase profits. The two goals of course are intimately related; the strangling of the unions, in the opinion of the bosses, will contribute mightily to the boosting of profits. Because if the unions are weakened so that they can be kicked around at the demand of the bosses, then these unions will not be in position to demand higher wages, or even to hold the wage scales they

This doesn't mean, of course, that the bosses and bankers don't want to defeat Germany. Of course they do. That's why they have drafted millions of youth into the Army. But the defeat of Germany also has some connection with profits, world trade, markets and the maintenance of "our system of free enterprise." The Germans also want profits, world trade,

(Continued on page 3)

Bosses Getting Fat on War Profits

By BILL HAINES

The recent passage by Congress of an emergency \$10,000,000,000 appropriation for the armed forces brings the total amount thus far appropriated for war purposes to \$77,000,000-000, an amount greater than the entire national income of 1939. The people are now already paying for the war through higher taxes and higher prices, which will lower their living standard by 25 per cent in 1942, according to an estimate of the Brookings Institute, and will reduce the purchasing power of the dollar to 88 cents, according to Leon Henderson, federal price administrator. But while the people are paying dearly for the war appropriations. the bosses are making fat profits on defense contracts. Buried in the inside pages of the papers last week were the reports of two important congressional investigating commit-

The first committee was investigating super-profits gained by corporations on defense contracts. Senator David Walsh of Massachusetts predicted there would be "an awful day of reckoning" when the people get the lowdown about corporate war profits. He estimated that shipbuilders are making a profit of \$640,000 on every \$5,000,000 destroyer constructed for the Navy-a profit of well over 10 per cent. The report of the National City Bank shows that profits of the nation's leading industrial corporations increased an average of 25 per cent in the first nine months of 1941 as compared with a similar period of 1940. This is on top of an increase of 42 per cent between the same periods of 1939 and 1940 and means that profits have soared 67 per cent since the outbreak of the war in Europe in 1939. All these figures are for net profits, after all taxes have been deducted.

The second committee was investigating a new war racket, the receipt of fat commissions piled up by so - called "defense contract brokers" acting as go-between in getting U.S. contracts for private (Continued on page 2)

Facts Speak for Themselves

Name of Company	Total profit for first nine months, 1941	Total profit for first nine months, 1940	Per cent increase	
American Rolling Mill	\$8,215,760	\$3,889,110	111	
Anaconda Wire & Cable	2,146,580	917,845	134	
Aviation Corp.	1,459,649	72,855	1950	
Budd Wheel	1,056,490	577,057	83	
Baldwin Locomotive	3,910,222	1,213,880	222	
Continental Oil	8,590,802	3,299,631	160	
Colorado Fuel & Iron	2,809,120	797,331	252	
Douglas Aircraft	10,733,046	7,288,355	47	
General Motors	161,175,834	129,172,490	25	
Jones & Laughlin	12,040,384	6,232,903	93	
Pittsburgh Coal	2,224,986	795,993	179	
Republic Steel	17,997,095	12,633,333	42	
Savage Arms	1,037,085	351,658	194	
Studebaker Corp.	2,016,180	457,495	341	
Standard Oil (California)	24,613,199	16,730,170	47	
U. S. Steel	95,688,091	69,418,070	38	
Wheeling Steel		3,275,186	100	
Worthington Pump & Machinery	2,081,282	1,534,493	35	
Yellow Truck	6,615,282	3,506,869	88	
Youngstown Sheet & Tube	12,445,843	5,265,492	136	

No Pay for Blackout Time

An important ruling was made this week by Acting Administrator Baird Snyder of the wage-hour division of the Department of Labor.

Workers in the blacked-out West Coast cities pressed the point of being paid for the time they were compelled to be idle during working hours either by blackouts or by air raid alarms which sent them to seek

Mr. Snyder ruled that such time hours out need not be compensated for by the bosses - under the wage-hour

As yet there has been no report of the reaction of West Coast workers

It comes to mind, however, that during the blitz over England numerous strikes were fought by workers on this demand of getting paid for loss of time in blackouts and air

The matter became a cause celebre. among the English workers. A year. ago, when the Nazi bambers were over England incessantly, workers

When the bosses refused to pay for this time, it meant that when working hours and blackout hours no time left to sleep.

Would Eat Cake And Have It, Too

Another of the rising list of prof-

The contract provides for the government to finance a \$55,000,000 plant expansion for Bethlehem Steel which could be used almost costfree when the war is over. It would permit the company to retain the new plants after the war by using them only 25 per cent of the time and paying rentals only when they

And if the government wanted to cancel the contract it would have to tear the plants down because they would be built on Bethlehem's prop-

Profiteer Without Risk

This scandalous arrangementwhich would permit Bethlehem to profiteer on a tremendous new plant (paid for by the taxpayers' money) without taking the risk of maintaining it after the war-is but another disclosure of war profiteering that has appeared in recent weeks. It amounts to a polite form of blackwould be out of the workshops for mail, since if the government refuses to grant Bethlehem the contract it wants, it can stall off almost indefinitely the building of new plant fa-

Giving this story added point are were added up, there was practically the recent profit figures which Beth-

Bethlehem Steel

iteering scandals was disclosed this week when the terms of a new contract which the U.S. government is to sign with the Bethlehem Steel Co. were disclose. The terms of this contract were negotiated by Jesse Jones, Seretary of Commerce and Federal / Loan Administration, and William Knudsen, Office of Production Management director. It has not yet been finally approved, most likely because of the publicity given it by the Senate Committee Investigating Defense.

were used.

(Continued on page 2)

closed shop. Not to grant it, but just to consider it would be a crime, as far as the industrialists were con-Such flagrant union-hating was too similar to the technique of a Girdler or the labor - baiting congressmen from the poll-tax districts of the South, for Roosevelt or his support-

ers to permit, because it would expose the fakery in the war aims. Instead, Roosevelt sought to ap-

pear as the Great White Father of Labor by denying the industrialists their most extreme demand, which, to be sure, they haven't given up hope yet of achieving. The labor bloc at the conference

felt it achieved a victory when the industrialists were unable to remove completely the question of the closed shop from the issues to be included for mediation by the new War La-

However, the next experience they have will again demonstrate to them what the captive coal mine strike taught many workers. That the only way they'll obtain a union or closed shop is by exercising their economic power, or being in a position to do so, if the occasion warrants it.

Perhaps the first major test of the War Labor Board, whose personnel is expected to be announced shortly, will be its mediation of the SWOC demand for a union shop in the steel industry, a demand which is on the agenda when the present contracts run out in February.

It can be said in advance that in those cases where the pressure of the rank and file in the unions is so great that it is felt even in the highest government circles, the War Labor Board will find it expedient to grant some concessions.

Under the War Labor Board, labor will get what it fights for. Nothing

Bosses Get Fat On Profiteering --

(Continued from page 1)

companies. One Leon K. Shanack of New York City has become rich in one year while doing practically no work, thanks to this racket. Shanack cleaned up nearly \$200,000 last year by buying up subcontracts from the Remington Arms Co. and then reselling them to 26 different machine shops at profits ranging from 33 to 122 per cent.

Evidence, such as the following presented before the committee, indicates that the Remington Arms Co. was also engaged in similar practices:

The fact that Remington paid \$31 per die to the Kings Mill plant in Ohio, one of its subsidiaries, when it could get the same die for \$5.00 each.

The fact that the chief buyer for Remington insisted that his acquaintance with Shanack was only through business relationships but later admitted that he had been Shanack's guest at a \$30 ringside seat at a prizefight.

The fact that Remington sold \$661,582 worth of subcontracts to Shanack during the past year while he didn't even have a machine shop until the last four months.

Remington Arms Co. lost nothing in Shanack's commission because of its cost-plus-fee operating contract with the government. Instead, all the profits, commissions and excess costs came out of the taxpayers' pocketbooks-as part of the \$77,000,-000,000 war appropriation.

While the bosses are thus profiteering from the war, workers are finding their increased wages wiped out by rising prices. The average hourly earnings of manufacturing workers increased less than 8 per cent between the first nine months of 1940 and 1941, and profit rose 25 per cent for these industries. Furthermore, the wage figures show no deductions for taxes, while profits are estimated after tax deductions.

Bethlehem Trickery--

(Continued from page 1) lehem has published. These figures

reveal that Bethlehem has been among the very first in profiteering. Figures compiled by government statisticians indicate that its profits

are now running more than four times higher than two years ago. on Bethlehem's profits for the third quarter of 1941 were estimated at

\$29,041,000, as compared with \$6,763,-000 for the same period two years ago. The company's profits have steadily risen ever since the European war broke out, and have almost doubled since America's rearmament program got under way.

For the first three quarters of 1939. Bethlehem's quarterly profits ranged from \$3,072,000 up to \$6,763,-000-then in the last quarter jumped up to \$16,120,000, according to the government estimates.

Like Other Increases

In the first three quarters of this year the company is estimated to have made about \$69,000,000 as compared with \$31,000,000 in the whole of 1939.

These increases are no steeper than those most of the steel companies have been enjoying during the war

39% of Families Underfed Poll Shows

The Gallup poll, in a recent study of the American food situation, discovered that 39 per cent of the families of America lack cash for suffi-

That percentage answered "better" to the following question: "Would the health of your family be better if you had more money to spend on food?"

The poll-takers believe that, due to the widespread education on vitamins and the "protecttive foods," intelligent answers were given in most cases.

Other findings of the poll: That the situation shows virtually no improvement over a year ago; that in the families receiving less than \$25 to \$30 a week, the need is especially acute: and that meat is the article of food the lack of which is blamed for poor health.

LABOR ACTION

New York, N. Y.

Dear Friends:

114 West 14th Street,

Negro Workers Face World Problems

There is a kind of Negro who always has his eyes fixed on what he calls the politics of "the race." He looks at the war and he says: "Two million German and Russian whites killed. Not one Negro killed. Boy, isn't that good?" Tell him about the class struggle and he replies that he is interested in the "race" struggle. He says: "Let the Negro mind his own business while the white men kill themselves off in the white man's war."

This type of Negro argument is nonsensical because today we live in a society where the production and the sale of goods is carried out on a world scale. American raw cotton goes to Britain, African gold goes all over the world, steeel from the U.S.A. and Germany goes to Brazil. Ford cars can be found in every part of the globe. We live in an age of WORLD econ-

It is this world-wide character of economy which calls for a international socialism. Instead of internationalism, the imperialist powers can only struggle in war after war. So interconnected is everything today that when a war begins it soon becomes a world-wide war. Imagine, therefore, the stupidity and narrow-i indedness of a Negro who calls himself a "race" man and thinks that Negroes can solve Negro problems by letting white or vellow men kill one another off in the war. He thinks Negroes can escape being touched by the problems of the

WE ARE PART OF THE WORKING CLASS

Negro workers are part of the working class. Every day the American Negro is given practical proof of the fact that he cannot just mind his own business and thereby solve his problems. The government, taxes, the AFL and CIO, the Army, the price of goods, schools for children-these issues all vitally affect the Negro because they vitally affect the working class, of which most Negroes are a part.

And the main problem he faces is the unity of the working class. A Negro cannot avoid this question. He is either for this unity or he is against it. Perhaps he thinks it is hopeless to try to get unity. But if he thinks it is hopeless, then when a trade union organizer asks him to join a union, he will have to say he doesn't want to. He will likewise try to prevent his friends from joining the union. And whether he wishes it or not, he will be in the same boat with the Ku Klux Klan and those who say that Negr is must go by themselves and whites must go by themselves. He is following out a principle of segregation, which is a high-class word for Jim Crow.

The Negro who preaches that Negroes must think in terms of the Negro race alone is not only preaching something stupid. He is preaching something impossible. An intelligent Negro today must think in terms of the international situation.

How necessary it is to do so is proved by a short notice that appeared in the Negro press a few days ago. The British government is hatching a plot to use American Negroes against the hundred million Negroes in Africa.

Readers of LABOR ACTION know that the most oppressed people in the world are the Negroes of Africa. Britain, France and Belgium have nearly a hundred million Africans working for them for ten cents a day. Whatever crimes Hitler has committed against the human race -and they are numberless-he has done nothing worse than have the so-called democracies in their treatment of the African natives.

Now, these days things aren't going so well for the British in their African colonies. The Africans aren't sufficiently "enthusiastic" about the war.

AFRICANS FOOLED ONLY ONCE

During the last war, the Negroes in Africa believed that the war was a war for democracy. They fought and hoped for a British victory. When the war was over the "democracies" not only kept the Negroes in the same old slavery, but they cut down even the starvation wages of the miserable African workers so as to keep things going for the British bosses during the

Today many Africans have learned sense. They don't care about Britain's promises. Not that the Negro people want Germany to win. But they don't expect anything from Britain, either. They know that the war is an imperialist war for profits and for the exploitation of the colonies. They know that Hitler is fighting to grab what Britain grabbed before and what Britain wants to keep its paws on.

The British government is therefore in a mess. It wants to get the support of the African people. But it has lied so much to them for scores of year, and oppressed them so much, that many Negroes in the British Empire just won't listen any more. The British government therefore plans to use the American Negroes-and this is how.

Oppressed as the American Negro is, he is at any rate a little better off than the Africans, most of whom are little more than slaves. The Africans, when they can, read about American

or San Francisco, is living in Paradise. They follow with interest such progress as American Negroes make. The British government therefore made a public announcement the other day that it would be glad to welcome American Negro journalists in order to let them see what Britain is doing to help solve the color problem among the 400 million colonial slaves. These articles in turn would be reprinted as propaganda among the American Negro press and the white capitalist press. These journalists would then come back home, write articles in the Negro peoples in the colonies. The exact words of the London correspondent are as follows:

"It is recognized that the colored press can play a big role in mobilizing support which in turn will go a long way to whip up enthusiasm among the Negro populations in the British Empire, who have a great admiration for their colored brothers in the United States."

Isn't that beautiful? Now let us explain exactly what these perpetual deceivers of the people propose to do. The man in charge of publicity for Britain in America is Sir Gerald Campbell. We can tell you in advance that Sir Gerald will call upon his friends here to introduce to him some nice boot-licking Negroes, hungry for crumbs. He will go around and gather some stooges who write for the colored press, some good Uncle Toms.

They will get free passage by clipper plane to Britain and enormous publicity. They will get a lot of money every day for

Negroes, and to them an American Negro in Chicago, New York expenses. They will be treated like princes in England; no Jim Crow for them: they will visit everywhere and make speeches and see all the best people; they will meet some Negro stooges of the British Empire who will tell them exactly what the British government wants the Negroes of America to hear.

They will write articles in the British press and they will make speeches to the British public. Then these rascals will come back here and fill the American Negroes with British propaganda and get more money and publicity for doing so. Their articles will then be used in the colonies by British agents.

So that while our "race" man is busy minding what he calls the Negro's business, the men who are running the world today (and ruining it) have the majority of Negroes by the throat, and are planning, on an international scale, to keep the Negroes

They fight in Africa for Africa. First, the Italians take British Somaliland. Then the British take it back and capture Italian Somaliland. But the Somali Negroes remain slaves all the

Now we can't sit down and let these people go on exploiting the Negroes and fooling the world about it. One of the many things we have to do is to prepare from now on to expose the truh about the British colonies and warn workers, white or black, against these prostitute American Negro journalists who will be low enough to do the dirty propaganda work of British imperialism—or any other.

What Should the Negro Worker Do About the Imperialist War

On December 14, a Negro, 31 years old, was arrested in St. Louis for saying in a restaurant that "the war would not benefit the Negroes and I hope the United States loses." He also said that there were Negroes in New York and Detroit who thought as he did and that they "were capable of beating the United States,"

What follows is a message written by Paul Harris, containing what he would tell this Negro if he had a chance to talk to him:

Brother, when you say that this war will bring nothing good to the Negroes, you are right. It is true that every Congressman and newspaper says that it is a war for freedom, that Negroes must defend the cause of democratic America. But when you refuse to be bulldozed by all this propaganda and say that for you, a Negro, nothing good can come from this war, you are showing common sense. We say the same. The American bosses, the Southern white bosses, have kept the Negro in slavery and tormented him ever since the abolition of slavery. Why should any Negro believe they will change things after

But when you say you want to see the United States beaten, what exactly do you mean? Do you mean you want to see Hitler and Mussolini and the Emperor of Japan masters of America? You can't mean that. Hitler is one of the greatest enemies of humanity who has ever lived. Hitler says that the Civil War which freed the slaves should never have been fought at all. He says that he learned the way to persecute the Jews by studying the laws and customs of the Democrats in the Southern states. If Hitler won and the American fascists established themselves here, you and the other millions of Negroes would be plenty bad off.

THE JAPS ARE NO BETTER

Perhaps, brother, you think that the Japs are a colored people and will help their poor colored "brothers" here. My friend, the rulers of Japan have conquered a part of Asia known as Korea, where people of the same brown color like themselves live, people of the same blood. They treat them just as the Democratic rulers of the South treat the Negroes. They kill and jail all who say a word of protest. They make them work for dog's wages. They are trying to enslave the Chinese in the same way. None of the poor people here will gain anything by seeing the United States beaten.

No, I don't think that what you mean is that you want to see the United States beaten. I think what you really mean is that you hate the people who have oppressed you, who have humiliated you, who have treated you like dirt and who now want you to go and sacrifice your life for them, while still treating you as if you were a slave. You hate it and what you are saying is that you want these fellows here

who are sitting on your back thrown off and put where they belong. I think that this is what you and all your friends in New York and Detroit really mean.

You want to be free of all oppressive rule and you hate these men most because these are the ones oppressing you: the Roosevelt Administration, Senator Bilbo and Senator Ellender and Tom Connally and all their friends. Now if that is what you mean, say so, and do not say something else. For in politics you have to be careful what you say. A lot of Negroes who would agree that the war would bring no good to Negroes would have been puzzled as to what you meant when you said that you hoped the United States would be beaten.

WHAT FREEDOM MEANS TO US

Now there are a lot of stupid Negroes who hate their oppressors so much that they want to see the United States beaten and Japan win. No Negro of sense wants to substitute Japanese slavery for American slavery. No. The thing to do is to fight for your own freedom, against all who oppress you, Japanese and Americans alike.

You have to be careful about this word freedom. Every man must ask himself-what do I want for my freedom? A Negro workingman will say that to be free, he must be able to get a job anywhere at equal pay and under equal conditions with any other man in the country. He must be able to live anywhere he wants to, eat anywhere, go anywhere. He must be able to join any union. He must have good pay, good education for himself and his children. He must have freedom of speech, freedom of election. That is good enough to begin with. That is a good basis for freedom.

But Negroes didn't get it by dying for Wilson's democracy in the last war, and they won't get it by dying for Roosevelt's democracy in this one. That is true. But you wouldn't get, it by helping the Japanese or Germans win. How to get it? By fighting for it, brother, here and now, against whoever is keeping it from you. The fight for American freedom is here in

AN UNPRINTABLE ANSWER

Suppose someone came to you telling you that he knew you hated the American bosses and would give you two dollars to help him blow up a factory so that Japan might win. Believe me, brother, the language I would use to that fellow would be

But if any man were to tell you: The country is in ger, do not fight for your rights, put off that fight until after the war, come and sacrifice yourself. I would use the same unprintable language to him

And I wouldn't only talk. I would try to join some organization that was fighting for Negro rights. I would support an organization that was fighting for Negro rights.

Worker Discusses Merits Of Brewster Contract

Dear Mr. Wilson:

I have enjoyed your articles in LABOR ACTION, and although I do not agree with your full program, I think you would like to know what happened at the meeting of the Brewster workers.

The union held a meeting to approve or reject the new terms of the contract for the following THIR-TEEN MONTHS. The company gave a 10 cent raise, boosting the average wage for all workers to 94 cents, which, as Al Oleario, head of the negotiating committee, explained, was the highest rate in the aircraft industry-comparing favorably with highest average of 93 cents obtaining at Bell. In addition, the starting wage will be 60 cents, going to 68 after two months and to 75 cents after four months. Then men also get four paid holidays, to start July 4th, then Labor Day, Christmas and New Year's, 1943. Workers in departments liable to catch industrial diseases, like the spray and paint departments, get two ten minute rest

As you can see, this is not a bad

Why So Few Holidays

The reason we don't get more holidays is that Brewster is in a bad financial way, making only \$800,000 last year-and one local officer says we want the company to make more money so that we can get more next year. Another point under wages that I forgot to mention: there will be an opportunity to discuss wages once again on September 12th and there will also be a pool of five cents in April to straighten out inequalities in classification.

What most of the workers objected to-although they enthuisastically and almost unanimously approved the report as a wholewas scrapping the clause in which we demanded an escalator on wages - because we damn well know that Morgenthau will take that dime from us and the rising prices will take some more and sooner than we realize we'll be having less money per week than

Union leaders said that was the best we could have gotten but I heard quite a few guys say that we had nothing to lose by calling a strike vote and taking the case to NDMB where it could be mediated -and could go higher but not lower than the company offered.

Aircraft men are making way below what EVERY other defense worker (like machinists, welders) are making. That's a fact. Aircraft has lowest pay and the men know it. Furthermore the men know that the company is rolling in profit, starting from a shoe string and making millions on a very small invested capital, and are against any war mildionaires this time, like last.

Old Worker.

PRESS ACTION

A hearty "Thank you" and an ap-

One month after launching the One Cent LABOR ACTION our request that old balances owed by the branches be paid up, is being carried

Boston, the traditional good payer, heads the Honor Roll in this respect. Following the example are Hartford, Pittsburgh and Syracuse. These were not among the highest debtors, but they demonstrated in a very practical way their seriousness about making the One Cent LABOR ACTION a success. Now how about our other New Englanders? And all you from the smoky and dusty states to sunny California, who, we are sure, are equally serious? Don't keep us in suspense. Send in the cash. We will accept it even after Christmas.

Another side of the Honor Roll is still growing and, we hope, will continue to grow. Akron requests a double order "Whenever the occasion arises." We think the occasion is HERE and hope that the "occasional" double order will become the regular weekly order.

A most heartening "sign of the times" is the continued influx of new and renewed subs and requests for sample copies

We print only one excerpt from our mail bag. "Enclosed is one dollar. Why

has LABOR ACTION been discontinued? I haven't received a copy in several weeks. I am lost without the news."

We apologize to our reader for the inconvenience and will take care of it at once. But we welcome the tone of healthy indignation.

Burma, Malaya, East Indies--The Stakes in the Far East

By HENRY JUDD

As the war in the Pacific grows and spreads, the number of its innocent victims increases day by day. These victims-the colonial peoples of the areas involved-live in those lands over which the Japanese imperialists and the Anglo-American imperialists are fighting-Indo-China, Philippines, Hong Kong, Burma, Malaya, Timor, Borneo, Dutch East Indies, etc.

Compared to these native people (Chinese, Indo - Chinese, Filipinos, Burmese, etc.) the Japanese soldiers and the "democratic" soldiers are an infinitesimal minority-probably less than 1 per cent. Yet, unarmed and unconsulted, kept down by one or another imperialist gang for centuries, these people are the real victims of the war between the rival capitalist armies and navies. Here are some facts about some of these places that have been unwillingly dragged into

BURMA: Already invaded from Thailand by the Japanese militarists. A crown colony of the British Empire furnishing the "mother" country with teakwood, tin, tungsten, silver, oil and rice. Rangoon, its major seaport, serves as the water port of entrance for supplies that go over the Burma Road. Its population of 15,-000,000 people has no democracy and is ruled in exactly the same way that India is ruled.

HONG KONG: Already partly destroyed and captured by the Japanese imperialists. It had been British ruled for exactly 100 years. It was seized during the Opium War of 1839-42 when the Chinese government fought England because English merchants were bringing "civilization" to China by way of this port, in the form of opium! Hong Kong (1,500,000 population) was a swer: "Yes, and you too."

great commercial and trading center for the British. A good half of its population consists of coolies who slaved for the British and now must slave for the new exploiters, the Japanese.

MALAYA: Now under Japanese attack from land and sea. A British colony for close to 100 years-rich in rubber and tin, with great strategic and commercial ports. A major plum for the imperialists! Its total population of 6,000,000 (Chinese, Indians and Malayans) have worked on rubber plantations, tin mines and docks for long years—to the great profit of their English masters. America's rulers would give anything to replace the British, provided the Japanese imperialists don't get there

DUTCH EAST INDES: A great network of islands, including Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Papua, etc. Enormously rich in rubber, tin, foods, oil silver and gold. Great stretches of unexplored and undeveloped lands. The Dutch Shell Company-aided by Standard Oil and British companies -hich rules over these territories, has earned a deadly reputation as slave drivers of the East Indian people. We predict particularly heavy fighting in these lands because the imperialists are really set on seizing the riches of the islands.

The same story—with slight variations-holds true for every island and bit of land that enters the war of the Pacific. Timor, Mindanao, Thailand, Sarawak, etc. - all are fought over for the riches and profits they might bring to the foreign imperialists.

When the Japanese drop leaflets over Hong Kong and Malaya saying: "Fellow Asiatics: Drive out the foreign white devils," the people an-

Results of Recent IWA Conventions

By ROSS CARRINGTON

As a result of the International Woodworkers Association convention held in Everett, Wash., last October, also from a series of district conventions held since then and from recent international elections and referenda, come the following IWA program.

- 1) All support to President Roosevelt's foreign policy.
- 2) All support to Phillip Murray's CIO program.
- 3) Organization of the unorganized workers.
- 4) One hundred per cent opposition to Hitler.

This program was submitted to the convention by the IWA "Unity Committee of Four" composed of the then Int. Pres. Orton, Int. Sec.-Treas. McCarthy, Exec. Bd. Member McSorley and Columbia River Dist. Sec. Hartung, together with Assistant

The program was adopted at the final session of the convention by unanimous vote of the 325 delegates from about 140 local unions.

CIO Director of Organization Wid-

The convention laid plans for an organizational drive in the coming year. The program is to be super-

vised by Adolph Germer. The plan for the membership drive can at least be temporarily placed on the credit side of the ledger, but proposed amendments coming from the same group of men are very definitely on the debit side and in direct conflict with Section 4. Acticle 1, of the IWA constitution.

The New Amendments

Amendments 2, 3 and 4, respectively, bar Communist Party, Fascist Party and Nazi Party members from membership in the IWA.

All three of these amendments were subsequently approved at the IWA elections.

The Stalinists played their usual role before, at and since the convention, that of betrayers of the working class. They showed complete lack of any guiding principles, exposing themselves as the rankest opportunists and excelled even the man on the flying trapeze in their agility at swapping horses in the middle of the stream.

Previous to the convention, they joined hands with the groups they had previously dubbed "phoneys" to forulate the above-mentioned "unity program." Feeling their strangle hold on the organization to be slipping, they hoped thus to appease the powers to be. But at the convention, while they were able to muster sufficient forces to endorse a resolution in support of Harry Bridges, the best they were able to do in regard to the anti-Communist amendment was to secure its submission separately from the anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist ones.

(2)

New Officers Chosen

At the elections which followed an almost complete new set of international officers were elected. An almost clean sweep was made of the Stalinists in spite of the fact that with Russia's entrance into the war last summer they had entered another cycle of their flip-flops. They thereby hoped to consolidate their position by a streamlined version of their old Peoples Front, through a unity program with the identical groups which they had held up as reactionaries during the weeks before. Previous to this new turn, in their attacks on progressive factions in locals where they had control, the Stalinists' favorite method of combat was to smear all opposition as being dominated by or associated with Worth Lowery (the new IWA president) or Adolph Germer.

But all that was in the days that many of them wish they could recall, the days before the October convention. Since then, in seeking to salvage what they could of personal place and face, they have been constantly knocking at the door, but without success. This, in spite of the fact that they went down the line with the reactionaries as against what few progressive candidates as were on the ballot.

With their complete defeat in the elections and with the passage of Amendment 2, many are now wondering when and where the quicksands will engulf them.

The Portola Convention

The convention held in Portola, Cal., on December 13 and 14 of the Klamoth Basin District was a carbon copy of the Everett convention.

It was there decided that District 6 had grown to the point in membership and geographical area to where it became advisable to peti-. tion the international for a division of the district into two districts.

Int. Pres. Lowery addressed the convention with the keynote talk on "unity." He also suggested a possible conference of the unions of all the pine areas early in the coming spring on hours, wages and condi-

tions. An additional 25 cents per month . per capita was voted in the recent referendum to be used solely for organization work. If this is wisely expended, something of benefit to the workers can be expected, despite the manner in which the other points may be construed.

Name			
Address			
City	1 1 W		

Of Special Interest To Women

-By Susan Green

A week or so ago Miss Harriet Elliott resigned from her twofold job as consumer adviser on the Defense Commission and as associate administrator of the consumer division of the Office of Price Administration.

The Associated Press, reporting President Roosevelt's acceptance of Miss Elliott's resignation, stated: "It was said in defense quarters that she was displeased with alleged sidetracking of consumers' interests in the defense program. In its present status, her staff members contended, the consumers' unit has been relegated to virtually hopeless subordination."

LABOR ACTION has often warned working class housewives-who are the most direct victims of war prices-that the politicos in Washington are not going to do much, if anything, about consumers' headaches. Miss Elliott's resignation emphasizes that point.

LABOR ACTION has also called upon working class housewives to form neighborhood committees and to follow a militant policy against war-profiteer prices.

Miss Elliott's resignation proclaims that there is now no alternative to such mass organization by the hard-hit housewives of the country.

Neighborhood committees of housewives are the crying need of the hour.

PROBLEM OF AIR RAID SHELTERS

I have seen women stop and stare in alarm and puzzlement at the crowds of children marching around the streets of New York City these days-in so-called air raid drills. A teacher takes charge of a group of youngsters and walks them to their homes-where they are supposed to be safe against falling bombs.

In case of an air attack, it would be criminal to send children into the streets on the chance that they could get home before the bombs fall. But even if they escaped from the streets with their lives, they would be going to places where they have just as good a chance of being killed or injured. For in most neighborhoods the houses are very vulnerable to bombing. Rows upon rows of flats, tenements and small houses are about the most dangerous buildings, judging by all reports.

Fiorello LaGuardia, director of civilian defense, urges parents to be calm and to set a good example of selfcontrol. His chief assistant, Eleanor Roosevelt, in her most motherly way, advises mothers to put dark curtains on their windows.

But thoughtful parents cannot get it out of their heads that neither they nor their children are being provided with safe and sanitary air raid shelters. Nor is their uneasiness allayed when the complete lack of civilian defense manifests itself in the most elementary things. Not even an audible siren system is in readiness.

In preparation for all-out war, not a stone has been turned to protect civilian life. THE RICH, OF COURSE, HAVE THE MEANS OF TAKING CARE OF THEM-SELVES.

WHAT HAPPENED IN LONDON

When the bombs fell in London, the working people suffered the most casualties in life, injury and the loss of their belongings. It was revealed that preparations for war had included no protection at all for the civilian masses. Whereas not only safe but luxurious air raid shelters were available for the upper classes.

Only after the terror-stricken masses flocked into the subways and refused to be driven out did the British government allow them to remain-crowded together like cattle on damp stone floors. Only after there had been mass demonstrations before the palatial hotels where the wealthy were reveling in air raid shelter night clubs did the British government make some attempt to meet the problem-though most inadequately.

The working people here should have learned a lesson from the experience of the working population of London.

Either the military authorities conceive the possibility of air raids in this country-or they do not. If they do not, then why are people being scared out of their wits? If they do expect air raids, then let the Office of Civilian Defense stop fooling around.

Suitable subway stations should be converted into sanitary shelters and people assigned to them in case of raids. Office buildings, skyscraper apartments, vaults, subcellars, all shelters secretly built by the rich for their private use, should be requisitioned. Mass shelters -modern, safe and sanitary - should be constructed throughout the city wherever necessary. Where school buildings cannot provide unquestionable protection, adequate shelters for the children should be provided nearby. This goes for every city in the country that may be threatened.

The government has allotted \$150,000,000,000 for the prosecution of the war. That is a lot of money. Many billions will be nestling in the pockets of the capitalist bosses. Some billions are finding their way into the clutches of the "fixers" who use their influence to place war contracts with their "clients."

How about cutting out war profits and fixers' fees! How about using the money for the legitimate purpose of protecting life!

Priorities Unemployment Reaches New Peak

The problem of priorities unemployment reached its climax this week when it was announced that 206,000 auto workers were to be fired within a few days. Of these workers, 130,000 would be affected in the Detroit area alone.

Over 30,000 of these laid off workers come from the Ford plant. When the management announced that these 30,000 workers would be fired, the United Automobile Workers, CIO, which has a bargaining contract with Ford, immediately demanded that the section of the contract which calls for a 32-hour week when mass layoffs take place, be enforced.

As yet, there has been no reply from the Ford com-

Walther Reuther, a leader of the United Automobile Workers, predicted that unless radical measures were taken in the interim, more than 300,000 auto workers would be unemployed by February 1.

The UAW responded to the situation by calling a conference of all its locals. R. J. Thomas, the union's president, declared that the unemployment was due to "poor management" on the part of the bosses. He charged that the automobile magnates had refused to transform their factories to war production by staging a "sit-down strike" which was designed to get "certain concessions from Congress."

"Workers are going to have to make many sacrifices," he declared. "I want to see management forget about

its profits, too." In the meantime, Washington was worried about the situation, according to a dispatch by James Wechsler in PM. Hillman and his crowd sent a special envoy to the UAW conference in order to try to placate the union.

A Portrait of Herbert Morrison:

A British Labor Leader Who Does Dirty Work for Tory Government

printed from the British New Leader, organ of the Independent Labor Party. It was written by John McGovern, ILP member of Parliament. While the specific occasion for Mc-Govern's wrath is the refusal of Herhert Morrison, British Labor Party leader, who is Minister of Security in Churchill's cabinet, to grant McGovern a visa to Ireland to investigate the imprisonment of an Irish Nationalist; the main interest for American readers is in the portrait which McGovern paints of Morrison, the Labor hostage in the Tory government. This article demonstrates once more how the workers gain nothing when one of their leaders gets mixed up in the capitalist governmental machine.)

By JOHN McGOVERN

Herbert Morrison's refusal to grant me an "exit permit" to Ireland has destroyed completely the excuse that it is desirable to have Labor ministers in the government in order to defend the liberties of the people against the Tories.

Morrison's action was far too reactionary even for the die-hard Tories, and during the debate in which 13 MP's tok part, only Jim Griffiths, Labor MP, and Churchill defended him.

The fact is that he has become arrogant and swollen-headed. In view of his past record, his wish to ride rough-shod over minorities now is less than decent.

I reminded him of his past record in the House. When he was of military age he declined war service and instead picked apples in an orchard. This was then his bitter advice to the workers:

"Your King and Country need you. Need hundreds of thousands of you to go to hell and do the work of hell. . . Go forth, little solyour German brother-go forth and kill himgo forth and slay him; he is only a German dog. . . . He is being told the same story. His King and Country need him."

But now woe betide anyone who crosses his path and refuses to howl with the pack! He does all in his power to persecute and destroy those who have independent minds.

The most brazen part of Morrison's defense for refusing me a permit was his statement: "Having regard to the nature and policy of the political organization of which Mr. McGovern is the national chairman, I am not at all sure that it would be right for me to give him permission to go." From a 1914-18 conscientious objector this is surely the extreme limit in brass-faced impudence.

Morrison was, of course, backed by Churchill, but even he is losing his influence and is being relegated gradually to his rightful place of pre-

I have been assured from high quarters that Churchill will never forget or forgive my recent attack upon him in the House, when I spoke of his "tour of the bombed areas on the back of a landau waving his hat and a stick like Doodles at the circus." So what could I expect but his support of one of his most ambitious lackeys? . . .

Morrison contrived a means of escape from his unjustifiable position by leaving a back door open, but this door is now bolted and locked. Cahir Healy was to be used as the medium. He had only to send a letter to Morrison and my request to go to Ireland would be reconsidered! Healy refuses to aid a Home Secretary who drags Labor's good name in the mud. I agree with Healy (whose only crime, by the way, is a desire to apply the Atlantic Charter to the whole of Ireland).

This Sure Is A Helluva Christmas!

It should be known that the Northern Ireland government refused to take action against Healy. It was Morrison who arrested him, dragged him out of Northern Ireland, and threw him nearly four months ago into Brixton Prison. What even the Conservatives in Northern Ireland think of this is shown by the action of the Fermanagh County Council, which is overwhelmingly Tory, but which a month ago unanimously co-opted Cahir Healy as a member.

A word about the general record of the official Labor leadership. It isn't the dictators who destroy democracy, but the Labor leaders, who use it to scramble for power and wealth. A number of them would sell their very souls for positions in any kind of government.

They hang on to the coat-tails of Churchill. They try to convince the citizens of this country that they are the real British patriots. They place the workers in the front line of battle and, while they shout for sacrifice, they and theirs make good their escape.

I say personally to Morrison: Look out, Herbert. The day will come when even a permit to Ireland may be welcomed by you. Little man, you had a busy day when you tried to justify to Parliament your refusal of democratic rights to me, but it was only a forerunner of much, worse that have yet to come.

A word also to the labor movement: What has it to say of Morrison's actions? Internments, arrests, imprisonment of CO's, threats of policemen's batons on the skulls of the internees, dragooning, fining and imprisonment of those who refuse to obey fire-watching orders dictatorially imposed, refusal of permits to investigate unjust acts-for the good name of labor is it not time the Home Secretary was repudiated and disowned?

girls...Just enough leg art to get

by the Hays office and the Legion of

Decency...And just enough brevity

of dress in the right places so that

the boys can forget their troubles.

Hollywood covers all the angles-

For the more elite with troubles

on their minds, the stage is the

thing. For the stay-at-homes it's the

radio. Pressure on all sides, every-

where you go. "BE HAPPY!"-the

But it's no go. Gloom and Joe

Louis reign supreme. The store win-

dows on Fifth Avenue are breath-

taking. Broadway is all aglow. The

Gay White Way is crowded with

But as the late French General

Foch remarked after being asked

how he enjoyed his first visit to the

Follies: "I've never seen such gay

Yes. It's one helluva Christmas.

And the only guy who's in a laugh-

ing mood is the department store

Santa Claus. And the only reason

he's laughing is 'cause he's such a

behinds, nor such sad faces."

and leaves the curves bare.

bosses command it.

beautiful women.

Liberals State Their Program of Bankruptcy

-By Irving Howe

The outbreak of the war has revealed many things in sharper and clearer perspective than could previously be seen. For one thing, it has punctured completely all the radical pretenses which a considerable number of intellectuals attempted to enjoy. Not that these pretenses have been put forward very insistently; most of the intellectuals were long ago sucked into the fold of Rooseveltian capitalism, just as their forebears of the last generation were enticed by the Wilsonian New Order.

But the climactic statement of intellectual bankruptcy came after the war declaration was issued. The Nation and the New Republic, guiding lights of a section of an entire generation, devoted almost their entire editorial statements to the problem of the war.

If any additional proof be needed of the programmatic bankruptcy and intellectual poverty of the American liberals it is here provided, and brimming over the

It is to be taken for granted that The Nation and the New Republic are openly for the war, that they give way to no one in patriotic and stirring phrases about the just and glorious character of the war. They long ago attached themselves to the chariot of American imperialism and nobody expected them to jump off.

What is, however, so noticeable at the present time is the complete lack of any political program, of any set of motivating ideas behind their present trumpet calls for the war. They write in the manner in which one expects the ordinary capitalist newspaper to write-not even that, since a paper like The Times constantly takes great pains to emphasize the programmatic issues of the war, as it sees them. The Nation and the New Republic write, rather, in the pseudo-scientific manner of that plague of American journalism—the self-constituted military expert. We therefore encounter the absurd spectacle of Miss Freda Kirchwey trying her best to write of the war in the accepted Hanson Baldwinish manner.

A COMPLETELY UNCRITICAL ATTITUDE

The liberals have so lost themselves in their uncritical attitude toward the imperialist war that they do not even attempt to distinguish their aims and purposes in the war from those of, say, the Herald Tribune. Rather does The Nation find itself swept over by the evanascent thrill of "national unity"-Miss Kirchwey is ready to trot out her best adjectives for the cause of saving democracy in Siam and Borneo.

'She writes of the country at war: "We feel a happy sense of union swelling in our hearts; hatred and contempt for our enemy run warmly in our blood.... We are one-all of us.... We feel our strength and our virtue. We know ourselves to be honorable, peaceable, unaggressive, generous, conciliatory."

It is this undiluted chauvinism, this two-penny jingoism which is the sole program of The Nation. Remember, it writes these words of American imperialism, the shining star of altruism in a world of gangsters.

Beyond this there is nothing. No program, no thought on the purpose of the war and, above all, no mention of that most embarrassing of topics: the character of the post-war world for which the war is allegedly being fought. The Nation confines itself exclusively to amateurish military pronunciamentos, which have the same value as those of any layman—zero.

The New Republic likewise concentrates on armchair strategy. Ah, it sighs, if only Bruce Bliven or George Soule could conduct this war instead of General MacArthur or Admiral Cunningham-from a point of safety, of course....

ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT

But the New Republic manages to tear itself away from its military preoccupations to write an editorial on the "Domestic Front."

It advocates the struggle against inflation, but "it is up to labor not to accept a freezing of all wages, but to set its face against those wage increases which will necessarily increase prices (provided a decent minimum already exists)." (Our emphasis.)

It advocates increased taxation, in order to lap up the recent increase in consumer buying power. "Unless we give up the extra money in savings or taxes we shall surely have inflation and a weakening of the war potential."

It advocates opposition to anti-strike legislation, but warns labor of its "share of the responsibility."

It advcates the preservation of civil liberties, but

warns of their necessary limitations. This program could-in fact, has-readily been pro-

posed and accepted by ordinary, conservative bourgeois papers. It is far less radical than the program for labor proposed by Wendell Willkie. The liberals have lost whatever function they once

had. They have always been incapable of participating in the struggle for socialism. Now they no longer play the role of avant-guarde within the framework of capitalist society. They do not even challenge, criticize, propose. Their voices are not distinct from, they are rather lost in, the pack of journalistic hyenas who screech their super-nationalistic choruses.

Knox of the Navy

Not being naval or military experts, we don't pretend to know why and how the Navy was caught napping when the Japanese attack took place. We have an idea, tthough, that Frank Knox, the man who heads the Navy Department, may have had something to do with it. That is, we are of the opinion that Knox has had so many other duties and activities recently that he just

Less than two weeks before the Japanese attack, Knox was busy justifying mob violence against labor organizers and workers on strike. He stated in a letter to the Workers Defense League that he was in "thorough-going accord" with a speech by a Navy admiral in which the admiral said if a strike occurred in Macon: "I hope you will ride them out of town on a rail as if they were wearing swastikas on their sleeves." Knox wrote that he considers the leaders of strikes in the war industries "traitors."

We would like to remind Knox and the admiral that the chief wearers of the swastika in Germany are not labor organizers and workers, but government officials: cabinet members and Army and Navy officers. We have no fear that labor organizers and workers in the United States will import the swastika from the German bureaucrats. After reading Knox's "thorough-going" approval of the admirals call to the lynchers, we decided that we might watch one Frank Knox when looking for swastikas.

ALSO AGAINST THE NEGROES

We also remember that it is this same Frank Knox who is busy keeping Negroes in the most menial positions in the Navy. This is right in line, of course, with Knox's opinions of labor organizers and striking workers. Knox is a firm believer in a "lily-white" Navy. What few Negroes are permitted to enter the Navy "in the struggle against fascism" are forced to carry on the struggle against the German Hitler from the kitchen, waiting on the officers' table and cleaning the officers' boots. Their only acquaintance with the real work of the Navy: gunnery, engine room, machine shop and navigattion, comes only as a sort of sightseeing trip, passing from the galley to the gang plank for shore leave.

Any time that Negroes object to this treatment Knox is ready to give them a ride "out of town on a rail." At the time he sat in on the conference in which Roosevelt insisted that the Negro March on Washington be called off, Knox made the remark that the Navy cannot have Negroes and whites together on battleships because this is no time to try such experiments. The Crisis for December remarks editorially that: "Secretary Knox says that the Navy may have to take draftees because voluntary enlistments have dropped 15 per cent. A. Hitler and H. Tojo may force the Navy to take chimpanzees but you can bet it won't take American Negro citizens. No siree!"

only means that labor wants guarantees from the bosses that the working class will be assured that its organizations and the right of collective bargaining will be main-

tained intact through the war.

The AFL and the CIO together are ready to abandon strikes during the war and have all disputes settled by a mediation board. The labor leaders were even ready to agreed to submit the union shop issue to mediation, in concrete instances, as was done in the captive mine dispute. All these proposals were rejected by Hook and the other industrialists at the conference. They demand complete surrender and capitulation. These bosses say that the union shop and closed shop questions cannot become matters for mediation or arbitration. Labor must agree in advance, right now at this conference, not to bring up the question of the union shop or closed shop until after the war

This means only one very simple thing, as we have said again and again: the bosses want to break the unions, they want the opportunity to conspire with their company "union" outfits against the CIO mainly and to use these company unions to harass and weaken the genuine ununity" but their national unity ideas can only result in the total wreck of the labor movement.

Labor Can Save Shirt

Labor may save its old shirt at the Washington conference but this will depend on its ability to understand what the present war is about, what the bosses are after and the point beyond which labor cannot go in making concessions if it is to continue to exist. The bosses know what they want. They are there to defend the interests, profits and the dividends of the boss class. As in the case of their religion, the bosses never permit patriotism to interfere with "business as usual." This is especially their procedure when dealing with labor. This is the program of the bosses at the Washington conference. That's why they are there. The question left over to ask is: WHAT IS LABOR THERE FOR?

THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

The reaction of the Social-Democratic New Leader is also of some interest.

In its major article on the war, Ferdinand Lundberg writes in the New Leader of December 13, as follows:

"The world is not headed for a markedly better day, not in the next 1,000 years anyhow. None of these things are on the agenda of history! Socialism, social security, the New Leisure, a land flowing with milk and honey. They will not be on the agenda of history even if the 'Defensive Bloc' (i.e., the Allies) wins the war and establishes a new and effective League of Nations. Within the realizable future there will not be two cars in every garage, a chicken in every pot, a model apartment for every family."

Very interesting! What happens to the Four Freedoms, the Atlantic Charter, the Better World over which the war is supposed to be fought? What, in the opinion of this pro-Roosevelt author, is this war about? Where is the brave new world for which millions are to die?

THE SOCIALIST PARTY

The Norman Thomas Socialist Party gave out a statement on the war which condemned the "wanton attack" of Japan while declaring that the war was a "culmination of a long struggle of European, American and Asiatic imperialisms for advantage of dominance in the Far East-an imperialist struggle which we opposed and continue to oppose."

The statement came out in defense of civil liberties during wartime, but failed to specify the attitude of the SP toward the political character of the war.

The Militant, which was the organ of the Socialist Workers Party until two weeks ago, responded to the war by printing a lengthy analysis of the Espionage Act and the manner in which it had been used in the First World War.

By TED LYONS Everyone's trying hard to be mer-This is a helluva Christmas! The

whole world's being shot up like the grand finale in a Buck Jones horse opera! Everybody's glum. The olde Yuletide spirit just ain't what she used to be. A smile on the average person's pan is as brief as a Tommy Manville marriage. And about the only guy that's really lettin' loose with some belly laughs is the mechanical Santa Claus in the department store window!

It isn't the weather that has everyone down; and it isn't mass constipation, as the evil-eyed, omnipresent "doctor" with the warning, pointing finger in the car ads tries to bulldoze people into believing. Whether the average person drinks "SerutaN" (read it backwards) or bock beer, that same blue feeling prevails. For unless "SerutaN" has more to it tthan advertised, it can't erase the fact that there's a gigantic WORLD WAR going on-and that today the singing of "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Man" is as out of place as Gypsy Rose Lee in the Vatican!

(Continued from page 1)

markets and their particular "sys-

American labor doesn't like the

Hitler system, and rightly so. That's

the reason that labor in the United

States has already demonstrated its

willingness to make certain sacri-

fices. The two big trade union organ-

izations have voted by overwhelm-

ing majorities to support the "Presi-

dent's foreign policy." This means

that they have voted to support the

war. The labor movement supports

conscription and has entered the

draft army by the hundreds of thou-

sands. Labor has hit the ball in the

war factories and pledged itself to

produce and produce and produce.

Labor leaders have pledged not to

stop production through strikes, if

any possible way out can be found

through mediation and conciliation.

Unions and union members have

bought war bonds running into mil-

lions of dollars. The unions have

passed resolutions and revised their

constitutions to provide for the ex-

clusion from office or from member-

ship in the union of all "communists.

nazis and fascists; fifth columnists

and subversive elements." Labor has

made all sorts of goodwill moves and

gestures. It has agreed to virtually

all the demands the bosses have

made expect one. It has not agreed

to liquidate the trade union move-

ment. Labor has not agreed to place

itself completely at the mercy of

the manufacturers and the bankers.

And this explains the stalemate that

The unions have made tremendous

sacrifices so far, but this is not

enough for the National Association

of Manufacturers and the Wall

Street bankers. They demand com-

plete capitulation. The bosses de-

mand the same thing of labor that

they will demand of Germany; com-

plete and unconditional surrender. .

defeat Germany. This is true. But

they also want to defeat the unions.

In the opinion of the boss, he has

two enemies: internal, that is organ-

We said that the bosses want to

exists between the bosses and labor

at the Washington conference.

Not Enough for Bosses

tem of free enterprise."

ry. But how can they, when all around the globe are death, destruction and misery - with larger and greater portions of them on the horizon. The prospective corpses in the Army and Navy-what've they to be merry about? The sight of an undersized sweater, a gift of some women's knitting club, isn't going to send a soldier or sailor into whoops of delirious joy. And the advertising agent who thought up the campaign stunt for that soap company, stating that what the boys in the service want FIRST above everything else is soap (!!!), must've been having a nightmare in a Bowery flop house when he came up with that

the dead. The workingman who's beind handed a SEVEN DAY WEEK for a Christmas present is wishing

to make this the "merriest Christmas of them all." The war has thrown families apart. Some of the families and some of the sweethearts and friends are already mourning

The home front can't even begin

There are many times when the

though their main enemy was in

though they believed that organized

labor is their main enemy.

the livin' hell out of a major who seems to be having more fun out of it than his tormenters... Now the two comedians are playing sailor and giving the same treatment to an admiral, who in the next scene is

going to decorate the boys with the highest honors 'cause they've just saved the fleet from destruction by finding a fifth columnist posing as a 16-inch gun ... All kinds of plots. his boss something more than a All kinds of jokes... All kinds of damn dummy! Bosses Show Teeth in Washington

Merry Christmas - and it's not a

One thing, you can't blame the

gloom on the bosses. They're trying

hard enough to make the country

happy. The movies are coming out

from the Hollywood assembly line

like hell on greased wheels. Happy

movies, hilarious movies: The hero's

in the Army...boy, is it fun!...

Good lookin' babes swarmin' all

over the camp...why, you've got

to brush 'em off like flies... Now

the hero's in the Navy ... boy, what

fun!...good lookin' babes swarmin'

all over the battleship ... still brush-

in' 'em off like flies ... Now the two

buck private comedians are beatin'

Happy New Year.

into this conference in a most conized labor, and external, the German-Japanese - Italian imperialist rivals. ciliatory mood. The organized workers had made all the concessions we bosses in the United States act as have related and more. Murray proposed his Industrial Council Plan. the bosses objected and in continuatheir own country. That is, the Nation of labor's conciliatory mood, tional Association of Manufacturers and the Wall Street bankers act as Murray withdrew his proposal for the adoption of the plan. The AFL and CIO representatives unitedly

This is all that one can say about proposed that the conference agree to the "union shop" set-up for the the conference that is taking place duration of the war. This proposal in Washington. Labor leaders came

didn't have time to keep up with the Navy, its efficiency and whereabouts.

Editorials

Coining Gold From Copper

the capitalists of this country are using in order to profiteer from the war are reaching the proportions of a national scandal. We have already written of the "defense brokers" and their ilk; in this issue of LA-BOR ACTION you will find more material on profiteering.

We wish here to comment on only one aspect of the skullduggery being committed by the bosses. Last week, it was disclosed that numerous companies, producing copper for the war program, are deliberately withholding increasing production because they want to dodge the excess profits tax. After a certain point, the RATE of profit of the copper companies declines if they continue maximum production, although the TOTAL AMOUNT of profit in-

As a result, the large copper companies, such as the Anaconda, the Douglas and Bunker Hill, are mereely producing enough to guarantee a maximum rate of profit, even though their capacity is greater. It is of course clear that there is at present an unlimited market for copper (the government) and that this decision of the companies deprives thousands of workers of jobs.

Senator Harry S. Truman says in this connection: "I believe there is an organized effort on the part of the producers to bring things to a crisis so the government will have to offer a bonus or higher prices. The same situation prevails in copper as in aluminum — a monopoly wants to stay in control after the war."

Not much need be added except

- 1) Nothing will probably be done about this in Washington.
- 2) If a worker were to go out on strike for a 10 cent wage increase now be would be labeled a "traitor," but these capitalists continue with their same old tricks, and
- 3) This again proves that, patriotism notwithstanding, what the bosses care about in this war is their own pocketbooks.

We might add that those pocketbooks are getting awfully/heavy.

A Stranglehold On Democracy

The American workers will undoubtedly be interested in knowing why Congress came so close recently to passing the Smith Bill to outlaw strikes.

One reason is that the Roosevelt Administration was putting up only a mock battle against it in order to get across its own milder anti-strike bill, the Ramspeck Bill.

But what we are interested in here is the fact that it was the votes of the Southern Democratic bloc which put the Smith Bill through the House of Representatives. It is these same Southern labor haters__Cox of Georgia, Smith of Virginia, Vinson of Georgia, Ramspeck of Mississippi - who are fighting now, after the declaration of war, together with the National Association of Manufacturers for anti-strike legisla-

One of the interesting things about these Congressmen is that they don't really represent their districts-even to the degree that the Northerners do. The repressive poll tax in the South just keeps on piling up to the point where, if you miss payment on it once, it is almost impossible to catch up with it. It is this poll tax which enables them to be elected year after year without opposition, because it prevents the Negro and white workers and sharecroppers from voting.

The 89 congressmen from the 11 Southern states were elected by about 31/2 million people. But, in the same election, there were 31/2 million voters in the industrial Northern areas who only sent 14 representatives to Congress.

This means that on the average, the vote of the Southerner sufficiently well off to pay the poll tax is about 61/2 times as influential as the vote of the Northern industrial worker.

In other words, two Southern real estate operators, who are interested in retaining the South's competitive advantage of low wages and exploitation carry as much weight in Congress as 30 rubber workers. n Akron, or 13 auto workers in Detroit, or 13. steel workers in Pittsburgh.

And an extreme example: Ford of Mississippi was elected by 15,300 votes while Scheutz of Illinois was elected by 450,000

It is clear from the above figures how The manipulations and intrigues which much it is to the interests of Northern workers to oppose the poll tax in the South. For not only would the abolition of the poll tax grant to the Southern people the rights they are presumably guaranteed by the Constitution, but it would also give labor a chance to get rid of the reactionary pests who today clutter up the Southern congressional posts.

What with all this loose talk about democracy floating around, we think that here is a good place to begin. And the best method we know of remains the organizing drive that the CIO planned to start in the South. Organize the Southern workers and they'll crack the stranglehold which the Bourbon Democratic machine has on their

Polishing His Brass

There are a lot of people who get by on sheer brass alone throughout their lives. They are so impudent that people fail to challenge them because of amazement.

We were prompted to this little bit of "philosophy" when we read a statement recently issued by William Fellowes Morgan, Jr., New York City commissioner of

Mr. Morgan came out with a sharp statement denouncing New York women who hoard food. He said that there was no reason to buy up a lot of food, since there are plenty of reserve stocks and no immediate possibility of food shortages. He declared that women who buy up a lot of food now are unpatriotic and causing damage to the

Yes, some people get by with a lot of brass. It requires a peculiar type of mentality to believe that most New York women are buying up food stocks because they want to be unpatriotic. As a matter of fact, patriotism or lack of it plays no role in the considerations of a housewife deciding how much sugar or pork to buy.

The reason women are buying lots of food now-and Mr. Morgan knows it-is very simple: New York housewives know that prices have gone up, are going up and now that the war is here will go up a lot

It's because they can't make stationary payrolls meet expanding prices that housewives hurry to buy food before the prices rise in the coming months, the food rush about price-fixing because they ve seen that nothing has come of it in the past half year when prices have risen as much as 25

If Mr. Morgan and his friends could give a reasonable guarantee that prices will not rise in thee coming months, the food rush would probably die down pretty fast. But that would mean to cut down on the profiteers-and is Mr. Morgan ready to do

Famous Last Words

William R. Castle, former Under Secretary of State, in a letter printed in the Herald Tribune, Sunday, December 7:

"Why should we go to war with Japan? To that question I have never received a reasonable answer ..."

Joseph Hansen, military expert in the Fourth

"There is reason to believe that Kurusu may be a courier in Hitler's behind-the-scenes campaign for a general agreement among the imperialist powers at the expense of the Soviet Union and China..."

No Government Contract Without a Union Contract

LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

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THE WORLD AT WAR -

Expectation of Immediate German Crackup Is Seen As Somewhat Premature

Goebbels' plea to the German people for winter clothing for the German soldiers and Hitler's startling admission of Russian superiority over the German army in manpower and materials has provoked speculation regarding the possible crack-up of the German war machine.

Those who are inclined to such speculation base themselves primarily on the German retreat in Russia and compare it with Napoleon's ill-fated expedition to that country. Hitler, they believe, played his last card by attacking Russia-and lost.

Such an appraisal is at best premature. Hitler has not played his last card. Those who believe that he has may well be the victims of a new surprise. It is necessary to place things in their proper perspective. It is just as easy today to underestimate the German Wehrmacht as to have overestimated it in the days of its initial lightning victories.

That Hitler has met in Russia a foe that he had grievously underestimated is undeniable. We can have no better testimony of this fact than the admissions of Hitler himself. The confession that the Russian enemy is superior in men and materials, whether true or not, can come only from a man who has been compelled to explain to the German people why it is that his promised victorious peace has not yet been realized.

Wehrmacht Stalled

When Hitler appeals to the German people for winter clothing for the German army in Russia he thereby admits that he did not expect that the Russian winter would find the Nazi army outside of Moscow, Leningrad and Rostov. When Goebbels says: "For the first time in this war our soldiers are deprived of a return to the homeland, deprived even of an extended furlough" he testifies to the formidability of the foe against whom no relaxation is possible and against whom the entire strength of the German Wehrmacht must be extended.

It is certainly significant that Hitler is compelled to remove his commander - in - chief, von Brauchitsch, and to put himself in supreme command of the German armies. The mystical faith of the German people in Hitler, such as it is, must be sustained. His troops must be told that they are fighting under the leadership of the Fuehrer himself in order to turn their flagging morale into fanatical devotion.

To complete the picture one must keep in mind the situation on the German home front. The German people who have experienced the war for two and a half years, have been told that with the entrance of the United States it will be a long and hard war. One can imagine that this is far from a happy prospect for the German family in nearly each of which there is alreay some relative killed, wounded or prisoner at the front and for whom the necessities of life, food and clothing, undergo a constantly diminishing ration-

Comparison with Last War Naturally this picture of the Ger-

man side of the war is far from bright, but it would be wrong to draw from it the conclusion that Germany is finished or on the verge of being finished. Certainly this is not the case if we compare Germany today with the Germany that collapsed at the end of the last World

Who will say that the situation in Germany today approaches that of Germany in 1918 when 65 per cent of its armed forces were casualtiesthat is, 7,143,000 out of 11,000,000 men? Who will say that today the German people are starving in the same way that they were literally starving in 1918? We limit ourselves to these two important factors, but anyone can see that Germany today,

NOTES OF THE MONTH:

War in the Pacific

READ:

despite her losses and the suffering of her people, is still quite removed from the stage in which she can no longer wage an effective war against her enemies.

Has Germany reached the peak of her war effort? To this question it is possible to answer ves in a relative sense. That is, relative to the combined effort of the Allies and the United States. And even here it is important to note that added to Hitler's war effort is that of his new ally, Japan.

Judging by the military successees achieved by Japan thus far, this is by no means a small item. The Japanese Navy, Secretary Knox said, "has a preponderance in the Western Pacific." This is a warning that Japan will be no pushover. In fact, the Japanese threat to Singapore and thereby to the riches of the whole South Pacific, is so real as to cause the Allies no end of worry.

Should the war in the Pacific be a long one, the war effort of the Allies will necessarily be divided and this will be to Hitler's advantage in what is the main theater of the war -that is, wherever Hitler's armies fight. This arena is today occupied primarily by Russia and Germany.

Did Make Advances

However, in viewing the Russian battlefield we must remember that though Hitler did not achieve his objectives this winter, the German army did advance in a period of five and a half months some 550 miles to within sight of Moscow. This in itself, against what has been up to now Hitler's toughest opponent, is no small achievement.

It must be noted, apropos the German retreat, that once the decision to take Moscow this winter was abandoned, a German retreat in the sense of the withdrawal of its vulnerable spearheads was inevitable. However the Russian armies may exploit this retreats, and retreats are always difficult operations, it is certainly premature to speak of any successful widespread Russian offensive against the main German defensive line.

The key, therefore, to Germany's ability to strike hard against the Allies in a new theater of the war is the degree of success that the German army will have in creating a stabilized defensive front on the Russian front. Given the German achievement in Russia, imperfect as it is, and the disadvantage to those who take the offensive there during the winter months, there is no reason, unless there has been a serious deterioration in the German army, why this cannot be done. In any case this is something that only the future can decide.

If, however, the Germans can successfully maintain their defensive positions in Russia then the logic of that situation dictates for Germany a thrust against the vitals of her enemy-toward Suez, Gibraltar, the Middle East, the Caucasus, in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic. The synchronization of such a move with the Japanese thrust in the Pacific holds the greatest danger for the Allies. To meet this danger they will have to throw in everything they have. Against this preponderance, the United States may, in order to stem the tide, contribute a considerable part of her trained manpower.

But even in such an eventuality, victory for the Allies is by no means assured. And if they lose? Then the perspective of the war is lengthened indefinitely.

These then are the possibilities that may face the warring camps in the near future. In view of these possibilities, speculation regarding Germany's finish and the near end of the war are, if not exaggerated, at least premature.

The New International

The Latest Issue Contains:

The Dilemmas of Dai Nippon.....By Henry Judd

A Minnesota Witch Hunt......By Irving Howe

France After the Defeat.....By Eugene Wolft

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Aftermath of Coal Miners' Strike

OPM and Dollar a Year Men

West Coast Welders Go **Out on Strike**

The failure of the AFL craft union leaders and Sidney Hillman's division of the Office of Production Management to settle the grievances of the welders in the West Coast shipyards after their first strike in October caused another walkout this week up and down the Pacific Coast.

For the welders had returned to work in October with some meager promises of settlement of their grievances the main one of which is very justified. And they received only a run-around and the double-cross since going back into the yards where the AFL metal trades unions have closed shop agreements.

The chief beef of the West Coast welders against the AFL unions was that under the craft union set-up in the yards, welders going from job to job were forced to take out membership cards in the various unions controlling the jobs in the different departments. This system of multiple cards meant that some welders had to have five different AFL cards and pay five different initiation fees to work on the various jobs.

Naturally, the welders beefed about this system and the failure of the AFL craft unionists to eliminate it (since it would jeopardize the petty crafts, although not unionism) was the fire behind the heat generated among the welders.

CIO Superiority

This trouble did not occur in those yards where the CIO had contracts because its industrial unionism enabled men to transfer from job to job, or types of jobs, and hold only one union card in one union, thus demonstrating the overwhelming superiority of industrial unionism over craft unionism in the ship yards, as in all major industtries.

Too many welders, however, blinded partly by the treatment given them by the reactionary AFL leaders, by their own feeling of craft superiority due to their indispensability at present, and also by an unjustified suspicion of the CIO as a "red" organization, sought a way out of their dilemmas by advocating and supporting an independent union of welders, the one which called both strikes, rather than the correct road of industrial unionism.

For even if some compromise is worked out in the present strike and the Independent Welders Union is taken into the AFL, which is not likely, all it means is that another craft union has been added to the already overloaded craft set-up in the shipyards under AFL closed shop contracts.

Craft Union Hopeless An independent craft union stand-

ing on its own is a hopeless proposition, as the history of all such attempts has proved. For example, in the auto industry the skilled tool and die makers once tried to solve their problems through an independent Mechanics Educational Society, which originated just before the CIO but which tried to be neither CIO nor AFL when those two were contending in that industry. The tool and die makers' outfit couldn't stand up against the progressive aims and accomplishments of the CIO industrial union movement and fell apart after playing a reactionary role against

In the last welders' strike on the West Coast, the leaders of the independent welders' union tried to set up a craft division within the CIO controlled yards, too, a purely reactionary step, and they obtained support neither from the progressive-minded welders in those yards nor did they make any headway among the CIO generally, which recognized the attempt to bust industrial unionism for what it really was.

Just because the welders have no reason or claim for independence from the CIO in the CIO yards does not say that they do not have a justified grievance in the AFL yards. Quite the contrary.

And the answer to the welders' problem is turning their struggle against the AFL set-up into a struggle for industrial unionism.

The welders in the AFL yards have just as much right to strike as any of the craft unions there. However, it would be tragic for them if they allowed to continue the trend that has already appeared, namely their struggle being purely a craft union fight rather than a fundamental struggle to unite all the workers in shipyards under the progressive banner of the CIO and to the exclusion of the AFL-(J.W.)

Another Kind of War Profiteering

once said that the more milk it sold the more money it lost, announced that its estimated net profit for 1941 would amount to \$8,253,737 or about \$1.92 a share. At the stock's present market price that means a 10 per cent return.

Five price boosts since last spring have brought milk to its highest price in 20 years. The above announced profits indicate what those price boosts were for.

BOOING

How Much Does It Cost to Do It!

By PAUL TEMPLE.

Consider the case of one Edward A. Loss:

"Edward A. Loss, Jr., 23, who booed a sound movie of President Roosevelt in a newsreel theater, was find \$200, the maximum, on a disorderly conduct charge in Municipal Court today."-AP dispatch.

Now we don't know why Edward was peeved at the President. But neither did the police when they arrested him on this grave charge. There is only the act itself to go by, and it raises some interesting questions.

The first one is the charge. Booing, it is well known, is the Ameerican way of expressing disapproval, like the German habit of stamping feet of the British practice of whistling. For Roosevelt's supporters at Willkie meetings during last year's campaign, it was a form of participation in the election discussion. We presume that young Loss's \$200 boo was also a statement of opinion on Roosevelt's policies.

One thing is certain: the maximum fine was not imposed in this case because of "disorderly conduct"-like rolling drunk in a gutter or littering the streets.

It was imposed because the judge could NOT find a law which said: "Any person who wilfully expresses disagreement with, or disapproval of, the President of the United States shall be guilty of sedition, treason and fifth-columnism." The judge might just as well have picked on the antinoise ordinance for the legal excuse.

But the philosophy behind this little case goes further than a war-whooping judge. The judge was putting into practice what the government and the boss press MEAN by "national unity.

This philosophy goes as follows: In this war emergency, we must present a united front to the enemy. It would be fine if there were actually no differences among us. But since there are, we must pretend they don't exist. The President represents the nation. We must therefore gag anybody who criticizes the President. This is so because discontent and criticism are infectious. The way to prevent a lot of dissenters is to knock the first little one on the head. So slap a fine on him if he as much as dares to say boo

This phonograph record is labeled "Defense of Democracy," but the music is that of Hitlerite TO-TALITARIANISM.

WHAT FREE SPEECH MEANS

The trouble with democracy, on this showing, is that the right to free speech MEANS "the right to disagree," and somebody's likely to take it up. That breaks your "national unity," so off go democratic rights to a place of honor-in a museum.

We got started on this subject as the result of a little boo and a little judge. Take a real expert in "national unity" and wartime "democracy," no less a person than the man in charge of government propaganda and press control during the war emergency of 1917-Herbert Bayard Swope. Here's how he described the "next war" before a congressional commission about ten years ago:

"Just as other constitutional provisions are ignored in time of war, so, too, must there be an abridgement of free speech, free press, free assembly, and even free thought. In no other way can a nation save itself....

"Enlightened and informed public opinion must have a stencil. If we take the muzzle off the dogs of war, we must put the muzzles on the people and the press.... Thinking along independent lines must be stopped ... free speech and free press become empty words. This is brutal but expedient, for when men are not permitted to give expression to their thoughts usually they stop thinking them."

You can print these words alongside of Hitler's Mein Kampf; or together with the story of the missionary who set out to cure cannibals of their detestable habit-by eating a couple of them, to teach them a lesson. A United States in which an anti-Roosevelt boo is fined \$200 in the name of "national unity" is that kind of missionary for democracy.

Now there are three possible ways for getting something like national unity. Unfortunately, only two of them are possible. The third one is the idea that we work out some scheme to "reconcile the interests of capital and labor."

If this were possible, the clever schemers would not have had to wait for a war to discover it. If workers want to raise their wages to meet the higher cost of living, and their bosses refuse to cut down on their war profits, no mediation or arbitration board on earth is going to "reconcile their differences." The only question is: Who's going to knuckle under?

THIS NATIONAL UNITY

If the price of meat rises so high that you have to clip coupons to buy a pork chop, the working class housewife is going to have to get along with soup bones while Park Avenue struggles along with a smaller sirloin. What does "national unity" mean when the housewife starts getting a trifle discontented?

The bosses and the government consider "national, unity" to be achieved when labor quits striking and squawking and when it takes speed-up, higher prices and swollen war profits lying down. The anti-boo judge and H. B. Swope, for instance, think it's "national unity" when no one dares open his mouth.

This is the "national unity" of the Hitler Reichstag yelling "Heil" on signal or the unity of a Georgia chain gang. It is the unity of a horse and rider, with the capitalist horseman in the saddle. This is the kind of unity that Germany "enjoys" today and of which our own bosses are so envious.

As for us, we don't want any part of it.

Deep down below, there can'e be any national unity in a real sense as long as one-tenth of the population lives off the fat of the land because they OWN the machines, while nine-tenths do all the useful WORK of society. And you certainly don't have national unity when the government speaks and acts as lawyer for the ONE-TENTH.

When the laboring NINE-TENTHS get together to get a WORKERS government, that'll be enough unity for us.

The Borden Milk Co., which