

LABOR ACTION

MAY 4, 1942

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

SOCIALISM



The Hope of Humanity:

SOCIALISM!

Workers Party May Day Statement

Labor's Balance Sheet Since Last May Day

By JACK WILSON

The ceaseless struggle of labor to defend its interests from the attacks of the economic royalists and their agents has reached a crucial stage this May Day, because of the extension of the Second World War to global proportions.

One year ago the union movement was celebrating its victories over Ford, symbol of the open shop policy in America, over Bethlehem, International Harvester and other industrial barons.

Although the shadow of imperialist war loomed ominously overhead, the storm had not yet broken over these shores and the labor movement was busy consolidating organizational and economic gains.

Today the labor movement finds itself enmeshed in the deadly spiderweb of war, with its very existence threatened by slow strangulation and the ever-increasing burdens placed upon its already overloaded shoulders.

The economic royalists, masters of this powerful industrial and financial system, attack labor directly or, through congressional hatchetmen, drive for a return to the open shop everywhere, and ply their nefarious trade on a world scale which earned for them, besides fabulous profits, the odious description: "Merchants of Death."

The chiseling on all union standards and the rising cost of living against the background of war profiteering, as well as the mounting scandals exposing the Merchants of Death, have fomented a deep resentment and uneasiness among the shop workers.

Industrial Barons on the March

Bitterness increased when the industrialists utilized the "Munich Pact" agreement signed by AFL and CIO officials under government pressure, to carry on an all-out campaign against all labor rights and standards. Since the CIO and the AFL leaders gave up their strongest

Dollar-a-Year Men Still in the Saddle

Despite the exposé of the dollar-a-year men by the Truman and Vinson Committees, which charged that they often worked in the interest of the companies, industries or class they represented, the number of dollar-a-year men has increased considerably in recent months. Since last November an additional 145 dollar-a-year men have been added to the War Production Board, making a total of 395.

weapon, the right to strike, the industrial barons have been proceeding in their drive with complete impunity.

The appeasement policy adopted at the Washington conference already has cost the shop workers a wage cut, in the form of taking away their union standards for overtime on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

It was this tragic consequence, hitting the pocketbooks of the workers, of the AFL and CIO appeasement policy which militant workers opposed at the auto and shipyard conferences held recently.

And for the first time at CIO conferences, direct references were made to the big salaries and expenses of the CIO and AFL bureaucrats, who suffer no personal inconvenience in wage cuts!

There is no question about it: The present appeasement policy of the trade union bureaucracy has alienated the vast majority of workers from the top leaders; and the division between militant workers defending the best interests of the union movement, and the bureaucrats, retreating ignobly before every capitalist onslaught, becomes sharper every day.

Each day finds the labor bureaucracy Role of the Stalinists (Continued on page 2)

Freeze Labor's Wage Scales, FDR to Ask

The widely-heralded demands of the CIO executive board for a union shop and a dollar-a-day wage increase in steel, auto and other major industries are going to be tossed into the ashcan next week by President Roosevelt in his radio speech.

In fact, the CIO leaders are going to be asked to "voluntarily" give up demands for "excessive" wage increases which in practice will be interpreted as any wage increases.

Meanwhile the fabulous war profits of the big corporations will be kept intact, since labor will be pressured into not fighting for any share of them, if the Roosevelt Administration has its way.

This is going to be done under the idea of "freezing wages and prices." Of course, prices for consumer goods have gone sky high, so now they'll be "frozen" at a point which hits the workers' pocketbooks hard.

But wages, if frozen, are hardly sufficient to meet the high cost of living so that this action, along with giving up of overtime standards for Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, means a drastic reduction in the standard of living of the workers.

Besides this attack on the wage front, which congressmen and the newspapers have been leading in behalf of big business, there is a steadily mounting drive against the union shop.

(Continued on page 4)

WORKINGMEN and WORKINGWOMEN!

On May Day, the world-wide holiday of labor for scores of years, the Workers Party addresses itself to you with an appeal to take stock of your position and your problems, and to fortify your ranks in order to solve these problems speedily and correctly.

In a few months, the Second World War will enter its fourth year of blood and tears and destruction, and nowhere is the end in sight. When the war began in 1939, the rulers of the countries on both sides of the war told their people that the war would not and could not last long, and that it would end quickly with the collapse of the enemy and the victory of the fatherland. But neither collapse on the one hand nor victory on the other is any closer today than it was when the war broke out. Instead, new forces have entered actively into the war on both sides, Japan and the United States and most of the countries of Latin America, and the war has spread its bloody pall over every continent and every land.

Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito call upon their people, already bleeding from a thousands wounds, to prepare for a longer war, and for the greater sufferings that prolonged warfare will bring. Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin call upon their people to make greater efforts and sacrifices in order to fight the enemy, but even they do not speak of an early end to the war—the President of the United States only recently said that it will last another two or three years.

THEY DO NOT TELL THE TRUTH

They are telling the masses of the people only half or a fourth of the truth! The truth is that so long as they remain in power, so long as the destinies of every country are decided by the interests of the capitalists, monopolists and profiteers, the munitions makers and militarists, the imperialists and overlords of the colonial slaves—in other words, so long as this remains an imperialist war for the domination of the world's wealth and power and for the preservation of the rule of monopolists and dictators—the war will continue to be fought for years and years, without any prospect of peace or freedom for the people. The earth will be soaked in blood; corpses will rise mountain high; the remaining liberties of the living will disappear, and along with them their old standards of living—but the war will continue because nowhere are the ruling classes able to bring it to an end!

The Axis cannot bring the war to an end with a durable victory. Everywhere that Fascism has advanced and planted its sinister banner, it has not established peace or won the cooperation of the conquered peoples. Just the opposite has happened. The fear and hatred of the people for the barbarous monstrosity of Fascism has only been deepened and intensified. Germany and Japan are compelled to wage just as murderous a war against the enemy they have conquered as against the enemy that is still unbeaten.

The Axis cannot appeal to the peoples of the world to bring the war to an end, to stop fighting under the direction of their governments, because the masses know that so long as Fascism lives they will not be allowed to live as human beings but only as slaves. To conquer the whole world of its enemies by military force alone, the Axis will require nobody

knows how many years, if it can do it at all.

But the picture on the other side of the imperialist war is not fundamentally different. The peoples of the United Nations do not want to become the serfs of the Axis. At the same time, however, the peoples—we mean the peoples and not the rulers—of the Axis fear the victory of the Allied imperialists. It is a lie that the long-suffering people of Japan want the war or support their war-mongers. It is a lie that the prostrated masses of Germany love Fascism or the bloodthirsty Fascist crew that tyrannizes over them.

THE HORRORS OF VERSILLES

But these people remember the infamous horrors and humiliations imposed upon them by the victors in the last world war, in the form of the Versailles Peace Treaty, and they fear its repetition. They know that the imperialists and reactionaries in Washington, London and Moscow have said—that if they win the war they will reduce Germany to ashes and dismember the German nation and the German people. They know that the only "peace-aim" of the Allies is a Super-Versailles. That is why these people continue to fight and to remain the victims of the Fascist warlords.

How can they be expected to listen to the "democratic" appeals of Churchill and Roosevelt and Stalin when they see that even though the Allies are fighting desperately with their backs to the wall, British imperialism refuses to give the democratic right of independence to India, American imperialism refuses to give the democratic right of equality to the Negro, and the Stalinist bureaucracy refuses to give up the aristocratic privileges by which its despotism is maintained? The only road left the Allies is the road of a defeat of the Axis by purely military means; and here too, if it is at all possible it will require nobody knows how many years.

Nowhere do the ruling classes offer the people a way out of the nightmare of suffering that has been imposed upon it by the imperialist war. Nowhere can they offer a way out. Everywhere they are bankrupts.

A WAY OUT!

Yet there is a way out! There is a way out which means the early end of the war. There is a way out which means not peace with fascism, but its total destruction. There is a way out not by putting or keeping people in slavery but by freeing all those who are enchained.

As American workers, who live and work here, our main job is in the United States. It is here that the way out must be carved by us first. It is here that we must begin.

If the American workers are able to show to the world that the United States is not an imperialist power, that it is not fighting an imperialist war, that it does not seek to impose iniquitous treaties upon other countries, that it is not fighting for the profits and power of profit-mad monopolists and merchants of death, that it does not tolerate Jim-Crow or any other form of racial discrimination—if we can show that, then the long-tormented peoples all over the world would break every chain that holds them to despotism and war and, almost over night, flock to the cause of peace and freedom!

That is what the American workers must do and can do. They have today the best and most strongly organized labor movements in the world. They have the gravest

possible responsibility on their shoulders, but they also have the organized strength to discharge this responsibility to the full. They must draw up an independent program of their own, a program for wartime, and mobilize their full strength to carry it through to victory.

WHAT IS THE WORKERS PARTY?

The Workers Party is a militant workingmen's political organization that stands irreconcilably opposed to capitalism, fascism and imperialist war, and works for the establishment of world-wide socialism. But the Workers Party understands that, due to prejudices instilled into the workers of this country, the majority of them are not ready to fight for socialism. But they are ready to work and fight for their immediate interests and needs. The Workers Party therefore suggests the following elementary program as representing these interests and needs.

1. A labor offensive to protect labor's rights—no more appeasement of the capitalists. Labor is told to fight the Axis because Fascism means an end to democratic rights—and in the same breath labor is asked to give up its own democratic rights here. Labor is told to fight the Axis because Fascism means slave-standard of living—and in the same breath labor is asked to allow its standard of living to be cut to the bone. By hypocritical pleas and by ominous threats, the capitalists and the government, aided by spineless labor leaders, have already deprived labor of its most important weapon of defense—the right to strike. Now that this right has been frozen, the talk of freezing wages grows louder and louder. Freezing wages means, for the great majority of the American workers, a disguised wage cut in view of the rise of the cost of living. Labor has already been tricked into giving up overtime wages after 40 hours; prices are being "frozen" at the higher levels; forced wage loans are being prepared by the government.

Every time the labor leaders make a concession to the employers and the government, every time they practice their appeasement policy, the employers and the government ask for two more concessions. They are preparing to strip the shirts off the backs of the workers in the name of "sacrificing for the national emergency." But all the workers do from the day of their birth is to make sacrifices. Every day they work in the mine or mill or plant to produce profits for their employer, they are sacrificing their labor power to him. And that is more than enough sacrificing!

WHY ALLOW PROFITEERING?

The employers—what about them and their sacrifices? The big corporations are raking in profits such as they have not seen for years. The government talks a lot about reducing profits to "only" six per cent, which would be terrifically high in view of the inflated capitalization of every important industry. But why should anybody be allowed any profits during this "war for democracy?" Labor gets paid wages for its work. Any employer or manager who works should get a decent salary. But why should the parasitic monopolists be allowed to profit from war, from the sufferings and deaths of the people?

Therefore: full democratic rights to the people, including the right to strike. A minimum one-dollar an hour wage, and no wage taxes. Freeze rents and food and (Continued on page 6)

Exposing the Merchants of Death:

Their Profits Born in Blood

By Irving Howe

We do not know for certain, but we suspect that only a small portion of the story about the financial deals of America's Merchants of Death has yet been told. The cartel agreements of Remington Rand, Standard Oil, ALCOA and General Electric have shocked the American people; their cynical deals with the German trusts have shown once and for all that all this double talk about "wars for democracy" which the capitalist class uses is just so much camouflage for profiteering.

Yet, shocking as these revelations are, annihilating exposes of the true nature of American Big Business as they are—how much is being held back? It took, you must remember, 15 years for the truth to come out about the last war—that it was a deliberate profit swindle in which thousands of American lads died to make the world safe for Morgan.

Thurman Arnold, Assistant Attorney General, has said that "in most basic war materials we find similar cartel agreements . . ." A pretty serious statement. It says, in effect, that all of American Big Business has been playing the same nefarious game as Standard Oil. But if that is so, why aren't the American people told about it? Let us have names and dates and places; let the American capitalist class—the master of our destinies thus far—stand exposed under the glare of truth. Let us see these profit-hungry, greedy murderous profiteers as they really are.

If and when more information is supplied about our native (Continued on page 4)

Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Third Camp

THE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IN EUROPE

May Day used to be a holiday of the workers all over Europe. Millions of workers in all European countries quit work that day as a sign of the international solidarity of labor. Powerful demonstrations, big parades used to mark this day. They were tangible proof of the might of the workers. Did it not look as if the day of liberation was near?

But the ways of history are tortuous. There is no straight path. Today there is no free labor movement in Europe. Trade unions and political parties are crushed; thousands rot and die in concentration camps.

Now May Day in Europe sees the fascist hoodlums parading in the streets of Paris, Berlin, Vienna—boasting of their tyranny. Yet is the European workers' movement really dead as so many "realists" wish us to believe? Has a new "Dark Age" really begun? Is this the beginning of the "Decline of the West"?

They may call us utopians, they may tax us with being wishful thinkers; but we disagree, we try to look deeper, to scratch below the surface of events. No, we say, the class struggle has not been abolished, class consciousness is not dead in Europe. It has taken a different form—often blurred, distorted, assuming strange forms—but it is alive.

This column has devoted itself to reporting the silent struggle which goes on in Europe. We have tried to gather from the scant reports which filter through the double censorship of fascist and "democratic" imperialists what the real tendencies inside Europe are. While the available material is thoroughly inadequate, it is possible to indicate some main points, which hold true of Europe as a whole.

SMALL CIRCLES OF ILLEGAL FIGHTERS

1) There are no great central organizations in any European country. There are only small illegal circles composed of the small minority of the best, unyielding fighters.

In countries where the hold of the fascists is strongest, these circles are not much more than loose meetings of comrades who come together to discuss events and attempt to maintain their socialist spirit amidst terror and betrayal.

In other countries such as France, there still exist larger organizations which turn out printed leaflets and papers, and which have a centralized organization and programmatic outlook. But still even there they have few members and exert no decisive influence on the course of events. Actually, the European working class has no organized vanguard, no leadership in close contact with the masses. If these little minorities are able to elaborate a theoretical insight into the new conditions which the movement faces, they will be invaluable in the period of mass movements to come later; but at present they have no appreciable influence.

THE ANONYMOUS WORKING CLASS ACTIVITIES

2) As far as real activity goes, it is undertaken by anonymous workers, faithful to their class and generally not having any thorough political concept or elaborated theoretical opinions. Yet they perform a great service, as the threads which hold the class together. They are the "unofficial representatives" of the workers in the factories, the men to whom the other workers come for advice: How to behave towards the official Nazi organization, what to do when the Nazis ask for a speedup in production, how to organize support for an arrested comrade.

They are quiet and unassuming, nothing of their activity is felt outside their immediate circle and yet their importance cannot be overrated. They may actually continue to cling to old political labels, still think of themselves as Social Democrats or Stalinists, but we believe that—at least in Germany and Italy—they have acquired enough experience to enable them to crush from the beginning any attempt to substitute a Stalinist totalitarian regime for a fascist one. They have no thoroughly analyzed conceptions, but they have undoubtedly learned that a prerequisite for socialism is democracy within the working class movement; they have acquired a deep-rooted hatred for all bureaucratic methods.

THE DECLINE OF GERMAN MORALE

3) All we have heard from Germany in recent times tells the same tale of bad morale, of increasing hatred for the Nazi regime. But as yet there are no signs that these sentiments have been transformed into organized action. Besides this powerful grip of the GPU, the main reason for this is to be found in slight hope which the "democratic" camp offers them. The German workers hear nothing from these countries but hymns of hatred against the German people, the tales of dismemberment, and annihilation daily poured out of the British and American press, and readily copied by the Nazis in order to show that "whether or not you like Hitler, a new Versailles would be far worse."

That is why the responsibility of the workers in the Allied countries is tremendous. The degree of our independent class activity, the signs which we show of the aliveness and militancy of the labor movement in America and England will play a great role in determining the actions of the German workers. International solidarity is not a pious phrase for special holidays, it is a burning reality. And the greatest service we can render to the workers in Europe is to push on our own working class activities in our own country.

The liberation of the working class can come only as a result of its own class activities. In order to make this clear, to impress this fact into the minds of our European brothers, we must show them that there are other workers, too, who fight a relentless battle for socialist emancipation. Never before has it ever been truer that only united action of the world working class can liberate this world from oppression, from wars and insecurity. Never was it more obvious that the struggle over there cannot be won without our struggle over here.

Europaean.

Exclusive to LABOR ACTION:

Uruguay Socialists Expose Coup d'Etat

(A short time ago a "palace revolution" took place in the South American country of Uruguay. Led by Gen. Baldomir, this move represented a step in the direction of further American domination of South America. In the statement we publish below, copies of which were widely circulated among the people of Uruguay, the Revolutionary Workers League of that country exposes the character of the coup d'etat that took place.—Ed.)

The results of the Rio Conference have made themselves felt in our country.

The Baldomir coup d'etat is but the logical consequence of the orders given to the American nations by the United States.

The "lend-lease" policy is fulfilled to the letter. They loan out the dollars and the South American dictators lease their countries to them.

The obstructionist work of the Nazi Herrera was the smoke-screen used to cover up this leasing of our country.

Faced with the facts, nobody can or should allow himself to be deceived. The stroke of Baldomir was not done to reform the Constitution, as these present dictators pretend, because they themselves created the Constitution! It corresponds to the needs of the United States to have a docile government in The Plata which will serve its imperialist aims.

You can expect a counter-stroke by Herrera, old-time Nazi fascist sympathizer, supported by the Nazi forces of the country or from outside to regain the lost ground.

Or else, a movement organized by his own supporters will give way before a Nazi blow against the country's independence.

In either case, North America will intervene, occupying our country by military force.

The first step toward fascism has been taken.

The "Governmental Council" that has been created will be an arrangement between the reactionary parties and the "opposition," supported by the Communist Party which has become the dictator's bootlickers.

Against the overturn!

Against every Nazi aim of Herrera!

Against political and economic intervention by Germany and North America!

Against all traitors who support Baldomir!

For a united front of all labor, political and student organizations against the coup d'etat!

What "Guarantee" Has a Negro of Equality Even After Socialism is Here?

By PAUL HARRIS

It is not difficult to show the grave political error of those Negroes who look to Japan for the salvation of colored peoples. In previous issues of LABOR ACTION, we have attempted to do that. As soon as you pin them down as to exactly how Japan is going to help the Negroes, they can't answer. When you pose the question of the only alternative, a new socialist society won by united labor, they reply that "the Negroes in the South is hated by the Southern white worker more than by the bosses. Even in the North and East, Negroes are excluded from some AFL unions. Even when they are admitted into unions, they are often discriminated against with regard to jobs."

The usual type of reply to this is that these things are less true than they used to be, to point to the hundreds of thousands of Negro workers in the CIO, the increasing recognition on the part of more and more white workers of the need for labor solidarity and to say that these things will continually increase and under socialism will become the rule.

That is true and important. Yet many Negroes remain skeptical. Often some will bring up the Civil War. They say that the North accepted the Negro as a soldier, but as soon as the North had won what it wanted, it deserted the Negro and handed him over to the mercies of the very Southerners whom the Negroes had helped defeat.

Some Negroes believe in allying themselves with the labor movement, but they have doubts. They ask: "What guarantee have we that after this socialist revolution the white workers will not turn on us, a minority, and once more put us in a position of inferiority?"

A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION

This attitude is far more serious than the shouting of the Japanese agents among the Negroes. It poses a fundamental question, a question that in reality goes further than the future fate of minority Negroes. For deep-rooted in the minds of many serious people is the idea that there must be rulers and ruled, dominated and inferior.

These questions are often asked. To answer them what must be demonstrated is that the economic development of society makes for equality.

Briefly, then, let us begin by looking at the question of Negroes as slaves. In the West Indies, and in America, Negroes were slaves for well over 200 years. As long as the dominating factor in production was land, Negro slavery continued. Then, apparently, quite suddenly, there began a great movement for the abolition of slavery.

Did French, British and Americans suddenly become conscious of the fact that Negroes were men like themselves and should not be enslaved? Obviously not. As industrial capitalism began to dominate, it was universally recognized that slavery and its brother, feudalism, had no place in the modern world. In other words, the necessities of production, compelled the abolition of slavery.

Slavery being abolished, American industry made tremendous strides. Its distinguishing feature was the growth of tremendous mass production industries and the gigantic concentration of capital in the hands of a few monopolists. The Negro was kicked around and suffered for years but at least it was better to be free than a slave; you could fight and organize. Still the Negro remained poverty-stricken and excluded from the great industrial centers.

NEGROES COME NORTH

However, in 1917 American industry reached another climax. With the entry of America into the war, the steady movement towards greater and mass production reached a new high. Not because American capitalists now loved the Negro more but because they needed labor, they sent to the South and brought a million Negroes up North.

The huge Negro populations of Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and Pittsburgh, who escaped from the agricultural misery of the South, hundreds of thousands of whom have won places for themselves in industry, were able to find a new footing because of the necessities of American industrial production.

Let us keep our eye on the movement of industrial production which is the great key to the understanding of modern society. American production from 1917 on progressed by leaps and bounds with more and more Negroes coming from the South. But as industry progressed, the labor organization also changed its form. Up to recently, the AFL ruled American labor. Skilled craftsmen for the most part, they excluded Negroes in many of their unions. They were the aristocrats of labor and the mass of unskilled and



semi-skilled workers were unorganized—which meant that the mass of Negro workers were unorganized.

But by 1929 the great days of American capitalist production were over. Came the terrific crisis of 1929. The workers of America received a tremendous shock. For a time they were beaten down. But by 1935 they had recovered enough strength to fight back.

Then began the tremendous movement of the CIO—the real mass organization of the workers. It took in whole industries at a time. Whatever race prejudice white workers might feel, the very scope of industrial production compelled the organization of all the workers, white and black, on an inclusive scale. Thus it was that the CIO from the very start was compelled to strike blows against race prejudice, whereas sections of the AFL maintain it to this day.

We see therefore that the race prejudice of the capitalists and their desire to keep the workers divided received one hefty blow in 1917, owing to the necessities of production; and the race prejudice of the workers received another hefty blow in 1936, owing to the necessities of labor organization which in turn were caused by the development of production.

This is how the economic development of society has effected the Negro people. Next week we shall discuss what may be expected in the future.

Review of 1941 Shows Industrialists Took in Tremendous War Profits

Each day for the past three months hundreds of corporations have been making their annual reports to stockholders reviewing business for 1941. By now most of the country's 460,000 corporations have reported and it is possible to summarize the results. So important is this annual review of business that summaries have already been published by four separate agencies: two federal, the Department of Commerce and the Federal Reserve Board; and two private, the New York Times and the National City Bank. Although these reports are intended chiefly for business men, they contain material of interest to every worker.

The first question asked by all reviews is: How was business last year? Although the four reports differ on exact figures, they are unanimously agreed that 1941 was one of the most prosperous years in history for the corporation big-shots.

The Department of Commerce Bulletin reports that corporate net profits in 1941, after all taxes, were 30 per cent greater than in 1940 and 75 per cent greater than in 1939.

The New York Times and National City Bank, both of which have definite bias in favor of big business and therefore try to make profits seem as low as possible, report average profit increases for 1941 over 1940 of 23 and 20 per cent respectively and the Federal Reserve Bank puts the figure at 17 per cent.

The following quotation from the New York Times best summarizes the situation: "Of 758 corporations surveyed, 325 reported profits after taxes greater than in 1939, long the symbol of unrestricted prosperity. If the service industries are excluded, the remaining 637 producing companies are seen to have earned only 9 1/2 per cent less in 1941 than in 1939, after taxes in both instances."

An important point to be noted is that the greatest profit increases took place in those industries directly profiting from the war program.

The table below, taken from the National City Bulletin, shows that such war industries as aircraft, shipbuilding, machinery, oil and tools increased their 1941 profits by from 20 to 65 per cent over 1940 and earned rates of return in 1941 varying from 10 to 49 per cent.

Contrast the average rate of profit in aircraft, 49 per cent, with the 7 per cent rate which is considered as "normal." Since profits above 8 per cent are subject to the excess profits, the ineffectiveness of this tax is readily seen. Great as these profit figures are, they in reality would appear higher

if it weren't for a cute device called "contingency reserves" by which corporations conceal their true profits.

The Times reports that corporations "more than doubled their special reserve and contingency funds in 1941." The money set aside in contingency funds should really be added to net profits.

MUCH UNDISTRIBUTED PROFITS

Another important point to be noted is the large amount of profits which were undistributed. The Times reports that 29 per cent of profits were undistributed in 1941, compared to 25 per cent in 1940 and 23 per cent in 1936. This means that corporations are tending to hold more and more of their profits as undivided profit. Point 3 of LABOR ACTION's tax program calls for a stiff undivided profits tax. Since total corporate profits amounted to approximately seven and a half billion dollars in 1941, there was a total of more than two billion dollars retained by corporations as undistributed profits in 1941. A 50 per cent tax on undivided profits would thus yield more than a billion dollars of revenue.

A final point to be noted is the large amount of money which can still be raised through taxing corporate profits. Although corporate income and excess profits taxes last year were the largest in history, they still took only 53 per cent of net profits and left corporations with net profit, after all taxes, of seven and a half billion dollars. Adoption of Point 1 of LABOR ACTION's tax program, a 100 per cent tax on all war profits, would thus yield at least four billion dollars annually.

Workers should therefore demand adoption of LABOR ACTION's tax program—as well as government conscription of all war industries, to be run under workers' control—to prevent war profits.

Industries Listed

Industry	Pct. Inc. in Profits 1940 to 1941
Rubber	34
Chemicals	7
Petroleum	43
Iron and Steel	16
Hardware and Tools	23
Machinery	40
Automobile	19
Aircraft	65
Shipbuilding	21
Coal Mining	77
Oil and Gas	92
Railroads	165

Women Need Equal Pay for Equal Work

Of the millions of peacetime workers in U.S. factories in 1941, 25 per cent were women.

Colonel Bailey, of the office of the Under Secretary of War, states: "Eventually the only labor supply may be women."

This presents a problem for the women. Profit-minded employers take advantage of the meekness and physical weakness of women to cut their wages below those of men similarly employed.

This is why women should demand men's wages on jobs they perform that were formerly men's jobs. They should get equal pay for equal work done.

Men should demand equal pay for women in order to prevent companies from carrying through threats to replace them with women workers at a lower rate.

This means that more and more women must attend the union meetings and plan on vigorous action in their own behalf.

This is a problem requiring the attention of national and local unions. The realities of the war situation require it. The unions can meet it boldly and squarely by coming out against any discrimination against workers because of sex and for equal pay for equal work.

Hey There, Bud—

How do you like LABOR ACTION?

Why not fill out the blank on this page and get it regularly?

IN LOS ANGELES:

The Minneapolis Trials

A PROTEST MEETING

SPEAKERS:

V. R. DUNNE DR. CLINTON TAFT

ASSEMBLYMAN PAUL RICHIE

EMBASSY AUDITORIUM, SOUTH HALL

GRAND AND NORTH

SUNDAY, MAY, 3, AT 8:00 P. M.

Auspices: Civil Rights Defense Committee

Labor Casts Its Balance For the Year--

(Continued from page 1)

crats and the Stalinist machine clashing with the ranks in the shops. The Stalinists' reactionary role in the labor movement is demonstrated by every action they take. It is not merely a question of their bureaucratic methods, their violation of all trade union principles of democracy, but of their functioning as stooges for the companies. They become "efficiency experts" in the same crude manner of the company efficiency experts, that, is speed-up artists.

The fact that our movement's policies of defending the rights of labor, of attacking the war profiteers, and of exposing the Merchants of Death finds the greatest sympathy and response among the workers in the shops, accounts for the Trotskyist witch hunt the Stalinists have begun on a national scale.

As one delegate at the shipyard conference told some Stalinists: "You see a Trotskyite under your bed every night."

For Trotskyism today is becoming synonymous with defense of labor's rights. The fusion between the movement and the masses is becoming a reality. Nothing illustrates this more clearly than the widespread increase in the working class circulation and support for LABOR ACTION—and the fact that the Stalinists continually seek to suppress its appearance (as well as that of other radical papers) before the workers.

In many unions in America, for the first time, the ranks, feeling both their own strength and the exploitation of the industrialists, are resisting and finding themselves called "Trotskyists."

Militants and "Lewisism"

Since the John L. Lewis forces in the labor movement are an imposing machine, it is understandable and regrettable that many militants find themselves partly gravitating toward "Lewisism" rather than finding their way into the ranks of the movement.

But a greater drive and more activity among the workers, especially the expansion of LABOR ACTION, to present the views of the Workers Party, will make our movement more of a magnetic force of attraction.

Sticking to the ideals and purposes, for which May Day has become an historic symbol is part of our May Day celebration, our dedication to the rich tradition of this workers' holiday, and the Stalinist mockery of May Day, serves to make clear to the workers the division between these two political tendencies.

The fact that the ranks of labor resist at every step the attacks of the bosses, and that they fight to reject the reactionary policies of the despicable turncoats who are at the top of the union movement today is the best sign on this May Day of the bright future of tomorrow.

In the present situation, and its development during the coming period, the prospects are unlimited for the movement. As always, the key question becomes one of building cadres of workers, of building the Workers Party, thoroughly imbued with the great teachings of Marxism.

Re-Write Job

Lady Bantock was trying to write new verses for the workers' revolutionary song, the "International." The song, as our readers know, begins:

"Arise, ye prisoners of starvation,
"Arise, ye wretched of the earth..."

Lady Bantock's version began:
"Awake, O sleepers, from your dreaming,
"Uplift, uplift your longing eyes..."

And, mind you, don't get your nightdresses dirty, dearies!

From the British New Leader.

Whose Victory? Whose Equality? Whose Sacrifice? The UAW "Victory Through Equality of Sacrifice" Program

By David Coolidge

In opening the "War Emergency Conference" of the UAW in Detroit, President Thomas remarked that the conference was called "to consider the role we are to play in the prosecution of the War." The leadership of the UAW following the CIO leadership had a program to present to the "conference" on this vital question. There were 1,400 delegates present to hear what their leaders had to say.

The "main point is the winning of the war," said Thomas. "We all have to make sacrifices, labor must make sacrifices," Thomas continued. "I can stand here and say that labor must not give up a damn thing in this war. You might applaud me today but tomorrow in the day of defeat you would curse me as a betrayer of our country."

This was the keynote speech of the conference so far as the international board was concerned. The "program for the nation" was then taken up. It is called "Victory Through Equality of Sacrifice." It is this program that I wish to consider briefly.

It should be clearly understood by all of us that this "program" and the method of its adoption were really based on the decision of the leadership to capitulate to the bosses and Roosevelt. Furthermore the "program" is based on a false conception of the independent role of the unions and the relation of the working class to imperialist war. (To be sure Thomas and the CIO-AFL leaders do not say that it is an imperialist war. Some of them know that it is but for reasons which I will discuss later they befuddle the workers with claptrap such as we reported in last week's *Labor Action* in the article on the conference.)

BECOMING SACRIFICE-CONSCIOUS

The CIO-AFL leaders, Murray, Green, Thomas and others, want the workers to become sacrifice-conscious. "A Program for the Nation" says: "within this war effort there can be no room for special privilege or gain by any group or individual. Labor has recognized this from the outset of the war."

What does this really mean coming from the leadership of a great militant international union? When we read such sentiments last year and this, in the capitalist press, when we read such statements made by the reactionaries in Congress we know exactly what they are talking about. We know because we know whom they represent. We know that when the bosses, their press and their congressmen talk in this manner they are trying to fool and mislead labor. The bosses and their stooges know that industry is not going to make any real sacrifices. They intend to go right on with their "special privilege" and their tremendous financial gains and profits.

What would Thomas and Murray consider "special privilege or gain" by labor? Was time and a half and double time on Sunday "special privilege and gain" for labor? Is the demand of the steel workers for a dollar a day increase in pay "special privilege and gain"? Is this what labor has recognized... from the outset of the war?

When Thomas and the UAW leadership use the exact language and take the same position on this question as the bosses and the capitalist press, whom are they bargaining for; for labor or for the bosses? When Thomas, Addes, Reuther, Leonard, Frankenstein, Kerrigan and the rest talk just like Witherow, Ford, Sloan and Wilson; then we say that they are no longer bargaining for labor but for the bosses and a boss government conducting the second world imperialist war.

THOMAS WANTS LABOR TO RETREAT

Thomas and Murray call on labor to give up more, to do more sacrificing while at the same time they parade before labor all the sacrifices that the working class has already made. They not only admit that labor has made tremendous sacrifices but they also admit that only labor has made any sacrifice at all. The "Program for the Nation" says: "the men and women of labor have cheerfully paid their share of steeply increased taxes; their contribution in this respect is altogether out of proportion to their comparative ability to pay. Labor has voluntarily foregone its priceless freedom of economic action, its right to strike." (It should be remarked right here that labor did not "voluntarily" forego its "right to strike." Murray and Thomas, under pressure from the bosses and Roosevelt, gave up labor's right to strike without asking labor's opinion on the matter.)

Who says that labor pays these outrageous taxes "cheerfully;" this is nonsense and Thomas knows this. Labor knows who should be paying the taxes for the support of this war even if Thomas and the CIO leadership don't.

"Labor has made sacrifices and will continue to make them without complaint." No one who stayed awake during the six hours discussion at the Detroit conference could draw any such conclusion as this. How does Thomas know that labor will continue to permit itself to be sold down the river for the duration of the war?

Where did Thomas, the "socialist" Reuther and Addes get the idea from for their "equality of sacrifice" slogan? From Donald Nelson, the \$70,000 a year Sears Roebuck executive and head of the War Production Board? "Before a congressional committee several

months ago" says the "program," "Mr. Nelson called for 'equality of sacrifice' in the war effort. The time is overdue to make this slogan a reality."

And how do Thomas, Addes and Reuther proceed to make "this slogan a reality?" They come into the "conference" with the proposal that labor sacrifice more right at the time the bosses are grabbing more and more and sacrificing absolutely nothing.

CONTRAST THIS WITH STANDARD OIL

This conference was held just a few days after the officers of Standard Oil of New Jersey had been called traitors by a United States Senator and at a time when the large corporations were brazenly reporting big increases for 1941 over the already huge blood profits of 1940.

"In furtherance of these principles the UAW-CIO asserts its adherence to the following commitments." First what principles are Thomas, Addes, the Reuthers and the others talking about? All they have talked about is the things that labor has given up. Labor has "cheerfully paid... increased taxes... out of proportion to their comparative ability to pay. Labor has foregone... its right to strike. Labor has waived its contractual rights to double pay for Sundays and holidays... the foregoing of this right by labor... means the acceptance of substantial wage cuts."

Therefore in the "furtherance of these principles" the UAW leadership proposed that labor do more sacrificing. Sundays and holidays shall be treated as ordinary working days. The pledge not to strike is reaffirmed. They agree on a 24-hour day, seven day week with a swing shift schedule. "To the above conditions we commit ourselves without conditions."

After giving up everything the UAW leadership gets down to the business of "equality of sacrifice." They submit their "program for the nation." They want all profiteering ended with all earning over 3 per cent going to the government. They insist on "no war-time millionaires. During the war salaries and incomes should be no higher than \$25,000 a year. Wages should be adjusted to meet living costs." They don't say how the workers will get this since the leaders have given up the right to strike for the workers. There are other points in the 10 point program but these are the main points aside from the last.

SHOULD LABOR GIVE UP OVERTIME PAY?

When industry consents to the above "we agree that all wages for time over 40 hours per week shall be paid in the form of non-negotiable SPECIAL DEFENSE BONDS. This will mean a tremendous source of income

for our government for financing the war effort. It will at the same time relieve the existing pressure toward rising prices, and will create a cushion of purchasing power for the post-war period."

Could any group of slaves make a more miserable, cowardly and abject proposal? Thomas and his board talk in point 5 about adjusting wages to meet the increased cost of living and then in point ten say that all our wages over 40 hours per week the government should take and save it for us. Then when our present bosses kick us out when the war is over, the government will have something to feed us on for a while. Then the government will not have to tax our bosses for unemployed relief. They will be able to keep all the millions they have piled up during the war. We will sacrifice now and go hungry so that the bosses will not have to pay for feeding us after the war is over.

It is no small wonder that this "program for the nation" created such a furor at the "War Emergency Conference." It is no wonder that Thomas and the board kept the "program" concealed until the morning the conference opened. It is easy to understand why they did not submit it to the locals in advance for discussion. They knew that this sell-out would be kicked over by the UAW membership if they got a fair crack at it.

It is a fact, the Murrays, Greens and Thomases are willing to strip labor and leave us naked. They are bargaining for the bosses, for the war-mongers, for the National Association of Manufacturers and the Automobile Chamber of Commerce. If labor wants to come out of this war with even its shirt left it will have to assert its rights, it will have to ignore the "bargains" the Greens, Murrays and Thomases are getting for the working class.

Labor can do nothing if the strike is given up. Not the "right to strike" but the strike in fact when it is necessary. The picket line is the only weapon that will guarantee "adjustment of wages to meet increased living costs."

It is only the mass economic and political organization, swelling ever larger, zealous political and more militant that can "end all war profiteering." It is only the mass organization of the working class that will bring us through this war with a shirt left.

It is only the mass economic and political organization of the working class now, in every capitalist country that can "win the peace" for the working class and establish that "post-war planning" that is working class planning and a working class victory.

Exposing the Merchants of Death--

(Continued from page 1)

Merchants of Death, we are certain that they will be shown to be just as competent in their gruesome game as their European brothers.

Don't you remember the story of how, during the first crusade to make the world safe for democracy, English soldiers would pick up bits of shell fired from German guns and identify them as made in Britain. (Today, American troops can have the consolation of knowing, likewise, that they are being shot at by bullets made... from New York's 6th Avenue E.)

It gradually became common knowledge in recent years that the Germans and French had an agreement in the last war that the Germans wouldn't bomb the Dombasle iron basin and the French in turn wouldn't bomb the Brier iron basin in Germany (which was owned by French capitalists).

After all, business is business. And in this Second World War the same thing was repeated.

Trade Between Enemies

In a remarkable article which Frank Hanighen wrote in the March, 1940, issue of Harper's Magazine, he described in detail how, while the present war was being fought (yes, this war "to make the world safe for democracy and to destroy fascism") the French and German industrialists were continuing their profitable trade, supplying each other with ingredients necessary for war production.

Hanighen wrote:

"German coke has been shipped to France via neutral Belgium. German coke has been shipped to French industrialists in neutral Luxembourg."

"French iron ore has been shipped to Germany via neutral Belgium and Luxembourg."

"French industrialists in Luxembourg have been shipping German iron ore from their Luxembourg mines and steel from their Luxembourg mills."

"French and German directors three months before the war (and today too, so far as it is known) are sitting on the same banking board in Luxembourg."

"Tools, machinery and implements have also been exchanged between Germany and France via Belgium."

"A Franco-German agreement, tacit or otherwise, to refrain from shelling each other's factories, seems to be in force."

And all the while French and British lads were bleeding on the battlefields to "save democracy" and the German boys were dying to "smash the plutocrats."

The Real Winners

But it was the giant plutocratic capitalist cartels—the ARBED and HADIR—which had interests in steel and munitions factories on both sides of the fence that were really winning.

It was the Banque Internationale de Luxembourg with four Frenchmen (representing the Schneider munitions interests) and three Germans representing the Dresden bank and the Nazi munitions cartel that were cashing in on both sides.

This is the picture of the capitalist world gone mad—profits, profits above all. Everything else is just so much hogwash designed to trick the unwary into surrendering their lives for these profits.

And cannot the same be said for Rockefeller's Standard Oil, for du Pont's Remington Arms, for Mellon's ALCOA?

They are the Merchants of Death, the traders in blood who pile their fortunes atop mountains of skeletons. They are the true representatives of this wretched capitalist system—the capitalist class in the ugly nude.

FDR to Ask For Wage Freezing--

(Continued from page 1)

The National Association of Manufacturers this week announced its intention again of resisting to the bitter end any attempt of the CIO and AFL to obtain a union or closed shop during wartime, as well as peacetime.

This open declaration of war against the labor movement, carried in full page advertisements in the Washington papers, was so reactionary that it was repudiated by the employer representatives of the War Labor Board as a gesture to the irate CIO and AFL leaders whose weaknesses are being exposed in this maneuvering around with workers' demands on the various Washington boards.

But the War Labor Board has thus far not only not granted a closed shop to any important union, but has rejected all attempts of the CIO to obtain a union shop in various industries.

Of Course the Workers Can Run Industry Without Coupon Clippers!

Why Should Labor Be the Tail to the Capitalist Kite?

By SUSAN GREEN

Must labor be the tail to the capitalist kite?

Those worthies, the capitalists, and all their political and literary lieutenants answer, Yes. This is to be expected.

What is out of order, however, is that men and women who parade as leaders of labor also answer Yes. For a labor leader—political or in the unions—to wish no future for the working class except as a tail to the capitalist kite, inevitably makes him a misleader of labor.

To the capitalist-dominated labor leadership it is sufficient to fight for concessions from the bosses through union action—for labor to "reward its friends and punish its enemies" in politics—to sit in on labor-management-government committees, and thus pressed in between the bosses and their government try to get something for labor. But the idea of labor cutting loose from the capitalist kite gives goose pimples to these conservative labor officials and leaders. They fear labor's power as much as do the capitalists themselves.

The opposition of so-called leaders of labor to the working class taking power is in large measure responsible for the fact that the imperialist classes throughout the world still rule and were in a position to plunge humanity into this Second World War.

The French Turncoats

If in France, for instance, the socialists and Stalinists had not turned traitors to the workers in their great sit-down strikes, the world today would be a better place to live in. The French workers were then ready to oust the capitalists, take over production and reorganize society under a workers' government. This would have undermined Nazism in Germany and changed the course of events in Europe and in the entire world. But so scared of labor's power were those turncoats whom French labor had regarded as its leaders that they tightened the knot fastening the working people to the capitalist kite—even though that kite was rapidly plunging to the ground.

LABOR ACTION has unqualified faith in the workers as the future rulers of society. It has nothing but scorn for those who contend that if labor assumes control of production and government, anarchy will result. On the contrary, LABOR ACTION proclaims that because labor does not perform its historic role of establishing a socialist society, it is subjected to the destruction of war and the anarchy of post-war periods.

Long before this war and long before the last war, those revolutionary socialists who see for labor a future freed from the profit system of capitalism, have proved with facts and figures that the boss class

is entirely superfluous as far as the real productive processes are concerned. The function of the capitalist owners has for a long time been merely to control and maneuver the course of industry to yield the most profits.

The actual production lines are manned by the industrial workers. The real production managers, engineers, inventors, technicians are also paid employees who could carry on under workers' ownership and control much better because they would be unhampered by the restrictions of the profit motive of the capitalist owners.

They Never Would Be Missed!

Now the war affords fresh and additional evidence that the owners of industry are definitely on the list of those who never would be missed. The present war proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that capitalist industry is a goose laying golden eggs for its owners and that capitalist ownership is a straightjacket on production.

Who Owns America?

Facts and Figures on America's Sixty Families

In his message to Congress on April 20, 1938, President Roosevelt said: "Statistics of the Bureau of Internal Revenue reveal the following amazing figures for 1935:

"Ownership of corporate assets: Of all the corporations reporting from every part of the nation, one-tenth of one per cent of them owned 52 per cent of the assets of all of them.

"And to clinch the point: Of all corporations reporting, less than five per cent of them owned 87 per cent of all the assets of all of them.

"Income and profits of corporations: Of all the corporations reporting from every part of the country, one-tenth of one per cent of them earned 50 per cent of the net income of all of them.

"And to clinch the point: Of all the manufacturing corporations reporting, less than four per cent of them earned 84 per cent of all the net profits of all of them."

This important quotation from the President's speech shows once again that the basic industrial and financial control of this country resides in the hands of a few great capitalist corporations, known as the Sixty Families (also occasionally going under the name of Merchants of Death.)

As a matter of fact, the disparity in wealth in this country is tremendous. The top few have almost everything; the mass of people almost nothing.

According to the Temporary National Economic Committee, "less than three per cent of the families of the nation have such a large proportion of both wealth and income as to dominate American economic life."

The 394 biggest corporations—less than 1/10 of 1 per cent of the total number of corporations—owned almost 45 per cent of all corporate assets. And the same thing was true of incomes. In 1929, the 3/10 of 1 per cent of the nation's corporations which had assets of over \$1,000,000 swallowed no less than 80 per cent of the total corporation income. And in 1937, the corporations with total assets of over \$5,000,000 received 40 per cent of the total national income.

And finally, there is the fact that "fully one-half of all corporate stock dividends are received by less than 75,000 persons of the 130,000,000 who inhabit the United States."

That, then, is a glimpse at the picture of capitalist America. Concentration of wealth on one pole—concentration of poverty on the other pole. Must it always be so? Why can't the workers run the country themselves?

A year ago Packard and other corporations refused to take the first government contracts until they were guaranteed the profits they thought fitting and proper. Today shipyard workers are demanding that such outfits as Bethlehem Steel Corp. be investigated by the FBI because these outfits of industry are more interested in cost-plus profits than in efficient production.

The Truman report has revealed the magnetic charm exercised by the dollar—a year industrialists in the government to start the flow of war profits in the desired directions. And could there be any more obvious demonstration of the complete uselessness of the industrial rulers than to see them by the hundreds packing up bag and baggage to migrate to the fleshpots in Washington?

Their absence from industry has not caused a single factory wheel to stop turning. "The Dogs in the Manger of Industry" would be a fitting title for the story of modern capitalists.

While the war has completely unmasked the uselessness of the bosses, organized labor has shown itself capable of nation-wide industrial planning. The Reuther Plan was so technically efficient that the bosses and the government did not dare adopt it all at once for fear of the prestige it would give labor. But everyone knows that the Reuther Plan was adopted piecemeal before war production got on its way in the auto industry.

The Reuther Plan

One of the editors of such a pillar of the bourgeois press as Harpers Magazine was carried away by his enthusiasm over this contribution by labor:

"The Reuther Plan had been a brilliant natural," he wrote, "and the more it was kicked around the more of a natural it became, whether the union got in on the management or not."

The Reuther Plan is the best known, but is only one of the many industrial schemes submitted by organized labor in this period. For instance, there was the union idea for producing refrigerators needed for the preservation of food even though a war is on. Raymond Clapper, columnist for the Scripps-Howard papers, commented:

"The only mystery about this is why, after two and a half years with all the industrial brains assembled here at Washington, and after all the official studies of what the British are doing in that line, it remains for some union people to bring up the idea."

While the Bombs Burst

The lack of ideas on the part of both the industrial and political brains is not a mystery. The bosses are too busy making money while the bombs burst over the world, and the politicians are too closely connected with the industrial masters. Here are the fetters on the wings of progressive ideas.

Labor alone is free for progressive industrial planning. Unwittingly Clapper, the columnist for a newspaper syndicate far from friendly to labor, gives the reason why LABOR ACTION has been advocating the conscription of war industries under workers' control.

"The realistic grasp of the problems of production that organized labor has shown itself to have should give every worker a thrill of confidence in himself and in his class. The glaring contrast between the progressiveness of organized labor and the fear of innovations characterizing both capital and government, is something every worker should understand—the working class is the class of the future, while the capitalist class is the class of the past."

It is a great human tragedy that labor's social creativeness should

come to the fore in answer to the needs of destructive war. But what labor does for a war from which it has nothing but trouble to reap, it can do a hundred times better for the constructive pursuits of peace. The Reuthers today are not inclined to lead the workers to their historic goal, to break loose from the capitalist kite and take over production and government in their own right. But what matter? The Reuthers rose from the ranks of labor. There are and will be others from the ranks to lead the workers to the social power that is rightfully theirs—when the working class as a whole wants it so.

On Our Own!

It is time for the workers to laugh in the faces of the demagogues of all political shades, with their windy promises to do this and that for labor. Labor doesn't need anybody to do anything for it—and furthermore nobody will do anything for labor. Labor can and must get on its own. It has the numbers, it has the industrial power, it has the progressive ideas, it has the executive ability in its own ranks. It needs only to sever the knot that keeps it tailing the capitalist kite.

There are in this period three major threats hanging over the heads of the working people: post-war chaos, fascism rising in this country, future wars. All of these dangers flow from a common spring—the concentration of industrial and political power in the hands of the few against the many.

This war is demonstrating the power and ability of labor to dam up the poisonous spring. The future can be shaped by the workers in

IN PHILADELPHIA:

Celebrate May Day!

PAUL TEMPLE

Organizer, Workers Party

SPEAKS ON

"The Third May Day of the War"

SUNDAY, MAY 3, AT 8:15 P. M.

431 PINE STREET

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

To make a purchase of a couple of pounds of onions these days is a sure way of bringing tears to the eyes figuratively speaking. This distress is not caused by the strength of the onions, but by the height of their price.

Last fall onions were three pounds for ten cents. Then they climbed to three for fourteen. A while later it took fifteen cents to get only two pounds. Today eleven cents buys just one pound of that cooking necessity, the onion.

Why this price increase of 330 per cent in a few months?

Why should a cotton blanket be one price on Monday and 50 per cent higher on Tuesday?

Why should a pair of shoes be marked up 50 cents in a few hours?

And why is everything else being marked up—except the wages that the working man turns over to his one-and-only-for household expenses?

The government is taking a mighty long time getting around to stopping price profiteering. In the meantime the dollar shrinks daily. Presumably this is in line with the government policy that the people must get used to sacrifices. The profiteers, however, are fast becoming so accustomed to fancy war prices that they will be very unwilling to give them up—if and when Mr. Henderson politely asks them to.

If price fixing were in the hands of the workers themselves, it would be at the head of the list of things to be done—not at the bottom.

In a certain sense the shortages of eggs, meats and other foods are being overcome in England. The profit seekers who miss no chance to turn a dishonest million pounds or so, have put out a number of "substitutes."

Mr. William Dayles, American correspondent in London, writes about "Peakegg—Egg Substitute Powder." The manufacturer proclaims that two ounces of "Peakegg" stirred in water is the same as ten beaten eggs. But Mr. Dayles reports that "no hen ever laid eyes on Peakegg."

After many months and after thousands of housewives had thrown away their money on this fake "egg substitute," government chemists "discovered" that "Peakegg" was "nothing more than flour, bicarbonate of soda, a touch of dye and a little gum," says Mr. Dayles.

This correspondent also writes that many English workmen pay for pork sausage but get "oil-soaked bread crumbs stuffed into cellophane." And there is a product on the market called "Meatlike." According to Mr. Dayles, its composition defies analysis. "One thing is certain, it contains no meat."

After income taxes, withholding taxes, sales taxes and other taxes, little enough money is left for working people to spend on food. Apparently Mr. Churchill's "democratic" government doesn't consider it necessary to see to it that the people get REAL food for their precious shillings!

Negroes are discriminated against in the army and navy. Negro workers of both sexes have the doors of industry slammed in their faces. The federal and local governments allow negroes to be barred from their homes in Sojourner Truth. The "imperial" government of the State and City of New York have been aware that Negro children are kept out of children's institutions—and have done nothing about it. This is the latest race discrimination scandal.

It appears that at least nineteen private child-caring agencies in the State bar Negro children from entrance. Most people do not know that many of these private institutions get financial support from the public treasury. They are paid a given amount per week for each child accepted as a public charge. Some institutions are almost entirely subsidized in this way out of public funds. New York City alone pays out at least a million dollars a year to the very nineteen institutions known to discriminate against Negro youngsters.

The old-law tenement house at 1795 Lexington Avenue, New York City, went up in a blaze early the other morning. The toll was one dead and several injured. The dead victim was an old man of 76.

A few days before that, another old-law tenement caught fire. This was in lower west side Manhattan. The casualties of dead and injured there were greater, including little children trapped in their beds.

Inconspicuous items in the daily press constantly check off the victims of landlord greed and of the unwillingness of capitalist society to attend to the vital business of providing adequate housing.

In New York City alone 500,000 families live in old-law tenement fire-traps. The government housing program was a mere drop in the ocean of actual needs—and even this farce has been discontinued in favor of building battleships at \$100,000,000 per.

A modern project that could shelter 17,500 parents and children in comfort and safety costs around \$20,000,000—only one-fifth the price of a single battleship. This is information everybody should have. Thus the \$120,000,000,000 war budget, if used for peaceful construction, could make of this country a garden paradise for the people to enjoy.

What is wrong with this picture? Only one thing—The wealth of the country and control of its expenditures are not where they belong, namely, with the workers who create the wealth.

"It was sad to read of two more of our destroyers being lost. I cannot bear to think of the many women whose hearts ache for the boys and men who are lost with each of these ships; as well as any one of the airplanes that fall to come back from a raid, or that crash somewhere in this country or in foreign parts. These days are terrible ones for the men themselves and for the women who wait at home for news. So many of the boys are very young and, under ordinary circumstances, would have their whole lives before them."

These are words that go to the heart of every one of us—even if we don't agree politically with their author. But working women must look with suspicion on Mrs. Roosevelt's next sentence: "I wonder if women in every country are making up their minds that out of this war there shall come some kind of permanent peace."

"Some kind of permanent peace" is much too vague, Mrs. Roosevelt. These words sound like the old gag used in the last war, namely, that it was a war to end all war.

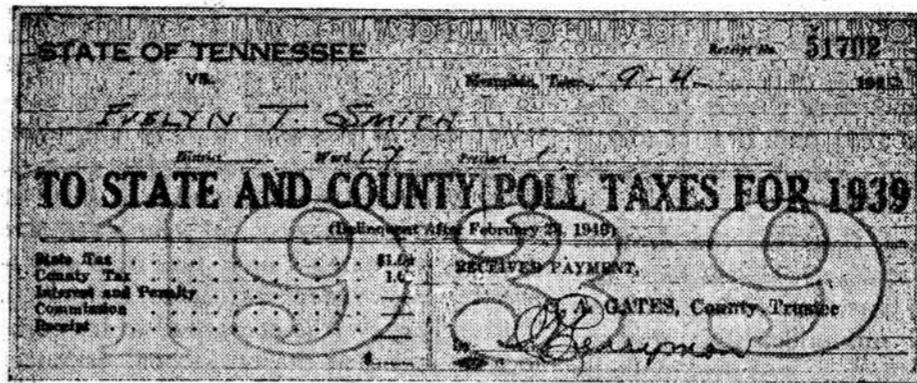
No kind of permanent peace can come while the proletariat, capitalist, imperialist classes of each nation remain in power. This second world war, which is again annihilating the youth of the earth, is ample proof that permanent peace requires a Socialist world.

This thought should fill the mind of every working woman in every country on this May Day—dedicated to the struggle of the international working class.

Is This the Road to Negro Freedom?

What's Wrong With "Double V" Plan

SYMBOL OF SOUTHERN DEMOCRACY



The Pittsburgh Courier, a prominent Negro paper, together with a number of Negro leaders have recently been active in pressing a "Double V" campaign. This "Double V" campaign is intended to get across the idea of a fight on two fronts—in support of the American war effort, and against Jim Crowism at home.

This, too, was the theme of the recent meeting of the Office of Facts and Figures in Washington where some fifty Negro leaders met to discuss the problem of racial discrimination in an effort to end present apathy of most Negroes towards the war. It is no exaggeration to say, we believe, that one of the major motives in starting such campaigns as Double V is the desire on the part of the Negro leaders to more efficiently central the skeptical Negro people into the imperialist war. So far, all oratorical appeals have met with slight success—Sikeston is a thousand times more effective, Sojourner Truth a thousand times more eloquent than any pap which Walter White or Dean Pickens can throw out about "sacrificing for patriotism."

The Negro people do not seem to be able to reconcile all this talk about "democracy" with the facts that they know: discrimination, lynching, poll-tax, Jim Crowism, poverty. And we doubt if anyone can reconcile them.

ANTI-NEGRO TERROR INCREASES

As a matter of actual fact, the outbreaks of anti-Negro terrorism have been more severe and frequent since the beginning of the war than they were before. The same thing was true during the last war. And the reason is clear: the powers-that-be, especially in the South, while quite willing to utilize talk of "democracy" for war propaganda, fear that the Negroes may take it seriously and therefore they increase their terroristic actions against the Negroes.

And in this very fact is shown the basic error of the Double V campaign. The Pittsburgh Courier, and the rest, do not realize or deliberately ignore the fact that the very same forces which conduct the war of which they approve, are also the Jim Crows.

If these Negro leaders were truly interested in

real democracy at home they would have to expose the futility of expecting it under the present set-up. They would have to point out that President Roosevelt to whom they appeal for equal rights depends for a large part of his political support on the white voters of the Jim-Crow South. They would have to point out the futility of waiting for the government to end the oppressions of the Negro people when that government is run in the interests of the big industrialists who foster race hatred in an effort to keep black and white workers apart. They would have to tell the people that they can expect no help from the government but can win the fight only through the militant struggle of Negro and white labor alike.

WHAT ABOUT AFRICA AND INDIA?

But there is still another thing that the double V campaign overlooks. Even if it were possible to destroy the racial prejudice fostered by the ruling class in America—even if it were possible to establish democracy at home, what about de-

mocracy abroad? The shameful treatment of the Negro people in America is not the only reason for their feeling that this is not their war. American Negroes know only too well the treatment that their brothers in India, Africa and the Indies have received at the hands of the "democracies." The famous Atlantic charter which spoke with such great eloquence about democracy in Europe had not a word to say about the colonies owned by the allies. Churchill when asked how the charter would effect the people of Nigeria answered that the charter applied only to those countries now controlled by the Axis. The double V has forgotten the third front of the colonies—where live the most oppressed people of all.

Jim Crowism and the imperialist war are not two, separate phenomena. They are manifestations of the same rotten society—capitalism. Capitalism fights an imperialist war in its interests and it Jim Crows Negroes in its interests. To fight one in any fundamental way requires a struggle against the other.

Britain's Political Crisis and the Role of the Independent Labor Party

By HENRY JUDD

"British capitalism cannot fight Nazism. All it can do is wage an old-fashioned imperialist war—and wage it inefficiently at that." (Walter Padly, in the British New Leader.)

It is as clear as daylight that England is rapidly approaching a crisis in its history.

No country can undergo a series of disastrous military and political defeats, year after year, without experiencing the most serious internal reactions. This is happening in England today. The fact that things are—at the moment—rather quiet should not fool us for a moment. It is a typical "quiet before the storm."

To summarize what has happened to England in almost three years of warfare is a simple matter.

(1) The unwieldy but mighty British Empire, ruling 550 millions of people and providing the economic and political basis upon which England itself has rested for centuries, is experiencing its dying agonies. A goodly section of it is already gone (either by direct conquest into Japanese-Axis hands; or by economic conquest into American hands). The rest of the empire (India, Ceylon and Africa) are faced with imminent invasion. Britannia no longer rules the waves; the "sun that never sets" now casts but a few dim shadows. These are FACTS, not opinions.

(2) The ruling class of Great Britain (headed by Churchill) has proved itself an utter military and political failure. The latest (and probably most disastrous) of its defeats was the abysmal failure of the Cripps mission to India. England's capitalist class not only cannot organize the nation's war industries for all-out war efforts; not only cannot make a revolutionary-political appeal to the peoples of Europe and Germany (to whom it offers, for instance, the "Free French" monarchist, de Gaulle); it cannot even arrive at a temporary settlement or agreement with the most conservative nationalists of India (Nehru and Gandhi). Truly, such a leadership cannot be expected to offer a program to England's people now.

(3) The ruling class of Great Britain (headed by Churchill) has proved itself an utter military and political failure. The latest (and probably most disastrous) of its defeats was the abysmal failure of the Cripps mission to India. England's capitalist class not only cannot organize the nation's war industries for all-out war efforts; not only cannot make a revolutionary-political appeal to the peoples of Europe and Germany (to whom it offers, for instance, the "Free French" monarchist, de Gaulle); it cannot even arrive at a temporary settlement or agreement with the most conservative nationalists of India (Nehru and Gandhi). Truly, such a leadership cannot be expected to offer a program to England's people now.

PEOPLE ANXIOUS FOR GREAT CHANGES

Yet, as Harold Laski wrote on January 19 in the Reynolds News: "I doubt whether there has been a time in our history since the Chartist movement when the mind of the masses was either prepared or so anxious for great changes as now."

This is the essence of Britain's approaching crisis: the revolutionary mood of the people as contrasted with the bankruptcy of their ruling class. This is why England's crisis is a class crisis; a political crisis in which the workers are pitted against the boss, capitalist class.

In the midst of this situation there are only two left-wing labor organizations that present a serious political program of action to the British working class. The traditional party of the workers, the British Labor Party, is deeply involved in the crisis itself since it has become completely tied up (by way of the Bevinnes, Attlees and Morrisons) with the Churchill government. The conservative leaders of British labor have placed their fate completely in the hands of the tottering politicians and bankrupts of England.

The two organizations we refer to are (1) the Workers International League (Fourth International) and (2) the Independent Labor Party.

Unfortunately, the WIL—if its newspaper, Socialist Appeal, and its publications are any evidence—does not appear to have very much influence or support among the more politically advanced British workers. While its political program is undoubtedly more correct than that of

the ILP, it seems to suffer from a mechanical sectarianism and political "orthodoxy" that are reflected in the abstract slogans and its lifeless repetition, "to the letter" of the policies advocated by The Militant in America. Its major political effort is directed toward readmittance to the British Labor Party, from which it was expelled shortly after the war began.

More important from the standpoint of immediate developments in England is the British Independent Labor Party (publisher of the New Leader), many extracts from whose press and publications we have occasionally printed in LABOR ACTION.

ILP HAS GROWN CONSIDERABLY

There is no doubt whatsoever that the ILP has grown considerably in size and influence since the war began. This is proved by the character of its paper, the New Leader, by reports on the activities of the ILP and its members, by the publicity and notice it is given in the capitalist press today in the life of England.

What is this party like? What does it do? What does it stand for? Since the ILP will be heard from increasingly as England's crisis grows, it is important to learn all we can about this organization. The ILP is a growing organization which has gained most of its support because of its opposition to the war and its program for a "Socialist Britain Now." It participates actively in the British labor movement and has many prominent trade unionists as members; it is the principal organizing force behind Britain's shop steward movement, a movement which is now in violent clash with the boss-collaboration, labor-management committees of the English Stalinists; it has an active group of spokesmen in the British Parliament and takes part regularly in local and national elections.

As a sign of its political strength we can cite two recent elections, one in Scotland, the other in Wales. In the Edinburgh contest, the ILP candidate got 1,950 (29 per cent) of the votes. In the Wales election, where Fenner Brockway, editor of the New Leader, opposed the "Colonel Blimp" candidate of Churchill's cabinet, Sir Griggs, the ILP candidate got 3,300 votes (25 per cent of the total). This later election was of national significance.

ILP STANDS FOR THE THIRD CAMP

Many of the political ideas and proposals of the ILP (as contained in their publications) are of a genuinely revolutionary character. The party has consistently denounced the war as an imperialist fraud and berated the Labor Party for its support to the war. It stands for the "Third Camp" of workers' action against the two war camps. It has carried on excellent exposés of boss profiteering, black market scandals, imperialist dirty work in the colonies, etc. Its immediate program of action is based upon the unfair and uneven burden of the war which rests upon the English workers. The party has likewise agitated for freedom to all the British colonies and—particularly

in the Parliamentary speeches of McGovern—has yanked hard at the Tory-imperialist tail of Winston Churchill.

At the moment, the ILP has launched a campaign known as the "Socialist Britain Now" campaign. This has received wide publicity and is apparently being conducted with some success, since it answers the needs of the hour. There are five principal slogans in the campaign:

- (1) Equality of War Burdens, by taxation, price control, etc.
- (2) Workers' Control of Industry.
- (3) Liberation of the Colonies of the British Empire.
- (4) Aid to Soviet Russia.
- (5) A Socialist Peace Offensive by a British socialist government.

Likewise, the ILP campaigns militantly against growing reactionary tendencies in the country. As its resolution presented at the party's annual Easter convention (reports of which are not yet available here) states:

"As this war develops, the economic and political structure of Britain approximates steadily toward a dictatorship. Military and industrial conscription, the prohibition of strikes, the tying down of workers to their jobs, etc...."

There is no doubt that the ILP is receiving its response because it has formulated answers to many of the questions being asked by Britain's workers.

We cannot but approve and welcome every militant step forward on the part of Britain's working class, particularly in view of the severe situation that is coming. To cover up their bankruptcy there are indications that the British rulers will attempt to institute in full some sort of a brutal, military dictatorship. Is the ILP fully prepared to meet this, can it lead Britain's workers to success?

SOME DOUBTS AND CRITICISMS

Here, while fully recognizing all the excellent and progressive work done by this party, we must frankly voice our doubts and criticisms. We do not agree with the ILP on many things—obviously, for example, its position of defense of the Soviet Union. Likewise, its inability to clearly formulate what it means by its "Peace Campaign," as contrasted with the "Appeasement—come to terms with Hitler" campaign of a group of British rulers and capitalists.

The ILP is confused and contradictory on many important political points. This reflects the confused character of its membership, many of whom are religious pacifists, reformists and reformers, conscientious objectors, etc. For the ILP is not a really unified, homogeneous revolutionary party. It ranges all the way from the conservative Parliamentarians (led by the erratic James Maxton) to revolutionary socialist militants, with experienced jugglers and political tight-rope walkers like Fenner Brockway balancing the odd assortment together. Clearly, such a party is in process of evolution and will itself experience many internal crises and difficulties. Various resolutions offered by local branches to the Eastop Conference showed this. They ranged all the way from open pro-war resolutions, to resolutions urging preparations for a Workers Red Army in England!

LABOR ACTION, as in the past, will continue to report the development and activities of the ILP with all the interest and attention it deserves. The coming year in England will determine whether the ILP can measure up to the great revolutionary needs or whether it will befall the same fate as the Spanish POUM and the French PSOP (both similar political organizations). These parties failed to win political clarity and, as a consequence, perished in the political crisis that struck them. The ILP still has the time and possibility of learning those lessons.

The "People's Cherce"—Smith of Virginia

By Jean Riley

The modest gentleman from Virginia, Rep. Howard W. Smith, hardly lets a week pass without bringing forth some proposal to lower the living standards of the American workers.

Recently, he led the barrage in the House of Representatives against the Wage-Hour law, the barrage of lies taken up by the money-dominated press and radio of the country to deceive the American people into believing that the ceiling on hours interfered with the arms effort by preventing work over 40 hours, when all that it does require is payment of overtime wages, the barrage which was only relaxed when the small about deals between American and German Big Business showed who was really sabotaging the arms plan.

Smith's bill, which was an amendment to the second War Powers bill, would have suspended the 40-hour week for the rest of the war. It would have repealed every law enacted since 1892 to limit the normal work week and to require payment of overtime wages.

In 1940 Smith brought out his bill providing for a "cooling-off period" before a strike could be declared in a defense industry, designed to weaken greatly the strength of union workers. This bill would have made the closed shop illegal in defense territories, and provided for a sentence of life imprisonment for sabotage. **SOME MORE "ADVENTURES"**

In 1939 he introduced a bill which almost repeats the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, recommending that "aliens be confined in concentration camps for life if they belonged to any group which so much as 'advised a change' in the American form of government."

Thus, as Kenneth Crawford pointed out in The Nation, an alien member of the CIO could be jailed or deported, since the CIO advocates amendment of the Constitution to forbid child labor. This bill also provided for a \$10,000 fine and/or 10 years in prison for persons advocating overthrow of the government by force.

The year 1939 also saw the creation of the "Smith Committee of 5" to investigate the NLRB, which drew up the amendments to the Wagner Act denying the Labor Board the right to intervene in cases where two or more unions claim a majority. That meant no plant elections where the workers could decide democratically what organization they preferred.

During some of his earlier campaigns against the Wage-Hour Law, Smith actually advised some employers to IGNORE IT. He has voted against every major relief bill. He prevented the investigation of silicosis deaths in West Virginia. He killed appropriations for the tenant farmers of the South.

Again this week, Smith's name is attached, with that of Rep. Vinson, to a bill pending before the Naval Affairs Committee, outlawing closed shops and suspending the 40-hour week.

You begin to get curious about a guy who is so tireless in his efforts to bring the blessings of Hitler to the American working class, a man about whom Representative Norton had this to say: "I have yet to find a single labor bill for the benefit of workers of the country that he has ever voted for."

WHAT'S HIS BACKGROUND?

You ask yourself, "what sort of a man is he anyway and how does he get himself re-elected with such a record?"

Howard W. Smith is president of the Alexandria National Bank of Virginia, a landlord farmer, an important Virginia dairyman. And the truth is, that he and his buddies, those two great democrats, Sens. Glass and Byrd, personally run Virginia's political machine, and manage to re-elect themselves to Congress terms after terms AGAINST THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS. (Last election more votes were polled for one Northern Congress member, Rep. Mary T. Norton of New Jersey, than were cast for TEN Congressmen from the poll tax states. Smith and Woodrum of Virginia, Dies of Texas, Whittington and Ford of Mississippi, Hobbs of Alabama, and Starnes, Cox, Tarver, and Vinson of Georgia. Mrs. Norton polled 89,187 votes while the 10 Southerners combined got only 85,619.)

Down in the poll tax state you can vote in the manner prescribed by the constitution only if you can lay down the one or two dollars head tax each election day. If you work for a few cents a day picking cotton or in a non-union mill or factory, you aren't likely to have much left over to pay a tax on your head in order to vote. So you don't vote. OR SOMEBODY VOTES FOR YOU. Somebody who CAN pay the dollar or two that you and a lot of men and women can't.

The Virginia Democratic machine which is responsible for the presence of loyal labor-haters like Smith in Congress has a permanent "backlog" of 85,000 such voters for whom it has paid poll taxes, according to testimony given before a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, holding hearings on the Pepper anti-poll tax bill. Virginia's constitution forbids payment by one person of the poll tax of another. But this does not restrain the machine.

Poll tax receipts are bought up in blocks and distributed where they will do most good. It is impossible to prosecute the men who thus break the law, since they control every branch of the government, including the courts, and according to Moss A. Plunkett, a Roanoke, Va., lawyer and member of a league against the poll tax, anyone attempting to do so would be hounded and persecuted. Is it any wonder, then, that Smith is the main Congressional hatchet-man against labor?

By keeping the poll-tax in and the unions out of the South, by playing white against black workers, by disenfranchising the majority of the population, not only is he able to continue as one of the leading business men of his state; he is also able to play a leading role in bringing the living standards in the rest of the country down to the level of those in Virginia.

Negro Slavery in Africa

"Slavery" has been abolished in the British Empire, but "forced labor" remains and is to be extended. It is not clear what the difference is between the two.

All Africans in Kenya between 18 and 60 are required under a new Colonial Office Order to perform compulsory labor. The minimum period of forced labor is to be 84 days and the maximum twelve months.

After that the African can return to work for a time in his village, but he will soon be recalled. He will be exempted only for one quarter of his work period.

Anyone who resists the call-up may be fined five pounds sterling or imprisoned for two months, or both.

The Africans in Kenya, who have been driven off the best land to provide farms for European coffee-growers, who have no democratic rights, and whose native organizations have been suppressed and their leaders imprisoned or deported, are not likely to be enthusiastic about this new manifestation of the "freedom" for which their British masters are fighting.

From the British New Leader.

LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

Published Weekly by the
Labor Action Publishing Company
114 WEST 14th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.
(3rd Floor)

Vol. 6, No. 18 May 4, 1942

Managing Editor: Irving Howe

Subscription Rate: 60 Cents a Year

75 Cents for Canada, New York and Foreign

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

Workers Party Statement --

(Continued from page 1)

clothing prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living.

If labor insists on its rights, if it doesn't let itself be bluffed or intimidated, if it puts a stop to the worse than futile policy of employer-appeasement, it will not be made the victim of the war.

2. Soak the rich to pay for their war! Who is going to bear the stupefying burden of the war costs? Already Congress has appropriated over 150,000,000,000 dollars for the war and it's only the beginning. Should labor carry that burden, or the big part of it? Not at all! Labor did all the suffering and sacrificing it could stand even before the war began—in the ten unbroken years of the unemployment crisis, when millions were without work, and without food. The war costs should be borne and can be borne by those whose economic and financial shoulders are broad enough to bear them.

Let the government first expropriate the "Sixty Families"—America's plutocratic upper crust, the 3 per cent of the people who own 96 per cent of the wealth.

Let the government impose a levy on capital to cover the costs of the war. It did not hesitate to levy human life by imposing conscription on the country. It does not ask the permission of the people it is drafting—and it needn't ask the permission of the capitalists whose capital should be drafted.

And in addition, all war profits should be confiscated. It is an inhuman disgrace that while millions are dying on the battlefields in the name of "democracy," the monopolists should be allowed to say that they will run the war industries only if they are guaranteed their blood-profits.

NO PROFITS FOR PARASITES!

Let the working managers, the skilled technicians, the actual production organizers—let them get a higher than normal salary to which skilled and experienced experts are entitled. But why should mere owners of stocks and bonds, parasites who don't do a lick of work except hold gilt-edged paper or sit at directors' meetings, be guaranteed profits in the war industries?

3. Conscript all war industries and put them under workers' control. The government complains about the big monopolists sabotaging production; about secret cartel agreements with German trusts; about mismanagement, bungling, incompetence. All this is true, and only one percent of the truth. Capitalism is no better able to organize production in war-time than in peace-time; capitalism means anarchy of production; capitalism means profits come first, and patriotism is only a phrase to hide that fact; capitalism means a development to control of our lives by a handful of powerful, giant monopolists.

The power of the monopolists must be broken! It can be done; it must be done. How? Conscript all war industries under workers' control. The government, at one stroke, decided to conscript millions of human beings into the army. Is property more sacred than human life? Are monopolies immune where life is sacrificed? We must have a government that doesn't hesitate a moment to conscript all the war

industries—and it is these industries which represent the monopolies in the United States.

WE NEED WORKERS CONTROL

Why workers' control? Because, in the first place, they could not possibly do as bad a job of disorganization and mismanagement as the capitalists have done. Because they are the ones who do the actual work as it is, and they should have the further power to hire and fire, to direct the organization of production with the aid of the skilled technicians.

4. Labor must fight for the draftees and itself learn to fight! Unless labor becomes the active champion of the draftees, the soldiers will fall under the influence of reactionary militarists and eventually be used to beat down labor and the labor movement. It has happened before and may happen again. The vast majority of the draftees are workers and sons of workers, and are therefore blood brothers of labor. They are told they must "fight for democracy."

Then let them, at the very least, have such democratic rights as free speech, free press and free assembly. Putting on a uniform should not mean putting off democratic rights. Nor should it mean a drastic cut in living standards. That's why, to begin with, the base pay of the draftees should be raised to a minimum of sixty dollars a month. The reactionary press whines and groans because draftees get twenty-one dollars a month while "labor gets more than that per week." They don't say a word about the fact that while the draftees get such low pay, capitalist chairwarmers and other parasites get tens of thousands of dollars of income per month! It is not labor's pay that should be reduced but the soldier's pay that should be raised.

Labor also has the obligation to organize militarily for defense from fascism and reaction. But labor, which should have learned by now not to trust any "Messiahs," should do this independently. Labor needs to organize its best forces into Workers Defense Guards, trained and controlled by labor's own organizations, the unions. Labor cannot meet and triumph over the armed and trained forces of reaction unless it is itself armed and trained.

SMASH JIM CROWISM

5. Wipe out the crime and menace of Jim Crow and anti-Semitism! All discrimination against Negroes or Jews in the Army and Navy, or by employers in industry, must be made a criminal offense. If labor allows its ranks to be divided against themselves along racial or national or religious grounds, it is ruined. Anyone who promotes such division, stamps himself publicly as a poisonous enemy of labor and democracy, and should be treated as such. The Negroes, in particular, must acquire complete social, economic and political equality, for how can they fight for genuine democracy when they have the rope of Jim Crow around their necks? How can the peoples of the world, especially the colored races in the colonies, take seriously any talk about "democracy," and "freedom" when they know the revolting discriminations practiced against more than

ten percent of the population of the United States, the Negroes?

LABOR NEEDS ITS OWN PARTY

6. Labor needs a party of its own to form a government of its own. A labor program means nothing without a political party to fight for it. A political party is not worth the name unless it is working to take over the government in order to put its program into effect. Labor today confronts one of the most bitterly anti-labor Congresses in modern times in this country. Every chance it gets, it strikes a blow at labor, and it is only fear of labor's reaction that has prevented it up to now from adopting the most violent anti-labor legislation.

Even Roosevelt is compelled to try curbing the speed of the anti-labor advances of Congress. Even those workers who believe that Roosevelt is a genuine friend of labor cannot fail to agree that one man, even the best in the world, is not enough. Labor needs an organized political force to rely on. That force is a Labor party, and no man, however excellent, no group of men, can be a substitute for it. A Labor Party is nothing less and nothing more than labor organized politically on an independent basis. It means a party that speaks frankly and authoritatively for labor, because it is responsible to and controlled by labor's own organizations. Big business has its political parties representing its interests. Labor must have its own political party!

A GOVERNMENT OF LABOR

Such a party can have real significance only if it aims at a workers' government, the government of labor, that is, of the vast majority of the people of the country, of the toiling masses. The capitalist parties and politicians have been in power far too long. They have patched up a hole here and a hole there. But they have not begun to satisfy the real yearnings of the people. The people want such simple things as a decent standard of living, amidst the abundance that modern life can give, and all they have received is poverty and insecurity. The people long for peace, and all they have received is the threat of war and the horror of war itself.

The people want a change from the misery and uncertainty of the old system, the system of capitalist exploitation and profit, and all the capitalist parties can offer is a "fight for survival"—the preservation of the old, discredited and bankrupt system. A workers' government means the workers in power, in control. Labor alone understands the needs of labor. Labor alone can satisfy these needs. By control of the government, labor can proceed to satisfy these needs in the best interests of the working people of town and country as a whole.

The realization of such a program as suggested here would deliver such a crushing blow to fascism and reaction, abroad as well as at home, that they could never recover from it. The people of the Axis would not tolerate the rule of their despots for a minute if they saw across the ocean the rise of the star of real freedom.

THE STAR OF FREEDOM

When the German people saw the star of freedom rise in Russia in 1917—at the time of the Bolshevik revolution of Lenin and Trotsky—they did not wait many months before they overthrew the despotism of Kaiser Wilhelm and brought the war to an end! If they do not revolt now, it is because the counter-revolutionary terror of Stalinism does not attract them any more than the Anglo-American imperialist ambitions to dominate them.

Let this May Day, the day of international working-class solidarity, mark a new point of departure for labor's noble struggle for freedom and equality. Over the whole world now there hangs the dread pall of the imperialist war. It is the bloody payment we must make for not having won, before now, the world battle for socialism. But that battle is not over. So long as labor is exploited and oppressed, that battle will still be fought. Let us determine to fight it better and more strongly and unitedly and wisely in the days to come.

Unite, workers of America and of the world, unite in struggle for the cause of the oppressed and disinherited. Unite to end forever the curse of Fascist barbarism, imperialist rule, and imperialist war!

Onward to the victory of the League of Socialist Nations, to the union of the socialist peoples of the world!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORKERS PARTY,
MAX SHACHTMAN,
National Secretary

May Day Was Born in Early American Labor Struggles

By WALTER CLIFF

May Day was born out of the struggle of the American labor movement—a child of its sweat, toil and blood—a symbol of the strength of the new, lusty American working class fighting fifty-six years ago in an historic battle for the eight-hour day.

May Day was born in America in 1886, a bitter yet glorious year for American workers. The nation was in the grips of depression. Factories were idle, railroads bankrupt, over one million workers had been fired.

Under these conditions, the workers began to rebel. By the hundreds of thousands they streamed into the Knights of Labor and the new AFL. In two years the Knights of Labor had grown from 200,000 to over 700,000.

The newly-organized AFL, with about 50,000 members, saw in the eight-hour day an issue around which it could organize the masses of workers who were yet unorganized. On October 7, 1884, the AFL convention passed a resolution stating that on and after May 1, 1886, "eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labor," and began to prepare for a general strike on May First, 1886.

At the convention in 1885 the call for a general strike was repeated, and militant workers got ready for the showdown. Union after union throughout the country declared its adherence to the May Day strike.

During 1885 and the spring of 1886 strikes began to explode in one industry after another. When May Day, 1886, rolled around the workers in many cities walked out of their shops and mills in a united demonstration of strength. The bosses were thrown into a panic.

Victory in Chicago

In Chicago, the center of the movement, 80,000 workers downed their tools and went into the streets. Forty thousand workers gained their victory immediately when the packing houses agreed to an eight-hour day with no cut in pay. Throughout the nation, there were over 500,000 workers directly involved in strikes on May Day.

To say that the bosses were annoyed would be putting it mildly. They were determined that this strength of the workers should be broken, and like the Fords and the Girdlers and the Weirs of today, they did not hesitate to use violence and provocation to do it.

On May 3 the Chicago police brutally attacked a three-month-old strike at the McCormick Reaper plant, killing six workers. A protest meeting was called for the next day at Haymarket Square. Militant labor leaders addressed the gathering. When rain began to fall, preparations were made to adjourn it. The Mayor of Chicago, who had attended the meeting, went home, stopping at the nearby police precinct to report that there was no danger of violence.

A few minutes after he left the police station, 180 policemen attacked the meeting. An unidentified person threw a bomb, killing a cop. The police fired indiscriminately into the crowd, and a battle followed in which seven policemen and four workers were killed.

The court arrested and hanged four leaders of the May Day demonstra-

His Cause Lives On



V. I. LENIN

tion—Parsons, Spies, Fischer and Engel. No attempt was made to prove they threw the bomb. They were railroaded because they were union militants.

This was the signal for bosses all over the country. The boss press, the schools, the pulpit, all unleashed a smear attack on labor. The period of 1886-87 was a period of reaction; of attacks upon the workers. But the attempts were vain. Labor had felt its strength and was going to use it.

May Day—Zero Hour

At its convention in 1888, the AFL voted to rejuvenate the eight-hour movement, again choosing historic May Day as the zero hour. May 1, 1890, was to be the signal for a nation-wide strike.

Meanwhile the May Day movement had leaped across the oceans to other countries. Everywhere the workers, inspired by the example of their American brothers, were organizing themselves to fight for the "While struggling for the eight-hour day we will not lose sight of the ultimate aim—the abolition of the wage system."

read the resolution presented to the striking masses at Union Square on May First, 1890. This became the new meaning of

May Day—to strike, to demonstrate, not only for immediate demands, but as a symbol of the fight of oppressed workers everywhere against all tyranny, and against the system which breeds misery and war. May Day took on meaning as a political day—a class day in Russia, May Day was made the occasion for workers' and peasants' demonstrations against the Czar; in Poland, May Day became a holiday symbolizing the struggle of Poland for liberation. In France, in Germany, in England, in Italy, yes, even in Japan, the workers marched on May Day as a symbol of their determination and power to make a better world.

Reading From Left To Right

"Until I was twelve, I sincerely believed that everyone had a house on Fifth Avenue, a villa in Newport, and a steam-driven, ocean-going yacht." — Cornelius Vanderbilt. At the age of twelve, I suppose, he walked over to Park Avenue and saw how the OTHER half lived.

Herbert Hoover says he worked all his life but "missed the discovery I was a wage-slave." Well, don't worry too much, Herbie. You can't have everything, you know.

A statesman is a man who calls a spade a spade—after he's dug your grave.

Mike Gold, the Daily Worker columnist, says: "I am hoarse and weary from answering questions." I'll bet his feet are tired from dodging them, too.

These bosses who are making all the money while WE pay for the war ought to use for their slogan the words of a now deceased business man, who once said: "Me an' Morgan ain't taxable." His name was Dutch Schultz.

My uncle used to put it a different way: "Them as has, gits—them as ain't got, gives."

Abe Lincoln said that "property is the result of labor." He should have added that it's generally somebody else's labor.

I read the other day that Jim Farley was once boxing commissioner of New York. Now I know where Roosevelt gets his political tactics. He leads with a feint to the Left, then socks you from the Right. And if labor threatens him with a Left jab, he wins by a technical knockout in the Mediation Board, after Murray has thrown the towel in the ring.

Our boss is the kind of guy who would have put God on a 7-day week.

CHIT.

WORKERS PARTY PLATFORM

Against Both Imperialist War Camps! For the Victory of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples! For the Victory of the Third Camp of Socialism!

LABOR MUST DEFEND ITSELF!

- Hands off the right to strike! For the defense of civil rights and all workers' rights! Against any wartime dictatorship measures!
- Thirty hours a week; thirty dollars the minimum wage; time and a half for overtime! Rehire the jobless millions by a six-hour shift!
- Wage increases which meet rising costs! No sales tax on consumer goods; no taxes on wages! Freeze rents and food and clothing prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living!
- No government contract without a union contract! The closed shop in all war industries!
- Maintain and increase all government social services!

SOAK THE RICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!

- A government levy on capital to cover the costs of the imperialist war! Confiscate all war profits!
- Conscript all war industries under workers' control!
- Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the 3 per cent of the people who own 96 per cent of the national wealth!

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO THE DRAFTEES!

- The right of free speech, free press and free assembly for the men in the armed forces!
- Sixty dollars a month minimum for draftees!

SMASH JIM CROW!

- Down with Jim Crow and anti-Semitism! All discrimination against Negroes in the Army and Navy, or by employers in industry, must be made a criminal offense!
- For full political, social and economic equality for Negroes.

BE PREPARED!

- For Workers' Defense Guards, trained and controlled by the unions, against vigilantes and fascist attacks!
- For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government! No political support to the Roosevelt government!
- For Peace Through Socialism! For immediate independence of all colonies! Only a socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism and fascist barbarism. For a League of Socialist Nations!

MAY DAY BANQUET

Celebrating Labor's Holiday and the Second Anniversary of Labor Action

Main Speaker: MAX SHACHTMAN

Singing • Skits • Dancing and Fun Galore

Sat. Eve., May 2 • 7 P. Sharp
Irving Plaza, Irving Place and 15th Street

Admission \$1.25

Auspices: LABOR ACTION

All of Our Friends and Readers Will Want to Be at This Wonderful Affair!