

Gives No Reason For Its Actions

LABOR ACTION

DECEMBER 28, 1942

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

BULLETIN

As we go to press, we are informed over the telephone by the Classification Section of the New York Post Office that it has just received a telegram from Washington instructing it to release last week's issue of LABOR ACTION for mailing. A letter officially notifying us of this is said to be in the mail.

At the same time, however, the Post Office repeated that it was still under instruction from Washington to hold up the mailing of each issue of LABOR ACTION until a copy has been submitted to the authorities in Washington and passed upon by them. The unofficial censorship thus continues.

The entire mailing of last week's issue of LABOR ACTION is being held by the Post Office until further notice, according to notification given our office by the local postal authorities last Saturday, December 19.

The official notice gave no reason for the withholding of the issue, which has been entered with the Post Office as second class mailing matter for almost three years. Telephone inquiry from the classification section of the New York Post Office elicited the information that the decision to withhold the issue from the mails had been made in Washington, that the local office had been so instructed, and that final decision as to the mailing of the issue depended upon inspection of a copy by the office of the Department in Washington.

LABOR ACTION representatives were further informed orally that the same procedure would apply to all subsequent issues of the paper until further notice.

The action of the Post Office, based upon arbitrary authority which it has arrogated to itself in the past, follows right on the heels of the withholding from the mails and even the destruction of several issues of The Militant and one issue of the monthly magazine, Fourth International. Recently, issues of The Militant that were at first withheld from mailing were finally released through regular second class mail by the Washington authorities after a delay of a week or longer.

Immediately upon notification from the local post office, the publishers of LABOR ACTION appealed for aid to Roger N. Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union, and to Morris M. Himmelfarb, of the Workers Defense League. Both of them promptly pledged their full support in an effort to have LABOR ACTION released for mailing, and to see to it that the paper is freed from any further harassment and persecution.

In addition, Max Shachtman, of Labor Action Publishing Co., addressed identical letters to Mr. Vincent Miles, Solicitor of the Post Office Department in Washington, and Mr. L. M. C. Smith, of the Special War Policies Unit of the Department of Justice.

The letter to Mr. Miles follows:

Vincent Miles, Solicitor Post Office Department Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Miles:

On December 19th, we received notification from Mr. Albert Goldman, Postmaster, per D. Wisset, Clerk of the General Post Office in New York, that 33 sacks containing the mailing of our paper, LABOR ACTION, dated December 21, 1942, have been detained at the post office. Upon inquiry we were informed by the classification section that it had been directed by the Post Office Department in Washington to hold up the mailing of LABOR ACTION until the Washington office could inspect a copy of the paper for the purpose of deciding upon its mailability at the second class rate which

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Brewster Shop Action Hits Company and WLB Stalling

LONG ISLAND CITY, Dec. 22—The membership of Brewster Local 365, UAW, this week instituted, by voluntary action, a campaign to "work according to what you are paid for." Having been told by the company to take their grievances "to Washington," Brewster workers, instead, took them INTO THE SHOP and demonstrated their strength by doing only the work they are paid for.

Thus, Brewster workers continued to act in the spirit of their recently adopted fighting program, which is published elsewhere in this issue. Two weeks ago Brewster furnished leadership to the organized labor movement by joining the Flint local in a demand for a special convention of the UAW to rescind the no-strike pledge.

An Outrageous Abuse of Power

AN EDITORIAL

The decision to withhold the mailing of LABOR ACTION pending approval by the Post Office authorities in Washington is an outrageous abuse of power, an assault upon the right of free press, an attempt to hound and harry a working class critic of the government.

The Post Office Department is the only section of the government, so far as we know, that takes upon itself the authority to indict someone (in this case, a newspaper—without presenting charges; to prosecute the defendant—without permitting him to defend himself; to sit in judgment—without the defendant even being present at his "trial"; to act as a combination of prosecutor, judge, jury and policeman!

The Post Office simply notified LABOR ACTION that it was being held up, but to this date it has given no reason for its decision. We are informed that this will be done with every issue of LABOR ACTION, but again, without being given the reason. It can decide to destroy the issue entirely. Or it can generously decide to release an issue for mailing—but one week, or two weeks, or four weeks later, when much of the value of the publication has been lost and tremendous inconvenience and loss caused the publisher and the reader.

That is how it has been acting with issue after issue of The Militant. Does it propose to start the same thing with LABOR ACTION? Does it hope thereby to harass these papers to death? We have not the slightest illusions about the real reason behind this kind of persecution.

We know the true value of all the fine talk about the "Four Freedoms," one of which is solemnly described as "freedom of the press."

If we are being hounded now, it is precisely because we have been exercising our right to the freedom of the press.

If the reactionaries are out to gag us, as the fighting labor press was gagged in the First World War, it is because we are and have always been the sworn enemies of all reaction, in all countries, be it Hitlerite, or Stalinist, or even when it wears a "democratic" mask.

If the reactionaries are out to gag us, it is because LABOR ACTION has refused to join the chauvinistic mob crying: "it's a war for democracy," it is because we have persistently told the truth about the war.

If the reactionaries are out to gag us, it is because LABOR ACTION has refused to compromise in its defense of labor and labor's interests; it is because we have put the interests of labor and the labor unions first, last and always.

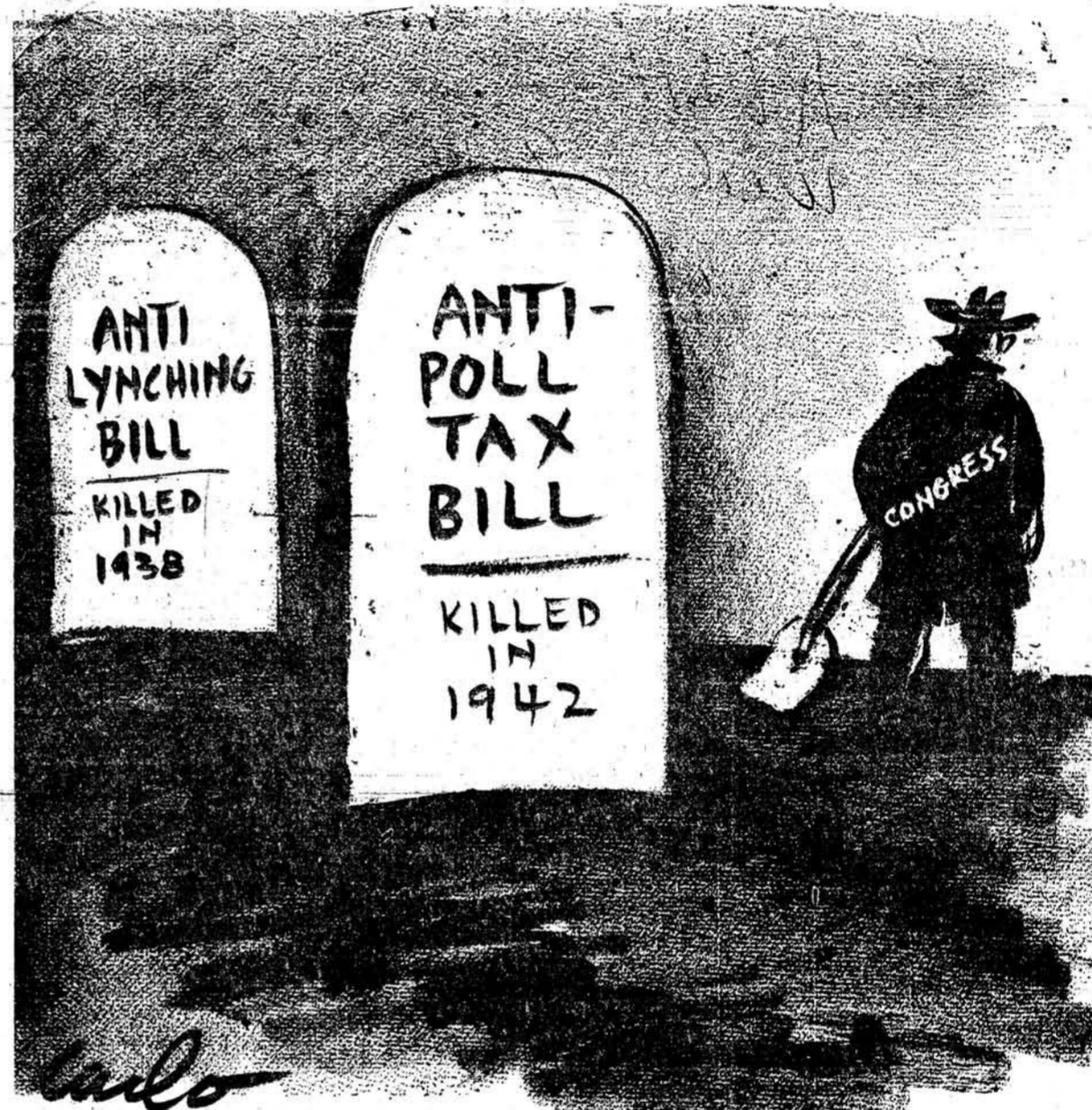
If the reactionaries are out to gag us, it is because LABOR ACTION has fought, openly and proudly, against the campaign to degrade the standard of living of the workers, to deprive them of their democratic rights, to force labor to make all the sacrifices and carry all the burdens of the war, while capital wallows in the biggest profits in its history.

If the reactionaries are out to gag us, it is because LABOR ACTION has fought Jim Crow in all its forms—that infamous system of racial discrimination and suppression that belies all the highpowered windjamming about "democracy."

If the reactionaries are out to gag us, it is because LABOR ACTION stands for the rule of labor, for labor's freedom, for a labor government, for a socialist society in which the mon-

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Progress of the 'Four Freedoms'!



Old Congress Bad Enough-- New Congress Will Be Worse

By VICTOR SEGUNDO

When Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President for the first time, back in 1932, it was as a result of a revulsion on the part of the people against their living conditions that at times reached almost revolutionary proportions. It was a feeling that in the union field built the CIO in record time. But in the political field it was siphoned off into the New Deal, made up of nine parts "My Friends" and one small part actual concessions.

But, as we pointed out at the time to the leftists who were climbing on the FDR bandwagon, the worst part of supporting a liberal capitalist party was not the smallness of the concessions. Gains, however small, are worth fighting for if they are real. But by backing Roosevelt in his New Deal days, liberals and "socialists" made it impossible to build a really Independent Labor Party from the genuine mass protest. The function of the New

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For Price Control and Rationing By Worker - Farmer Committees

By Susan Green

Leon Henderson's "resignation" as head of the OPA means that prices are going higher--AND WILL GET THERE FASTER.

For Henderson's resignation signifies that he has been beheaded by the "farm bloc" as part of a deal made by FDR with that bunch of farm bosses.

Newspaper men report from Washington that among the terms of the deal is one permitting "MODERATE INCREASES IN CEILING PRICES ON FARM PRODUCTS." That indicates which way the wind is blowing. Moderation is a word not very popular with profit-grabbers.

Under Henderson's OPA, farm prices have been allowed to go up—without a special deal, but with disastrous results to the consumer. It is no joke when spinach sells for 15 to 19 cents a pound—carrots for 12 to 15 cents a bunch—lettuce for 17 to 19 cents a head.

The wholesale prices of wheat and rye are climbing. Any day the prices we pay for bread will reflect this jump. Eggs and butter are priced way beyond the reach of many a working class family.

One of Henderson's latest accomplishments was to allow an increase in the wholesale prices of meats, as if present prices are not bad enough. The new prices will soon be passed on to the consumers of meat—whose number among the working class is daily diminishing.

Every time we open a newspaper, another ceiling-lifting operation stares us in the face. When we go to the store, what we read in the newspaper HAS AGAIN DECREASED THE PURCHASING POWER OF OUR DOLLAR. On December 14 the OPA announced that it allowed increases in the prices of seventeen items of food, including canned apples, apple sauce, maple sugar and syrup, egg noodles, crackers, and honey.

All these holes in ceilings have been obviously made by Mr. Henderson.

without any special deal with the farm bloc. CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT WILL HAPPEN AS A RESULT OF FDR'S DEAL!

With the farm bloc exerting its influence on Congress and with ex-Senator Prentiss M. Brown as new head of OPA, prices will sprout bigger and better wings.

It can also be expected that this government shift toward loosening up further the already loose enough price controls of the OPA will encourage the chiselers of every stripe. The pasters of phony labels on the same merchandise, the fakers passing off shoddy goods at the ceiling prices of better goods,

all of them will consider that the government is giving them a field day.

Too long have the profiteers and politicians been allowed to play around with the wherewithal of life. Price control is a matter of life—yes, and of death—to the masses.

Committees of workers at the points of production of civilian goods, committees of working farm-

ers whose toil brings forth the fruit of the earth, and committees of housewives at the points of consumption must take over the problem of price control and create the machinery for such control.

Otherwise the politicians will continue to make their concessions and deals with the profiteers—while men, women and children are deprived of food and clothing by run-away prices.

Food Squeeze Grows--1943 To Be Worse

Grocery store shelves are full of wide open spaces.

Meat products are so scarce that butcher shops and meat counters in chain stores are closing in the middle of the day.

Butter has gone with the wind—and retailers are reaping a harvest of extra pennies on 1/4-lb. sales to customers too grateful for the bit of butter toicker about the gyping.

Bacon, lard, vegetable fats are all hard to get.

Fish is becoming almost prohibitive in price. Fish dealers inform complaining customers that it's all on account of the developing shortage. Not that Father Neptune is less prolific. The fishing areas have been restricted and fewer fishing boats are going out for catches.

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Here's a Real Union Program!

We reprint below the SEVEN-POINT PROGRAM OF BREWSTER LOCAL NO. 365, UAW-CIO, as it appeared in Aero-Notes, the local's paper, on December 23:

RESTORE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING—We're tired of being pushed around and tied up in endless red tape with arbitration boards and the like. We want action and results on our grievances.

HOLD A SPECIAL CONVENTION OF THE UAW IMMEDIATELY—An about-face must be made immediately by the international. Only a special convention can do the trick of restoring collective bargaining on a national scale.

WITHDRAW THE NO-STRIKE PLEDGE—When a man goes into a fight, he doesn't start by tying both his hands behind his back. Big business is out to beat us. Untie our hands.

ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED NOW—There are millions of people waiting to be organized. Many of them are in small part shops, which in their expansion can absorb our members into consumer industries after the war. Get a closed shop in the entire aircraft and automobile industries now.

BUILD THE LOCAL UNION TREASURY by making monthly contributions of fifty cents per member. We need immediate funds to carry out this program in order to build our union so that we can survive the post-war period.

WIN THE PEACE—AFTER THE WAR—NOW—Labor must maintain its rights in order to win the peace. The peace can only be won by strong unions with a willing, enthusiastic membership.

BRING BACK THE OLD MILITANT SPIRIT OF THE UAW—It was the spirit of Flint and General Motors that built the UAW. Keep it alive!

Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Camp

QUISLING WIELDS WHIP OVER LABOR

To tighten earlier orders freezing Norwegian workers to their jobs in German war production, Quisling has now issued a decree completing the slavery under the year-old order to "work or starve." According to the new decree, workers must hand over to employers their "working cards" as well as their ration cards. In return, they receive from their employer every week a special ration card good only for the current week's purchases. If a worker leaves his job in an "illegal way" he loses both his working card, without which it is impossible to obtain employment, and his permanent rationing card. In other words, he is left to starve.

The new decree is regarded as a device to combat the effectiveness of the workers' campaign of ob-

struction which is expressed in the slogan "work slowly and badly." That is how a working class which has been temporarily defeated is treated by the victorious imperialists. But it bears mentioning that Britain has employed substantially the same methods in its colonies. And it bears further mentioning that "It Can Happen Here." The Paul McNutt in this country may be much impressed by that kind of treatment of labor. That is why labor has to be on the lookout for such moves in this country too. Let nobody think "it can't happen here," because it WILL happen here. Labor does not fight militantly for its rights. American workers can learn quite a bit from the experience of their European brothers.

DARLAN LIES ON LABOR SITUATION IN NORTH AFRICA

"There is little industrial development in North Africa and Vichy laws prejudicial to labor unions had little or no applicability," says Darlan, the "democratic" - fascist gauleiter of North Africa.

Darlan lies. Labor unions were extremely influential in North Africa. There were unions of white French workers as well as unions of Arab workers. The labor movement in the bigger industrial towns had grown tremendously since 1935. In 1938 there was a big strike wave in the North African colonies as well as in the French homeland. While it is true that French imperialism tried to check industrial development in North Africa, there were nevertheless

quite a number of industries (especially since, after the Armistice with Hitler, many factories were transferred to North Africa.)

The lies of Darlan are exposed if one just compares this statement with others in which it was claimed that the Nazis took great quantities of industrial products and minerals out of North Africa. Who did dig the coal and iron ore? Who worked in the phosphate mines—if not French and Arab workers?

Why haven't American labor leaders said something about the continued suppression of unions in North Africa. A funny kind of "liberation" it is which does not even permit labor unions, not to speak of political organizations, to function in North Africa.

ON THIS AND THAT IN OCCUPIED EUROPE

Radio Oslo reports the arrest of 75 young people who had planned to hold a dance at Suaherud. Despite the Quisling law which prohibits dancing in Norway, they had constructed a dance floor and engaged a fiddler. In the total state even dancing is subversive, since it distracts people from their daily routine work and gives them some relaxation. The time spent in dancing is better employed in turning out munitions.

Even the blind must slave for the Nazis. Owing to a shortage of labor in the Czech "protectorate," the Nazis have decreed that from now on the blind can be employed in certain pharmaceutical and metallurgical factories.

About forty illegal papers are now being published in Prague, according

to the Swedish daily, Aftonbladet, in spite of the dwindling stock of paper.

Slave workers of ten different nationalities are now working in Norway, according to the Swiss paper, Neue Zuercher Zeitung. Most European peoples, from Russians to Danes, are represented. Only Yugoslavs are no longer working there. An epidemic of typhus has nearly wiped out the 800 of them who had been working on roads.

"We want the Sudeten Germans," says Dr. Ripka, high official of the Czech government-in-exile, his theory being that the Sudeten Germans have been as "wicked" as the other Germans and therefore should have no right to self-determination after the war. The Atlantic Charter is on the march!

FEPC Accomplishes Little

Organized Mass Pressure Only Effective Way to Smash Jim Crow

By HARRY ALLEN

In June, 1941, under the threat of a mass march on Washington by the Negroes, President Roosevelt set up the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC). Great hopes were placed in it by Negro organizations who saw in its establishment evidence of the Roosevelt Administration's good faith in seeking to break down Jim Crow. At the beginning, the FEPC carried through some investigations and publicized the problem to some extent; it exposed some of the many firms that flagrantly practice Jim Crow.

On July 30, 1942, President Roosevelt, despite protests from Negro and labor bodies, transferred and subordinated the FEPC to the War Manpower Commission. The excuse he gave, that the WMC offered greater administrative possibilities for suggesting the hiring of Negroes, could not disguise for one moment the fact that his action was a slap in the face of the Negroes.

When Roosevelt transferred the FEPC to the WMC, it became dependent on Congress for funds to carry out its work. The FEPC complains it has neither funds nor adequate personnel to pursue its work. The budget provides but small funds for this committee. The huge bloc of reactionary Southern congressmen—bitterly hostile to the Negro, and determined to prevent, in any way possible, open agitation or hearings in Southern cities on Negro discrimination—have stood resolute against any instrument (FEPC) or proposals (poll-tax abolition) aimed at breaking down Jim Crow in any degree.

FEPC Is Weak Sop

Roosevelt's control of Congress (especially with today's slim Democratic majority) depends largely on these Southern congressmen. Roosevelt, therefore, makes the necessary concessions—to the Southern congressmen, not to the Negro masses. Thus Roosevelt is directly responsible for the lifeless condition of even this very meager sop—the FEPC. The FEPC, according to a recent Washington dispatch, "for months has been virtually without power to investigate an avalanche of complaints of discrimination against Negroes in obtaining jobs. Today it is making 'a last-ditch fight for its existence.'" (New York Post.)

Negro organizations, such as the NAACP, National Urban League, March on Washington Committee, etc., which refuse to exert mass pressure on the government and on employers, since that would "embarrass" Roosevelt, have begged for "teeth" to be put into the FEPC. But they themselves are not clear as to what these "teeth" are. The fact is, incisive power for the FEPC depends on exposure, investigations, mass public opinion, etc., directed against Jim Crow.

Complaints and charges of Jim Crow have flooded the FEPC from all over the country. For the past several months large numbers of charges relating to the failure to employ Negroes on the railroads have reached the FEPC, forcing it to announce that it would hold hearings on December 7, 8 and 9. From New

York City alone over 1,000 complaints charging discrimination against Negroes, Jews, Italians and others have been received. But the FEPC has continued helpless and floundering.

Organize Public Trials!

Negro organizations or groups must take open cognizance of these grievances in a direct and cumulative manner! Through the Negro and white press, through the action of the many Negro organizations, and through the issuance of special leaflets they must announce that PUBLIC HEARINGS ON DISCRIMINATION will be held by their organizations.

The March on Washington Committee, the NAACP and other Negro organizations ought, jointly or singly, to hire halls, and then call upon the Negro workers to come and state specifically how they have been Jim Crowed in trying to get jobs, or Jim Crowed on the job. Churches and other Negro institutions can be asked to give their halls for such public hearings and trials.

PUBLIC TRIALS must be held of those responsible for Jim Crow. Let juries, witnesses and judges be selected from those who will attend these gatherings. Let them sit and pass judgment on the iniquities of Jim Crow; and, more significantly, endeavor to examine the basic causes and cure for discrimination, segregation, etc.

Let the Negro organizations invite white workers and labor unions to these meetings and trials, and give them the opportunity to say what they are ready to do to aid the Negroes in smashing Jim Crow.

Let the proceedings of these assemblies be widely and dramatically publicized both before and after the meetings. Send reports of such proceedings to the LABOR UNION PRESS particularly.

Let elected representatives of these open trials and hearings be delegated to go to union meetings and request the opportunity to address the local unions and central bodies on what the Negroes are endeavoring to do to break down Jim Crow, to obtain jobs, and so on.

Develop Mass Pressure

Such PUBLIC HEARINGS by the Negro masses are only one form of the necessary mass pressure on the bosses and government. Out of them will follow other forms of mass pressure on a wider scale—such as mass marches on city halls and factories; mass picketing of Jim Crow factories, etc. These kinds of hearings and actions, initiated and stemming directly from the masses, will prove a hundred times more effective in the struggle against Jim Crow than occasional, arbitrary and limited hearings by the FEPC or other government agencies. Moreover, it will establish who is with the Negroes, and who is against them.

Such public hearings are one task which the Negro masses themselves can undertake and demand of the leaders in their organizations.

Moreover, the white workers too must now intervene more actively against Jim Crow. First, by forcing changes wherever necessary in their own unions (for example, the boiler-makers and machinists in the AFL) to cease Jim Crow practices on membership rights and on jobs.

In the attitude reflected in the resolution on Jim Crow, adopted by the recent CIO convention, denouncing racial and religious discrimination, is provided an effective weapon in cracking Jim Crow. Provided, of course, such resolutions are implemented by the unions and on the jobs by militant action whenever necessary to compel employers to hire and utilize Negroes on an equal basis.

Further, as the white workers entirely eliminate Jim Crow in their organizations and combat Jim Crow by the bosses, then the Negro masses will see in the labor movement their real ally against Jim Crow and all exploitation. Then there will be no looking to "white hope" Administrations or to feeble FEPCS. Only thus will the Negroes realize that the LABOR road is the road to victory against Jim Crow.

The magazine, Survey Graphic, in its study of the race issue in its November number, calls its article "The Unfinished Business of Democracy." But capitalist democracy is both unwilling and incapable of doing or finishing this job. For capitalism does not extend the basic economic and democratic rights of the masses in this epoch, but rigidly regulates, limits and, when necessary, does away with them. The race problem is labor's problem—yes, "The Unfinished Business of Labor."

Brewster--

(Continued from page 1)

By their action the men are challenging the company and the WLB. However, it is plain that this action can only be temporary. Confined to that, the action may end in a stalemate. Now that the workers are in motion, and in view of the excellent program adopted by the local, the action must lead to a more direct challenge of the WLB.

The local's paper, Aero-Notes, has, in fact, already declared itself as favoring the resignation of the UAW from the WLB. A considerable section of the last issue, in addition to a report on the general program adopted by the local, is devoted to a scathing review of the anti-labor record of the WLB.

There is a certain sentiment among the men for asking the Navy to take over the plant. If so, the workers of Brewster are in for a rude disappointment. The Navy will not improve the situation. It will, in all likelihood, make it worse. Once before the Navy took over with no particular advantage to the workers. The same has been true in other plants taken over by the Navy. If the government were to take over the plant, AND PUT ITS OPERATION INTO THE HANDS OF THE WORKERS, that would be something! But there is small likelihood of the government doing that—though it is a demand well worth raising by the Brewster workers.

In the meantime, it is well for workers everywhere to keep their eyes on Brewster. The men of Local 365 are at bat for the entire labor movement!

THE BETTER OFF.

Storekeepers are saving beef and other scarce meats for their "best customers" to whom price is no consideration.

The black market grows by leaps and bounds. The elegant shops get what they want—AT A PRICE—while the stores that serve the workers do without.

RATIONING is the only way to put an end to these undemocratic practices—to put an end to the black market and discrimination against the poor.

But rationing will have the same fate as price control under the OPA—if it is done the same way.

First, for rationing to have any rhyme or reason, prices have to be prevented from rising and in many cases they have to be reduced. It will do the working class housewife no good to have meat, butter, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, etc., rationed—IF SHE CANNOT AFFORD TO BUY HER SHARE AT THE HIGH PRICES PREVAILING.

Second, rationing—like price control, with which it is so closely connected—CAN BE CARRIED OUT ONLY BY THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES. From production to consumption, commodities must be controlled by committees of workers, working farmers and housewives.

Otherwise the politicians and profiteers will make a laughing stock out of rationing as they have out of price control.

Both these functions have to be taken over by committees of the people. THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.

Pass this paper on. Give it to your fellow worker. He'll like it.

Sparks in the News

By Everett Wesson

"When Singapore fell the Australians awoke to the realization that Britain was no longer a reliance. The only hope lay in America, and we know that hope was not misplaced.... New Zealand, perhaps South Africa, and certainly all of the Americas, including Canada, are dependent upon us just as Australia.... The military power of the United States... is destined to be the determining factor in the organization of the post-war world... This is the American Century."—Chicago Tribune.

If this were Wallace, or Willkie, or Luce, it would no longer be worth noting. But it is McCormick, the Chicago Tribune, for many years the leading spokesman of reactionary Mid-Western isolationism.

This is also the final chapter of a rather long, but also funny, story. Marshall Field, millionaire Chicago department store owner, has interests in some Southern mills that have beat down union organizers as viciously as any other. But for public consumption he publishes PM, a New York tabloid with a Stalinist-liberal slant and violently interventionist from "way back. Late last year he made noisy preparations to start the Chicago Sun, to buck the isolationist Tribune. It was printed in Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox's Chicago Daily News plant, and the estimated annual loss (of PM, Parade and the Sun) of five million was deductible from Field's

income tax, so that it was an officially backed, if not actually officially sponsored, venture. Three days after the first issue of the Sun was printed came December 7, and the Tribune (after the manner of all good isolationists) promptly reversed its line. But it has taken it a year to blossom into the full flower of Luce imperialism in the quotation above.

From a listing of current movies in Newsweek:

Nightmare (Universal).

As a safeguard against the "chaos of inflation," workers must be "induced," by taxation or by other measures, "to refrain from spending some forty billion dollars, or \$4.00 out of every \$11 of income at their disposal after payment of existing taxes."—Randolph E. Paul, general counsel of the Treasury Department.

Note this is AFTER existing taxes. Take your pay envelope, take away the new taxes, then take away more than a third of what's left, and go out and buy a newspaper with the remainder.

If you live in a city where U.S. Steel has any sort of interest, you probably noticed one of their ads on December 7. The company spent \$100,000 through 150 papers, being ostentatiously patriotic on that fateful day. It also helps to keep the editors happy, and friendly.

"At the CIO convention in Boston, left wing union leaders bit their fingernails and pondered the disposition of their second front resolution—a document they had fully intended to explode under Philip Murray. They showed every intention of going through with it until the Stalin letter praising the North African venture solved their problem. If there is a more ludicrous spectacle in labor politics than Michael Quill wondering where his Transport Workers are to be led next, it is Michael Quill adjusting himself to an alliance, however, temporary, with His Britannic Majesty's Ministers."—New Republic.

But for the most ludicrous, we still hold out for New Republic laughing at the capers of other Stalinist simps with every change in line.

"Any attempt to interpret literally the phrase 'equality of sacrifice' would of course not help prosecute the war to victory, but would hopelessly sabotage it. There is not, and cannot be, any literal equality of sacrifice as between workers and capitalists in this war. The workers must make the main sacrifices, and they have enough common sense to know, and enough patriotism not to object to it."—Earl Browder in his new book, "Victory and After."

This is no Popular Front. As Browder says later in the book, "Tories and Communists can severally and jointly contribute to national unity."

Pity the Poor Poll-Tax Bigot!

Every time a Southern politician opens his mouth you can expect him to drool over the "sacred" customs of Dixieland, meaning of course, the "sacred" custom of keeping thirteen million Negroes in a state of semi-illiteracy, paying them starvation wages, terrorizing them if they squawk or organize and denying to them the right to vote through poll-tax laws.

Governor Frank M. Dixon of Alabama, speaking last week at the annual dinner of the New York Southern Society, let out an agonized scream in defense of "the basic principles of segregation, without which there can be no orderly society below the Mason-Dixon line."

The cracker-box bigot specifically attacked the regulations of the United States Employment Service which prohibit racial discrimination in war industries, and the Fair Employment Practices Committee, the ineffectual agency that is supposed to enforce the regulations.

Taking heart from the recent easy victory of the poll-tax senators over the lazy, lukewarm opposition of the anti-poll-tax bill supporters, Dixon prodded his fellow bloodhounds to tear to bits any challenge to the continued practice of Jim Crow barbarism in the South.

"How long will you put up with this?" he asked, referring to the efforts of Negro and labor organizations to push through anti-discrimination measures. "Ways and means are being discussed daily to break our chains."

Imagine Dixon and the rich planters and capitalists he represents, lords and masters over all they can survey (and a helluva lot they can't) straining to break THEIR "chains"!

Such arrogance is only possible after the defeat of such a measure as the anti-poll-tax bill. This reaction can be expected to flower when such "friends of the Negro people" as President Roosevelt maintain a cowardly silence at the disgusting antics of ignorant poll-tax filibusters.

Post Office Dep't Holds Labor Action

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LABOR ACTION has enjoyed since it was first published.

We request that you inform us of the reason for this directive to the New York Post Office to hold up the mailing of LABOR ACTION. So far as we are aware nothing in the contents of LABOR ACTION, past or current issues, can be construed as constituting a violation of any law or, specifically, of the terms of its entry as second class mailing matter. If in the opinion of your department the contrary is the case, we should like to be informed immediately and in specific details.

Permit me to call to your attention the fact that the editorial policy of LABOR ACTION and in general the views expressed on its pages are the same today that they have been since the publication of the first issue almost three years ago. You will therefore understand why we are at a loss as to why this particular issue of the paper has been held up for mailing, with the consequent inconvenience both to publisher and reader.

I am sending an identical letter to Mr. L. M. C. Smith, of the Special War Policies Unit of the Department of Justice. At the same time, I am sending record copies of these let-

ters to Mr. Roger N. Baldwin, of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Mr. Morris Milgram, of the Workers Defense League, both of whom have kindly agreed to intercede in our behalf.

I expect to hear from you at your early convenience.

Yours very truly,
MAX SHACHTMAN,
Publisher, LABOR ACTION,
December 21, 1942.

Readers and subscribers of LABOR ACTION have been asked to stand by in readiness for all aid that may be necessary to fight this new attack upon the labor press and the right of free speech.

Sensational
... revelations of Anaconda Copper's double-dealing, grafting and cheating on government contracts for wire will be discussed in next week's LABOR ACTION, along with an account of Anaconda's financial tie-ups and anti-labor record.

Food Shortages Growing --

(Continued from page 1)

The predictions for 1943 are very gloomy indeed.

The supplies of eggs, cheese—AND EVEN MILK—will also be cut to the bone.

Meat will be even scarcer—AND DEARER.

Canned goods will practically disappear. Even canned soup will be slashed to 50 per cent of the present supply.

Fresh fruits and vegetables will go to civilian consumers only after the increasing demands of the armed forces and lend-lease customers are supplied.

Food Boss Wickard talks about rationing food—and keeps right on talking about it.

Meanwhile a sort of "rationing" is developing by itself. IT IS THE "RATIONING" THAT RULES OUT THE FAMILIES IN THE LOWER INCOME BRACKETS IN FAVOR OF

THE BETTER OFF.

Storekeepers are saving beef and other scarce meats for their "best customers" to whom price is no consideration.

The black market grows by leaps and bounds. The elegant shops get what they want—AT A PRICE—while the stores that serve the workers do without.

RATIONING is the only way to put an end to these undemocratic practices—to put an end to the black market and discrimination against the poor.

But rationing will have the same fate as price control under the OPA—if it is done the same way.

First, for rationing to have any rhyme or reason, prices have to be prevented from rising and in many cases they have to be reduced. It will do the working class housewife no good to have meat, butter, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, etc., rationed—IF SHE CANNOT AFFORD TO BUY HER SHARE AT THE HIGH PRICES PREVAILING.

Second, rationing—like price control, with which it is so closely connected—CAN BE CARRIED OUT ONLY BY THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES. From production to consumption, commodities must be controlled by committees of workers, working farmers and housewives.

Otherwise the politicians and profiteers will make a laughing stock out of rationing as they have out of price control.

Both these functions have to be taken over by committees of the people. THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.

Pass this paper on. Give it to your fellow worker. He'll like it.

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The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Camden Ship Worker Describes Candidate Men Ought to Elect

Dear Editor:

Shipyard workers are going to vote for officers in January. I write to urge my fellow workers in the Camden shipyards to go to their department meetings and cast their vote for shop stewards, and to go to the membership meeting to vote for officers.

Now, which candidates should they vote for? I say they ought to vote for candidates who stand for a militant, full-fledged union program. I have sometimes heard of men of that kind called "Labor Action men." Among certain people, any union man who hasn't been taken in by Johnny Green's "no unionism-assessment" spiel is a "Labor Action man."

good unionist is to be called a "Labor Action man," then so much the more credit to LABOR ACTION, and, if I may say so, to the unionist. You'll recognize the kind of steward and officer we need at any meeting. He'll be kicking about the fact that the "cost of living clause" in the contract has been scrapped.

He's the guy who stands up and makes a fight of it when a man gets fired or when the company tries to chisel on the rates.

He's the man who thinks the union was organized to take care of the men's interests.

He knows that a shop steward's job is not to keep the men pacified and happy regardless of working conditions, but to walk into the boss' office and lay down the law.

That should be our man for shop steward—the one who remembers how and why the union grew—and

why! That's the man who should get our vote in January.

Camden Shipyard Worker.

Stalinist Destroys Books by Trotsky

Dear Editor:

I am not connected with your movement, but read your paper. I thought this might interest you, in the event you overlooked it in the papers.

A Stalinist seaman, Jacoby, was recently arrested for tearing up about 35 books in the 42nd Street Public Library (main library in New York—Ed.). He destroyed all books relating to Trotskyism. These he hated most. In addition, he destroyed books by Max Eastman, Eugene Lyons, Norman Thomas, etc. He simply tore the books and washed them down the toilet!

He put in twenty-two days waiting for sentence, during which time he was sent to Bellevue Hospital for a mental examination. The psychiatrists found him sane. He therefore came up for trial and the Special Sessions Court gave him three months in the workhouse. E. S.

(It wasn't insanity, but plain, ordinary Stalinist miseducation. We do not know if others have been apprehended, but it is known that Trotsky's works, in various libraries, have often been mutilated by Stalinists. Book burning, a practice common to all totalitarians, is evidently, in one form or another, part of the Stalinist "education." Distributors of LABOR ACTION have, for example, many times been molested by Stalinists, and their papers torn up. We don't doubt that Jacoby will be quite a hero when he returns to his Stalinist circles—Ed.)



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114 WEST 14th STREET
New York, N. Y.

SIX MONTH SUBSCRIPTION 25¢!

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City _____

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

Hard times for us means good times for the rich owners of the stores where we pay such outlandish prices.

For instance, Federated Department Stores, Inc., has made almost double the clear profit this year as in the corresponding period last year—of course, after deducting taxes.

First paying dividends on its preferred stock, the company still has enough left to pay **SIXTY-EIGHT CENTS** a share on its common stock—as against **ONLY THIRTY-ONE CENTS** for the same period last year.

Another instance of bigger and better profits as the war goes on!

Among the broader hints to housewives is the one to eat chicken when meat is scarce. That is like the tip that Marie Antoinette gave the poor of her day to eat cake when they didn't have bread. Because, as every housewife knows, chicken costs around forty cents a pound.

The Borden company is never getting enough money for its dairy products. It is constantly before this or that government agency, pressing for higher prices—which we pay.

To complete the picture it is necessary to know that this poor, forlorn, underpaid corporation has netted profits amounting to \$1.90 a share for the year 1932—after making every kind of deduction for taxes, for a substantial "contingency reserve," etc.

Its shares of stock are selling at about \$22 on the New York Stock Exchange. So that a profit of \$1.90 a share would make the rate of gain around **ELEVEN AND A HALF PER CENT!** This will help you understand why we pay so much for milk, cream, cheese and other dairy products.

In a very old Broadway hit, "Camel Through the Needle's Eye," there is a scene in which a poor woman about to receive a visit from the charity people, boils cabbage and lets the smell of it permeate the house. In those days about the only green vegetable the poor could afford was the humble cabbage. When a house smelled of cabbage, the inhabitants' poverty was unquestionable.

But those were the happy days!

In the last couple of weeks the A&P has boosted the price of the humble green from two cents to five cents a pound—a 150 per cent mark-up! A three-pound head formerly at the purchaseable price of six cents puts on the Ritz and sells for fifteen cents.

Price profiteering has thrown the humble cabbage up the stairs and under a top hat!

The A&P—the largest chain grocery in the country, doing an annual business of \$1,378,660,000 and making plenty of profit—is under indictment for violation of the anti-trust laws.

The housewife will be interested to know that among the charges against this colossus of the grocery business is that it follows that "systematic practice of secretly enhancing their actual prices above their advertised prices through short-changing, short-weighting and marking up prices on store tags and purchases."

In other words, this powerful, rich super-trust takes food out of the mouths of consumers to put more profits into its own pockets!

Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co., Procter & Gamble Co. and Lever Brothers Co. do more than 80 per cent of the business in soap and soap products in this country. So they got together to take full advantage of their monopolistic position. They have entered into a conspiracy "to fix, maintain and stabilize prices" at exceeding profitable figures.

Why not? That's part of the profit system which FDR has pledged himself to maintain, isn't it?

An Outrageous Abuse of Power

(Continued from page 1)

strous offspring of capitalism—exploitation, oppression, war and fascism—no longer exist to poison the life of the people.

We know the people who have been out to "get" LABOR ACTION for some time. We are proud of the fact that we have gotten under their thick hides. That shows we are doing our work successfully. The fact that we are plugging such people as the Stalinist bureaucracy, as the trade union bosses who don't give a hang for labor's interests, as the reactionaries in the government officialdom, is an encouraging sign that our working class, socialist ideas are making headway. Nobody can stop them—nobody!

Of course, we know that we are not the Chicago Tribune. It can, as the government charges, print military information of value to Japan—and get away with it. The Post Office doesn't hold up a single issue of the Chicago Tribune, or other papers like it! Why not? Because the Tribune is a powerful and, above all, a reactionary critic of the Administration! With a socialist critic of the government, a critic that does not have the tremendous financial and political resources of institutions like the Chicago Tribune, and which is guilty of no crime except that of advocating the program and principles of socialism, the Post Office gets right into action.

If the Post Office succeeds in depriving The Militant of its rights, in depriving LABOR ACTION of its rights, then be sure of one thing at least: no labor paper will be safe; all of them will be at the mercy of an arbitrary decision by the Washington authorities.

That is why it is necessary for the whole labor movement, for every worker, for every progressive and genuine democrat, to express himself firmly in protest against the action of the Post Office and give every bit of aid necessary in fighting these cases through to a victorious end!

From Coast to Coast Workers Are Striking for Redress of Grievances

By JOHN BERNE

Judging by strike actions throughout the country, workers are realizing that when their leaders gave the no-strike pledge in exchange for WLB control, they traded a solid gold nugget for a gold brick. "Grievances" is the only commodity of which labor is getting a bellyful. The workers begin to realize that the only way they can get action is by taking it.

Following is an enumeration and description of some of the recent strikes—many of them either not mentioned at all in the boss press or relegated to obscure corners of their pages.

In the Wilkes-Barre, Pa., area 2,000 miners walked out. The men of the Ewen mines quit when their committee failed to reach an agreement with the Pennsylvania Coal Co. over the restoration of pay cuts made during the depression. The men of the Underwood and Saporito mines, both owned by the same company, voted a sympathy strike. The company hid under the skirts of the WLB, claiming it would get into difficulties with that august body if it raised wages. It would seem from reports that a telegram from John L. Lewis himself telling the strikers they are not supposed to be striking because "the UMWA also has a commitment to the government of the United States to refrain from strikes" did not prevent the walk-out.

In Johnston, Pa., 3,000 Bethlehem Steel Co. workers, members of the United Steel Workers, CIO, walked out over a dispute on double pay for Sunday work. The local CIO di-

rector stated that the men were protesting that company's unfair work-schedule, which prevents them from working on Sunday as the seventh and double-time day. The gyping company so arranges the work-week that Sunday falls on the fifth or sixth consecutive day. On this basis men work eight or ten days in a row without receiving any double pay.

On December 15 the 3,400 employees of the Electric Storage Battery Co. in Philadelphia went on strike when the WLB refused to grant their union maintenance of membership and a general pay increase of 12½ cents an hour. Using its dictatorial powers to the limit in this case, the WLB rejected the workers' demands because of previous work stoppages. Thus does the WLB fit the punishment to the "crime."

In the Pittsburgh district, workers at the Duquesne plant of Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corp. walked out and closed down the machine shop. They struck in protest against the interference of an industrial engineer making a time study in their department. And in Connellsville, Pa., employees of the National Distillers Co. walked off the job because the management was stalling and delaying contract negotiations.

In Chicago the "EI" workers voted on December 14 to strike on all elevated lines at 12:01 a.m. Sunday, December 20—unless their demands are met. The workers are demanding a blanket wage increase of nine

cents an hour, with larger increases for certain groups. The men are members of the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees Union, AFL.

Day shift workers numbering 1,200 walked out on Bohn Aluminum & Brass and were joined by 700 night shift workers. They disregarded the disapproval of Fred Williams, president of Local 208, UAW. Their grievance was that the WLB was going one better than the bosses in opposing a wage increase. For although the union and the company had agreed on a wage increase on October 5, ON DECEMBER 9, WHEN THE STRIKE TOOK PLACE, THE WLB HAD NOT YET APPROVED THE INCREASE.

Workers of the Yellow Truck & Coach Manufacturing Co. in Pontiac, Mich., have been put on probation by the WLB as if they were criminals. The board approved an agreement between the workers and the company for a four-cent hourly wage increase and granted maintenance of membership. PROVIDED THE WORKERS BECOME GOOD. DO-CILE SLAVES. The so-called labor members of the WLB disgraced themselves once more by voting that the UAW international union be required to "investigate promptly and fully the conduct of the local union and, particularly, its president in connection with work stoppages in this plant and take whatever disciplinary action may be necessary with a view toward preventing future stoppages."

What India Means to the American Working Class

A Brief Outline of Indian Economy

By J. R. JOHNSON

(Continued from the issue of Dec. 7)

It is easy to say that the great majority of the people of India live in poverty and misery. It is easy to say that Gandhi, Nehru and the Indian nationalists whom they represent are treacherous and ready to betray the cause at any moment. The question is: Why?

Early Indian Economy

Here it is necessary, even though in barest outline, to restate the historical development of capitalist society. Three or four hundred years ago production all over the world was overwhelmingly agricultural. This took various forms. There was serfdom, in which the agricultural producer had certain rights on the land but was compelled to hand over the surplus produce to the landlord, or work for him for nothing. There was peasant production in which the peasant owned the land but paid rent in money. There was also the agricultural commune in which the agricultural producers owned the land in common and divided it up periodically among themselves, but paid taxes in money or in kind to the state or an individual overlord. There was a vast variety and intermingling of these forms—but the basic feature of production was production of AGRICULTURAL products.

Such industrial products as he used, the agricultural producer often made himself. In other areas, the Indian village, for example, one villager would be a smith, another a

goldsmith and another a cobbler, all producing for the village as a whole. In a few big towns, production of industrial goods was carried on, but these for the most part occupied a small share of the total economy. The general level of production was very low.

Native Industry Destroyed

Now the distinguishing feature of capitalist production is a tremendous development of machine-made industry, which has grown continually until, today, in advanced countries, people use far more industrial products than they use the direct products of agriculture. This has revolutionized the lives of the large majority of the people. Generation after generation the peasants have been turned from the land and compelled by one means or another to work as wage laborers in factories. As agriculture declined in relation to industry the worker gained a rough compensation for the loss of his capacity to live on the land by the possibility of earning a living in a factory. Furthermore, the development of industrial production meant an increasing number of the products circulating in the community as a whole and, for long periods, a general increase in the possibilities of acquiring more and more of the elements of existence.

The whole secret of India is that only half of this process has taken place, and the worse half. The British went into India. They destroyed Indian industries by the

export of British goods. They brought India into the circle of modern countries, which result in enormous taxation upon the country as a whole both for modern armies, modern administration, modern transportation (railways, etc.) and for interest on British loans. These huge expenses in an industrialized country could be paid because of the tremendous development of industrial production. But India, without industrial production, has been compelled to carry these burdens on the basis of a production which is mainly agricultural, and a very backward agriculture at that.

Increased Misery of Masses

Without industry, agriculture is no longer able even to give the peasant a respectable living. His condition gets worse and worse because, as the population grows, the land is less and less able to satisfy even the needs of the peasant's own subsistence, far less the enormous burden which modern India requires of him. In a short article like this we can only give outstanding examples.

In a village in Poona in 1711, the average holding of the peasant was forty acres. In 1818 it was 17½ acres. In 1915 it was seven acres. Yet modern India needs more from the seven-acre peasant than India in 1711 required from the forty-acre peasant. In Bengal the average holding is about two acres. Between 1921 and 1931 the number of landless laborers increased from 291

The tool and die makers in the Detroit area are dissatisfied with a ruling of the WLB setting maximum wage rates but failing to set minimum wages. UAW officials in Detroit are seeking to reopen the matter determined that "any order for maximum wages should include minimum rates."

On December 15, aircraft workers in three West Coast cities met in mass meetings to protest the delay of the WLB in adjusting wage scales. These are the workers of Lockheed-Vega in Los Angeles, of Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego and of Boeing in Seattle. The workers demand that the present 60-75-cents an hour minimum be raised to 95 cents. A hearing has been set for January 8, but the workers don't like this delay.

The Consolidated Aircraft workers meeting in San Diego voted to ask President Roosevelt to release them from their no-strike pledge and authorized their officers to set a date for taking a strike vote if such release is granted. What Roosevelt will say is a foregone conclusion!

Another significant action taken by the Consolidated Aircraft workers was the passing of a resolution to the effect that further support of the company's pay-roll deduction plan for bond purchases be given only "at the discretion" of the workers. This action was taken because the pay-triotee company had been using the ability of workers to purchase bonds as a reason to prevent wage increases to meet the cost of living.

Paul McNutt, His Record And His Job

By Everett Weston

When Roosevelt gave Paul V. McNutt dictatorial authority over America's workers, he took what may be the largest step yet toward American totalitarianism. Not only, in the words of the New York Times, has McNutt "been given more power over men in this country than anyone has ever exercised in its history," but that power has been given into the hands of a man who has amply proved himself willing and able to (ab)use it.

Only Willie has exceeded McNutt in the number of things he is for. At various stages in his political career McNutt has gathered votes where he could, by advocating almost anything—in words. Who's Who, for example, lists him as vice-president of the American Peace Society, whatever that is. The only thing written by him that the New York Public Library has on file is a pamphlet defending Zionism. (That he is not anti-Semitic is one of few favorable things in his record.) And so on.

BROKE TERRE HAUTE GENERAL STRIKE

But from at least two things we can truly gauge what type of man McNutt is. The first is his long and close association with the American Legion. LABOR ACTION has devoted several articles in the past few weeks telling what type of organization this is. We need say no more here. McNutt held various posts in the Legion and in 1928-29 was its national commander. Last September he traveled out to Kansas City to speak before the American Legion convention.

But more important even than this are his actions in 1935 when as Governor of Indiana he broke the Terre Haute general strike. Nothing in American history smacks more of fascism than this. Remember as you read of it that this is the man who now controls your job, who now controls you.

McNutt was elected Governor of Indiana in the 1932 Democratic landslide. During the campaign there was martial law in Sullivan County, a coal-mining district, illegally declared by the Republican Governor. McNutt made a good deal of political capital by denouncing the martial law; like Roosevelt, he was elected by labor and liberal votes.

In March, 1935, the workers of the Columbian Enameling & Stamping Co., in Terre Haute, went out on strike. It was, you remember, pretty tough in '35. The company, however, wasn't doing too badly. Some 30 years before, when the Chamber of Commerce was angling to get it to move to the city, they arranged to have it declared outside the city limits, and during the whole period it had never paid a cent of taxes. The cops who were to wham workers' heads with nightsticks were being paid by the workers—and by them alone.

It was a peaceful, uneventful strike until toward the end of July, when the company imported 60 thugs as guards. Then all hell broke loose. There was a two-day general strike—the third in American history—which, while it lasted, was complete almost to a man. More than 23,000 workers struck, and gave an impressive demonstration of their power when united.

The strike was broken when McNutt declared martial law and sent in 2,000 guardsmen. This was illegal: "The operation of the laws shall never be suspended except by authority of the General Assembly."—Indiana Constitution.

Strikers were arrested on the street and taken by the guardsmen back to the plant. They were told to go back to work. All but four or five refused—and were thrown into jail because they would not scab.

In all, some 150 workers were arrested, held incommunicado for days or weeks, then released without trial. Professor Shannon of the State Teachers College was arrested and held incommunicado for 36 hours because he asked a question of a militiaman.

Picketing and meetings were forbidden. Workers were denied the right even to meet in their own Labor Temple, owned by the unions. All people were blocked from certain areas; they were ordered off their own porches. Scabs were issued military passes.

Machine guns were mounted on the roof of the factory. Tear gas and vomit gas were used to break up meetings.

WORKERS DENIED LEGAL RIGHTS

The arrested workers were not allowed bail. This was illegal: "Offense other than murder or treason shall be bailable by sufficient sureties."—Indiana Constitution.

The right of habeas corpus was denied. This was illegal: "The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended except in case of rebellion or invasion and then only if public safety shall demand it."—Indiana Constitution.

The workers were held without trial. This was illegal: "All courts shall be open; justice shall be administered freely, completely and without denial, speedily without delay.... In all criminal prosecution, the accused shall have the right to a public trial by an impartial jury."—Indiana Constitution.

The whole thing, from beginning to end, was illegal. But the worst was yet to come. Some 2,000 National Guardsmen were sent in originally, but very soon all but a handful were withdrawn. But there was still martial law—for workers. People who parked before fire hydrants, or rifled the cash register, or murdered their wives, were arrested by the regular police and tried in the civil courts, with all the usual guarantees in operation. But workers trying to picket or hold meetings were subject to military law. This dual law—civil law for one class and military law for the other—went on for months. No better device for the introduction of fascism has ever been thought of.

Major Earl Weimar, the National Guard commander, said so flatly. He told Powers Hapgood, then the Indiana leader of the Socialist Party, that there was fascism in Sullivan and Vigo Counties, and that he had better watch his step.

KEEP A WATCH ON PAUL McNUTT

And Paul Vories McNutt, the man who directed all this, is now U.S. dictator of manpower. He did not get his job because he was competent; on the contrary, he has been notoriously inefficient. He did not get his job because he worked hard; on the contrary: "He spent the last two weeks of August on vacation, returned to his office for one day, promptly took off on a four-day junket for a Labor Day speech in Omaha. He returned to Washington for nine more days, then was off to make a speech at the American Legion convention in Kansas City."—Time.

He got his job for only one reason. He is a man who can be depended on not to get sentimental about civil liberties. He is a man who has proved that he will act forcefully, within or without the law, to keep labor down. He is the Hoosier Hitler.

He is a dangerous man to American labor. Keep a watch on him!

Cover design of pamphlet issued by the Workers Party. You can order copies of this pamphlet from the Workers Party, 114 West 14th Street, New York, N. Y. 25 cents for a single copy; 20 cents per copy in bundles of five or more.

By Henry Judd
29¢

(To be continued next week)

Editorials

On Rationing

Several readers have written to ask us our opinion of rationing—are we for it, or against it?

We are FOR rationing—provided it is properly controlled and handled!

Given the curtailment of civilian production and the unavailability of many essential foods and articles, rationing is the only just method by which all can be assured of getting their fair share.

In the absence of a rationing program, those with the financial ability to pay the highest prices and those who can afford to lay aside inactive supplies of food or living essentials in hoarded stocks, deprive others—the poor—of necessary items.

However, as the experiences of price-fixing prove, rationing cannot be handled for the common advantage of all if it is left in the hands of government bureaucrats.

Government committees and merchant committees concerned with profits cannot ration goods for the equal benefit of all. Under the OPA, one price ceiling after another has been lifted—to the benefit of profiteers and merchants, and to the detriment of working class consumers!

Left to the same kind of administrative device, rationing will simply limit the amount of goods available to the low income consumer, while, in all likelihood, the black market flourishes and merchants pile stocks away for sale to those who can shell out.

Those who are most affected must be the people in charge. In other words, a rationing program that will benefit the masses of people is a rationing program under the control of working farmers, union representatives and working class housewives.

Thus, rationing is a good and necessary idea, but its operation must be in the hands of those who can administer it with the greatest justice.

But--

There are two other points that must be made.

The first of these is the relationship between rationing and prices. If prices continue to go up, rationing is only a meaningless gesture.

Where people cannot afford to buy eggs or butter or meat, there is small sense in rationing these items. Already, these foods are being 'rationed' out of the reach of the poor by spiralling prices. In fact, we suspect that one reason why eggs are still available in large quantities (at least in New York) is that the excessive cost per dozen denies their purchase to many thousands of families.

It does little good to ration a commodity and then fix a price on it so high that it is beyond the reach of the average purchaser. A real rationing program must therefore work hand in hand with a real price-fixing program.

We do not have that kind of a price-fixing program now, and there is no sign

of any improvement coming. About the only news we need relating to price-fixing is the hiking of this or that price.

Price-fixing will never be of real value to the people until it is put in the hands of committees chosen from among working farmers, union men and working class housewives.

And--

Wages have to go up! This is our second and more important point.

The facts are simple. Prices have already risen 'way out of proportion to the rise in working class income. Further, regardless of what the boss press may say, millions of workers have enjoyed no increase in income at all, or one so small as to amount to nothing.

And still further, the inroads on income through taxes, bond deductions, etc., take so considerable a slice away from the worker's pay envelope that scores of commodities, whether rationed or not, are beyond his reach.

Wages must rise until they guarantee a DECENT standard of living to every worker and his family. Once they reach that level they must continue to rise with every jump in the cost of living—otherwise the standard of living of labor goes down.

A declining standard of living—even in this period of peak employment and "big wages"—is precisely what lies ahead for labor. Many millions of workers have already felt the effects of that declining standard of living. Others will—if wages aren't boosted, and supplemented with an adequate price-fixing and rationing administration.

There is small chance of the average working class household vying with a banker's family for the best and most expensive cut of meat. One can't afford it, the other can.

But we hold to the idea that it is the right of the working class to enjoy the best cut of meat, the best eggs, the best butter. That is why, in this system which is based on the inequality of income and privilege, wage demands are always and ever in order.

Wage increases remain the fundamental need of labor! Rationing and price-fixing can be truly meaningful only if they are predicated on a decent standard of living!

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New York City's Transit Workers Face a Stiff Fight

The transit workers of the City of New York went into their struggle for an increase in wages with their hands tied behind their backs. For Michael J. Quill, president of the Transport Workers Union of America, and the New York local officials made it clear from the beginning that they had no intention of putting up a real fight in the only way workers can fight, namely, by threatening to strike and carrying out the threat if necessary. No wonder the 32,000 workers who operate the subways, buses and trolleys of the city have had to take some pretty hard blows.

For two years the TWU has been trying to get from the high and mighty Board of Transportation an adjustment of wages and other grievances. The autocratic head of the board, John H. Delaney, is a passionate union-hater. Mayor La Guardia, ultimately responsible for the city transit system, has backed up his co-boss Delaney in giving the union and the workers the run-around.

Delaney has consistently treated union officials like so much dirt. As Quill put it at the recent hearing in an unsuccessful attempt to get the case before the WLB, the union has been "CHASING" Delaney for a year and has been told that "he is either at Newport or Westport or some other port."

Unions Ask 15 Per. Cent Increase

The men and women to whose skill, carefulness and hard labor the millions of users of the subways, buses and trolleys daily entrust themselves, are earning from \$26 to \$38 a week—a shame and disgrace today, when high prices and taxes make such big gashes in a worker's wage.

The union is asking for a 15 per cent increase above the September 1, 1941, levels for all workers. This is the "Little Steel" formula adopted by the WLB for nation-wide application. Inadequate as it is because the cost of living has climbed much higher than 15 per cent, still this is all the union wants.

Delaney and La Guardia unhesitatingly offered the transit workers a \$1,000,000 raise. A million dollars is a lot of money when one captain of industry gets it in a lump sum. But when \$1,000,000 is to be distributed among 32,000 workers and spread out for a year, it breaks down to SIXTY-CENTS A WEEK.

Believe it or not, the municipal bosses had the unadulterated contempt for the transit workers, who perform absolutely indispensable work, to offer them an increase of sixty cents a week—after they have been trying for two years to get an adjustment of their dwindling wages. From this insulting offer the high and mighty did not budge.

But Quill and the other union officials—very much under the influence of the Stalinist line that when Uncle Joe is on the same side as Uncle Sam the American workers must be sacrificed to that alliance—still kept the hands of the transit workers tied behind their backs. Protesting loudly that they will not call a strike during the war, they made an application to bring the case of the New York City transit workers before the WLB.

Immediately Delaney countered this move on the part of the union with the ukase that by appealing to the WLB the union had automatically abrogated the contracts between the Board of Transportation and the TWU.

Also, without losing much time, the Mayor of New York and the mayors of seventy-eight other American cities declared that the WLB does not have jurisdiction over municipal government employees—and the Mayor of New York refused to be represented at the hearing before the WLB.

The New York State Chamber of Commerce, ignoring the fact that the TWU was not threatening to strike, thought the transit workers should be handled by the militia in the exemplary way in which President Coolidge once "settled" the Boston police strike. At the same time the

whole reactionary press decried the TWU's "attempt to create anarchy."

Under this anti-labor barrage the WLB announced that "it has no power under Executive Order 9017 to issue any directive order or regulation in these disputes governing the conduct of the state or municipal agencies involved." To their eternal shame, the union members of the board concurred in this decision, making it unanimous.

Workers' Hands Tied

Not that the WLB is anything to write home about. Workers all over the country are squirming under the constant stalling and unfairness of the WLB. But by refusing to consider the case of the New York City transit workers and of other municipalities who had appealed to the board, it gave its okay to the policy of municipal bosses that their workers have less rights than other workers. It is this anti-labor conception that the union members on the WLB also gave their disgraceful concurrence.

On December 17 the executive board of the TWU met to consider what to do next. It seems the mountain labored and brought forth a mouse. For the only thing the union leaders could think of was to call upon the Mayor and the Board of Transportation to resume negotiations with the union.

So the 32,000 transit workers stand exactly where they did before—with hat in hand before Bosses La Guardia and Delaney, who offer them sixty cents a week increase. Only the workers' situation is much worse now, for they have to argue down Delaney's ukase that by appealing to the WLB they broke their contract with the city.

The transit workers must get their hands untied. A man must have his fists to fight, and workers must have their right to strike behind their demand for better wages and conditions. This is the moral of the New York City transit workers' story up to this point.

Record of 77th Congress --

(Continued from page 1)

Deal was to absorb this protest, give as many concessions as were absolutely necessary—and no more—and then as soon as conditions warranted it, snap back to "normalcy."

A Record of Reaction

This is a record of the 77th Congress, the one that has just ended. It is a record of the reaction we predicted in 1932. Not a complete picture, of course; much of the worst that goes on today is in the control of the executive department or, like the withholding of LABOR ACTION and The Militant from the mails, is done by autocratic bureaucracy. But even this incomplete record is bad enough.

The 77th Congress convened for the first time in January, 1941. It was not markedly different from the 76th—there were five more Republicans in the Senate, two more Republicans in the House. But the war was approaching fast throughout the year, and the time for the liquidation of the New Deal was overdue. It was a time for reaction.

One of the first bills extended the life of the Dies Committee and gave it \$150,000, the largest appropriation it had ever received.

The Doughton bill raised the legal debt limit to \$65,000,000,000. (Since then it has been raised several times and on November 30 it passed the \$100,000,000,000 mark.)

One of the first bills to be discussed, though it took months in the passing was HR 1776, the Lend-Lease Act. This was significant partly because it was a clear step toward war, but principally because it was another step, and a large one, toward centralization of power in the hands of the President. He was empowered to "sell, exchange, transfer, lease, lend" virtually any article to any country—thus giving him a very heavy weight to throw in the scale of any foreign contest. He was empowered to take over factories and run them, "notwithstanding the provisions of any other law." He was first given the almost unlimited blank check of all unappropriated funds to work with; then, by amendment, this was limited to \$1,300,000. (But within a few months there were additional appropriations of seven billion and five and a half billion dollars.) He was empowered to issue such orders as he deemed necessary to carry out the act.

In spite of widespread opposition (among the noisiest of which was the Stalinist American Peace Mobilization picketing of the White House), Congress passed the bill almost without meaningful amendment. The President's powers were,

by an amendment, set to end June 30, 1943—which is certainly meaningless. The President had to submit reports to Congress every 90 days, hardly much of a limitation. The bill could be revoked by concurrent resolution (that is, a simple majority), but the possible veto would make a two-thirds vote necessary. Senator Ellender of Louisiana ("I can buy and sell legislators like sacks of potatoes") offered an amendment denying the President the right under this bill to send another AEF out of the Western Hemisphere, but he was induced to withdraw it. The only amendment that took into account the opposition to giving the President so much power and really cut it down was that specifically denying him the right to convoy ships with the American Navy, and in several months that was reversed by the repeal of the Neutrality Act.

Reynolds Gets Key Post
In May, 1941, Congress unveiled a statue to the memory of Huey Long and listened to speeches extolling his many virtues.

Then it passed the ship-seizure bill, giving the President the "right" to seize some 500,000 tons of Danish, Italian, French, German, Belgian, Rumanian, Austrian and Lithuanian vessels in American harbors.

The Senate put in as the chairman of its Military Affairs Committee, a key post, Robert R. Reynolds of North Carolina, a poll-tax dude known to be friendly to native and German fascists, whose principal contribution to American legislation has been a repeated effort to exclude all immigrants from all countries.

The Congress passed the priorities bill, giving government agencies contract priorities, giving the President control over the distribution and allocation of all war products (read: "of everything"). "Besides extending the President's powers," as Time remarked, "the Senate performed the almost impossible feat of expanding those of Secretary of Commerce Jesse H. Jones"—representative of Humble Oil and Rockefeller in the Cabinet.

NYA, CCC, NRA and later, by administrative decree, WPA, were abolished.

Congress got so in the habit of including loyalty oaths in bills that they found one payday that they themselves had to swear that they did not advocate the violent overthrow of the government before they could collect their checks. They did not think it funny.

Of course, the standard business of Washington, the pork barrel, went on uninterrupted. There was a \$500,000 increase in the allowance for franking—which was already substantial. A request for \$125,000,000 for "defense" highways they upped to \$320,000,000—what a chance for the contractors back home! It was vetoed. They revived that old bottomless receptacle of graft, the Florida ship canal.

They played around with repealing the poll-tax and in the end did not do so. Even the liberals had a hard job believing the off-

cial story that it was all the wicked Southerners' fault.

Vicious Tax Policy

Perhaps the most vicious of all has been the tax policy. In June taxes were raised to a new high of \$27 per capita. Taxes in the middle brackets were almost doubled. In the lower brackets they were doubled or even tripled.

Roosevelt was not satisfied. Said he: "Very few tax experts agree with me, but...most Americans are willing and proud to chip in directly even if their individual contributions are very small." Eventually they would not be so small.

Several months later came the next tax bill. Exemptions were lowered to \$750 for a single person, \$1,500 for a married couple. Anybody with \$15 a week had to pay. Almost five million people filed returns for the first time. The old tax bill had brought in \$9,500,000,000; the new one added \$3,500,000,000. Just the part added was enough to run the federal government in 1927.

This was still not enough. Next time they lowered exemptions still further, so that everybody earning \$12 a week or more had to pay a tax. And this time there were no exemptions. It was a "Victory Tax." About fifty million persons will have to pay under this new law.

Meanwhile the rich were being taxed, too. Oh, yes. There is a tax on everything above \$25,000 in salaries—which conveniently ignores the fact that a large part of the income of the wealthy comes from clipping coupons. There is even a tax on corporations, and EXCESS profits tax (normal profits are okay). At the time it was passed the New York Post quoted business executives as saying they found it "most generous."

That summarizes the 77th Congress: capitulate to the bureaucrats; soak the poor. There are a few unfinished items for the 78th Congress, which promises to do its best to be even more reactionary. For example, there are anti-strike bills in both houses (to reinforce the Roosevelt decrees)—in the Senate introduced by Poll-Taxer Connally, in the House by Hague-woman Norton. But on the whole they have done a pretty thorough job. The New Deal is dead, and its bones are picked.

This last Congress was one of the most reactionary in years. The next Congress promises to be worse. Can anyone challenge the need for a Labor Party, independent of the boss parties, based on the unions, representing the interests of the working class?

(LABOR ACTION will soon publish an analysis of the new, the 78th, Congress.—Editor.)

Buy Labor Action In No. Philadelphia:

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JAPAN: How Its Workers And Farmers Live

By Sylvia Merrill

By SYLVIA MERRILL

The past year has added to the considerable confusion that existed about Japan. For years the Japanese were described as some kind of doll-like people who wore kimonos, lived in bamboo houses, grew wonderful flowers in little gardens, lighted their houses with lanterns and grew lovely cherry trees. Of more recent origin has been the concept of the Japanese as wily, slant-eyed rogues, in shorts and sandals, ready to blow themselves to bits.

In actuality, neither of these concepts accurately describes the Japanese. There are fanatics among all peoples, and there are dainty, delightful habits and customs in all cultures.

To the Japanese farmer, that little bamboo house, which looks so delightful in a picture, is a flimsy built, one-room place, little different from that of our own Southern sharecropper. He has no land on which to grow anything but rice, since the cultivation of the soil is very intensive. Prior to the war, the thousands of yards of silk rayon and cotton that flooded the markets of the world from the looms of Japan rarely were seen on the backs of the Japanese workers and farmers. That goes for the gadgets and articles of one kind or another manufactured in Japan and shipped everywhere, but rarely sold in Japan proper. There is no mass market for these things—the workers and farmers are too poverty-stricken to do much more than buy their most needed commodity—food.

At the height of the depression, a leading Japanese industrialist, a Mr. Yatora, at one time president of the South Manchurian Railroad Co., made a speech extolling the poverty of the Japanese worker and farmer: "If Japan were a nation which ate a lot of meat and wheat, which wore woolen clothing and were dependent upon a great many international commodities, we should be on the verge of a revolution. But fortunately, or unfortunately, our people eat rice and fish, wear cheap clothing and are almost entirely divorced from the international markets in the essentials of living."

Mr. Yatora has very eloquently described the poverty of the Japanese masses. He errs only in one point; he thinks they are satisfied with their lot. What is more, the whole world has been educated to believe that the Japanese workers and farmers are content, that they are modest creatures, having few wants, ready and willing to turn out more and more work for the good of country and boss. The actual story of Japanese labor dispels this myth.

AS CAPITALISM GREW, STRIKES INCREASED

Simultaneously with the development of capitalism in Japan began the history of strikes and conflicts in which the ruthlessness of the ruling class and the desperate plight of the workers became apparent.

The revolution which brought the Japanese capitalist class into power took place in 1867, when the Emperor Meiji was restored to the throne. Soon after, in the 1880's, there was a strike of stone masons. The masons had refused to accept a decrease in wages and struck for twelve days. During this same period, 200 knitting mill workers went on strike.

During 1897 there were approximately forty strikes in which about 7,000 workers were involved. Miners, railroad workers, machinists and furnace stokers struck to secure higher wages in 1898.

So we see that, contrary to the much-advertised submission of the Japanese workers, peddled by its cynical government spokesmen and "labor leaders," the workers set out to win their rights by actions not unlike those of their Western brothers. It is true that their actions were not as widespread as those of Western workers, but this was due to the peculiarities of the development of Japanese capitalism which in turn gave rise to a labor movement with problem unlike those of the European and American working class.

THE ORIGINS OF SOCIALIST AGITATION

The revolutionary wave set in motion by the Russians in 1905 affected all Asia and had its reflection in Japan in many large strikes. Coal carriers, glass workers, dock workers, all won wage increases of from 10 to 25 per cent. The miners' strike was particularly violent and it took four infantry companies to break it.

At about this time socialist agitation and propaganda began to take place in Japan. In 1898, the Socialist Party of Japan was organized by Sen Katayama. Needless to say—before Hitler's now famous Gestapo, made careers for themselves as brutal suppressors of the socialist movements.

The trade union movement had less difficulty in carrying on its work than did the political movement, since the state found it necessary to be more tolerant of organizations along economic lines than political.

In 1904, the Russo-Japanese War broke out and while the armies were clashing in Manchuria, the Congress of the Second International was meeting in Amsterdam. There the delegates from the Russian and Japanese labor movement sat around the tables of the Congress, and Plekhanov for the Russian movement, and Sen Katayama for the Japanese met and shook hands amid an ovation that expressed the solidarity of the two working classes despite the war then being carried on by their governments.

The Russian Revolution and the revolts in Europe in 1918 stirred the Japanese working class. The year 1918 saw a great spurt forward in the organization of the labor movement. In 1918 there were 108 strikes; in 1917, 398; in 1918, 417; and in 1919, 497.

The spark that set the whole movement going was the "rice riots" of 1918. The rise in the cost of rice, the main food staple in Japan, provoked rioting in several small fishing villages. It soon spread to the larger cities, where the sacking of stores and warehouses took place. In Tokyo, the workers stormed the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce. The price of rice dropped!

The relaxation of the law forbidding unions was a spur to unionization. After 1918 there was a series of strikes and actions which drew in the most backward section of the working class: girls working in the textile mills. Here paternalism and a brutal slave method of employment prevailed. The girls were sold into the factory, boarded at the mill and in most cases never saw their wages, as they were paid back to their families.

(Continued on next page)

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!

1. Hands off the right to strike! For the defense of civil rights and all workers' rights! Against any wartime dictatorship measures!
2. \$1.00-an-hour minimum pay! Time and a half for overtime; double time for Sunday and holiday work.
3. Wage increases to meet rising costs. No wage or job freezing! Equal pay for equal work!
4. For a greater share of the increasing national income. For a higher standard of living!
5. No sales tax on consumer goods! No tax on wages! Against forced savings!
6. For control of price fixing and rationing by committees of working class organizations, housewives and farmers' organizations. Freeze rents and consumer goods prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living.
7. No government contract without a union contract! The closed shop in all war industries!
8. Maintain and increase all government social services!

SOAK THE RICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!

9. A government levy on capital to cover the cost of the imperialist war. Confiscate all war profits!
10. Conscript all war industries under workers' control!
11. Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the three percent of the people who own 96 per cent of the national wealth!

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO THE DRAFTEES!

12. The right of free speech, free press and free assembly for the men in the armed forces.
13. The right of soldiers to vote in all elections.
14. The right of all youth, male or female, to vote at the age of eighteen. Old enough to fight; old enough to work; old enough to vote!
15. For adequate dependency allowances paid by the government with NO deductions from the soldier's pay.

SMASH JIM CROW!

16. 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!
17. For full political, social and economic equality for Negroes!

BE PREPARED!

18. For Workers' Defense Guards, trained and controlled by the unions, against vigilante and fascist attacks!
19. For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government! No political support to the Roosevelt government!
20. For Peace Through Socialism! For the independence of all colonies!
21. For a World Socialist Federation! Only a socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism and fascist barbarism!