

What the Tax Squeeze Does To Your Wages

By JOHN BERNE

The Ruml Plan, embodied in the Carlson tax bill, has been recommitted to the House Ways and Means Committee by vote of the House of Representatives. This should be the beginning of the end of that attempt to steal from the have-nots to give to the haves.

The average worker does not react to each and every one of the machinations and maneuverings going on in Congress on the subject of taxes. But, generally speaking, the newspaper reports of the tax discussions make him feel like a lemon squeezed almost dry, to which the final squeeze is about to be applied.

But herewith LABOR ACTION submits to the reader something very concrete—the EXTENT of this final squeeze.

Richard Seller, Federated Press correspondent, after going into a huddle with expert tax consultants, comes out with the eye-opening information that—

Present congressional tax proposals will leave a \$40-a-week worker with only \$16.80 to spend in terms of the pre-war dollar.

Here is how this scandalous scale-down is arrived at by Mr. Seller:

Social Security Tax on \$40 Wage	\$0.40
Victory Tax on \$40 Wage	1.40
10% for Compulsory War Bond Purchases	4.00
Other Taxes of All Kinds	4.80
Ruml-Carlson 20% Pay-as-You-Go Deductions	8.00
Total Tax Deductions	\$18.60

In a word, the \$40-a-week worker—THAT SYMBOL OF WAR "PROSPERITY"—would be made to sacrifice down to \$21.40. This looks much like a sub-standard and sub-subsistence wage.

But wait a minute! THE COST OF LIVING FURTHER REDUCES THAT \$21.40. And how!

Mr. Seller figures on an increase in war prices of twenty-two per cent over peace prices. This is obviously too low. Increases of twenty-five per cent in the most favored communities and as high as thirty-five per cent in the less favored ones are more realistic. However, taking Mr. Seller's low allowance for price increases, the dollar buys only 78 cents worth of pre-war values—not counting inferior quality and other gyps.

Therefore, the \$21.40 left to the worker after taxes will give him \$16.70 of pre-war purchasing power.

Need more be said! No wonder the workers all over the country have begun to clamor for wage increases—and for an end to the Little Steel formula which the War Labor Board has just reaffirmed in the cases of the airplane and packing house workers.

But here's a bit more light on the Ruml-Carlson twenty per cent withholding tax. Just what does that \$8.00 deduction from a \$40 wage mean to the worker?

If he has no dependents and now pays what amounts to \$2.80 per week in federal income tax, he will be paying \$5.20 more per week than at present.

If he has one dependent and now pays \$1.48 a week, he will be paying \$6.52 more each week.

If he has two dependents and now pays only twenty cents a week, he will be paying \$7.80 more than at present.

Visualize these weekly income tax figures in terms of food, clothing and rent. How will the worker with two dependents whose tax burden will amount to \$33.80 each month additional—meaning that much more than he pays today—how will he pay his monthly rent?

Thus the financially weakest layers of the population are being taxed into poverty! And remember that the above figures are on the basis of a \$40-a-week wage. What about the lower wage levels—which are also taxed!

Now we come to the very climax of this factual story. Why did the Messrs. Congressmen become so enthusiastic about the twenty per cent pay-as-you-go deduction—which increases so very drastically the income taxes of the workers? Why? So that—

One and one-half per cent of the entire population of over 130,000,000 can be presented with the lavish gift of five billion dollars of 1942 taxes to be skipped under the Ruml-Carlson Plan—with similar gratuities to the rich all along the line.

No wonder LABOR ACTION shouts: "Lay off the workers! Confiscate corporation war profits. Limit individual war incomes to \$25,000. Levy a tax on the big fortunes of the rich. And—lay off the workers!"

Murray Local, UAW, Asks Premium Pay Restoration--Backs Miners' Wage Fight

The restoration of premium pay for Saturday and Sunday work in all war production plants was demanded by the Murray Local No. 2 of the United Automobile Workers in Detroit.

Lloyd T. Jones president of the local, announced on March 24 that this demand had been made in telegrams to the leaders of the international union and to top government officials. The demand will also be made to the management in addition to a demand for a \$2.00-a-day increase in wages to meet the rise in living costs.

The demand for a \$2.00-a-day increase is similar to the wage demands of the United Mine Workers, now negotiating their new contract. Jones stated that the local was sending a telegram to John L. Lewis in support of the miners' insistence upon the \$2.00 increase.

LABOR ACTION

APRIL 5, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

WAR ORDERS ALLOW BOSSES 20% PROFIT!

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The latest report of the Senate Truman Committee reveals the fact that industry is repeating the profit-making orgy of the First Imperialist World War. The committee reports that even after the "renegotiation" of war contracts, companies manufacturing war supplies and equipment are being allowed profits of more than 20 per cent.

The reported top profit allowed by the Navy Department is 17.8 per cent. But the War Department is more generous and allows a top profit of 22 per cent.

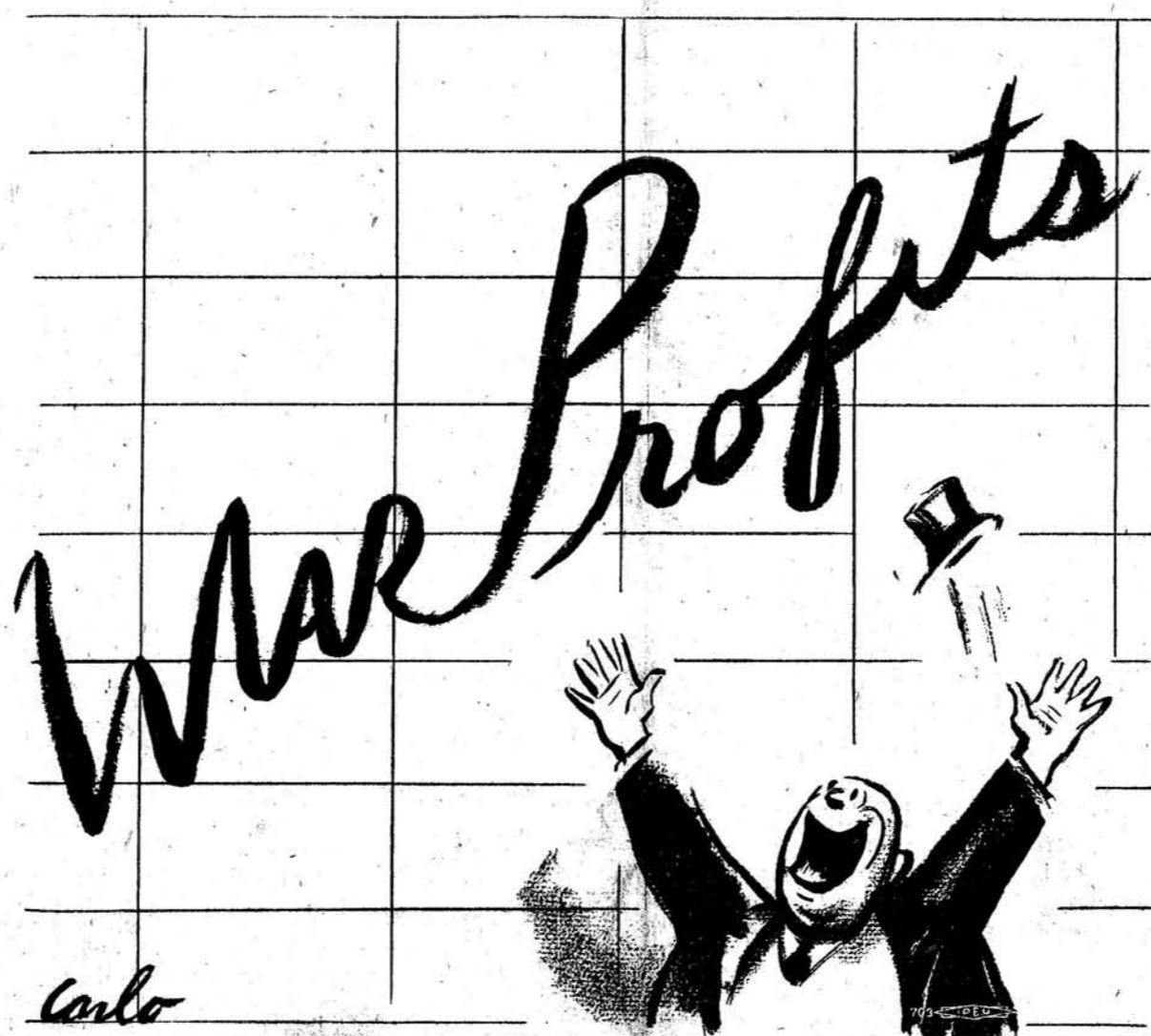
Determined not to be outdone by the War and Navy Departments, the Maritime Commission permits a top profit of 23.2 per cent. This commission has allowed more than 15 per cent on over half of its renegotiated contracts.

We want to emphasize that these high profits are being allowed after the contracts are "renegotiated"! What must they have been before the process of cutting down on the amount of profit? And what is this "renegotiating" of contracts? It is the carrying out of provisions in an act of Congress that requires the various government departments to make new contracts with manufacturers after a period—and when it is apparent that the original contracts signed were far too high and if allowed to stand would create a public scandal!

(Continued on page 4)

1942 Must Have Been Bad Year For Bosses of Bethlehem Steel

Grace	\$537,724
Bent	197,317
Mackall	197,317
Homer	160,826
McNath	155,393
Shick	155,393
Berkeley	109,620
Holton	109,620
Jacobs	109,620
Larkin	109,620
Total	\$1,842,450



Mine Dispute Brings Issue of WLB-Roosevelt Wage Policy to a Head

By MIKE STEVENS

With the acceptance by the mine owners of the union's proposal that negotiations continue for thirty days after the present agreement expires on March 31, and that all wage increases and working conditions changed during the process of negotiations be retroactive as of April 1, the possibility of a strike in the anthracite mine fields has been delayed pending the outcome of negotiations.

Why did the mine owners finally accept the retroactive clause which they had rejected in the beginning? They accepted it because of Roosevelt's guarantee that "the question of undue hardship to individual operators resulting from the agreement to make such adjustments retroactive to April 1, 1943, will be given due consideration by the agencies of government concerned with costs and prices." This, of course, assures them that if any wage increases are granted it will not cut into their profits but will be passed on to the consumers. The joker in Roosevelt's telegram, of course, was the statement that the Little Steel formula must be adhered to. This automatically excludes any wage increases to the Mine Workers.

Another reason why the owners originally refused the retroactive clause was that they expected Roosevelt to force the entrance of the War Labor Board into the picture immediately and thus bring the fight to a head-on collision. For political reasons of his own, Roosevelt refrained from doing this.

Government observers are already

sitting in on the negotiations without taking part, but will undoubtedly enter the picture officially when the negotiations bog down.

With the miners continually quitting the mines for better-paying jobs in war industries and with the assurance to the mine owners that the government will permit increased prices to cover wage increases, the negotiations may really produce a favorable agreement. But whatever happens at the negotiations, the problem of the WLB and its Little Steel formula remains. If a wage increase is granted, the WLB will not permit it. If negotiations break down the WLB will eventually claim jurisdiction over the case. Thus the mine dispute has brought the entire question of the Little Steel formula and the functioning of the WLB to a head.

Last week Roosevelt's WLB unequivocally came out against any change in the Little Steel formula. They made this decision despite the fact that the entire labor movement is so much against the Little Steel formula that it forced its leaders to take action to seek its revision. Certainly Roosevelt is not at the present time prepared to slap labor so hard without compensating it in some way. And labor's dissatisfaction having been brought to a head at this time by the mine workers, the most militantly outspoken union against the WLB, FDR is forced to offer some satisfactory-sounding so-

lution to the workers' protests against the rising cost of living.

Roosevelt was prepared last week to make a big splash on how he would stop runaway increases in the cost of living by refusing to sign the Bankhead Bill, which would increase food prices seven per cent, and the Pace Bill, which would have added an additional fourteen per cent to food prices. This he hoped would counteract the effect on labor of the WLB's refusal to scrap the Little Steel formula.

Roosevelt wanted to show the workers that although he refused to allow slight increases in wages he was also refusing to allow their food prices to go up five billion dollars. The farm bloc, composed of the banking firms and corporations that control large-scale food production, stole this opportunity from FDR by keeping the higher bill in the Senate Agricultural Committee until a more opportune time. Roosevelt hoped he would make the workers forget that food prices have ALREADY soared far above wages by blocking an additional five billion dollar rise.

Exactly what course Roosevelt will now pursue depends on his estimation of how much labor support he will lose by refusing any change in the present "wage stabilization" policy. And although he is certain that the AFL and CIO labor leaders will abide by the present formula, his ability to keep the rest of the labor movement in check, if the mine

workers continue their militancy, is questionable. And Roosevelt cannot afford to let his labor lieutenants, Green, Murray and others, lose prestige to a victorious John L. Lewis.

Negroes and Whites Call Demonstration in Detroit Against Jim Crow, Apr. 11

By JOSEPH CARTER

DETROIT—A mass demonstration to combat the increasing discrimination against Negro workers in this city has been called jointly by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the United Automobile Workers (CIO) for Sunday afternoon, April 11.

More than 15,000 Negro and white workers are expected to participate, according to NAACP President James J. McClendon. The demonstration will begin as a parade at 2:30 p.m., starting at Theodore and John and ending at Cadillac Square, where there will be speaking at the monument of Sojourner Truth.

Charging that the recent work stoppages at Packard, Vickers, U.S. Rubber and other plants were organized by the revived Ku Klux Klan and other anti-democratic groups, Gloster B. Current, executive secretary of the NAACP, told your correspondent that these elements were out to provoke race riots and destroy the union movement. The Negro workers, he added, are loyal and active members of the unions, and are determined to assert their full democratic rights. Skilled Negro workers with many years of seniority have been refused upgrading by the management, and in view of the "job freezing" cannot leave their jobs.

Mr. Current cited innumerable cases of discrimination against Negroes throughout the city in restaurants, bars, amusement places, jobs and in housing. Trained Negro women are refused work in most plants and in many cases when hired are given either menial jobs or work which is too difficult for them and in violation of the labor code of the state.

The federal agency has refused to permit Negro war workers to live in the Willow Lodge Housing Project at Willow Run. The Detroit

Housing Commission continues its segregation policy by refusing to allow Negro war workers to live in war housing projects now being built in the City of Detroit and plans to designate a segregated project at Eight-Mile Road. Mr. Current stated that the only way to abolish these Jim Crow practices is through the planned, organized efforts of Negroes and whites, such as the joint NAACP-UAW demonstration.

Recently at Ferndale, a Detroit suburb commonly called "Shacktown," Negro and white school children engaged in fighting with knives. White hoodlums, according to reports, notified the Negroes that if they didn't leave the town they would be run out by violent means. Mass rioting was avoided. These sources state, by the intervention of state troops and the local police.

Numerous stories of discrimination against Negroes are heard throughout the city. According to one of them, a meeting was recently held by the workers in a plant who had refused to work with Negro women who were put on machines. A government official present explained, the story continues, that discrimination against Negroes interfered with the war effort. Whereupon several workers inquired why they have to work side by side with Negroes when the government itself maintains a Jim Crow policy in the armed forces and at its housing projects. The reply of the government official was not reported.

Detroit Workers!

LABOR ACTION urges you to turn out for the demonstration against Jim Crow at Theodore and John R., Sunday, April 11, at 2:30 p.m. SMASH JIM CROW!

Protest Ban on "Militant"

Speakers Denounce Post Office Action as Violation of Free Press

NEW YORK, March 26—Four hundred workers and friends of a free labor press, meeting at Manhattan Center, tonight protested the order of the Postmaster General revoking the second-class mailing rights of The Militant. A resolution adopted by unanimous vote condemned "this first attack upon an anti-fascist labor paper since the war began" as a "gross violation and serious threat to the constitutional and democratic rights of freedom of the press," and called upon Attorney General Biddle and Postmaster General Walker "to

revoke this arbitrary ruling and restore to The Militant its full mailing rights." The resolution, referring to the action against The Militant, pointed out that "it sets a dangerous precedent which can be invoked against other labor and liberal papers critical of Administration policies."

The meeting was called by the Civil Rights Defense Committee, which is leading the fight to win back The Militant's mailing rights. George Novack, secretary of the CRDC, was chairman of the meeting. Speakers were Emanuel Garrett of LABOR ACTION (see page 4); Layle

Lane, national executive board member of the March on Washington Committee; John Finerty, well known civil liberties attorney; Clifford Forster, representing the American Civil Liberties Union; and Albert Goldman, attorney for The Militant. Over \$400 was collected in donations and pledges, in response to the appeal of the chairman for funds to carry on the defense.

Attorney Goldman announced that action was being taken in the courts to block the Postmaster General's illegal move and that the case would be fought all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary.

News and Views from the Labor Front

Bell Local 501, U.A.W., Returns to Its Members

BUFFALO—The one year of dictatorial (mis)rule by Allie Brodese is over. John Matuski, former vice-president, supported by the local's progressive group, was swept into the presidency by an overwhelming victory of the entire progressive slate in the recent election of Bell Local 501, U.A.W.-CIO.

Although the main strength of the progressives came from the increasing demands of the membership for militancy and an end to company appeasement, the main stress of the progressive election papers was concentrated on union democracy and honest unionism.

The beaten administration, whose greatest strength lay in the abuse of his powers as president by Allie Brodese, such as appointing stewards and committeemen in an attempt to build a machine, create jobs and obtain privileges for "the boys," could get no support among the members. This in spite of the fact that the shop is being packed with followers of the Stalinist party line, which Brodese follows.

Brodese and his clique, made up of Stalinist sell-out artists and the usual number of careerists, as well as some professional petty politicians, knew they were licked from the start and tried every means they could think of, and more, to disrupt the election. All their efforts so far have been of

no avail. The votes have been counted and the election is over. Brodese will probably protest to the international executive board, but it will be useless. Every possible precaution was taken to assure a fair and honest election.

The simple truth of the matter lies in the fact that the workers of Bell Aircraft have no stomach for the sell-out line of the Communist Party or the dirty tactics deemed necessary to cram it down their throats.

The election fight was a bitter one. The progressives pulled no punches on Brodese. They exposed his misrule and ruining of the local. In spite of their knowledge of the fact that he followed the Communist Party line, they did not red-bait, and kept that issue out of their campaign material. The Progressive paper concentrated on Brodese's record in NOT building the union and the fact that he did nothing to protect leading militants against company persecution.

Brodese, on the other hand, conducted a campaign of vicious name-calling and downright anti-union stool-pigeoning. Some time before the election two leading militants were framed and fired by the company, one a committeeman, the other a chief steward. The local immediately got behind their grievance and was prepared for a real battle. Brodese sabotaged that battle. Meanwhile he protested strenuously that he was doing all he could. The union paper in two months, however, had not one word to say in their defense.

Brodese Shows His Colors

During the election campaign Brodese showed his true colors. His election paper, for example, carried the following story:

"And if the truth were told, Vincent Copeland was not fired for union activity. No worker has been fired from Bell in the past year. Why should the company pick on this disrupter and not on any of the loyal, effective union members and leaders.

We have reason to believe that Copeland was fired because he was disrupting the war effort."

This in spite of the fact that the local union branded the firings as frame-ups because the men were good union members. Brodese knew this because he was the head of the grievance committee handling their case. The company's main charge was that they were getting too many grievances settled. They tried to claim the men intimidated the foreman. This, to Brodese, is "disrupting the war effort." Militant unionism to him is treason. That is why the workers voted to throw him out.

Brodese asks: Why did the company fire these progressives and not loyal union men and leaders (read here: Brodese stooges). The answer is that the company can easily get along with Brodese and most of his stooges because they believe fighting for the workers' justifiable grievances is "disruption of the war effort."

In another issue of his paper we read: "...and in the near future we hope that Trainor and Slaiman will be with Copeland far away from the Bell plant, where they cannot sabotage and incite to strikes." It is these stool-pigeon statements that provoked the members of the union. The men and women in Bell Aircraft do not want as president of their union a man who is ready to support the company and even anticipate the company in its attempts at slandering and oppressing union militants!

Steel Workers Protest Job Freezing

By WILLIAM BRAD

CHICAGO—The United Steel Workers of America, representing over 60,000 steel workers in the Calumet area of South Chicago, has protested the job freeze order of the War Manpower Commission issued last week and has announced that the union and its members will not accept it.

This is the latest in a series of developments since the WMC order was issued last Monday. The decree, put into effect without consulting the unions themselves, would freeze all workers in the Calumet area of South Chicago to their jobs. The order affects 250,000 workers employed by such giant corporations as Carnegie-Illinois Steel, a branch of the Morgan-controlled United States Steel Corp., various Little Steel plants such as Youngstown Sheet & Tube and the notoriously reactionary Pullman Car Manufacturing Co.

employment stabilization plan" by the War Manpower Commission. But just as "wage stabilization" means wage freezing so "job stabilization" means job freezing.

This is made clear enough for the blindest to see by the provisions of this order under which no worker may leave his job without the permission of his employer or the State Employment Service. If his employer refuses him a release he can appeal to the State Employment Service, get all tied up in red tape, lose time and pay, and at the end may or may not be released. Actually the order puts the worker at the mercy of the boss.

The company undertakes no responsibility toward the worker. He is bound to his job no matter what the wage, no matter how many hours he has to work, no matter how bad his housing conditions are. If the

wages he gets are too low to permit him to meet the rising prices... that's just too bad. He's stuck with the job, chained to it. If there are openings elsewhere at higher rates, he's just out of luck. If he wants to get a job at a higher skill in another plant he must first get his boss's permission.

What Unions Can Do

The area covered by the decree contains some of the lowest paid workers in these industries. Some of these have had no increases in fourteen months, in spite of the Little Steel formula. Housing conditions, especially around the steel mills, are even worse than most city slum areas. Unheated shacks, loose jerry-built wooden bungalows are common conditions around the mills. These are the workers who are to be frozen to their jobs.

Herbert Lieberum, sub-district

director of the Steel Workers Union, made the union's position clear: "We are unalterably opposed to the job freeze which ties a man to his job without giving him any protection." Fullerton Fulton, state director of the CIO, said: "We will demand that job freeze be revoked or modified."

There is one sure way of carrying out this program. The unions must clearly announce that they will not accept the order as binding and rally the rank and file membership in support. The unions are not in a very good spot, having already given up their best defensive weapon: the right to strike. Since the unions have given in on this the interest of the membership has declined. If the job freeze is to be defeated, the unions must rally the membership. The first and best way to do this is to show that they mean business by taking back the right to strike.

Mexican Working Class Hit by High Prices--Strike Movements Increase

By G. ORDO

Prices for basic foods have been skyrocketing in Mexico just as in the United States. A kilo (a little over two pounds) of poor grade beef now costs 1.80 pesos. A year ago the same amount of beef cost 1.20 pesos. During the last month many foods rose as much as 25 per cent. Butter went from 40 to 50 centavos a hundred grams in three days. Lard went up ten centavos a kilo.

At the same time the quality of the food sold at these higher prices has become poorer. In a kilo of beans 25 per cent of the weight is waste matter—stones, clods and dirt. Dairy products are unfit for human consumption because of the presence of putrid foreign matter.

Mexican unionized labor is paid on the average about 2.30 pesos a day—non-unionized labor much less. That is, a union man can just about buy three pounds of low grade beef with a day's wages.

As in the United States, the industrialists in Mexico have failed to grant minimum wage increases in the face of these rising prices. The result—a series of crises in the Mexican labor movement. Strikes are now threatening or are being

that sentiment had swung all the way against the new proposal. The pressure of the rank and file machinists and the shop stewards put the kibosh on the scheme temporarily, but the stewards and the union members must be aware that the company has not given it up.

It is clear to every man that Pollard is not their man on this issue and that only the democratic voice of the union membership can defend them against this latest attack. By his disgraceful actions Pollard is working the men up to the point where an explosion is due to lift him from his high seat in the union.

Press Revives Harlem Atrocity Story Scare

By T. R. COBB

A committee of four Harlem clergymen and two New York police inspectors met in conference at the West 123rd Street police precinct last week and blasted the press-concocted smear campaign against the Negro people.

Refuting the hysterical outburst of "Harlem Crime Wave" and "mugging" stories currently featured on the front pages of the daily newspapers, the committee reached the following conclusion as a result of its discussions:

"THERE IS NO CRIME WAVE IN HARLEM."

Furthermore, the Rev. John H. Johnson, police chaplain and spokesman for the group, stated flatly: "I am not only saying there is no crime wave, I am also saying that the Police Department is able to back me up with facts and figures. In other words, THERE IS LESS CRIME IN HARLEM TODAY THAN THERE WAS A YEAR AGO TODAY."

The latest campaign against the Negro people apparently received its impetus from the New York Times, which on March 15 again belied its traditional reputation for "dignified" reporting by headlining an ordinary story of a neighborhood gang fight in which a white minister's son was stabbed, as "Pastor's Son Stabbed by Muggers as He Protects Girls Against Gang."

Here the old, inflammatory, Negro-baiting, race-hating routine was pounced upon by the journalistic fraternity and enlarged into a full-blown "Crime Wave," replete with outraged white womanhood and a mugging a minute. The

police issued a statement the next day describing the stabbing as the result of a gang fight, categorically insisting that it was NOT a mugging, NOT an attack on the girls, and NOT a hold-up! The Times printed this statement under a headline about "Two More Muggings in Harlem," its conscience not one whit disturbed by the inestimable injury caused the Negro people by its despicable and slanderous story.

Even the city's judiciary has been infected with the poison of race-hatred. Rebuking patrolmen for not hauling in suspected muggers with more alacrity, Magistrate Charles

See editorial on "Race Hatred—American Style" on page 4 of this issue.

Solomon addressed one policeman in these tones: "This woman has IDENTIFIED THIS NEGRO. What are you waiting for?" Mere IDENTIFICATION has now become a basis upon which to convict suspects of crimes they may or may not have committed!

There has been no hint of a let-up in the atrocity stories, and all signs indicate that the newspaper bloodhounds intend to pump the very last mugging out of Harlem. They will even report out-of-town crimes in which Negroes are involved, as they did about a Newark mugging recently when things became a little dull in Harlem.

The police department, carried away by the publicity and yielding to the demands of vigilante-minded citizens ignorant of the facts, has assigned fifty additional detectives to a "Mugging Patrol" of Harlem streets, leaving the rest of the city as open house for increasingly active white hoodlums, confidence men, burglars, white slavers and assorted riff-raff.

The Negro press, in defending itself and the Negro people against the frenzied attacks of the capitalist press, misses the intent and purpose of the campaign. The slogan for "racial equality" and "fuller democracy," employed to win Negro enthusiasm for the war, have been taken literally by many thousands of Negro workers, and a tremendous body of enlightened and militant Negroes stand as an unorganized but threatening force against the institutions of segregation, job discrimination and wage chiseling.

Federal Housing Administration Would 'Dixie-ize' Detroit Project

By GENE DYER

DETROIT—Local 600 of the Ford River Rouge plant, the Citizen's Committee and the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have joined in a fight to resist the efforts of the Federal Housing Administration to "Dixie-ize" Detroit. The FHA has refused permission to Negroes to occupy the Willow Run Housing Project.

While the housing situation is acute in Detroit, especially for Negroes, the importance of the fight is not so much to get Negroes into the Willow Run project as over the general, and vital, issue involved. The conditions on the project are not such as to encourage anyone to batter his way in.

The contractors who built the project did so with little regard for housing needs. From a bird's eye view, the project looks like a chicken farm with oversized coops. The houses are made of wood. The drainage system is very bad and the landscaping seems to have been executed by a blind man.

Unlike the Sojourner Truth Project, whites have already begun to occupy the Willow Run project but the Housing Administration has refused to rent to Negroes.

There doesn't seem to be much chance in reversing the Housing Administration through legal action. Not soon enough to matter, anyway. It is really up to the union local to take such action as will compel the company and the housing authorities to change their position.

Fight Company Threat in San Pedro

SAN PEDRO, March 26—Workers in the Los Angeles Shipyard here were faced last week with another threat to union conditions and the union contract, in the shape of a bid by the company for the introduction of the ten-hour day. The union contract calls for eight hours.

This fresh attack by the corporation coincided with the announcement in the press that Paul Porter—who, as head of the notorious Shipyard Stabilization Committee of the government, is in charge of selling ship workers down the river—had set up a committee to "study" the question of the ten-hour day.

Just about the same time, at a meeting of the Labor-Management Committee of the Los Angeles Yard, the company propositioned Walter S. Pollard, the administrative dictator of Local 9. Pollard was requested to permit the machine shop department to go on a ten-hour shift "temporarily."

The company claimed at this meeting that the national office of the IUMSWA was in favor of such an arrangement. But it turned out, on examination, that all the management representatives had to show was a series of communications with the Navy favoring the ten-hour day, and one communication from Philip

Van Gelder, national secretary of the union, who, informed of the Navy's stand, merely stated that he understood the Navy's position.

Pollard Favors Proposition

This reply could not by any stretch of the imagination be interpreted as favoring the violation of Local 9's agreement with LA Shipyard. But still, Dictator Pollard was persuaded by the company's "eloquence" to go to bat for the proposition and convince the machine shop workers to agree voluntarily to give up the eight-hour day.

Pollard thereupon hastened to the machine shop to carry out the company's wishes—without so much as dropping a hint even to his hand-picked stooge executive board, without in any way consulting the membership of Local 9. He proceeded to call a meeting of the machine shop men—during working hours and in the machine shop; everyone was at the meeting, including all the bosses, and the men were expected to vote under their eyes. There was no discussion.

Pollard made the speech for the proposition, along the line of the following method: First you deny that

you are flag-waving or beating the drums about the "boys on Bataan" or Guadalcanal; then when you come to the vote, you say something like this: All those who are against increasing production, all those who want to sabotage the war effort, all those who in this emergency refuse the sincere request made by the company, etc., vote nay.

Despite the circumstances of the meeting and the intimidation of Pollard's speech and the presence of the bosses, over 50 per cent of the men voted against ten hours. It was finally decided to take a referendum vote in the department on all shifts to settle the question.

The disgraceful behavior of Pollard came in for a well-deserved beating at the following meeting of the LA Yard Shop Stewards' Council, from which Pollard took care to absent himself. A unanimous motion of the shop stewards went on record against the introduction of the ten-hour day, and Pollard was lashed for his unprincipled and undemocratic procedure.

Shop Stewards Aroused

It was pointed out by the shop stewards that the union agreement was made between the union and

the company, not between Pollard and the company or the machine shop and the company, and that therefore only the members of Local 9 as a whole had any right to change the agreement. One member of the council demanded to know whether the union was a craft or an industrial outfit. The general sentiment of the men was: "Pollard would sell us out for two bits. Let's get rid of the dictator!" All realized that the company proposal, though made to one department and qualified as "temporary," was only an opening wedge whereby the company planned to continue its anti-union drive as it has in the past year and a half.

It was pointed out also that all government surveys in this country and in England showed that the ten-hour day was disastrous to the workers' health. The accident and sickness rate increased tremendously, so that after a period of time the men scarcely make more money or do more work. In England the ten-hour day was dropped in the shipyard industry as the result of experience.

It remains to be added that the referendum in the machine shop was not held, MAINLY because it became obvious after the shop meeting

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Sharecropping In Missouri

Dear Editor:

Well how are you all today. I am well in health and strength, not in mind on what I going to face this summer or fall from this big boss's place. He is hell they say because he is a millionaire. Well it look like they want the workers to starve or go hungry this summer to make this crop. Well I don't know. The labor is short and getting shorter. The prices are rising to \$2.00 average through this section.

Say one landlord "I lost two sharecroppers last week." He tried to get them to stay. They would not. He give or offered them more crop and say he would pay \$2.00 a day. They say no, you are too late. No \$3.00 would. I going to git. So they moved. We don't know how we are going to make it on the farm this year.

One day I was talking to a worker. He was saying his boss was paying \$1.25 a day. I felt like knocking him in the head when he had to pay \$1.10 for 24 lbs. of flour. He say he was not going to work any more for that. There is a cotton gin and when we sell cotton the gin call his self selling our cotton to the government. Well they tell the graders to grade out cotton 2 or 3 points low and we do not get no check from the government. We get his check on cotton graded low.

John Jones.

On the Strike At River Rouge

Dear Editor:

Some of you may have read of the strike that took place in the Ford River Rouge plant the week of March 15. I'd like to give some of the facts that were suppressed in the Detroit press.

On Thursday, March 11, a Negro committeeman from the aircraft plant of the River Rouge factory came to the gate without his plant badge. He had credentials identifying himself as a union committeeman but was still denied admittance by the plant guard.

Higher union officials inside the plant identified him but the guard still refused to allow him to enter. A fight began and the Negro was badly beaten by the plant police. Later the same day the plant guard responsible for the assault on the union committeeman was beaten in retaliation by a group of union men.

Following this incident the company discharged the Negro committeeman himself and seven other active and militant committeemen. Of the eight fired seven were Negroes and one was white. The company obviously decided to utilize this incident as a pretext for striking a blow against militant elements in the local and at the same time hoped to stir up antagonisms between the white and Negro workers in the plant. This attempt failed.

The management refused to give

the union grievance committee an immediate hearing on the reinstatement of these workers. A walkout started against this arbitrary attitude of the company. The second shift in the aircraft plant refused to work on Monday, March 15. The men in two of the foundries walked out until close to 40,000 men were idle in protest against the high-handed actions of the company.

The strike lasted until the second shift on Wednesday.

The boss dominated press of Detroit featured violent editorials condemning the strike and stating that it had been organized by Hitler's agents. If they want to know who is really responsible for the strike they don't have far to look: the Ford Motor Co., which hoped to split the union and weaken it.

A. Z.

thereby aroused to a vague desire to know more about world and national problems, and yet would never take the initiative of going to a library or book store, and wouldn't know what to select if they did go to such a place. A few of these people might be induced to begin serious study if you would, in each issue, recommend some special book, and make it possible to buy that book through your paper. I would suggest that in selecting these books you put readability before content, since you are not appealing to those who are willing to follow a serious tome—they have no need for such service. Semi-social novels might be the ticket for a starter: Sinclair's "World's End," for example, rather than "The Road to War."

A Reader.

Suggests Reading List of Books

Hello, LABOR ACTION:

More power to you and your paper; it is the best of its kind I have ever seen, both in point of content and appearance.

It strikes me, however, that you are neglecting something. Social changes must come about through widespread knowledge, and knowledge cannot be entirely obtained through newspapers. There are probably a considerable number of people who read your paper and are

Firing of Local 9 Militant Steward

Dear Editor:

LABOR ACTION, in previous issues, had occasion to report on the firing of Paul Boyich, former chief shop steward of the Los Angeles Shipyard. Boyich, a militant member of Shipbuilders Union, Local 9, was following up on a discrimination grievance filed with him as chairman of the grievance committee, on his own time, when his employment was terminated. The company charged that Boyich was not following the

Why No Elections In Ship Local 9?

Dear Editor:

We members of Local 9 of the Shipyard Union down here in San Pedro had our local autonomy lifted some months ago by that phony, Walter S. Pollard. After he was here a while he made us a lot of promises, but the only ones that came true were those where spending our union's money was concerned. One of the promises he made was that we would have the right to

In Chicago: You can now get LABOR ACTION, The New International and Henry Judd's pamphlet, "India in Revolt," at CESHINSKI'S BOOKSTORE 2720 Division Avenue.

LABOR ACTION announces a series of lectures in New York on FRIDAYS AT 8:15 P.M. April 2—American Labor and the Mine Workers. Speaker—DAVID COOLIDGE. And a series by MAX SHACHTMAN on the war. April 16—Why the War Came. April 30—Fascism and Democracy in the war. May 14—United States in the war. May 28—Russia in the war. June 11—Socialism or the Third World War? Place—Labor Temple, 14th Street and 2nd Avenue. Admission—25 cents per lecture. Combination Ticket for All Six One Dollar

Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Camp

THE NORTH AFRICAN COMEDY: THIRD ACT

The hollowness and stupidity of "liberal" thought in this country is really amazing. For months "progressives" have been bursting with indignation over U.S. policy in North Africa. You could not open one of the "liberal" weeklies or dailies without noticing an article on the fascist set-up in North Africa...

But what has caused all this rejoicing? Have trade unions again been permitted in North Africa? Are there going to be free elections? Are political parties allowed to function? Oh no, not at all!

Of course, in order to be completely out of tune with the official democratic phrasology of the Allied camp, Giraud had to make some kind of a "democratic" speech; he had to out some fascists, had to declare some of the Vichy laws abolished.

HOW DEMOCRATIC WAS THE THIRD REPUBLIC?

And then, what about the wonderful democratic epoch of the Third Republic? That was the time when trade union militants could be administratively deported to the Southern desert—slowly dying there; when people who dared to speak their grievances were shot without further investigation; when starvation on a mass scale was a normal phenomenon; when an Arab, in order to go to France, had to have a special paper—which he did not get most of the time; when daily wages were between one and five francs in agriculture (45 francs equal \$100) and between eight and fifteen francs in industry; when 70 per cent of the Arabs were rejected by the draft because of chronic undernourishment; when only about five per cent of the Arab children could go to school.

Our liberals make high-sounding speeches about the pints of milk to be distributed in the wake of the onrushing armies of democracy. So far they have only brought a still more accentuated economic crisis to North Africa—an acute shortage of bread and meat, even in the big coastal towns, not to speak of the misery and starvation in the interior. Indeed, the march of democracy goes on and on—but under its heel are crushed the Arab farmers and workers, as well as the French workers.

Let nobody be deceived if tomorrow the Provincial Councils are restored. These councils have absolutely no power. They have only consultative functions. Furthermore,

But how far does all this go? Where are the acts concretizing these declarations? These have been thoroughly lacking. There is no possibility of a fundamental change in the North African set-up except through the action of the natives... that is, a native revolt. But the British and American general staffs probably get nightmares with the thought of such a possibility.

Some more anti-Jewish laws are probably going to be abolished. However, not even all the laws of the Third Republic can be reintroduced. These laws are the result of a generation of struggle between the demagogue French colonialists and the natives. They are the legal framework of oppression and to a certain degree they also reflect the few victories the natives have achieved in their fight against their oppressors. These small victories were possible when the French felt weak and unsure in North Africa, because they had no large standing French army, only a mixed army, and for several other reasons as well. Now these reasons no longer exist. An enormous army is right on the spot. There is therefore no reason why the slightest degree of freedom should be given to the Arabs right now.

THIRD REPUBLIC?

they are the fruits of a very clever scheme on the part of French colonial administration—the French are past masters in this sort of thing—a scheme which, although it gives the appearance of democracy, actually makes a mockery of democracy. First, mostly French and few Arab landowners and officials are represented. Second, every conceivable method of bribery was used to elect "the right people." Third, in the South, even these travesties of democracy do not exist at all. Fourth, the only real power outside of the Administration is held by another type of General Council elected by French citizens only—that is, not by the Arabs, who are subjects and not citizens.

De Gaulle and Giraud might possibly come to some agreement—that will depend less on their personal intentions than on the schemes of those powers who pull the wires which make them move. Then, it is possible the Third Republic will again be introduced in North Africa and every legal document will again begin with the phrase "In the name of the French people." And on every prison wall the inscription "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" will reappear. But this will be the sum of change. French colonial administration, with the reinforcement of some American gauleiters, will be just as ruthless with the native population as it has always been. And the Four Freedoms will have as much bearing in the realities of North Africa as they have in de Gaulle's Syria or in British India.

Europacus.

Workers Party Activists' Conference Maps Plans for Membership Recruitment Drive

Enthusiastic endorsement of LABOR ACTION's campaign to get 1,000 new subscribers and The New International's drive to increase its circulation, plus a decision for a membership recruitment campaign of its own, marked the high points of the two-day National Active Workers' Conference of the Workers Party recently concluded in one of the principal industrial centers of the Middle West.

The conference was attended by almost one hundred delegates and visiting party members who came from coast to coast to listen to the reports of the party's work in the past period and plan for the months ahead, as well as to exchange experiences accumulated in the course of the activity of each locality in the factories and the unions.

Report on the War

The opening session was called to order by National Secretary Max Shachtman, who, after the adoption of the agenda, delivered the principal report on the war and the working class at home and abroad, and on the situation and problems of the party.

The report on the war and the working class dealt mainly with the analysis presented in the political resolution of the National Committee of the party, which is reprinted in the current issue of The New International. Outstanding in it were those sections which reiterated the viewpoint held by the party since the outbreak of the war, namely, that neither of the two imperialist camps has a way out of the war, that neither of them can look forward to an early decisive military victory such as would restore even the precarious peace that existed prior to September, 1939. The war, Shachtman repeated, can and will last for years, bringing the most unbelievable devastation and reaction in its train for the working class, which alone has the power to bring it to an early end by taking government power into its own hands.

At the same time, the conflicts and problems which capitalism is multiplying for itself as well as for the people as a whole in the course of the war are creating increasingly favorable conditions for the restoration of an organized, fighting working-class movement in Europe. On the basis of the political resolution, as well as of the resolution on the national question in the colonies and in Europe, Shachtman pointed out that there is no reason for a black and pessimistic outlook, but that, on the contrary, we can look forward, especially in Europe, to the recurrence of favorable revolutionary situations.

Labor Is Not Passive

In the United States, where the situation differs greatly from the European situation, the reporter showed that the theory held above all by the Cannonites that the working class is on its back, is passive and not likely to engage in struggle, cannot be held

up under the light of a thoroughgoing political analysis.

If the ruling class were unitedly embarked on a reactionary course and had the labor bureaucracy completely under its thumb, such a perspective might be justified. A much more optimistic perspective for the class struggle in the United States is justified, however, in light of the fact that the ruling class and the government machine are still sharply divided on the subject of how to deal with the working class, its standard of living and its rights. One section wants to use the iron fist, to employ the "tough" method of open reaction. The other seeks to chain labor to the war machine by the methods of capitalist reformism, however greatly diluted since the early days of New Dealism. In the conflict between these two forces, the ability and inclination of labor to strike out in defense of its standards, to act independently of the autocratic instructions of the war machine to keep its nose to the grindstone regardless of what is done to it, are greatly increased.

To the great interest of the conference as a whole, the individual delegates who spoke bore out this point of view by reporting from their own experiences in the factories and labor movement to show that virtually everywhere the workers are seething with discontent over the conditions imposed upon them and are constantly within a hair's breadth of precipitating open struggles against these conditions.

State of the Party

Shachtman's report also dealt with the state of the Workers Party itself. All the prophets of doom and gloom who have been so freely predicting the "disintegration" of the party would have spent an uncomfortable week-end listening to this report and to the detailed corroborative and amplifying reports from the local organizations. That the party has suffered many and even severe losses was indicated by all who spoke, as well as by the reporter. With the outbreak of the war, some of the weaker, less experienced or less educated people, as well as some timid characters, separated themselves from the party, as was inevitable. In addition, and far more serious, was the fact that the party, being made up predominantly of young militants, has suffered heavy losses due to the draft, resulting in some places in serious weakening of the organization.

However, these losses have been greatly compensated for by the recruitment of new members, who are doubly valuable because it is precisely now that they decide to join the revolutionary socialist movement. Also, the party has been enormously strengthened in the past period by the fact that the overwhelming majority of its membership—a good ninety per cent—is now employed in the basic industries of the country and active in the most important unions, much to the discomfort of labor bureaucrats and the Stalinist machine. In addition, the party has succeeded in establishing itself in fields never before touched by the Trotskyist movement in the United States, notably among the Southern agricultural workers and laborers.

Report on LABOR ACTION

Shachtman's report was followed by a report on LABOR ACTION, delivered by Editor Emanuel Garrett. Citing the facts and figures, Garrett showed that with the aid of the party members, LABOR ACTION had succeeded in attaining a circulation, primarily among the industrial workers of the main cities in the country, of more than 32,000 copies every week. The reporter indicated the firm and systematic devotion of thousands of workers to LABOR ACTION by citing typical letters received at the central office, by the unprecedentedly large subscription list of the paper, and by the recognition of its effectiveness among workers, which is involuntarily given by union bureaucrats, Stalinists and other reactionaries who have sought to have LABOR ACTION suppressed or its distribution interfered with or prohibited.

Delegate after delegate rose to substantiate the report of Garrett, as well as to propose changes and modifications aimed at further improving the contents of the paper and making it even more accessible to the workers among whom it circulates. The decision to endorse the LABOR ACTION subscription drive was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted. So also was the decision to support The New International, which has suffered a good deal in the past because of the general concentration around the weekly press.

Analyze Union Situation

The second day of the conference was devoted almost entirely to reports and discussion of the situation in the trade unions in the country and the tasks of the party members in them. The principal report was delivered by Labor Secretary David Coolidge, who submitted the trade union resolution printed recently in the columns of LABOR ACTION. Coolidge devoted himself mainly to a critical analysis of the work of the party members in the labor movement and a series of proposals calculated to improve and intensify this work.

Before general discussion was started, special reports were made by local representatives of the party, from New York, Philadelphia, California, Detroit and the South. Without ballyhoo or exaggeration, the reports showed the slow but steady progress made by the ideas of the party among the workers and

trade unionists in the main centers of the land.

The conference was especially enthusiastic over the detailed report of progress made by the two Negro delegates from the South, themselves workers in agriculture, who depicted the abominable conditions to which hundreds of thousands of croppers, tenants and laborers are subjected and described what is being done, with sober and grim determination, to change these conditions to something approximating a human existence.

The discussion that followed was generally considered the most fruitful and promising that the party had ever had on this most important of all current problems.

The National Question

Before the conference finally adjourned, Secretary Shachtman gave a presentation of the line contained in the National Committee resolution on the national question, showing its relationship to the position taken by the French and German comrades of the Fourth International as well as the position taken by the Cannonites. Questions asked by the delegates were answered by the reporter, who announced that the printing of the resolution in The

New International inaugurated the formal discussion in the party and in the press by the entire membership. This discussion will follow up the informal discussion that has been carried on in the pages of The New International for more than a year, and bring to a conclusion the point of view of the party on this question as dealt with in resolutions adopted at preceding national gatherings of the party and full meetings of the National Committee.

No gathering of the Workers Party in recent times was so widely considered a success from every standpoint as the Active Workers Conference. The ability of the party to assemble at one time in one city the most active and experienced militants to the number of one hundred, under the difficult conditions now prevailing in the country in general as well as in the party itself was a tribute to the firmness, cohesiveness and devotion of the party. Delegate and visitor both left the conference with the determination to dedicate themselves even more seriously and single-mindedly to the task of building up the working class movement, and strengthening and popularizing their Workers Party in the ranks of the labor movement.

Profits, Taxes, Prices Rise -- But Wages Are Held Down

By EVERETT WESTON

When the Little Steel formula was set by the War Labor Board, it was agreed by AFL and CIO officials on the basis of certain premises. At that time, LABOR ACTION pointed out that they were false premises. By now, it is clear to everyone that they were.

The Little Steel formula, which limits the increase in WORKERS' pay to 15 per cent over the January 1, 1941, level, was represented as a step, one step, to prevent inflation. It was freely admitted that at least two other steps had to be taken if inflation was to be avoided: a limit had to be set to big incomes, and the rise in the cost of living had to be stopped. Without these two supplements, the Little Steel formula has become a means of transferring a yet larger share of the war burden to the backs of the working class.

Some surface show was made to limit large incomes. That it was hardly more than window dressing, we pointed out at the time. By executive order, a high limit was set to SALARIES at \$25,000 a year, \$500 a week. That most wealthy people derive most of their income from clipping coupons was entirely ignored. Virtually all of them had, in addition to the \$500 a week in salaries, at least that much again in dividends, interest, fees. You might think that, if only to give some substance to this talk of equality of sacrifice, they would be willing to struggle along on a mere \$1,000 a week. You might think—if you had failed to realize the arrogance of America's ruling class.

Even this limitation, fake though it was, was too much for Congress. By votes of 268 to 129 in the House, and 74 to 3 in the Senate, it was repealed.

As for the third step—blocking the rise in living costs—again no serious attempt was made. Again there was a gesture. And again even the gesture was not maintained.

The gesture in this case was the setting of ceilings on money prices. That these ceilings have not been maintained is no news to anyone. The most conservative sources estimate the rise in the cost of living since January 1, 1941, at 23 per cent. Others, closer to the workers who have to pay, estimate it at 35 per cent. The rise in the cost of food alone has been close to 50 per cent, and the poorer a man is, the more important food is in his budget. The poorest family spends about 75 per cent of its income for food, the average worker about half, but the millionaire only a few per cent.

But figures about the rise in money costs are only half of the story, and the smaller half at that. When you buy something, three things figure in the price: how much you pay for

Company	"Earned" in		Per Cent Increase
	Recent Period	Year Before	
City, Inc.	\$1,395,720	\$922,881	51.2
H. C. Bohack Co., Inc.	634,236	373,352	69.9
Budd Mfg. Co.	3,802,029	1,060,218	258.7
American Republics Corp.	2,167,837	1,352,155	52.9
Bush Terminal Co.	575,706	401,171	43.5
Gray Mfg. Co.	124,270	20,815	497.0
National Refining Co.	983,266	596,329	64.9
Universal Pictures Co.	1,135,763	848,941	34.3
Combustion Engineering Co., Inc.	2,011,081	1,058,092	90.1
Federal Mogul Corp.	1,006,376	605,818	66.1
A. O. Smith Corp.	1,416,601	691,356	104.9
Allied Products Corp.	1,067,026	648,326	64.4
Lyons-Magnus, Inc.	116,946	40,834	186.4
Munising Paper Co.	394,315	268,467	46.9
North American Creameries, Inc.	173,193	49,756	246.1
Aviation Corp.*	4,723,894	2,454,142	92.9
National Airlines, Inc.	105,387	65,726	60.4

*This is a consolidated profit, including "earnings" for Vultee Aircraft, Consolidated Aircraft, New York Shipbuilding and American Central Mfg. Corp.

it, how much there is of it, and what its quality is. All statistics you see on the rise in the cost of living are figured on the first only, but actually the decrease in quality has been such that probably this is a still more important factor. And recently a court decision, reported in LABOR ACTION, ruled that even a decrease in the size of an article is not to be interpreted as an increase in price.

The fight to maintain quality has centered around the issue of grade labeling. The original order to ration canned goods included a provision for at least partial grade labeling, but this was scotched long before it saw the light of day. It is the large canning companies that have successfully fought it. If, for example, you have spent some millions of dollars in advertising to build up Del Monte, and if most of the items so labeled would have to be changed to "Grade C" under grade labeling, you would fight grade labeling to the last ditch.

Under Prentiss Brown, senator-rector from Michigan, the OPA has come even more under the control of the big canners. His personnel man is LaVerne Herring, also a senatorial rejectee. Together they have hired and fired with the intent of building a successful political organization. Brown himself is a stalwart of Michigan Democratic politics, having been chairman of the Democratic state conventions in 1924, 1932, 1934, 1936, 1938, 1940. An index of where Herring stands can be gotten from his testimony before the Truman Committee, where he spoke up dutifully for Standard Oil.

Two of the men Brown and Herring have hired recently are Daniel Gerber and Louis Maxon. Gerber is the son of the president of the baby foods company. (Baby foods were exempted under the

original rationing of canned foods.) Maxon is an advertising man, and his most important account was Heinz. It is the old story of the men who make the profits sitting on government bureaus to determine how much, and under what conditions.

It is against this background that the War Labor Board voted not to scuttle the Little Steel formula. One of its members, Wayne L. Morse, representative of "the public," had the vote effrontery to add this to his vote: "If the time comes when the other agencies of the government fail to control the cost of living, with the result that the cost of living reaches a point where labor cannot maintain a decent standard of living necessary to maintain war production, then I will vote to break that ceiling; but..." The arrogance of these men is amazing.

Meanwhile, still, there has been no culling on profits. Every week LABOR ACTION prints a list of companies, with their 1942 profits as compared with those for 1941. The increase is not a mere 15 per cent, or even double that, but three, four, five, six times that. This is "equality of sacrifice" in action.

There is one remedy, and only one: Various locals of the UAW and the UMW have withdrawn their no strike pledge. Every local of every union must follow their example.

Buy LA and NI In Akron at:

News Exchange (near Palace Theater), 51 South Main Street.
News Center "88" (near Colonial Theater), 38 E. Mill Street.
National News Co. (corner Exchange and South Main Street), 333 South Main Street.

Protest Ehrlich-Alter Murder

By SUSAN GREEN

The assassination of Henryk Ehrlich and Victor Alter by Stalin's murderous GPU was protested at Mecca Temple in New York City on March 30 by some 3,000 trade unionists, socialists, liberals—and a sprinkling of capitalist politicians grinding their own axes.

Among the speakers at the meeting was William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, to whom Ambassador Litvinov had sent his letter of "explanation" of the murder of the two leaders of the Jewish and socialist movements of Poland.

The tone of the meeting had been set in a statement by David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union and head of the committee which organized the protest meeting. Mr. Dubinsky said:

"The lives of Henryk Ehrlich and Victor Alter are shining examples of sterling and fervent devotion to the cause of their people. We dismiss categorically the absurd and wild charge that they were working for a separate peace with the Nazis. The effort to besmirch the character of these two martyrs, to cast black shadows on their fealty to the ideals of progress and humanity, is shameful and vile."

James A. Carey, secretary-treasurer of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, who spoke at the Mecca Temple meeting against the violent opposition of the Stalinist contingent in the CIO leadership, struck a note of international solidarity of labor.

"I know of no men of independent thought who have been persuaded that Alter and Ehrlich were guilty," said Carey. "I have read and re-read the 'explanation' submitted by the Ambassador Litvinov, and each time the explanation appears less convincing. Those who seek to defend these executions are reduced to the grim self-deception practiced recently by one columnist in the Daily Worker, who wrote: 'These men were guilty or they would not have been exe-

cuted.' No apologist for any tyrannical ever spoke more frankly. The Ehrlich-Alter case extends far beyond national boundaries. It cuts deep into the whole future of world labor. The Russian workers in the past have often joined with us in protesting injustices and persecutions in our own country. We have welcomed such demonstrations—in the cases of Mooney and Billings and of Sacco and Vanzetti. We ask them to see our protest tonight in a similar light. As a gesture not of hostility to Soviet labor but of concern for the future of world labor organization."

Other speakers were Mayor La Guardia of New York, United States Senator James M. Mead and United States Representative Voorhis of California. It would have been in better grace and in the spirit of the sincere socialists in whose memory the meeting was called, if the meeting had been made strictly labor's affair—excluding representatives of the capitalist class.

Professor Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary was the only speaker who even made mention of the scandalous Moscow trials. "Cynical defiance of the labor movement of the Western world which pleaded for the lives of these two labor men, refusal to give any plausible reason for their execution, all remind us of the Moscow trials years ago," said Professor Niebuhr.

In justice to the labor movement

'India in Revolt'

If you haven't yet ordered and read Henry Judd's magnificent pamphlet, "India in Revolt," do so immediately. Order your copy from the Workers Party, 114 West 14th Street, New York City. Twenty-five cents per copy; twenty cents in bundles of five or more.

of the whole world, the leaders of labor organizations speaking at the Ehrlich-Alter protest meeting should have taken it as an opportunity to denounce also those Moscow trials, the exile, torture and assassination of tens of thousands of revolutionary Bolsheviks by bloody Stalin and the murder of Trotsky by Stalin's hatchet men. We must, however, note that most of these were disgracefully silent when Stalin was murdering Russian revolutionaries.

Green, rightly said: "We do know this—that the lives and records and characters of Ehrlich and Alter thoroughly belie these charges." But the lives and records and characters of Trotsky and the old Bolsheviks "liquidated" by Stalin for their revolutionary intransigence, speak far more loudly for themselves.

The Daily Worker and the Stalinist misleaders of labor have been getting high blood pressure over the mounting protest against the assassinations. These super-patriots who only recently were calling this an imperialist war out of no communist convictions but in line with the Hitler-Stalin pact, now condemn the Dubinsky committee for "deliberate efforts at corruption of the United Nations."

In the crowd on the street around the meeting hall, arguments developed between Stalinists who seemed to have been planted there for the purpose of reminding people (who came to protest the assassination) that Ehrlich and Alter were just "a couple of Nazi spies." These arguments did not go so well for the stooges.

In the course of the street arguments the Moscow trials were mentioned, Trotsky's innocence was acclaimed again and again, and he was referred to as the organizer of the Red Army—which, of course, is NOT Stalin's army of today.

This reporter left the scene as one good sized defender of Trotsky, using every restraint to keep his anger in check, shouted: "Without Lenin and Trotsky there would never have been a Soviet Union." From the crowd came murmurs: "The man is right."

New York Workers Attention!

THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN EUROPE

WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF A LECTURE BY

MAX SHACHTMAN

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, AT 8:00 P. M.

IRVING PLAZA—Irving Place and 15th Street

AUSPICES: WORKERS PARTY, LOCAL NEW YORK

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION ADMISSION: 25 CENTS

Editorials

Race Hatred-- American Style

The white worker who nibbles on the suckerbait dangled in front of him by the current campaign against the "Harlem Crime Wave" is in danger of chewing off a sizable hunk of race-hatred poison!

Certainly there is crime in Harlem. Is there a community of a quarter of a million people in any part of the country (or anywhere under capitalism) which hasn't got its quota of crime and juvenile delinquency?

What makes the newspaper stir about NEGRO crime dangerous and dishonest is not so much that it deliberately relegates crimes by others to the back pages and plays up in exaggerated fashion the misdemeanors of TINY SEGMENTS of the Negro population, but that it is a CALCULATED campaign to disrupt the increasing cooperation and understanding between black and white workers.

The New York Times and the Daily News are arousing a LYNCH SPIRIT against Negroes not in order to sell more papers, not in order to discourage whites from patronizing non-advertising Harlem entertainment spots, but in order to create DISTRUST, SUSPICION and HATRED—to maintain their own "American" brand of terror and "racial supremacy" over the heads of a minority group.

They would like nothing better than to

create the general impression that every other Negro is a mugger or a criminal. They would like to be in the position to answer the just demands of an oppressed people with "No, you are not entitled to jobs on the same basis as other workers because you have muggers in your midst. No, you have no right to ask for better housing and an end to exorbitant rents and prices because out of degrading poverty you have produced a few muggers."

There isn't a social agency in the city of New York that hasn't reported that the problem of crime in Harlem can only be solved by ERADICATING THE DISGRACEFUL CONDITIONS CREATED THERE BY A SOCIETY THAT ENFORCES RACIAL THEORIES SIMILAR TO HITLER'S IN ITS OWN BACK YARD.

Instead, Mayor La Guardia, who has unjustly been accused of "coddling" the Negro people, has assigned fifty more detectives to keep order in Harlem. This is on a par with some of his other solutions for social ills. Here are a few PRACTICAL suggestions:

1. Publish the figures on the police blotters in Harlem, comparing them with last year's figures. Then compare the rise or decrease in Harlem crime with the rise or decrease in crime in other parts of the city. We challenge the Mayor to make such a survey.

2. Open the schools in the evening for recreational activities for young and old alike. In the summer time, keep them open from 9 to 9.

3. Prosecute any business, firm or company that discriminates against Negroes in any way.

4. Insist that the newspapers cease their slander campaign and the "crime wave" will disappear as swiftly as it was first conceived.

In the factories where Negroes work side by side in harmony with whites, in the unions where Negroes stand shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-workers of every color and nationality—there is the living refutation of one of the slimiest press campaigns in the history of the country.

We Know Enough About Him Now!

Reports from Hollywood herald a movie based on the life of labor-baiter No. 1, Edward Rickenbacker.

It is labor's job to protest the production of a film which will idolize as a national hero a man who has proved himself—in the past and in the present—an enemy of the working man and therefore of the American masses.

Organized labor must protest from coast to coast! Plenty of anti-labor propaganda is put over on the screen. But a Rickenbacker film at this time is laying it on a bit too thick, and is openly a slap in labor's face.

Twentieth Century-Fox will release the film which is to be produced by Winfield R. Sheehan. Alva Johnston, story writer, and Paul Green, playwright, are supposed to be busy on getting up the screen version of Rickenbacker's life—about which labor already knows all that is important to it. Edwin Burke is reported to be the one to give the screen version final treatment.

Take note of these names as belonging to those willing to extol an ardently labor-hating boss who profiteers on war transportation via the air.

If—in spite of a nation-wide protest by labor—this film is produced and shown, labor's next move must be a boycott. The working people of the country are the box office customers on whom Hollywood relies. Labor can show them a thing or two.

PROTEST and BOYCOTT a Rickenbacker film!

LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

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Sub Drive Gains Momentum

MARCH 21-27—THIRD WEEK:

New York	25
National Office	1
Buffalo	12
Chicago	8
Philadelphia	2
Cleveland	1
St. Louis and Missouri	3
WEEKLY TOTAL	52
GRAND TOTAL	128

The Sub Drive is picking up momentum—but much too slowly. New York is coming through in good shape; Chicago begins this week to bring in its quota; and Buffalo leads the country, exceeding its quota and increasing its returns each week. But where is Los Angeles? Where is Detroit? And we need more than scattering returns from the rest of the country.

From wherever LABOR ACTION has even a SINGLE READER, we expect the subs to come in. Get one sub a week if you can; and two subs a month require so little real effort to obtain that there is hardly any excuse for not doing the job.

If you can't get subs, write us and tell us what's wrong. We can probably help you to get started. We have an excellent printed leaflet for use in the drive, but it is not being made use of to the extent that it deserves.

There are plenty of ways to call workers' attention to our paper and to get them to fork over twenty-five cents for a six months' sub. It's a proposition that can't be beat. What we want is some of that ACTION that our paper is named for.

We urge you to subscribe simultaneously to The New International, monthly socialist magazine: \$1.00 for six months; \$1.50 for a whole year. You can take advantage of the special combination offer: LABOR ACTION and The N.I. for six months—\$1.00; LABOR ACTION and The N.I. for a year—\$1.75.

Use this convenient form and mail your sub today. ONLY 25 CENTS FOR SIX MONTHS (OR 50 CENTS FOR A FULL YEAR). (Coin, Money Order, Currency, Stamps)

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Enclosed find \$_____ for which please enter my subscription to

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LABOR ACTION and N.I. for _____ 1 yr. 6 mos.

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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!
- \$1.00-an-hour minimum pay! Time and a half for overtime; double time for Sunday and holiday work.
- Wage increases to meet rising costs. No wage or job freezing! Equal pay for equal work!
- For a greater share of the increasing national income. For a higher standard of living!
- No sales tax on consumer goods! No tax on wages! Against forced savings!
- 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.
- 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 cost of the imperialist war. Confiscate all war profits!
- Conscript all war industries under workers' control!
- Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the three percent 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 armed forces.
- The right of soldiers to vote in all elections.
- 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!
- For adequate dependency allowances paid by the government with NO deductions from the soldier's pay.

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 vigilante and fascist attacks!
- For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government! No political support to the Roosevelt government!
- For Peace Through Socialism! For the independence of all colonies!
- For a World Socialist Federation! Only a socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism and fascist barbarism!

Sparks in the News

By Everett Weston

"The War Labor Board has no statutory existence whatever. It exists purely by presidential directive. Under a thin fiction of 'voluntary acceptance' by both employers and workers (if even that fiction is still seriously maintained) the board in fact imposes compulsory arbitration on workers and employers. Congress has never explicitly authorized compulsory arbitration of labor disputes in wartime. The President never even asked Congress for such authorization. Compulsory arbitration merely exists as a fact."—New York Times editorial.

"The cancellation of taxes on 1942 income would in effect wipe out many of the tax increases imposed to finance the war. The married person with no dependents and a net income of \$2,000 would be forgiven 77 per cent of the INCREASE in income taxes for the three-year period 1940-1942; at the \$100,000 level the amount given would be 102 per cent; and at the \$1,000,000 level, 320 per cent... Persons with incomes of \$100,000 or more would actually receive a bonus!"—Letter to the New Republic.

"Rickenbacker... made a plea for rugged individualism, saying that he would rather be the guest at dinner

of Henry Ford, the Fisher brothers, K. T. Keller and a few other automobile manufacturers than to sit down with 'those who are living in the lap of luxury at the expense of the sweat and toil of millions of honest men and women.'"—New York Times.

"Former Judge William H. Hastie, who resigned as civilian aide to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson in protest at alleged racial discrimination in the armed services, has won the Spingarn Medal for 1942... The medal is presented annually to the American Negro considered to have made the highest achievement in the preceding year or years."—New York Times.

"Roy F. Hendrickson, director of the Food Distribution Administration, asserted that, with good management of supplies, he saw no reason why conditions should verge on the chaotic."

Text of Garrett's Speech Hitting Post Office Ban

I have the honor to bring to this meeting and to the fight The Militant is carrying on, the fraternal greetings and solidarity of our paper, LABOR ACTION, and our party, the Workers Party. (See page 1.)

FUNDAMENTALLY, we oppose this arbitrary attack on the rights of The Militant because it is an attack on a basic democratic right—the right of free press—for which labor has fought tenaciously throughout its existence as an organized movement.

An attack on this particular right—the right of free press—is an attack on all democratic rights. What does the right of assembly mean if there is no right of free press, if there is no free press which can call people to assemble?

What does the right of free speech mean if you cannot speak through the columns of a paper and reach the ears of people who cannot be reached by voice alone?

peralist war, is subject to the same persecution and gag. "And we have, of course, what might be called our own reason for attacking the persecution of The Militant, for being in complete solidarity with The Militant, what you might call our own private reason. Our paper, LABOR ACTION, has been subjected to the same outrageous Post Office attack as The Militant. Week in, week out, without any official reason being given, LABOR ACTION has been arbitrarily held up in the Post Office and its mailing to subscribers delayed—all this, I repeat, without any reason being given.

As many of you know, at about exactly the same time as the Post Office informed The Militant it was deprived of second-class rights, LABOR ACTION was notified that it would be mailed without delay as before. We are, however, not deceived, or lulled into a false feeling of security, by this apparent quality of policy in the Post Office, and no one else should be. It is obvious that the reactionaries are making The Militant a test case. If they succeed in keeping The Militant out of the mails, if they win their court case, that will be the signal for them to attack all along the line, with LABOR ACTION next on the list.

All these reasons, and many others that might be cited, dictate to us the clear and unambiguous course that must be followed by the entire labor movement and by everyone to whom the term "progressive" is not an empty word.

That course is 100 per cent solidarity with The Militant in its fight. That course is 100 per cent hostility to the reactionary plans and procedure of the Post Office and the Roosevelt Administration and war machine that stand behind it.

If we fail in this, we help by our negligence to pave the road for reaction.

If we join hands firmly on the side of The Militant, if we fight unitedly and aggressively, and if we win our fight, as we can, we shall have helped pave the road for new victories by the working class and its revolutionary vanguard!

Companies Allowed 20% War Profits - -

(Continued from page 1)

Not only this, but "renegotiation" is a ruse to make it appear that the government is cracking down on industry, reducing private profits and making the big corporations toe the mark. It is a nice way to make the workers believe that the demand of the CIO for "Victory Through Equality of Sacrifice" is being put into effect. The worker sacrifices on wages, meat, shoes and butter. The corporation sacrifices on profits. They are told to reduce their prices to the government; a war is going on and everyone must sacrifice equally.

Of course, the bosses don't like this "renegotiation" business. They don't like the act which permits their government prowling around in their private affairs and examining their books. This reduces their opportunity for double bookkeeping, stealing, price fixing pacts and other such pay-triote practices indulged in by the big industrial and financial patriots.

Furthermore, to have the high per cent of profits exposed regards the anti-labor drives of the bosses. The workers catch them in their BVD's, so to speak, and the halo that surrounds these "industrial statesmen" is changed either into a dunce cap or a money bag.

The bosses would rather the Truman Committee let their profits alone and put in all of its time talking about "absenteeism," "man

hours lost through strikes," how the workers are "holding up the war effort," etc., and anything except profits, salaries and dividends. They want 25, 40 and 50 per cent profits. But the government hedges and will meet them half way, the War and Navy Departments and the Maritime Commission will "split the difference." The boys must be satisfied with a top of around, 17, 22 and 23 per cent!

How They Manage

Now we have to examine how the corporations are faring with this meager average little profit of only 20 per cent. What do the stockholders get, and what about the salaries of the top officials of the big companies producing war materials.

There is U.S. Steel. They sold nearly two billion dollars' worth to the government last year. This was 18 per cent over 1941 and 38 per cent over the highest year during the First World War. Out of this huge sale to the government this company was able to make a net profit of \$71,000,000. In 1941 they made 116 million. They paid out 725 million in wages to a half million workers and officers. But the stockholders were not forgotten. The preferred stockholders got 25 million and the common stockholders got 34 million. Each group got the same amount in 1941. That is, this one corporation paid to stockholders 118 millions in two years.

These millions didn't go to the men who produce the steel. By far the biggest part of it went to men and women who do no useful labor—to people who just sit and wait for the dividend checks to come rolling in. Of course, these people

claim that they had money to "invest" because they or their forefathers "abstained," they didn't spend their substance in riotous living like the average worker or the Prodigal Son. They made a pair of shoes last a little longer; they did with a little less meat; they didn't eat cake for years and years.

And there is Douglas Aircraft Co. Their net profit in 1942 was \$11,000,000, or \$18.32 a share. In 1941 the net was \$18,000,000 and \$30 a share. They say that the payroll of \$150,000,000 was fifty times the dividends. This means that dividends were around \$3,000,000. Of course it would be interesting to know in the case of U.S. Steel, Douglas and all other corporations just how many people collected these dividends and what share went to each person. This information would reveal some startling things about the bosses and bankers and why they are so anxious not to have profits and salaries exposed. No wonder these fellows have Rickenbacker chasing around the country talking about what grasping and selfish organizations labor unions are. No wonder the bosses keep the air filled with cries of "absenteeism," "un-Americanism" and the rest of it.

Not a Bad "Wage"

Not only do the corporations making war supplies want high profits for dividends, they also want to look out for themselves in the matter of salaries. The officers of the Bethlehem Steel Co. understand this thoroughly. Last year this company paid its top officers and directors a total of \$2,037,035. There were fifteen of these. Ten of this group received over \$100,000.

Eugene Grace, the president, got \$537,724! There were eleven smaller fry getting from fifty to a hundred thousand who received a total of \$671,334. There were 105 little fellows getting between twenty and fifty thousand, who got a total of \$3,908,779. Altogether 126 officers got over five million dollars in salaries!

These are the fellows who talk about "absenteeism," "our American Way of Life," "this is labor's war" and about increasing the work week. Of course they want labor to work and sweat and toil like a mule; they want larger salaries, dividends and profits.

Of course they get mad when a harmless little Truman Committee meekly exposes their high per cent of profit and insists that they take a small cut.

See the Contrast

The war for these fellows is just one more opportunity to make money. The workers pay terrific income taxes. The government takes part of this money and builds plants for the bosses. The bosses operate the plants and rake in the profits, huge dividends and fabulous salaries. Of course they howl when they are forced to "renegotiate" contracts.

This is the real picture that labor should look at. That is the real situation. When their leaders come around whining about "Victory Through Equality of Sacrifice," they should point to the profits, the salaries and the dividends.

Who gets the profits out of the war? The bosses are getting their now in hard cash. They give up

nothing, but continually grab for more.

Labor is told to wait until the war is over and they'll get democracy.

Right now, however, we get our wages frozen, our hours increased, taxes made more burdensome.

The price of food goes sky high. We get two pounds of meat a week.

How can we permit this state of affairs to go on? What kind of people are these labor leaders who lie on their backs and tell us not to fight back, who say "Yes" to every proposal made by Roosevelt, who wait and moan that if we don't behave ourselves the stooges of the bosses on Capitol Hill in Washington will pass some "anti-labor" bills?

HOW MUCH LONGER WILL WE ABIDE BY PROMISES MADE BY THESE "LEADERS"?

Hard to Understand

"The State Department was amazed at the public kickback to news that this country was permitting Spain's dictator Franco to obtain gasoline enough to give Spaniards a bigger gasoline ration than automobile owners in Eastern United States now enjoy. It seems that the public had just seen a picture of Franco shaking hands with Hitler in a very friendly way and was not impressed. Mr. Roosevelt has had a personal hand in directing this country's relations with Spain from the days of the civil war in that country."—U. S. News.