

Supreme Court Rejects Appeal of the Eighteen

As we go to press, news comes from Washington that the third attempt made to have the United States Supreme Court review the case of the eighteen Minneapolis victims of class persecution has come to nought. The Supreme Court rejected the appeal submitted by the American Civil Liberties Union—an action termed "shocking" by the national director of the Union, Roger N. Baldwin.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee announced on December 31 that it would ask President Roosevelt to grant unconditional pardons to the eighteen members of the Socialist Workers Party and of Minneapolis Truckdrivers Local 544, CIO, convicted under the Smith "Gag" Act, who began serving their twelve and sixteen-month federal prison terms on January 1.

"The action of the U. S. Supreme Court in twice refusing to review the convictions of the eighteen, unprecedented in a case involving such important issues of free speech and free press, leaves us no alternative

except to appeal for a presidential pardon for these unjustly imprisoned CIO and socialist leaders," declared George Novack, secretary of the Civil Rights Defense Committee. "The virtual upholding of the Smith 'Gag' Act, under which the eighteen are the first to be persecuted, endangers the democratic rights of the entire American people.

"Our committee plans immediately to launch a nation-wide campaign to arouse progressive opinion to the significance of the jailing of the eighteen, to secure their freedom and to work for the repeal of the reactionary Smith 'Gag' Act."

LABOR ACTION

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A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

Labor Turning Away From FDR

IN 1944 WORKERS NEED AN INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The threat of twenty railroad unions to call a strike resulted in the taking over of the railroads by the government of the Roosevelt Democratic Party, but the railroad workers have been given a few cents increase in pay. Roosevelt reversed Vinson, who had decided that railroad labor was entitled to only four cents an hour increase.

When 175,000 steel workers refused to work without a contract or to trespass on the property of their employers, Roosevelt decided that his WLB was in error in their decision against retroactive pay for these workers.

Many of the trade union leaders, the liberal "friends of labor" and, of course, the Communist Party will claim that by these little bits of concession Roosevelt has once again proved that he is a "friend of labor" and that he would do more if a "reactionary Congress" would only let him.

FDR Is Patching

But Roosevelt is only doing a little judicious patching. The capitalist garment is bursting at the seams, the seat is worn thin and the pants are threadbare at the knees. Labor finally begins to understand in a somewhat vague way that this garment is too small; that it has become worn and shabby.

If this wasn't clear to the workers at the beginning of the Second Imperialist World War, it is certainly beginning to dawn on them today that Roosevelt and the Democratic Party, with the aid of the AFL-CIO leadership, betrayed the confidence that labor placed in them. This fact is becoming clearer and clearer each day to the working class in the AFL and the CIO. Two full years of the war have taught us something. One thing labor has learned is that a policy of constant retreat doesn't pay.

The workers quietly accept a no-strike pledge agreed to between their leaders and Roosevelt. From fifteen to twenty hours are added to the work week. The steel workers accept a Little Steel formula which becomes the measuring rod for all of industry and ties the workers to a standard of living below the subsistence level. The WLB replaces the foreman, the superintendent and the corporation president.

At the very top sits Roosevelt, saying to the workers that he will decide their grievances and they are to accept his decision. Collective bargaining is all but destroyed. Thousands of grievances pile up and contracts are buried in the files of the WLB awaiting excavation or for Roosevelt to return from a flying trip to Asia and Africa.

Accompanying the "stabilization" of wages was a heavy burden of income taxes and strong-arm tactics to extract money from the pay envelope for war bonds. "Ten per cent for war bonds." Buy this, that or the other, "but buy a war bond first."

Promises to Labor

Labor had been promised that if it agreed to the "stabilization" of wages, prices would be held down. After prices continued to soar and the OPA had admitted that "prices have got out of hand," the government promised to "roll back prices." But the meat packers, the canners, the milk companies, the egg and butter producers and all the other huge

(Continued on page 4)

General Marshall Smears American Labor

The whole labor movement is aroused to a fighting pitch over the anonymous attack made against it in the press by a "high official," who it turns out, is none other than General George C. Marshall.

Marshall, under cover of anonymity, launched a sensational charge that boils down to the accusation that labor is playing Hitler's game, and that as a result of its strikes and threats to strike, the war will be prolonged and many soldiers would lose their lives who otherwise would be saved.

The attack is so scandalous that the most conservative labor leaders, the men who look like business men and who most often act like them, have been moved to make public protests. They include leaders of the CIO, of the AFL, including President Green, and of the railroad unions. Even some congressmen have taken issue with Marshall's statement and especially with the manner in which it was made public. This is all the more significant in light of the high position, and even the high esteem generally enjoyed by Marshall, who has, up to now, confined himself pretty much to military affairs.

American labor has a right to protest against this outrage, and to protest with the greatest determination. Marshall's statement can only have the effect of deepening the antagonism to labor that reactionary, anti-labor elements have been carefully and systematically promoting among the armed forces in order to destroy the basic solidarity that exists between workers at home and workers in uniform.

THINGS MARSHALL DIDN'T DENOUNCE

We do not recall General Marshall having issued a statement, anonymously or in his own name, against the shipment from America of oil and scrap iron to Japan, oil and scrap iron which is not serving to shorten the war or to preserve the lives of American soldiers in the Pacific.

We do not recall General Marshall having issued a denunciation of the big American manufacturers who refused to produce any war goods for their government until they were guaranteed in advance that they would rake in huge blood profits.

We do not recall General Marshall having issued

a denunciation of the fascist and semi-fascist spokesmen of Hitler's doctrines in this country, including those who can still be found on the floor of both houses of Congress.

We do not recall General Marshall having issued a statement of praise for American labor because it has been bending over backward for more than two years and not putting forward its over-modest demands for a decent wage that would meet the rising cost of living, and make the country a somewhat better place for the soldiers to come home to.

We do not recall General Marshall having issued a statement denouncing the shameless war profiteers, who are coining millions upon millions of dollars in profit out of the war, and enjoying a prosperity such as the world has never known in all its history.

No, his wrath is reserved for workers trying to maintain at least a half-decent standard of living—not only for themselves, but for the very soldiers in whose name Marshall spoke with so much indignation.

MARSHALL NOT VERY CLEVER

The charge that labor is playing Hitler's game is a slander, and not a very clever one.

What are the facts?

One point is that the Nazis do not, and do not dare to, "make capital" out of the fact that workers in the United States go on strike or fight for the right to strike. Why? Because if they tell their slaves that there are workers in other countries who have the right to strike, and who exercise it, that would only give these slaves "ideas," and encourage them to carry out these ideas.

The knowledge that there are workers in the world today who fight for their democratic rights, who fight for a better standard of living, only serves to encourage the German workers to fight for the same thing.

What CAN and what DOES Hitler make capital out of? He makes capital out of the fact that strikes are prohibited or suppressed in other countries! For he is able to say in effect to his own restless slaves: "What are you kicking about? What are

you complaining about? Don't you like my regime? Are things so much better in the other countries, in the so-called democracies? Aren't they doing, or beginning to do, the same things I have done here?"

Anyone who doesn't understand these simple truths either understands nothing at all about the problems involved in the war, or else is not really concerned with fighting FASCISM.

But it will not do for the labor leaders, or anyone else, to pick on General Marshall alone, or to make him the scapegoat for others who are more important and weighty.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Marshall was only echoing the propaganda of the Administration as a whole. Proof? There are a thousand proofs. The latest is the statement to the press of President Roosevelt's secretary, Stephen Early, which said that the President was thinking along the same lines as General Marshall. We add: So is the National Association of Manufacturers!

And who is responsible for the Administration? The very same labor leaders who helped vote it into office, who kept their tongues so close to the Administration boot that it was the easiest thing in the world to kick them in the teeth. The very labor movement which was induced to support Roosevelt as an enemy of the Economic Royalists and a friend of the Common Man, and which has now been so grossly insulted.

High time to break with this shabby, humiliating, self-defeating politics. From the capitalist parties and politicians, labor can only expect what it has been getting. That is the meaning of this scandal.

High time for labor to enter the political field as it enters the economic field—with an independent organization, with an independent program, with an independent banner. That means—with an independent Labor Party with which to answer its political opponents.

That kind of reply to the attacks on labor will not put an end to more attacks. By no means! But it will give labor a weapon with which to hit back that will inspire its detractors and enemies with a healthy fear and respect they do not now have.

Bosses' Anti-Labor Propaganda Among Soldiers Has a Reason -- Not a Good One!

By GERTRUDE SHAW

When the miners were fighting alone and desperately for the right of all workers to a wage commensurate with the skyrocketing cost of living, the pay-triots of the National Association of Manufacturers craftily tried to turn public opinion against the miners by accusing them of sabotaging the soldiers at the front.

Following the militant example of the miners, the railroad and steel workers are today out in front struggling to melt the wage freeze. As was to have been expected, the war-profiteering capitalists again set up the false hue and cry that the workers are betraying the soldiers. And the President now joins the chorus. The same capitalist propaganda agents who are so ardently and dishonestly trying to hammer a wedge between the workers and the soldiers are now revealing just what they are up to.

This revelation has come about on the question of renegotiation of war contracts—and thereby hangs a most interesting tale.

Revelations and "Just Rewards"

In April, 1942, a law was passed for renegotiating war contracts. Under Secretary of War Patterson explained that the renegotiation law was passed for a reason that can be stated in three words: "Exorbitant war profits."

Since the passage of the law, the government succeeded in taking out of the greedy grasp of big business through renegotiation of war contracts a juicy tidbit amounting to \$5,300,000,000.

That \$5,300,000,000 looks awful good to the capitalists. In fact they consider they have been robbed of it. They are positive they have been deprived of some of their "just rewards."

So they got busy not to let it happen again. Through the "representatives of the people" in Congress, they hoped to commit mayhem on said renegotiation law. Congress obediently introduced so many amendments to the law as to make its operation a pointless joke. If the amendments should be passed, there will be no more such "nonsense" as paying back to the government over five billion dollars of "hard-earned" war profits.

That's an excellent illustration of capitalist greed—for even without that \$5,300,000,000, big business made clear profit to the tune of \$8,600,000,000 in 1942!

To save them from their own greed, many spokesmen for the capitalists have started to talk turkey. They are afraid of the consequences of the super-duper war profiteering.

And of whom are the watch-dogs of capitalism afraid?

Of those very same soldiers whom they are trying so hard to turn against labor.

Fear Soldier Reaction

Thus Under Secretary of the Navy Forrestal, a Wall Street banker, warns his co-capitalists to go easy because their unrestrained greed may "lead to a reaction and another wave of radicalism and anti-business legislation when the SERVICE MEN come back home and get all the facts about wartime profits."

In the same vein, David Lawrence, good capitalist journalist, writes in the New York Sun: "When SERVICE MEN get back home and read the headlines of congressional inquiries into war profits they will wonder what was done back home when they were at war."

And Arthur Krock, reactionary columnist of the New York Times, also warns the war profiteers that: "SERVICE MEN returned from the conflict would be conditioned to radical economic plans thus far rejected. And the system of 'free enterprise,' to which business men swear devotion every time they come together, would be sorely wounded in its own house."

So you can see that the "fox hole" propagandists know very well who are the real enemies at home of the soldiers at the front. These hypocrites try to whoop up soldier opinion against the workers—to divert the just wrath of the soldiers from the shameless profit-grubbing of the industrial masters of the land.

What the real interests of the men in arms are is shown, first of all, by the composition of the armed forces. Of the personnel under arms, twenty-five per cent are actually union men. Another large percentage are unorganized workers. Many are young men from working class families who would have gone out looking for jobs if the war had not swallowed them.

A drafted army necessarily reflects the composition of the population. The overwhelming majority of the people of the United States and every other country work for a living

and do not—like the capitalists—live off the labor of others.

The mass of men in arms cannot identify themselves with the exploiters of labor who made huge fortunes out of the blood and horror of World War I—and are repeating the performance on a super-duper scale.

Let us look at what the capitalists are getting out of this war so far.

War Profits Up to Now

Profits of companies with war orders are known to have gone up by hundreds and thousands of per cent. One concern hit the jackpot with a 2,420 per cent increase of war profit over peace profits. The salaries of the big moguls of industry have been doubled, tripled and quadrupled.

One executive had his stipend increased over 3,700 per cent!

Big business has put under its mattress a post-war reserve of \$42,000,000,000.

The government will pay back to these self-sacrificing citizens \$13,000,000,000 by way of tax refunds, which is an additional post-war reserve.

The industrial owners have an option of \$14,000,000,000 of government plants and equipment—which they expect to get for a song.

As stated above, in 1943 big business netted profits to the tune of \$8,600,000,000 after paying taxes and deducting plenty for reserves, wear and tear, obsolescence and what not—and even after the government took back that \$5,300,000,000 of "exorbitant war profits" through renegotiation of contracts.

On the other hand, what are the workers getting out of the war?

Wage rates have been frozen by the Little Steel formula, and only by dint of working almost to physical exhaustion has the workers' pay looked like anything approaching respectability. Wages are automatically reduced by the twenty per cent pay-as-you-go tax and again by the ten per cent bond purchasing pledge. The purchasing power of the worker's dollar has been slashed by the constantly mounting cost of living, by violations of ceiling prices, by black market operations. The value of the worker's dollar has been further diminished by the inferior quality of everything he buys.

After three years of war, the American workers have got so "much" out of it that they have to strike in self-preservation—both to get more wages to enable them to live and to check the arrogant anti-labor policy that the capitalists have put over under cover of "war necessity." And already the cutbacks in war orders begin to throw workers out of jobs and into the army of unemployed.

When the soldier returns home he will be part of that mass of working people who—without any \$55,000,000,000 in reserve—will be struggling to solve the problems of unemployment, of decent wages, of fair conditions of work, of housing, of medical care, of education. And every thinking soldier coming from the mass of unprivileged and underprivileged people of this land, understands that each blow struck by the workers to defend and extend labor's rights is a blow struck for him also.

Klan Elements In Detroit Again Whitewashed

By BEN HALL

DETROIT—The final daub of whitewash to cover the dirty role of the Detroit police department under the administration of Police Commissioner Witherspoon and Mayor Jeffries during the June race riots was administered by the police trial board hearing charges against two Negro policemen.

Jesse Stewart and William McKinley Williams, the two Negro patrolmen, were found guilty, according to the board, of "neglect of duty." They were suspended from the department for four months. They were accused of failing to intervene when a group of five hundred Negroes was urged to go to Belle Isle Park on the eve of the rioting.

Two, and only two, Negro patrolmen were expected to attempt to deal with the crowd! But what of the scores of policemen who were on the scene of the actual rioting at Woodward near Peterboro when thousands of white persons, under the influence of Ku Klux Klan elements, beat Negroes, destroyed their property and attempted to invade the Negro neighborhood nearby? The police there used "kid glove" methods and stood by idly while Klansmen had free hand. No investigations there! No suspensions!

What of the shootings of Negroes by the police? No investigations! Were the shootings unjust and indiscriminate attempts to terrorize the Negro population? Who cares?—as long as the police department gets a clean slate and as long as Negro patrolmen are made the scapegoats!

The real culprits are the Klan elements and the police who refused to act against them. The suspension of the Negro patrolmen is another attempt to hide this fact from the public.

Super-Heroic Profits For the Airlines--\$168,421 Per Plane

The private airlines of the United States have been doing a big job in the war. So states a special report of the Office of War Information (Associated Press, December 21). They have given up to the armed forces more than half of their peacetime planes and one-third of their men. Yet they are carrying twice as much cargo and air mail and are flying more passenger-miles.

They even took a direct part in the campaign for the Aleutians by flying in special troops and equipment quickly and in great quantity to Dutch Harbor.

Naturally the pilots and other workers did all this, but the airlines are collecting the bouquets from the newspapers and the OWI.

And not just bouquets. Listen:

1. "Airlines made a net profit of nearly \$32,000,000 in the year ended August 31, more than twice the profits of the previous year."

2. They did this with fewer than half the 434 planes in operation before Pearl Harbor. We are informed that the Army and Navy have taken over 244 planes. That seems to leave 190. Now divide \$32,000,000 by 190 and you (rather, the airlines) get a profit of \$168,421 for each plane.

Yes, the pilots have done a heroic job. But the profits... they are super-heroic.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Fascistic Drive Against Unionism On West Coast

(Reprinted from "Labor")

In its last issue, "Labor" referred briefly to a sensational report by the Senate Civil Liberties Committee exposing almost unbelievably brutal efforts of employers in Los Angeles and San Francisco to discredit and destroy trade unionism.

The report, signed by Senators Robert M. La Follette, Jr. (Progressive, Wisconsin) and Elbert D. Thomas (Democrat, Utah), contains findings of fact so shocking as to merit a more extended review than "Labor" in its earlier article was able to give.

What makes the disclosure of extraordinary importance to organized labor is the committee's solemn warning that the California communities "are but symbols of many other areas in various parts of the nation where the exercise of labor's rights and the practice of collective bargaining are imperilled by interests which stand to gain from an anti-union labor policy."

Follow the Fascist Pattern

In many communities, the report asserts, reactionary forces are being mobilized for a direct assault upon unions "after the shooting stops" and are using the Los Angeles method as a "pattern" for the war that is being planned.

In other words, right here before us, fascism, in a most menacing form, is being fashioned by the same interests which in Germany and Italy put Hitler and Mussolini in power! They pursue exactly the same tactics—first of all, they seek to discredit or destroy labor unions.

"In many such areas," the report adds, "it is not necessary yet for anti-union forces to expend the funds and establish the organizations necessary to enforce their ruthless policy. This will come in the future. The Los Angeles situation does and will have many counterparts. The battle for industrial democracy is far from won."

Los Angeles, the report recalls, has long boasted that it is a "white spot" on the industrial map, by which is meant that it has been more successful than other large industrial centers in depriving workers of their rights as American citizens.

"A Cancer Area"

In view of the facts the committee has learned, the report says, the city should be "adjudged not as a white spot, but as a cancer area."

For years the Southern California city was regarded as the heart of the so-called "open shop" movement—which the report declares is a camouflage term for intense hostility to unionism. The crusade was kept alive for a quarter of a century by General Harrison Gray Otis, owner

of the Los Angeles Times, who found it a source of great personal profit.

After Otis' death, the campaign was carried on by his son-in-law, Harry Chandler, now directing the Times, aided by the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association.

Enactment of the Wagner Labor Act and its validation by the United States Supreme Court broke the blockade against unions, the report recalls. Business interests then went under cover and created various organizations to "front" for them, among them the "Associated Farmers," "Southern Californians, Inc.," and "Neutral Thousands, Inc."

Millions of dollars were contributed by California industrialists to finance these groups, the largest contributor being Standard Oil of California, whose officials now direct this administration's oil policies from vantage points in the Department of the Interior and the War and Navy Departments.

Nearly a million dollars was put up for "Southern Californians" and "Neutral Thousands," the report reveals.

This "conspiracy" to flout the law of the land was undertaken deliberately, it is charged. Alliances were made with the local newspapers, police, radio stations and business organizations. Several hundred thousand dollars were paid to police officials and law enforcement groups, which thus became virtually private armies of the anti-unionists.

"Behind this illegal and anti-social policy," the report says, "was concentrated economic and political power that defied any local application of the law and custom of the nation."

The conspiracy to prevent collective bargaining included the mass application of common anti-union devices such as labor espionage, the use of professional strikebreakers, the use of industrial munitions, the blacklist, discriminatory discharges and a host of similar weapons. Secret societies were organized to spy on unions and to harass their members."

"Neutral Thousands," which paraded as a civic organization interested in "promoting satisfactory industrial relations," is said to have confined its activities almost solely to forming company unions, of which more than 150 were foisted upon the community in a year or two.

Employers who hesitated to submit to the dictation of the promoters and professional spies and strikebreakers in "Neutral Thousands," the committee says, were subjected to all sorts of pressure and persecution. When other coercion failed, they were haled before their bankers, who

forced them into line with threats of depriving them of credit.

High-powered publicity agents were employed to fill the columns of the newspapers with inflammatory statements. Radio stations were enlisted and broadcast "utterly despicable, slanderous attacks on all organized labor." A series of so-called dramatic sketches, "in which labor leaders were portrayed as murderers, arsonists and kidnapers," were put on the air weekly.

"In a city the size of Los Angeles," the report declares, "this conspiracy is a phenomenon which demands careful scrutiny. There are many industrial areas in other parts of the

country which are known as open shop or anti-union centers and where, as in Los Angeles, there is a phalanx of opposition to trade unionism composed of employers, civic groups and public officials, supported by bankers and newspapers.

Opposite of Democracy

"In such an atmosphere, labor's civil rights cannot be properly exercised and the tyranny of local persecution and opposition to trade unionism is intolerable. Proceedings against an individual for unfair labor practices under the Wagner Act may not prove to be an effective measure of protection.

IWA Officials Feel Pressure From the Rank and File

SUSANVILLE, Calif.—While progress in the International Woodworkers of America has not been sensational in the past year, nevertheless some substantial gains have been made. Many new locals have been organized here in California, Washington and Oregon. The vast Potlatch Forests in Idaho have been wrested from Bill Hutchison's Carpenters & Joiners and will eventually result in the IWA bargaining collectively for several thousand woods and mill workers. The deep South has been invaded, with victories in every instance where elections have been held.

Here in California and also at the national convention held at Sacramento in August, the Stalinist gang had taken a beating. At one time they controlled this provisional district. But as a result of a determined fight, by outspoken militants in the various locals, and the exposure of their rotten frame-up tactics, which they used to vilify their political opponents, they suffered a sharp defeat.

At the convention in Sacramento, the usual Stalinist second front resolution was easily beaten. They lacked the courage to reopen the Harry Bridges matter, as Harry is still in very bad odor as a result of having sent his longshoremen through a picket line that many of the delegates had been on in Portland some years ago.

They were somewhat more successful in slipping through a modified version of "incentive pay," this being done so smoothly that some committeemen were later surprised when a resolution opposing incentive pay was ruled out of order.

In election of delegates to the national CIO convention the Stalinists were able to secure two delegates, but their bell-wether from Northern Washington, Karly Larsen, was defeated by a narrow margin.

In the nomination of officers to man the IWA for the next two years the Stalinists nominated only a partial slate, but all were decisively defeated in the later election.

Fight for Wages

As previously reported, the IWA industry-wide negotiating committee was successful last winter in securing practically a general raise of seven and a half cents an hour throughout the West Coast and Northwest. Since then, raises have been successfully negotiated in some of the Southern, Midwest and North Central states.

At the delegated conference held in Portland last February to formulate an industry-wide program for broad negotiations, the Stalinists opposed going after further wage increases; and though defeated in the conference, later attempted to sabotage a united front before the West Coast Lumber Commission. They soon, although reluctantly, got into line rather than have their position exposed to the membership at large.

Other points dealt with at the conference were demands for accumulative sick leave with pay; improvement and alterations in vacation clauses, and night shift differential, minimum standard crews, guaranteed weekly wage of six and a half days for the duration, no piecework and a complete safety program.

These points, along with minor ones composing fourteen in all, have been submitted to the various employer groups and individual employers as contracts have come open for such purposes.

WLB Stalling

The negotiations in the fir districts and some of the pine have long been processed and waiting for decisions from the West Coast Lumber Commission, a branch of the WLB.

The commission at this date has rendered no decision. In fact, it has unquestionably stalled, knowing that no further concessions with regard to wages can be made within the bounds of the Little Steel formula. Neither can any substantial part of the other demands be given without affronting their real masters, the employers. So they have stalled, hoping that the union officials who still believe in Roosevelt and have faith in the West Coast Lumber Commission, the pap that "any move now will endanger a favorable decision from being handed down."

However, with the continually rising spiral in the cost of living, the increasingly heavy

Chicago Holds CRDC Meeting

CHICAGO—Over two hundred persons attended a meeting held at the Hotel Midland on December 26 to protest the action of the U. S. Supreme Court in refusing to hear the appeal of the Minneapolis defendants sentenced to prison under the provisions of the Smith "Gag" Act. The meeting, under the auspices of the Chicago Civil Rights Defense Committee, was addressed by Albert Goldman, one of the eighteen defendants; Paul Picquet of the Workers Party; Maynard Kreuger of the Socialist Party, and others.

The Workers Party speaker expressed the solidarity of his organization with the defendants. He further pointed out the necessity not only for all labor to protest the prosecution and persecution of all fellow workers, but the imperative need for the labor movement to organize on all fronts, especially to form an independent Labor Party, in order to combat the general offensive of the capitalist class against labor.

Albert Goldman, representing the defendants, spoke of the case and recited the development of the various court actions leading up to the refusal of the Supreme Court to review the case.

"When this opposition in the community is due to a lack of understanding or familiarity with labor relations, it may dissolve with the passage of time. But when this opposition to the exercise of the rights of employers to organize and bargain collectively is a pattern of organized interference, strong and precise measures of protection must be devised.

"Such opposition to the national labor policy as has existed in the Los Angeles metropolitan area can only result in a wholesale violation of labor's civil rights and in social attitudes which are at variance with the spirit of industrial democracy."

burden of taxation, the men and women (now we have women even on the hardest jobs around the saw mills) are stirring and showing their resentment in many ways. In spite of the WLB's "job freezing" and its former tacit acceptance by our high officials, hundreds of workers are on the move from job to job in the industry and with increasingly large numbers being successful in leaving the industry entirely.

Turn in the IWA

As a result of this quiet pressure from the ranks and the not so quiet pressure from militants at every chance they see at meetings of all kinds, our official policy has been changed. Some time ago statements in the International Woodworker, our official paper, indicated a progressive change in policy. But the following, taken from the December 1 edition, page 2, has Editor Galbraith almost taking down his hair when he laments: "If American labor had made a determined stand against the job freezing edict of the War Manpower Commission, it would probably not now be confronted with the attempt to introduce slavery which is embodied in the Austin-Wadsworth labor draft bill."

But Brother Galbraith stops here. He does not dare analyze the why and wherefore first of job freeze and then of the labor draft law. He does not go farther and admit that all of which he rails against and more is the direct result of the no-strike pledge personally given to Roosevelt by Murray and Green and later crammed down the throats of the rank and file of the various international unions, through the connivance of the top officials.

Thus was labor dictatorially robbed of its only weapon, the strike. Thus, too, was labor treated to the spectacle of its "leaders" supinely bowing to the masters they had sworn to fight.

But the men and women who do the work have not so quietly acquiesced in this betrayal. Many strikes have occurred, "outside of Stalinist-controlled locals," some lasting only a few hours, some a few days.

Here in Susanville, Calif., we have been organized in the IWA a few months. Last fall competent organizers by the names of Joe Clark and Les Ames were sent in and successfully organized most of this territory in a few months, accomplishing what the Stalinists were unable to do over a period of years when they controlled the district offices. We are particularly lucky in that we have very few of that stripe to contend with here.

The lament of Editor Galbraith above quoted may be a sign of the times, with it as a harbinger, that the top officials are slowly realizing can keep workers from moving with that their program is unattainable as long as they adhere to the no-strike pledge.

WORLD EVENTS

By Europacus

Polish Workers Fight Nazi Slave Drive

At the end of April, 1943, the Nazi authorities in Warsaw again issued an appeal for Poles to register for work in German industry. The appeal promised increased food rations and threatened reprisals against those who refused to comply. The only effect of this intensified drive for slave labor was stiffened resistance on the part of the workers. The Polish Underground immediately issued a proclamation appealing for a continuation of the uncompromising struggle against the deportations. At the same time the workers were advised to hamper in every possible way the work of the German labor offices.

Resistance against the Nazi labor hunt has spread throughout the country. The Polish workers do not report—despite all threats. The wholesale boycott of the Nazi decree has been so effective that, in Warsaw alone, the labor offices, with the help of the police, are now searching for 12,600 persons who failed to report when summoned to work.

Trying to make the workers obey,

the Nazis arrested one hundred persons in the Bialystok district and held them as hostages, giving the population one week to stop resistance—but even this terror of collective responsibility had little effect. To prevent the Nazis from obtaining their quota of workers, the Polish underground workers' organizations have, in a number of towns and villages, destroyed the files of the labor offices which listed the name of all persons subject to conscription.

One night all the files in the town halls of the Sandomierz district were destroyed by fire. The same night the district administration building and the labor office of the city of Busk were burned. On May 15 the files of the labor offices of the Lubartow district were burned after an armed clash in which three officials were killed. In view of the widespread sabotage of the organized drive for new labor, the Nazis have now resorted to mass round-ups in the streets. But often workers escape again before being finally shipped to the Reich.—(From "Poland Fights.")

German People Help Foreign Workers

Nazi propagandists spare no effort to build a barrier between the German people and the millions of foreign workers now being forced to work in Germany. A recent Nazi publication says on this subject: "Every German is expected to maintain cold reserve in his dealing with Poles, which is the just desert of a nation burdened with guilt. . . . No Pole may be regarded as a welcome comrade of labor. . . . Work performed in common must never be permitted to lead to a situation in which the hostile relationship between the two nations may be lost to sight." (From Arbeitseinsatz und Arbeitsrecht, Berlin.)

But the Nazi papers themselves give the lie to these assertions. They complain over and over again that the German people "pamper" Eastern workers. "Several Eastern females," said a recent article in Goering's National-Zeitung, "were recently sitting in a tram which, as usual, was crowded with elderly people. A German mother with her child was standing. A passenger requested the Eastern

females to get up, whereupon the public started murmuring and other passengers violently attacked the woman who had made the suggestion. They said that the Eastern females also worked all day and had a claim to be seated. The foreigners smiled and retained their seats."

The paper then quoted from a recent speech by Gauleiter Terboven, who denounced the German "national evil" of "always siding with the weaker person, whatever his attitude is toward the German nation." "From a human viewpoint," Terboven was quoted as saying, "this is a weakness, but in wartime it is dangerous. It must be combated."

"Many Volksgenossen," the article went on to say, "are so obliging that all natural distances seem to disappear, and finally it is impossible to know who is the master in the house." The article closed with a warning that there are "fanatical Bolsheviks" among the foreigners. Common misery, common exploitation and common hatreds bind together German and foreign workers.

Greek People Demonstrate Against High Prices

Since the Nazi occupation of Greece the economic situation of the country has been steadily deteriorating. Practically no goods are available except on the black market. A tremendous inflation has set in. "Prices which were fixed in the morning are no longer valid in the evening and are fixed twenty to thirty per cent higher the next morning," says the Bulgarian paper, Utro. The half-starved Greek population has been patient for a while, but since last year there have been many violent hunger demonstrations

in the great cities.

On October 8, for example, a huge crowd, mostly older people and women from the outlying workers' districts, moved into the shopping center of the town. The police were unable to stop the immense crowd. The windows in the swanky shops were crushed and the content of the tremendous stocks of the black marketeers were distributed. The Greek police were then reinforced by special German police troops who began to shoot—only then did the crowd disperse.

UE Local at Foote's Votes Fight for Increased Wages

By T. S.

CHICAGO—The most representative meeting ever held by the first shift of the Foote division of Local 1114, UERWMA, CIO, saw over five hundred aircraft engine workers reject the wage proposals of both the company and the union leadership. The meeting was held December 28.

The regional War Labor Board, after "considering" a wage dispute for over fifteen months, in which the union sought ten to twenty cent increases in hourly wage rates, requested the company and the union to resume negotiations with a recommendation that they settle for a flat five cent raise.

In the negotiations the company got big hearted and offered a three cent raise with back pay cut to about twenty-five per cent of what it should have been.

The union negotiators became almost equally generous with the

membership's money and offered to settle for a four cent raise with full back pay.

In rejecting both proposals the membership informed the negotiators that they made a grave error in compromising the union's demands to such an extent. They expressed their determination to join in the struggle with other unions to smash the Little Steel formula. The negotiators were instructed to accept nothing under a ten cent flat raise with full back pay.

In the past the local's leadership, under the presidency of Joseph Persily, has been more interested in sending postcards to congressmen, opening a second front and passing no-strike resolutions than in really organizing a fighting local. It is hoped that this meeting will mark the end of this policy and the beginning of a policy of vigorous labor action.

Minority Resolution On Question of Forming Labor Party

The following is a resolution on the question of the attitude of revolutionary socialists toward the formation of a Labor Party in the United States. Written by Paul Temple, it is now being discussed by the members of the Workers Party. Although it differs from the point of view of the National Committee of the Workers Party, as set forth in its own resolution on the subject, which we printed in the last two issues, and differs also from the point of view advocated by LABOR ACTION, we publish it here as discussion material because of the interest that LABOR ACTION readers have in the subject and because of the vital importance of the question to the labor movement as a whole.

By PAUL TEMPLE

The present upturn in political action talk and Labor Party sentiment in the trade union movement is showing increasingly that even substantial sections of the trade union bureaucracy, not to speak of the rank and file, are beginning to realize that the self-limitation of organized labor to economic action only ("pure and simple" trade unionism) is self-defeating.

The point of the long-standing socialist insistence on the necessity of political action is being hammered home especially by the development of increasing political (governmental) intervention in the relations between capital and labor.

Socialists have always been the staunchest proponents of political action by labor. In so far as objective circumstances themselves are forcing the labor movement to turn to political action, it becomes increasingly important for socialists to be clear that political action—including political action by labor—can be good or bad, progressive or reactionary; an aid to the socialist development of

the working class or an obstacle to it; conservative, reformist, liberal, fascist, or revolutionary.

The criterion of socialists in their estimation of the character of political formations, or of the development of a given political party, is clear and definite. This is the criterion of class independence.

To pose the question: Shall labor form a Labor Party? is to ask: Would the formation of a Labor Party REALLY lead to a political break-away by labor from capitalist politics?

The question is not answered by deciding to add the word "independent" to Labor Party. It is only obscured by confusing the formal organizational independence of a party with its political content.

The fact that the British Labor Party, for example, is an independent organization does not reflect on the fact that it does not represent independent working class political action today. The independence of labor politics—its class independence, not its organizational form—is in the first place a programmatic question.

Before the present era of capitalist decline, when capitalism was expanding, the formation of a reformist Labor Party with an INDEPENDENT class program was a possibility. It was accomplished in Britain; it was proposed by Marx and Engels for America.

It was a possibility because a reformist struggle for immediate gains, economic and political, which the bourgeoisie was able to grant if sufficiently pressed, offered a realistic political perspective.

At the same time, and for the very same reason, the reformist parties of social-democracy also were able to play a progressive role in the historical development of the working class.

Today, in both cases, this political perspective is no longer actual. Today, even the successful struggle for immediate demands

requires militant, class struggle, implicitly revolutionary action. The bourgeoisie must tend to withdraw rather than grant further concessions. What gains are made episodically are cancelled out by the development of the capitalist crisis, the imposition of war economy, and tomorrow by post-war breakdown.

The time is past when a working class political party acting within the programmatic limitations of bourgeois reformism had an independent role to play in organizing the class in independent action for immediate concessions. Today, the only working class program which is actually—politically—dependent of the capitalist class is the revolutionary program.

There is no reason for making any putative American Labor Party a peculiar exception to the rule: Today every political formation is confronted with the harsh alternatives—defense of capitalism or the fight for socialism. Only individuals without responsibility, theorists, demagogues and impotent groups can continue to talk in terms of a dreamed-up middle ground. The possibility of finding footing in a middle ground is no longer there for any serious political movement. The pressure of social forces does not permit this escape from reality to any serious political organization which has to act on real problems.

The old type of reformist program which, in a different period, provided this middle ground, has now been taken over by the most enlightened section of the bourgeoisie itself—the "left" New Deal Democrats, the Rooseveltians, the "liberal" wing of capitalist politics. It is in this sense that we used to make the observation that the Roosevelt Administration may be called the social-democratic phase of American political development. It is that social-democratic phase, not in its "class" form naturally, but in the crabbled, reactionary, telescoped and already senile form inevitable under

the new conditions of chronic capitalist decline and chronic war and revolution. The lusty reformism of the old days, with its progressive consequences and politically independent programmatic base, is no more possible for it than it is possible for the labor bureaucracy.

"SOCIAL-PATRIOTIC... BUT POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT!" This analysis is made starkly concrete by the imperialist war now raging. As long as the revolution does not appear as a pressing threat, the setting up of a Labor Party would mean for the reformist leaders setting up in politics against the leaders of capitalism whom they support and FROM WHOM THEY HAVE NO ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT PROGRAM.

To them, as to us, the war question is paramount. Less than ever are they willing to "break national unity" at this time when they are acting as whips to line the workers up behind the capitalist government's war policy, and specifically behind Roosevelt.

The United States is in the midst of the Second Imperialist World War. The criterion of class independence becomes translated into terms of the war. In the midst of an imperialist war, a social-patriotic party and a party independent of capitalist politics can never be the same thing.

We cannot give political support to a pro-war Labor Party, the only kind of Labor Party conceivable in the coming period. We cannot support pro-war candidates, whether running on the ticket of the Democrats, Republicans or of the American Labor Party (the existing "independent labor party"). We cannot wish the creation of a reformist, social-patriotic political machine, born for the purpose of "independently" rallying the workers to the support of the demagogic wing of capitalist politics.

(To be continued)

'Look Here, Mr. Striker - - -'

By KENNETH WALSH

I want to show you a bit of hallowed ground—it is the Arlington Cemetery of the South Pacific; it is the Valhalla of American servicemen. I'm going to show you this bit of ground, but it will be done the hard way. Come with me up Sealark Channel at dawn of a day in August.

Yes, Mr. Striker, I want you to stand at the rail with these men, nerves drawn as taut as a violin string—mouths dry, eyes strained to the breaking point, breath coming in short gasps of fear—that awful feeling of nothingness in the pits of their stomachs. The objective comes into view, the time has come for these men to stop out on the stage, and they know full well that death plays the leading role in this theater.

Death Is Their Destiny

There they go over the side of the big transport—Tom Jones, Dick Brown and Harry Smith. Hand-over-hand they crawl down the cargo nets into their small craft that is to take them to a rendezvous with that death. You know it's death—it is in the destiny of these men.

The first objective is reached—the cocoon grove at the water's edge. Men are down never to rise again, other men move up to take the places of the fallen. The main objective is an air field beyond that fringe of cocoon trees, and as though God himself has pulled the

curtain on this brutal stage, their movements become vague and finally obliterated and these movements become lost to you. The uncertainty, the utter feeling of helplessness leaves the element of time suspended in the hellish hot sun of the tropics.

Close your eyes, Mr. Railroad Worker, close them tight; it is another day, in another month; your hands are gripping another rail, the inevitable cocoon tree rail that separates the living from the dead in these areas of war. You can open your eyes now, Mr. Coal Miner, open them wide. Yes, the seeds that have been planted have grown into bloom; the bloom is the row upon row of white crosses that meet the eye. These men have paid the price in full for just seven small acres of ground, but seven of the most important acres of ground ever owned by Uncle Sam.

Restful, isn't it, peaceful and quiet—yes, quiet with eternal peace. Read the epitaphs, Mr. Labor Leader, they tell a story in themselves—America, the Land of the Free. There's a Star of David beside a pair of rosary beads owned by some Irishman. A captain of marines and a colored boy from Georgia sleep side by side—a lieutenant from Indiana, a sailor from North Dakota, an aviator from Ohio, from here, from there, from every star in the flag, a cross in the ground, Tom Jones, Dick Brown, Harry Smith. It's their home now, some 7,000 miles from home. These

men were making \$50 a month, Mr. Striker, \$50 a month, room and board.

No Strikes Here

When you were a kid, Mr. Striker, you studied about the American heritage of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Well, read it again and then again; study it; delve back into the pages of American history and show me anything in the American creed of living that will justify your wartime strikes.

There isn't any air conditioning out here, Mr. CIO, and there isn't any way you can strike for it, either. You haven't even the time to think about it.

Come with me to the bridge over the jungle river. I want you to see someone who would make you ashamed of that extra fifty cents an hour you get in your pay envelope. Here's just a seventeen-year-old kid that the brass hats put on duty at this infrequent bridge for the simple reason that he isn't sure of himself any more. Did I hear you ask what's wrong with him? He was on a destroyer that took three "fish" amidships and blew up, Mr. Twenty-Dollar-a-Day-Man. His brother was on that ship, too. There were but a few survivors from a crew of 300, and his brother was not among them. He's plainly shell-shocked. Talk to him a

same heading and same sub-headings as were used in the original. As the reader will see, it is an article which can be, and has been, exploited to the maximum against labor and the labor movement.

Along with it we print an article by Max Shachtman, addressed to Seaman Walsh, not so much for the sake of this sailor, but for the sake of the ideas he sets forth. They are ideas that are repeated in different forms every day by the enemies of the labor movement, and they merit the reply they receive.—The Editor.

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saken hole on a God-forsaken bit of land. Not very nice to hear about, is it? But it's the brutal truth. Think about it the next time you sit over a big steak dinner in your comfortable home.

See that boy sitting over there on that hatch cover, Mr. AFL? He's only twenty-two—just a boy, maybe the one that lived down the street from you. He looks down in the mouth, doesn't he? Why shouldn't he? Some time this week his wife is going to have a baby, but he's not going to be there when it happens. He has to stay out here for the duration... "Wonder if it's a boy or a girl; hope it's a boy. I wonder if my wife is well. Please, God, she doesn't die—she can't die—I've got to get home." Fifty dollars a month, Mr. Steel Worker, fifty dollars a month, room and board.

A ship today is bringing in a cargo of human suffering. Come down to the quay with me and witness the transition of young America.

Welcome to Wounded

The men on the wharf become tense, the music has a sound to it that is of the infinity as all eyes are strained toward the slowly descending gangway. The first man of these thousands of battered troops tortuously feels his way to the ground, the band strikes up The Star-Spangled Banner as soldier after soldier follows in his wake.

But what is this? What is wrong? These men have to be led! They aren't sure of themselves as they stumble and fumble their way to solid ground. John L. Lewis, look into the eyes that are open, but see not. Watch lips that move, but say nothing. Look at the stumps dangling from their bodies that once were arms and legs. Look into the souls of these shell-shocked, fear-ridden, malaria-sick men that are not men, but sacks of skin and bones. Nerves gone, minds temporarily deranged, bodies numb from being stretched on the searing rack of war.

Fifty Dollars a Month

But stay a while, Mr. Striker, don't leave me now! Do you hear the bugle in the far distance blowing taps? It has an unearthly sound and it is for the unearthly that it is being played. The big boom on the hospital ship swings downward and picks up the last of her cargo—the wicker baskets of the dead.

Look around you, man. Those are tears you see in the eyes of these hard-bitten veterans as they watch the baskets being lowered to the dock and draped with the flag for which the dead have given their lives.

Yes, Mr. War Plant Striker, these men were getting fifty dollars a month—fifty dollars a month, room and board.

Now YOU Look HERE, Seaman Walsh...

By MAX SHACHTMAN

No human being can remain unmoved by the picture you draw, Seaman Walsh, of the conditions under which servicemen are living, fighting, dying. I know you have not overdrawn the picture. I know that when we get the full story of how the war was fought, your sketches will seem pale by comparison.

Nevertheless, your point of view is terribly mistaken. You are on the wrong track, and whoever follows you will end in disaster for himself and for all the things we cherish and dream of in this country.

What are these things?

Our Ideals

The "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" you speak of. The "Land of the Free" you are proud of. The ideal of brotherhood, that scorn for racial and religious bigotry which you find exemplified in the fact that there is a Jewish Star of David by the side of a pair of Catholic rosary beads in the Arlington Cemetery of the South Pacific, the corpse of a Negro boy from Georgia by the side of a white captain of the Marines. The wife of the twenty-two-year-old fighter he has not seen for so long, and the baby that is coming this week he may never see at all.

You think of all these things. You think of the maimed and the wounded, of the nameless dead, and of the many, many others who may be dead tomorrow. You think of the fact that these men are getting only fifty dollars a month, room and board. You think of the fact that

the workers at home are getting more than fifty dollars a month. You think of the fact that some of these workers are striking for still more money in their wage envelope.

It makes you bitter and reproachful. You think you are being betrayed by these workers, and that they are betraying the memory of the men who died.

I don't know you, of course, but I think I know how you feel, and how many like you feel. But, I must repeat, you are fatally mistaken in your reactions.

Look here, Mr. Striker, you say. I say, Now, YOU look here, Seaman Walsh.

Is it the workers who are responsible for the war that brings so much suffering and death and destruction, that separates men from home and family, from wife and child, and from the child unborn?

Is it the workers who, year in year out, sent financial aid to bolster up Hitlerite Germany, scrap iron and oil to strengthen the Japanese imperialist war machine? Is it the workers who made millions in profit from these cold-blooded business deals that went on so long with the sanction of the governments involved?

Is it the workers who said, even after Pearl Harbor, that before the factories are converted to war production they want to be guaranteed vast profits with no risks, or is it the big business monopolists, who got their way?

Is it not the big monopolists who said to the government, to their

government: **YOU build us plants with public funds; YOU provide us with machinery, raw materials and labor; YOU provide us with cost-plus contracts, so that no matter what we produce, or when and how we produce it, no matter what we are fighting for or who is doing the fighting, our good and luscious profits will continue?**

You have read, Seaman Walsh, of how the Army is sent in to take over railroads when the workers threaten to strike for a decent wage, after having exhausted all other means of gaining their legitimate demands, after having been exhausted by a run-around so outrageous that even representatives and senators feel obliged to denounce it.

What Does Labor Want?

What do these railroad workers want? What do the steel workers want, and all other workers in the country? What did the miners want before them? What is so monstrous about their demands? A miserable few more cents an hour—when the resources and wealth of this country make it possible for all of them, and all of you, to live in security and comfort!

But have you ever read of the government stepping in with all the force at its command to cut the enormous incomes of the bloodstained war profiteers and merchants of death?

In spite of high taxes, never have the profits of big business been so vast. Never before has it bled in so deep a pool of gold (and blood).

Senator Walsh of Massachusetts said a few weeks ago that when the story of the huge profits is told after the war the American war veterans will be outraged and the people will be dumfounded. Right now, even that small part of this sordid story that does get into the newspapers is buried in the back pages by the capitalist press.

Don't you find it significant that this same press gives the most prominent display to your article against the workers who want a few cents more per hour so that their families may be better able to meet the rising cost of living? How much space do you think they would give you if your article were addressed to the blood-proteers of big business?

You think to yourself with bitterness: "There are no strikers in the foxholes. My buddies don't say they want a raise before they agree to go into action against the enemy."

In the Foxholes

Are there any war millionaires in the foxholes, Seaman Walsh? Are there any of your buddies who first demand a cost-plus contract from the government, guaranteeing them a good, substantial profit, before they agree to charge?

You seem to say that if the soldiers, sailors and marines can fight and die for fifty dollars a month, labor at home can work for that, too.

Suppose you were to say that to General Motors, Ford, Bethlehem, du Pont, Chrysler, New York Central, and the other corporation heads rolling in profit up to their hips. They

would laugh themselves to death, or else demand that you be instantly committed to a madhouse.

What are you fighting for, and your comrades? Just for the sake of fighting? Or just in order to suffer and die, in the horrible ways you describe? Or are you fighting for a good and decent world to live in, one that is free of the periodic curse of war, free of suffering, oppression and injustice, one in which man enjoys security and abundance and peace for himself and his kin and his fellow men?

If men are ready to fight and die for such a world, it is because they want to be able to live in such a world, and to have others live in it. Men do not want to come home to a world of a low standard of living, of tyranny and oppression, of exploitation and iniquity, of a mere interlude of peace in preparation for another war. They don't want to return to a world such as the word "fascism" represents. Such a world is surely not what they had in mind when they went into battle to fill the cemeteries of the South Pacific and the ships "bringing in a cargo of human suffering."

Do they want to return to a country in which the ruling class, partly with the aid of articles such as you have written, has succeeded in reducing the standard of living of the workers to fifty dollars a month, room and board? Is that the kind of life that your twenty-two-year-old comrade, and his wife, and the baby he has not seen, are looking forward to?

For Whom Labor Fights

Don't you understand that "Mr. Striker" is not a selfish, treacherous beast, just fighting for a wretched penny or two, that the organized workers at home, in the AFL, the CIO and other unions, are not your cynical enemies? They are fighting for all of you and for your tomorrow, your future!

They are fighting for a better standard of living for the masses of the people, for the democratic rights that all the people should enjoy, for a better world for all of you to come home to. When they fight for their rights and standards, they are fighting now so that you will not return to a world of low wages, long and exhausting working days, long unemployed and relief lines such as we had after the First World War and for years after the depression set in.

They are fighting against the band of blood-suckers who are patriots only at so much per cent profit—the higher the better—against the small group of dominant monopolists who are coining unbelievable fortunes out of labor's toil and out of the war.

We socialists are the deadly enemies of fascism, as of all oppression and despotism. And we have been its enemy not since yesterday but from the very beginning, because we are for labor, for the working class, first, last and always.

We too have our differences with the labor movement as it is today. But these differences are exactly the opposite of those voiced by you.

We do not think that labor's de-

mands in this country are exorbitant. We think they are too modest. We think they are too limited. Limited and modest though they are, we support them wholeheartedly and militantly. But we think labor should go much further.

We think labor should demand nothing less than control of the society in which it is the only useful citizen. It should take the big industries out of the hands of the monopolists, take over the government, and reorganize society on a rational basis so as to put an end once and for all to the dreadful mess into which we have all been hurled by capitalism.

Labor is fighting for too little, Seaman Walsh, not too much. It cannot fight for too much, because if it had everything it would only have its due.

If labor takes the destiny of our world into its hands—and it must do so if modern civilization is to survive—we can all proceed to organize society and our lives in it in such a manner as to wipe out all social inequality and antagonism and bring into existence the new socialist man.

Then, Seaman Walsh, there will be neither the saga of death in the Pacific that you describe so movingly, nor the conflicts and wars that bring it about.

Such a world would be worth returning to. It would be worth fighting for. My defense of labor, and of your "Mr. Striker" derives from the conviction that only labor can usher such a world into existence. Do not bar its road, Seaman Walsh, for it should be your road as well!

On the Troubled Waters at Teheran

Iran Oil--Another Chapter of the Same Old Story

By PAUL ULLMAN

When the three giants of modern statecraft, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin, met at Teheran, the world expected epoch-making results. But the giants, in their published declaration, brought forth a mouse.

Even the liberals, with their type-writers poised for an orgy of praise and self-congratulations, could not deceive themselves into thinking that something concrete had been accomplished. They swallowed the age-old diplomatic stock in trade of "freedom and democracy" with famished appetites but they remained hungry. For there was very little meat that one could bite into in the Teheran declaration. Its omissions tell the real story. But real decisions of Teheran remain a secret.

The only meaty, "concrete" portion of the Teheran declaration was the statement guaranteeing the independence and integrity of Iran. This has been a great consolation to some and has served as a symbol to others of the honesty and good intentions of the United Nations. Here, they say, in the concrete, in deeds that everybody can understand, one can see that the Allies really mean what they say. Iran is the first to receive this generous offer (perhaps because the meeting took place there); others will follow. Iran is the weather-cock of the future.

Promises to Iran

The declaration on Iran states that the governments of the United States of America, the United Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom are at one with the government of Iran in their desire for the maintenance of the independence,

sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran.

But this sweet and solemn song has been heard before in the land of Iran; indeed from the mouths of at least two of the giants.

Persia (the name was changed to Iran in 1935) has been an imperialist plum for many years. At the beginning of this century, England and Russia were at each other's throats over the question of Persian domination. Their conflicting interests were settled by a treaty in 1907 without the agreement or even consultation of the Persian people. This treaty, after stating its intention "to respect the integrity and independence of Persia," divided the country into three parts. The North was to be under Russian domination, the South-east under British control and a central and neutral zone in which both could obtain their economic concessions. Thus was Persian "independence" respected by an economic partition of the country by its capitalist overlords.

A small but vigorous group of nationalists that had become active in 1906 was outraged by the 1907 treaty and shot the Finance Minister of the government, whom they accused of selling out to the foreign powers. They continued their fight and succeeded in throwing out the Shah and instituted a Parliament. Russia supported the Shah with money and munitions and gave him refuge until he could get enough strength to start a civil war against the revolutionary government. England played the nationalist movement against Russia for its own interests.

When the Bolsheviks came to

power in 1917, events took a sharp turn. A workers' state does not mout the mealy words of freedom and independence for the colonial peoples, and then proceed to strangle them in deeds. That is the way of Stalin, but not of the Russia of Lenin and Trotsky.

In 1917, Trotsky, who was Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, repudiated the 1907 agreement and disclaimed the imperialist aims of Czarist Russia. By a treaty in 1921, the Soviets nullified all Czarist treaties, gave back all Russian concessions except the Caspian Sea fisheries, cancelled all Russian loans (these amounted to \$22,500,000 at the time) and promised new tariff agreements.

The second article of the treaty attacked Czarist Russia and other nations for "not only violating the sovereignty of the states of Asia, but also of leading to the organized brutal violence of European robbers on the living body of the peoples of the East."

Compare this Soviet treaty side by side with the Anglo-Persian Treaty signed at Teheran on August 9, 1919. After making the proper British bows to the public with such phrases as, "the progress and prosperity of Persia should be promoted to the utmost" and "respect absolutely the independence and integrity of Persia" (shades of Teheran, 1943), the English proceeded with the business of slashing Persia's economic and political throat. The treaty called for British "advisers" for Persian departments, British officers and munitions for the Persian army, British capital for railroads, a loan of two million pounds at seven per cent, control over customs, and national income as security for loans.

Britain Seeks Control

The Bolsheviks having stepped out, the British, not a bashful bunch, stepped in and made a grab for everything.

But the Persian nationalist movement had developed under its own steam and under the influence of Bolshevik propaganda.

The Persian Majlis (parliamentary body) refused to ratify the treaty, and an independent Persia was set up. Britain was not willing to go to war on the question and dropped, for the time being, its attempt at political control for the development of its economic hold over the country.

At the end of the last century and the beginning of the twentieth, Britain's major aim in fighting for Persian domination was the defense of India. Today, however, Britain has huge economic stakes in Iran which are crucial to the welfare of the Empire. She dominates the trade of the Persian Gulf, through which ninety-five per cent of Iranian oil is transported. She has, as an unofficial protectorate, the strategic trade and important center of the Bahrain islands, which the Iran government has complained, time and again, belong to Iran. The Imperial Bank of Iran, with its main office in London and branches throughout Iran, is the dominant bank in the country, with assets of over ten million pounds in 1936.

But first and foremost is British control of the rich oil fields of the country. In 1936, Iran produced 88,000,000 barrels of oil, which is half of the peak production of the fertile Bakhti oil fields. The profits from British concessions were so huge that

in 1932 the Persian government cancelled the Anglo-Persian Oil Co. concession on the ground that the company refused to pay its proper income tax, prohibited Persian officials from looking over the books, cheated on its royalties to the Persian government. The British pushed through another concession in 1933 which, although it had better terms for the Persian government, still permitted the company to declare a handsome dividend of seven and a half per cent on its ordinary stock.

Oil and Freedom

American oil companies have entered the arena in the fight for oil control. In 1921, the Anglo-Persian Oil Co. opposed a concession to the Standard Oil Co. to exploit the five northern provinces of Persia. The concession finally went to another American company, Sinclair, in return for a loan of ten million dollars.

This was the political and economic background of Persian events when Russian and British troops invaded Iran in 1941 to "protect" it from the Germans and control the trade route to Russia and to India. Yet the Iranian minister to the United States, in a recent speech in New York, said that Iran has no objections to keeping Allied technicians in Iran to handle lend-lease trade but saw no need of the occupying forces in the country since there was no longer any Axis military threat. He asked for the removal of the occupying troops.

But the Iranian minister must remain content with the Teheran declaration. The integrity of his country will be "respected," as in the case of Korea, "in due course," no

Line to the Nut House Forms Here

This story is apocryphal, but it needn't be.

It seems that a noble gentleman appeared in the capital of one of the Latin-American republics, and presented himself to the President, along with credentials, as the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Hungary.

"Oh, Kingdom of Hungary," said the President. "Then you have a King?"

"Well, no," replied the Hungarian. "But we do have a Regent—he's an admiral."

"Oh, an admiral," said the President. "Then you must have a navy?"

"Not exactly," answered the Hungarian, "the truth is we have no navy."

"I suppose, then, that you are a neutral," inquired the President.

"Not really," said the Hungarian, "because, you see, we're at war with Russia."

"Why are you at war with Russia?" pursued the President.

"Because we want Transylvania," answered the Hungarian.

"Oh, then Russia now has Transylvania?" asked the President.

"No, you do not understand," said the Hungarian. "It is those scoundrels of Rumanians that have Transylvania."

"Aha," said the President, thinking he saw a bit of light. "Then you are at war with Rumania?"

"Not at all," explained the Hungarian. "Rumania is our ally!"

"Lock this madman up!" roared the President as the guards led the Ambassador away.

No Fooling!

So little guts is possessed by the president of a leading labor organization, namely, Bill Green of the AFL, that he hastened to apologize for the rail workers. According to Green, they were only fooling and "there never was the faintest possibility of an actual walkout."

However, Robertson and Fraser, presidents of two of the railroad unions, promptly assured Green that the railroad men weren't joking. "The only thing that averted a strike," they said, "was the taking over of the railroads."

Workers Still Getting the Run-Around

By WALTER WEISS

The Washington Run-Around is operating again—but not too smoothly. The miners, railroad workers and steel workers have proved none too anxious to ride forever.

Back in the early days of FDR, the steel workers—remember?—were the first to call the NRA the National Run-Around. They were only the first. In time, workers generally got the idea that the sit-down in their own home factories was a better idea than the run-around in Washington. So the CIO made labor history.

MINERS FOUGHT RUN-AROUND

This year the mine owners and the War Labor Board combined in effort after effort to give the miners the run-around treatment. The miners were having none of it, and four solid nation-wide strikes resulted. The WLB, however, is still hopefully "reserving" the right to pass on the portal-to-portal provision in the latest contracts.

During the same period, the railroad workers, with a far more subservient leadership, were getting a full dose of the treatment—from special board to Economic Stabilizer Vinson to Roosevelt back to special board. This kind of thing went on in the case of some unions for about a year, in the case of others for fifteen months.

Finally, under the heaviest kind of pressure from the ranks, the leaders said some very strong words about Vinson, company profits, fake patriotism—and even about Roosevelt.

Congress took the opportunity to step in and promise a nicer ride to the non-operating unions—then called it all off by adjourning. At last the union leaders reluctantly set a strike date.

Even when Roosevelt himself offered to be final arbitrator only two of twenty union leaders were willing to make every sacrifice for the nation and to place full confidence in the Commander-in-Chief. Three unyielding operating leaders wanted assurance that the arbitral award to the other two was not a "freeze for the duration"—as it seemed to be from its wording—and Roosevelt has had to give them the assurance.

WHY THE ARMY TOOK OVER

The non-operating leaders took the position that Roosevelt could not arbitrate (as he and the operators wished) ALL wage increases but only overtime and vacation pay. The government, therefore, is forced to retain formal ownership of the railroads, as of the mines, and the Army brass has issued wild statements that the very threat of a strike will cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of American soldiers. The Army men are also hurt to learn that, despite government control through the military, strikes were not cancelled but merely postponed.

The steel workers, entering the battle last, were surprised to learn that striking miners could get a promise of retroactive pay, while new contracts were being negotiated, but peaceful steel workers (or at least their peaceful leader, Murray) could not. They too began to strike and, if you believe the capitalist editorial writers and Murray, Roosevelt yielded and promised the retroactive pay.

The story really isn't quite so simple; Roosevelt is trying to hand the steel workers a trick clause, too. The steel workers are asking for an increase of seventeen cents an hour. They said that they would continue working after their contracts expired if the companies and the WLB would agree to make any increase finally agreed to effective from the time the old contracts expired.

A MEANINGLESS COMPROMISE

The companies and the WLB (labor members dissenting) refused. But first the "public" members offered a compromise—a really good ride, this one. Will you agree, said the "public" members to the labor members, that all wage adjustments must be in accordance with the "Stabilization Act and regulations issued under it"? If so, we will vote to make these adjustments retroactive?

In other words, if you will agree to the Little Steel formula, that is, to no basic increase at all, we will generously make this retroactive! (To be sure, some concessions might be worked out by various devices but nothing like the seventeen cents basic raise.)

Knowing how the workers were feeling, the labor members rejected and Murray denounced this raw proposal, thereby indirectly encouraging the strike.

Next step: WLB Chairman Davis agrees to reconsider and to grant retroactivity—if the labor members will vote for his compromise, that is, to accept the practically nothing allowed by stabilization regulations.

Next step: Roosevelt cuts red tape, makes it unnecessary for the labor members to reconsider. He reconsiders for them. Any agreement WILL be retroactive, he says, but "of course... in accordance" with the stabilization program.

RUN-AROUND CONTINUES

Exactly what we proposed, says Davis. How true! The run-around is still operating.

Murray hailed the President's action—as if it were not a reversal of the stand of the labor members—and called off the strike. The labor members, already reversed by the President, then reversed themselves.

Murray then proceeded to protect himself before his members by acting as if he did not understand the President. He instructed officials "to make sure that the incorporation of this directive [his own wording on retroactive pay] will be precisely as stated without qualification."

Now, of course, the workers, having such an ingenious leader, know exactly where they stand. On December 31 (New York Times, January 1), United States Steel complained to the WLB that the union has refused to sign an extension agreement in accordance with the board's order. The board has complained to Murray. There the matter stands at the present writing.

Murray, no doubt, hopes to get concessions in severance pay, vacation pay, sick leave, holidays, and equipment expense, and an adjustment in the cost of living index, rather than the straight seventeen cents or any part of it. He is also demanding a guaranteed forty-hour week—a good proposal, with "cutbacks" threatening. But it will not be achieved by reliance on Roosevelt, by deceiving the workers, as Murray has been doing, about Roosevelt's real proposals. Only fully independent political action by labor can even begin to realize so radical a demand.

Of Special Interest to Women

By Susan Green

Yes, it can happen here. It can happen that the lower wages paid to women workers will become the norm for all wages. And this is not just scare talk. For here is the columnist of the New York Times writing under the headline "Topics of the Times" who put that very idea into print.

Commenting on the report of the New York State Department of Labor that among office and clerical workers, women earn less than men in comparable jobs, he says: "But when we say that women clerical workers earn less than men in the same kind of work, it is the same thing as saying that the men earn more than the women. In that case you are bound to ask why the profit-seeking employer should choose to overpay his male employees."

There it is—the standard of wages paid to men after decades of bitter struggle is a sign of the employer OVERPAYING his male employees! By implication, the lower wages received by women workers should be the normal wage for all workers.

The columnist quoted above puts a touch of so-called humor into his piece. But many an anti-labor thrust starts with a little jibe to find out how much comeback labor has.

That is why the rash of strikes spreading in England at the present time to gain for women the same pay as for men in the same jobs, are of such tremendous importance. In the past months thousands of women workers in England have demanded equal pay for equal work—AND HAVE GONE TO BAT TO GET IT.

More important still, men workers begin to understand the necessity to raise the wage level of women workers up to their own—for their own protection. In some cases men have struck together with the fighting women. This was true when 3,000 male workers joined 2,000 women workers in a Scottish war plant in a struggle for equal pay for both sexes.

Three cheers for these militant workers! Labor solidarity is labor strength—and any kind of discrimination against any group of workers because of sex or color or religion injures all the workers.

If you have tears, prepare to shed them for the poor, downtrodden landlords. Imagine the nerve of the OPA issuing a rent-freezing order!

It is true, of course, that landlords are collecting the same and higher rents—and giving much less in service. Where a large apartment house once had a night and a day man, besides the superintendent—now, in a great many cases, the superintendent gets along with one helper or with none at all. However, this saving of wages must naturally not be held against the landlords. Oh, no!

Where landlords once painted and repaired apartments for both old and new tenants, now they do neither for either. This additional saving must also be overlooked.

Where once tenants raised hell if the heat and hot water supply were not sufficient, now tenants are intimidated by the fuel shortage. Landlords—whether they have to or not—cut down on both. In spite of the increase in the cost of fuel, they still are not the losers by the transaction.

Once there was quite a turnover in the housing market and to let shingles decorated the exterior of houses all year around. Now the housing situation makes every hovel rentable and vacancies so rare that the flow of income is uninterrupted and yearly profits much greater.

But why mention such facts, so damaging to the landlords' demand for a ten per cent rent increase? Yes, why mention them—unless they are acted upon by tenant committees working together with organized labor to give these profit-grubbers a dose of what they need!

This year the problem of buying herself an adequate winter coat has been a very serious one for every working woman. It has been nearly impossible to get a warm and durable coat for the money a working woman could afford to spend.

Of course, Secretary of Labor Perkins assured us—bright and early on January 1, 1944—that the cost of living has gone up a mere three and a half per cent during 1943. Here is a woman who most definitely did not go out during 1943 with \$22.75 in her pocket for a winter coat. If she had, she would have discovered that the \$22.75 coat of 1942 would have cost her \$32.75 in 1943. That looks like an increase of almost fifty per cent—not three and a half per cent!

Another person who did not have this experience with a winter coat is Mrs. Henry Ford. She will probably make her Russian sable coat valued at \$100,000 do for the duration.

Don't look at me that way! That's right—\$100,000 for one fur coat! But then, there is a lot of profit in the automobile industry—especially with fat war orders on the books and the wages of auto workers frozen stiff.

People who live off profits fished from labor don't have to be too particular about whether cost of living indices are right or wrong. They are delighted to accept the Perkins way of figuring—since that gives them "statistical backing" for opposing wage increases.

The American public—especially the women back home—are being diplomatically prepared for the casualties that the big push in Europe will inevitably mean. The toll of human life is expected to rise to half a million in the next three months.

From Algiers comes the warning of Surgeon Joseph I. Martin of the Fifth Army in Italy that families are bound to have a psychological shock when their crippled and wounded sons, brothers and husbands return home. "The people must expect to see the results of the war," he said.

Those who will be the wounded and the dead of World War II were the infants and children whose elders were the casualties of World War I. These were the little ones who were supposed to grow up in a world made "better to live in" by the Allied victory in 1918.

This was not so—judging by the horrible fate that is being meted out to them.

Can a woman today look at her baby with any assurance that it will not be a shocking casualty of World War III when it grows up?

She could only if the working people of the world join hands to set aside the whole world system of capitalist imperialism and to establish workers' governments throughout the world—and WORLD SOCIALISM. OUT OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM CAN COME ONLY INTERNATIONAL POWER POLITICS THAT WILL HAVE TO EXPLODE INTO ANOTHER WORLD WAR.

LET US WORK FOR A SOCIALIST WORLD!

Labor Turning Away From FDR --

(Continued from page 1)

combines, corporations and coupon-clippers were willing for Roosevelt to have his little rollback joke so long as the land, factories, mills, railroads, mines, plants and banks were left in their hands and under their control.

These capitalists had learned a long time ago that the purpose of running a business is to make profits and that in time of war one must make sure that the profits are bigger even than in peacetime. And then when the war is over, the capitalist has a nice nest egg to tide him over the depression days when the workers are evicted from their homes and sent to the soup lines and the bank houses.

And so, despite the fine talk about holding prices down, labor has seen the cost of living rise steadily and the profit jump to the highest levels in the history of "free enterprise." The profits of 385 companies for nine months of 1943 are 11.4 per cent over 1942. The railroads gain 21 per cent over 1942 and the automobile industry 24 per cent. Twenty-eight officials of automobile (aircraft) companies are paid over four and a half million dollars in salaries for 1941.

This isn't all, of course. What is important is the fact that this year, as in previous years, hundreds of millions of dollars will be paid in

dividends and interest to that comparatively small group of capitalists who know that this war is being fought for them—and for them alone.

Labor Awakening

Now that labor begins to understand some of these things they become more assertive and forget the no-strike pledge which was put over on them in the dark. Following the lead of the miners, who are not so easily fooled, the railroad worker and the steel workers talk of mass action.

Long after they should have known it, labor begins to understand that when the government, the capitalist press, the Stalinists and the employers were trying to dig John L. Lewis's grave, it was really the UMWA, they were after. The capitalist bosses and their government knew, even if Murray and Green did not, that it was not just Lewis they had to deal with but 500,000 organized and well disciplined coal diggers.

The more conservative labor leaders of the CIO and the rail unions were forced to follow the leadership of the miners. Murray learned that he too had to talk like Lewis. The hidebound elder statesmen of the rail unions used strong language—far stronger than even Lewis had used.

Strikes have been threatened or have taken place in spite of the Smith-Connally and all manner of state anti-labor bills. The capitalist press fumes and rants. Vinson and Byrnes, in the true style of capitalist government bureaucrats, raise the big stick. The WLB mutters some ancient jargon about Little Steel formula. The hired hands on Capitol Hill in Washington decide that the Brewster local of the UAW and its militant president, De Lorenzo, are the monkey-wrench in the machinery.

Crawford, chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers, makes the amazing announcement that "there is much talk of maldistribution. We have maldistribution due to the lack of productivity and to the failure of the underprivileged worker to produce enough to give him a fair share of the things he wants." Crawford then promises the workers that if they will only be patient, "if we can continue the free enterprise system (capitalism—D.C.) for one more generation, we can have ninety-five per cent of our people above want."

This should be comforting to a working class which starved through the last capitalist depression, which is being shot to bits on the imperialist battlefields today just as its preceding generation was twenty-five years ago, and whose only outlook for the post-war period of capitalism is more unemployment and hunger.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Crawford doesn't promise that capitalism will feed all of the people, even after the passage of another generation. According to this "industrial statesman," even after the passage of another generation of capitalism ("free enterprise system"), and if the population should remain stationary, there will still be over six million people in need of food, clothing and shelter. And this is all that the leaders of capitalism have to offer after the war is over.

The emerging mass movement of the working class, which has been evident over the past months, is not only distrustful of people like Crawford, but also shows the beginnings of distrust of Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. Labor is learning out of the trials and tribulations of its own bitter experience. But we have taken only a short and halting step. Labor is sore at Roosevelt and the Democratic Party, but what about Willie and the Republican Party?

This reactionary, anti-labor outfit lies in wait to cash in on the "mistakes" of Roosevelt, Willie, the knight in shining armor, is ready for another start. He wants labor to have a place in the Cabinet and to have a say in the making of the policies of the government. This from a little Wall Street lawyer. Are we going to be fooled by Willie and the Republican Party? Didn't labor vote for McKinley, fifth cousin Teddy

Roosevelt, Taft, Coolidge, Harding and Hoover? Are we going to be stupid enough to go through all of this again? From the frying pan into the fire and back into the frying pan!

Labor is surely on the move in the United States. But where are we going? By now capitalism and capitalism's government have certainly taught us something. Or they should have taught us something. They should have taught us that the whole capitalist class and its government in Washington, from the Capitol to the White House, is arrayed against us.

This class of manufacturers, bankers and government officials presents a solid front against the working class. We should make no mistake about this. In the elections next year the capitalists will be concerned only with deciding which one of the two candidates will best defend capitalism and guarantee their profits. They want to win the war, but that's what winning the war means to them: markets, territory, raw materials, profits, cheap labor, domination of the world.

Labor's Demands

The working class wants jobs, decent wages, food, clothing and shelter, happiness, freedom, security and deliverance from destruction in the ever-recurring and ever more destructive imperialist wars. We want a government which guarantees these things to us, which fights for us, which represents us. This can only be a government of our own. We can get this kind of government through a party of our own, a Labor Party of workers and trade unions with that kind of a fighting program. Roosevelt and Willie both know that if labor organized its own political party, based on the trade unions and the working class majority, and carried on a genuinely militant fight, labor would turn the capitalist parties out of control and take possession of the factories, mines, mills, banks and railroads and operate them in the interest of the masses of the people.

That is why Roosevelt is trying so desperately to keep things patched and in repair. He makes no basic alterations; there is nothing new. As the working class breaks through he puts on another patch. Crawford and the other capitalists hope and pray that the patch will hold.

But labor is on the march. On the march toward renewed militancy, political understanding and independent political action. The old wine-skins will not for long hold the new wine that is being fermented in the daily experience of the working class.

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Work for independent political action next November!

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Robber Barons—A Saga of the Railroads

By WILLIAM A. STOKES

The traditional myth that the railroads are a sick industry seems to have become an accepted fact, even by many workers. The reason for this belief is due to the periodic bankruptcies of many of the railroad companies and the worthless stock of the small stockholder.

Railroad financing is one of the blackest chapters in the history of capitalism in the United States. Up to recent years the owners of the railroads were not known as the "robbers," as they are politely called today, but as the "Robber Barons." And they certainly deserved and fitted that description.

ROBBING OF THE LAND

The land for the railroads in this country was largely donated free by the federal and state governments. One of the American historians in attempting to portray the amount of land given to the railroads described it thus: "A chart of the railway grants in the West looms up like the map of the Roman Empire in the age of Augustus." The total acreage of the railroads in 1933 was 13,796,488 acres.

After the land was donated the public purchased bonds for the construction of the roads. The robber barons formed construction companies that bled the parent bodies into bankruptcy, the small investor's stock became worthless, and the construction companies purchased the railroads. Then came the policy of taking tremendous dividends and placing on the market bond issue after bond issue.

The stock was watered and the railroads were thrown into bankruptcy with such regularity that the small investor was milked dry of his ownership. The House Committee on Interstate Commerce, in its study of regulation of stock ownership in railroads, reported in 1931 that of the 159 major railroads, there were only sixteen in which "there is no marked concentration of ownership," but that the large bulk of the railroads "were wholly or largely controlled by an individual or family."

Yet the Robber Barons in their advertisements in their kept press are always crying out that whoever disturbs the railroads immediately affects the pocketbooks of the widows and the orphans of the United States.

"WATER AND BLUE SKY"

A. F. Whitney, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, before a government fact-finding commission in 1942 revealed that the capital structure of the railroads "contains \$9,500,000,000 of water and blue sky." This financial manipulation and over-expanded capital structure means that the Robber Barons with one hand collect tremendous interest charges for lending money to the railroads and with the other hand collect the dividends from the profits. This does not take into account all the subsidiary industries which the Robber Barons control, which sell their goods to the railroads at terrifically high prices.

This past year, 1943, the freight carried is estimated at 725 billion ton-miles. This is seventy-eight per cent higher than the figure for the highest year during the First World War. The passenger miles will total eighty-five billion for 1943. This is ninety-nine per cent higher than the peak year of the last war. This tremendous record-breaking was done with over one-half million workers FEWER than were employed during the last war. The year just beginning will break even these new high records. The passenger service is expected to rise an additional fifteen per cent and the freight an additional five per cent.

The profits for the first ten months of 1943 (the last two months have not been published as yet) were \$1,188,410,005, an increase of more than \$27,000,000 over the same period in 1942. After the payment of all charges was made (for the first ten months in 1943) there remained \$778,800,000, which is \$89,000,000 more than in 1942, for dividends to stockholders and bondholders.

DECADES OF DIVIDENDS

But this is not just "war prosperity." The railroads have been paying dividends even in the worst years of the depression.

According to official government figures, the railroads have paid an average of \$711,000,000 ANNUALLY in dividends for the past fifty-two years. In other words, in little over half a century, the Robber Barons have sucked almost THIRTY-SEVEN BILLION DOLLARS out of the sweat and toil of the railroad workers.

But—give these railroad workers a modest raise that will make it a little easier for them to meet the rising cost of living? No! The industry is "sick!" The workers and the unions are committing an outrage! They are destroying national unity! They are doing Hitler's dirty work! The industry is "sick" and can't afford to pay the raise.

The industry IS sick—sick from the corroding disease of monopoly ownership, sick from the blood-sucking of the profiteers.

If, after all these years of ownership and management by the monopolists, they claim an inability to pay the railroad workers a decent wage, then they are announcing their own bankruptcy. If, after all these years, the government finds it necessary to put the Army in charge of the railroads, it is confirming the bankruptcy of the monopolists.

Then out with these bankrupts!

Nationalize the railroads!

The government did not ask many questions before conscripting the bodies and lives of millions of working men for war. Why doesn't it conscript this key war industry—the railroads?

Nationalization of the railroads under workers' control—that is the urgent need of the day.

If the "management" of the monopolists has resulted in a situation in which workers cannot get a decent living, then the management must be turned over to the workers themselves. If the present government does not want to see it this way, let us have a government, a workers' government, that will.

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An unfortunate typographical error occurred last week in the article on the new Yugoslavian Provisional government written by Max Shachtman. It reads that the Yugoslav Stalinists "came forward as the most aggressive adversaries of the aspiration for national freedom of the peoples who were deprived of it." It should, of course, read that they came forward "as the most aggressive ADVOCATES," etc., etc.