

LABOR ACTION

MARCH 27, 1944

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

Workers Party Platform

The National Committee of the Workers Party, following instructions on revising its platform adopted at the recently concluded national convention of the party—of which a full report appears on page 3—has just adopted its political platform.

In making public the platform, the Workers Party recommends its adoption "as the fighting program of the trade union movement and of the national independent Labor Party which labor must form."

The platform, divided into several sections and embracing thirty-two points, is devoted to the most urgent problems facing the working class of this country, not only in the immediate present, but for the post-war period as well.

LABOR ACTION publishes the platform on the back page of this issue. Turn to it now!

30-Hr. Week Is a Cinch--You Bet!

By NANCY NATHAN

LABOR ACTION has stated again and again that one of the indispensable requirements for full post-war employment has to be the thirty-hour week. Those who prattle about solving the unemployment question and do not admit the possibility and necessity for the thirty-hour week are only giving lip-service to the problem.

In a recent discussion, Eric A. Johnston, president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, said the thirty-hour week is "absurd." Henry J. Kaiser, industrial magnate, laughed it off. Walter P. Reuther, vice-president of the United Auto Workers, CIO, said that by utilizing the full productive potential, the thirty-hour week could easily be the productive equivalent of the pre-war forty-hour week.

LABOR ACTION agrees with Reuther one hundred per cent. The thirty-hour week is a cinch. Here's why:

War production has shown us what peacetime production can be like. It is not merely that production has been increased to an extent nobody would believe possible in 1939. For instance, the output of magnesium increased four and one half times from 1942 to 1943; the production of aluminum in 1943 was seven and a half times that of 1939; airplane turnout in 1943 was 1400 per cent above 1940—to cite only a few instances.

LABOR PRODUCTION AMAZING

The fact is also that the labor-time required for the same amount of work has been cut, in some cases almost unbelievably. Even in coal, which has not reflected to any great extent the wartime trend toward labor-saving methods, 400,000 bituminous miners now turn out about 600,000,000 tons of coal, whereas in 1939 it took 430,000 bituminous miners to produce only 400,000,000 tons.

In aircraft, the production time has been reduced most amazingly. According to Charles E. Wilson, chairman of the Aircraft Production Division of the WPB, the CUT in production time for planes is all of NINETY PER CENT since the beginning of the war program. Fighter planes that took 157,000 man-hours then, took only a mere 7,800 for the building of the 1,000th plane. Four-motor bombers taking 200,000 man-hours to produce formerly, on the 2,000 bomber took only 13,000 man-hours. These are Wilson's figures—and they are not fiction.

An illustration from another field is gasoline. In January, 1943, in Bayonne, N. J., the Standard Oil Company opened its super-fuel plant for turning out large quantities of 100-octane gasoline—how much, is a military fact not revealed, but it is plenty. Yet this tremendous plant, producing not only 100-octane gasoline but also the raw material for synthetic rubber, requires only NINE MEN to operate its remote-control apparatus—and nine are used more for "safety than for actual operating necessity." It was stated at the time this plant was opened that thirty-three such plants were scheduled for construction throughout the country.

Illustrations could be multiplied. How about shipbuilding—Mr. Kaiser's racket? In fact, how about nearly every phase of war production?

What happened was that the government's demand for fulfillment of its war orders forced private industry to utilize new machinery and labor-saving devices. Even with one eye of the capitalists on the cost-plus contracts, marvels were still effected.

WHAT COULD BE DONE

Consider what could be done with a labor force of over 60,000,000—which will be the post-war labor force of this country—if the restrictions of private property and private profit were removed? If the power of the monopolists' hold now combining to withhold from use patents, formulas, inventions, etc., were broken—if the bans imposed by the international cartels were ended—think what that would mean in increasing production and reducing production time in every field of industry and agriculture!

The class represented by Johnston and Kaiser naturally don't want the country to reach its high productive possibilities. They prefer a peacetime economy of limited output with monopolistic control by themselves. As for labor-saving machinery and devices, they are guided by profit considerations exclusively. And as for the thirty-hour week with adequate minimum wages for a decent standard of living, they naturally prefer to exploit the labor of their workers for forty or forty-eight hours—AT THE SAME WAGES.

That is why to Kaiser the thirty-hour week is a laughing matter and to Johnston it is "absurd."

A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

However, to avoid inhuman unemployment, the thirty-hour week must become the law. Furthermore, there must be a government peacetime program for national improvements and social benefits at least equalling the war program—in order to win the fight against unemployment.

However, the chances are practically nil for these two indispensable demands being attained under a capitalist government. It would be a cinch, however, to reach these very reasonable, possible and necessary aims under a workers' government.

To get that—a workers' government—the first step is an independent political party of the workers, based on their unions and entirely free from all connection with the capitalists and their politicians.

That is something Reuther has not yet learned—and THAT he will have to learn if his support of the thirty-hour week is to bear fruit.

MAILING RIGHTS RESTORED TO THE MILITANT

Just about a year ago the second class mailing rights of The Militant were rescinded. With its issue of March 18, these rights are restored.

However, The Militant has been informed that each issue will be held up before final dispatch to permit the solicitor of the Post Office Department to determine its "mailability."

The Militant points out that this constitutes "arbitrary and discriminatory censorship" and a "threat of further deprivation of mailing rights."

LABOR ACTION is wholeheartedly with The Militant in protesting against such censorship of a socialist paper.

New Crop of Star-Spangled Millionaires Is Being Born

By DAVID COOLIDGE

Eugene G. Grace, president of Bethlehem Steel Corporation, reduced his 1943 "incentive compensation" by fifty-eight per cent. The United Aircraft Corporation of Connecticut turned back \$286,000,000 to the government. Company officials said that they were ashamed to take the money.

Some Facts—But Don't Draw Conclusions Yet

The War Department announces that the government is paying twenty per cent less for equipment and supplies than two years ago. A bomber that formerly cost \$238,000 now costs \$137,000—from the same company. A

company that got \$510 each for a .50 caliber machine gun now charges the government only \$200. Light tanks that formerly cost \$45,000 each, now are sold for \$22,564. A radio transmitter that was given to the government two years ago at the bargain price of \$3,194 is now bought from the same manufacturer for \$1,302.

These figures are in a recent report by General Browning, director of purchases for the War Department. A total saving of nine billion dollars has been effected by the government in the last two years. But in addition to these nine billions, the War Department says that over twelve billions of savings had previously been effected in reductions in the esti-

mated costs of equipment and supplies made by the department and in savings due to changes in contract prices after the contracts were let.

From these two sources alone, then, the government claims savings of twenty-one billion dollars. The manufacturers of war equipment and supplies got twenty-one billion dollars less than they would have if the prices had remained as of two years ago, and if there had been no change in budget figures or in the approved contract figures.

This is for the War Department alone and does not include the Navy Department, which also spends billions of dollars for war equipment with the same corporations.

These same corporations have also paid millions and millions of dollars in taxes the past two years. It is their constant claim that taxes are so "burdensome," as is alleged in the case of the railroads, as to "not only deprive the carriers of a reasonable return on their investment but also menace the future of the industry."

Perhaps the reader will conclude from all this that the capitalists—those staunch defenders of "free enterprise" and the "American way of life"—are in great difficulty, and that a "socialist" government is about to put them into overalls, or hurl them into the breadline.

This would be a sad mistake. Cap-

italism still lives. It is in no danger from the government—from its government. While it is true that Mr. Grace reduced his "incentive compensation" fifty-eight per cent for 1943, he still had \$42,546 remaining after he paid his income taxes.

It is true that the United Aircraft Corporation got "ashamed" and gave \$286,000,000 back to the government. But it is also true that this corporation had \$17,000,000 in net profits left after paying millions in taxes and putting "a little something" away for "unforeseen contingencies." Before the war the highest net profit of this company was \$5,000,000.

"Incentive pay" is working well on

all fronts for the corporations, their officers, stockholders and bondholders. Big profits, fancy salaries, huge dividends and juicy interest checks to chronic loafers who hold the bonds are the order of the day.

The Securities and Exchange Commission, in its latest report on profits, tells a story that should make every worker ponder over the no-strike pledge and the labor leaders who insist that the pledge be kept.

A Mere 100 Per Cent of Profits on Investment

Six corporations in the heavy industries classification made profits in 142 of over 100 per cent on invested

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FOOD STOCK IN STORAGE; RELEASE IT FOR OUR USE!

Who Is Sabotaging the Soldiers?

By JOHN BERNE

So the workers are sabotaging the soldiers, are they?

How about the backward and defective equipment being delivered to the armed forces that mean sudden and unexpected death to many men in the air, on the sea and on land!

Exposures of such contemptible practices, so flagrantly sacrificing human life on the altar of profits, have been published from time to time throughout the war. They involve some of the tallest and most stalwart pillars of the industrial empire of America—great steel manufacturers, great electrical equipment manufacturers.

In recent columns of his Washington Merry-Go-Round, Drew Pearson continues this horrible saga of profits against human lives.

Parachute Death Traps

On February 19 it was announced from Camp Mackall, N. C., that eight paratroops had drowned "incident to a training and flight jump." Pearson says that these men—like many others—were plunged to death because they could not get free from their parachutes.

And why could they not get out of their parachutes to save their lives? Because, as Pearson explains, the Air Force parachute has three "release points." When a man descends, he has to release the harness at three points. This requires two hands. If one hand is injured or if the flier cannot coordinate so well, he just cannot get out of the harness when he lands.

Every American aviator, when he

gets to England, gets rid of this death trap, and turns heaven and earth to procure a British style of parachute that has single-point release, operated with one hand. Brig. Gen. Newton Longfellow, of the Eight Air Force in England, has stated that "anything but a quick release harness is murder." Men in the United States Air Force all know that over water they haven't the chance of a snowball in hell when they are harnessed to these treacherous parachutes.

Not only are the safer types used by England and by every air force on earth—except that of this country—but the safer type was actually invented right here by the Irvin Air Chute Co. of Buffalo, N. Y. For many years the company tried to sell the patent to the United States Army but failed, and moved its plant to Canada.

Pearson declares: "It gets down to PATENTS AND PROFITS. Somebody persuaded U. S. procurement officials to insist on the fatal parachute harness rather than the safer type."

Let every soldier, sailor and airman mull this over in his mind when he hears the vicious propaganda against labor as it tries to keep up with living costs and maintain decent standards for all labor both at home and in the armed forces.

Only after Pearson's exposure did the government order a mere 100,000 of the modern parachutes.

Defective Planes

The other exposure of how lives are tossed away needlessly, pertains to the manufacture of planes. Pear-

son to the manufacture of planes. The defects in planes delivered to the armed forces by a large plant in Texas became so extensive that a chief inspector for the plant resigned as a protest. In an affidavit, he declared:

"This statement is not made for purpose of any grudge or dislike of firm or of management, but because of defective planes being delivered. I FEEL PRICELESS LIVES OF YOUNG AVIATORS HAVE BEEN LOST DUE TO SUCH DEFECTS, AND MORE WILL BE SACRIFICED IF THESE PLANES CONTINUE IN PRODUCTION under the slogan 'push 'em out and deliver 'em regardless of condition.'"

This inspector reveals defects in the planes produced by wrong types of rivets used, by sections twisted out of alignment, by unsatisfactory landing gear. The flight hazards were of such a fundamental nature that he had to give special lessons to the experienced test pilot who succeeded him, on how to handle a B-24 and avoid being killed. He also testified to the hush-hush policy of the general superintendent of the plant.

What can be the reason for such criminal practices? What else but the desire of the company to make money out of this defective, death-dealing equipment!

Let the men in the armed forces bear in mind, when they hear filthy anti-labor propaganda, that it is against these merchants of death that the workers are struggling for a proper livelihood for their own families and for the family of every man who toils at home or at the fronts.

"The major part of the huge food stockpiles with which the nation's storage space is crammed is available for civilians, who cannot get it because they lack the requisite ration points."

Thus begins the account of reporter Jefferson C. Bell in a recent issue of the New York Times. The government owns, for military and lend-lease uses, "only a fraction" of the total amount of food in storage. The rest is held by private interests.

Fight in ALP Subject of Talk By Shachtman

NEW YORK CITY—Max Shachtman, national secretary of the Workers Party, wound up in this city his current national speaking tour on the need for independent labor political action and for an Independent Labor Party. Before an audience of one hundred and fifty workers he spoke on the situation in New York's American Labor Party.

Comrade Shachtman pointed out that the key problem before the American working class today is the establishment of a political party of its own, independent of the capitalist parties and politicians, with an independent program and independent labor leadership.

At every point today, labor finds that its possibilities for economic action become more and more limited. It comes into headlong conflict with the government on all issues of work-wages, working hours and conditions and on every conceivable phase of social and even personal life.

The speaker made clear the contradiction between the advanced state of organization of American labor in the trade union field, where it is the strongest in the world, and its lack of organization on the political field, where, by and large, it continues to support the parties and politicians of capitalism.

The capitalists protect their interests through their government and their political parties. Labor cannot protect itself, said the speaker, except through a government of its own, which can only be achieved if labor has its own fighting independent political party.

Evaluating ALP Fight

The Workers Party evaluates the significance and importance of the present fight in the ALP from these considerations. Comrade Shachtman made clear that the ALP is not a working class party nor the vehicle of independent labor political action.

It was organized as a labor auxiliary of the Democratic Party, as a vote-getting machine for Roosevelt in his first presidential campaign in order to corral labor votes—which could not be done on the old discredited Democratic ticket. The ALP was, therefore, set up to prevent the development of independent labor political action, and has been maintained in the same spirit.

Nevertheless, it was pointed out by the speaker that those interested in independent political action must be interested in the fight now going on in the American Labor Party on the issue of "the Hillman plan."

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An instance is frozen meat. Of a total of 676,111,000 pounds held in storage in the New York region, only 31,079,833 pounds belongs to the government. This is a mere 4.6 per cent of the total.

That means that 95.4 per cent is the property of private dealers, manipulators, and war profiteers.

While this vast meat stock remains out of circulation, the meat consumption of the country actually decreases. The present quarter of the year has seen a six per cent decrease in civilian consumption of meat from the preceding quarter.

The same is true of many other foods.

The reduction in the government's take of butter will not mean a great deal more butter for civilian channels. The same is true of cheese.

Be assured again that "by far the largest portion of the total quantity of food in commercial storage now is privately held in regular commercial channels for civilian use." You can take the word of F. D. Cronin, regional director of the War Food Administration, that this is a fact.

A Few "Whys"

Then why isn't all this food released for civilian use? Why is it allowed to get stale, rancid and unusable—as recently happened to a huge quantity of eggs and butter that not even the speculators wanted to buy?

Why are people compelled to do without necessary nourishment while actually there are mountains of food spoiling in the warehouses?

The reason given why this food is held out of circulation is that the ration point values are so high that there cannot be a "demand" for it.

Then why aren't ration point values reduced or eliminated so that people can get what they need, since it is here to be had?

With all this food around, including stocks of sugar and other things, why are not ration values lowered or rationing removed altogether where there is no shortage?

What reason can there be that makes any sense at all?

Ration Points and Prices

Can it be that high prices and high rationing values go together?

Could that be the motive why the private holders of all this precious food don't mind holding it? Why aren't they thundering for the lowering of ration values so that they may sell their stocks and realize profits? Maybe they do all right

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MASS ACTION

By David Coolidge

WLB Penalizes Labor For Fighting

The practice of the WLB in rescinding maintenance-of-membership provisions or in penalizing locals in various ways where there have been strikes, only shows what a stranglehold this government outfit has been given by Congress and the Green-Murray union leadership.

In the case of a two-day AFL strike at a Philadelphia plant, the regional WLB penalized the local by limiting maintenance-of-membership rights "only to those who signify in writing their willingness to continue as members of the union." This means that any backward worker, any scab-minded worker or any company union employee could get out of the union and begin the job of union-busting with the aid of the company.

In another instance the WLB denied maintenance-of-membership rights to a union because it refused to give a no-strike pledge after a strike. The regional WLB said that the union, an independent, was exhibiting a case of "cool, calculated... short-sighted self-interest." Furthermore, the actions of the union demonstrated, according to this board, "that its manner of operation was not of a responsible character which would justify... granting a maintenance-of-membership provision."

In the case of the Cramp ship-building employees, the WLB Ship-Building Commission acted as a court and fined the workers for the strike. They were fined one month's retroactive pay on any wage adjustment that would be made.

The WLB chastises the workers for not keeping "their" no-strike pledge. They are called "irresponsible" and violators of a "solemn contractual obligation." In the shipyard case, John Green and Van Gelder were praised for their "courage" in ordering the men back to work. The board said that the penalty might have been more severe if it had not had the cooperation of these officials.

This is nonsense and the WLB knows it is nonsense. Congress knows it is nonsense, and Roosevelt knows it is nonsense. If the government and the capitalist employers did not have the cooperation of the leaders of the AFL and the CIO, there wouldn't be any WLB to be "more severe." Any day the labor leaders get off the WLB and back to their organizations where they belong, the WLB is finished.

Furthermore, if the labor leaders would stop giving "cooperation" to the government and to the capitalist employers, and lead the millions of workers who pay them, there would be no Smith-Connally acts and no proposals from Roosevelt for a national service act. The WLB can't build ships nor planes nor tanks. Congress can pass anti-labor legislation but these loud-mouthed placers holders at \$10,000 a year, couldn't produce a single airplane.

Hutcheson Likes His Kind of Unemployment

William Hutcheson, president of the Brotherhood of Carpenters, has written an article called "Labor and the Presidential Election." Hutcheson's union is the AFL international that has been accused for years of sediting in too much in per capita tax. It is said that Hutcheson pays for members he doesn't have in order to increase the vote of the carpenters at the AFL convention. Hutcheson is also a Republican and is the big guy that John L. Lewis knocked under a seat at the 1935 AFL convention. He is the Republican counterpart of Dan Tobin, who is the Democratic Party's labor lieutenant.

At any rate Hutcheson has written a political article. There are six points or demands on the two major political parties for the 1944 elections. Hutcheson speaks for all of labor—so he says, and his points are labor's demands—so he says.

The first point is "the preservation of free enterprise." He fears that after the elections Roosevelt or Willkie may institute socialism, and Big Bill is against that. He'll defend "free enterprise" any day against the onslaughts of Roosevelt and Willkie. Bill is for capitalism, because under socialism he would have to go to work. When a man has been away from the saw and hammer for thirty or forty years, unemployment at \$20,000 a year is not to be sneezed at.

The second point calls for "the abatement of bureaucracy." This is too sudden! The president of the carpenters' international, an AFL craft union, comes out against bureaucracy. He says that "bureaucracy... is choking our democratic institutions." Which democratic institutions? The carpenters' union under Hutcheson? The AFL executive council?

This is enough. The other four points can be passed by.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Michigan Forms New Party

By BEN HALL

(This is the second and concluding article reporting the formation of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation.)

CIO POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES

Intimately connected with election policies was the attitude toward the CIO Political Action Committee on a national and local scale. The conference arrived at no policy whatsoever. This was inevitable. Unable to reach agreement on where they stand in relation to the "friends of labor," they could not have any unified opinion on the chief defenders of the "friends of labor" within the CIO, namely, Sidney Hillman's Political Action Committee.

Brendon Sexton, one of the "wise" strategists at the conference, found this formula to straddle the issue: There is no guarantee that the PAC may not support some of our candidates.

But there is a guarantee that the PAC will support so-called "friends of labor" within the Democratic Party. Where does the conference stand on that? No reply. Some delegates spoke of going into the PAC local groups to capture them for the new party. But without a policy in opposition to the PAC it will be extremely difficult to shake it. Moreover the conference decided that the new party will be neutral where it does not run a candidate. The greatest likelihood is that the members of the new party in the PAC will go along with the policy of the PAC and not vice versa. He who has no policy generally finds himself towed along by someone who has.

Here again an irreconcilable divergence of opinion was revealed on the floor. The recommendations committee report, proposed that members of the new party must "renounce the old-line parties." This seemed to puzzle Tracy Doll. Does this mean, he asked, that I would be thrown out of this party if I campaigned for a Democrat in the next election? Doll is one of the leaders of Labor's Progressive League and works closely with the PAC.

The question stunned the conference leaders. Paul Silvers stated that it was his opinion that one could not go out and campaign for Democrats and remain a member of the new party. Hammond, however, mumbled a few words to the effect that Doll could do so as an individual but not in the name of the new party. What is the policy? No one knows because there is none.

COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS AND TROTSKYISTS

The recommendations committee proposed the following statement: "It [the new party] shall never accept into membership any individual or

group belonging to a rival party or espousing principles contrary to its own policies and platform."

A motion was made from the floor and opposed by the leadership that the reference to "policies and platform" be deleted and changed to "basic principles." This motion was carried after one of the delegates explained that they must permit legitimate differences to exist on what their program and policies should be.

But this discussion led to a series of questions addressed to the leaders of the conference. One was: "What rival parties are referred to?" It was obvious that the Communist Party was not aimed at here because by the rules of the conference one had to sign a pledge in general agreement with the aim of establishing a Labor Party. That already ruled out the CP.

Blaine Marrin, chairman of the recommendations committee, replied: "That refers to communists, socialists and trotskysts." But Silver had a different interpretation: "This refers to the Democratic and Republican Parties."

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Discussion of the constitutional convention centered around two points: (1) the date; (2) the basis of representation.

The conference leadership proposed that the convention be held within seven months. This was adopted after several other proposals, aimed at a speedier convention, were defeated.

One of the delegates revealed the real reason for the long delay. "Let's wait," he said, "and see what the Democratic and Republican Parties do."

After the Democratic Party convention and after the PAC has already chosen candidates for endorsement, it will then be possible for the leadership of the new party to run candidates in "safe" districts where they will not conflict with the so-called "friends of labor" and the PAC. In that way the possibility of rupture between the "friends of labor" advocates and those who oppose this policy in the leadership can be avoided.

The existing committee will determine the basis for representation at the forthcoming convention. What its basis will be in outline was made clear by the speeches made by the leadership on the floor of the conference. They stated that this party must not be dominated by any one group but must include workers, professionals, farmers, small business people and others.

But in Michigan the CIO dominates. Therefore, if representation is in proportion to membership all the non-labor elements might be scared off. Some method of representation which will give unwarranted influence to non-labor and middle class groups will be devised.

Leaders of CIO Political Action Committee Again Boost "Their Friend" at Detroit Meeting

By BEN HALL

DETROIT, Mar. 12—The CIO Political Action Conference held here today under the auspices of the Sixth Regional CIO Political Action Committee makes several facts stand out clearly:

Four Points Clear

1) Despite all the fanfare accompanying its formation and all the energy devoted to its construction, the CIO Political Action Committee has been unable to arouse any real degree of enthusiasm among the membership of the CIO and is making progress, if at all, at a snail's pace.

2) The policy of the PAC is to function as a labor adjunct of the Democratic Party. The leaders of the CIO are fully decided on support to Roosevelt for a fourth term, and they subordinate all their political action to this objective.

3) The Communist Party is the most virulent enemy of the formation of a genuine Independent Labor Party, and in this connection serves as front line fighter for the top leadership of the PAC.

4) The leadership of the newly formed Michigan Commonwealth Federation, favoring the formation of an independent party but following a confused and inconsistent policy, are unable to reply to the policy of the PAC with a clear call for support to a Labor Party.

August Scholle, Michigan CIO regional director and chairman of the Sixth Region CIO Political Action Committee, pleading time after time at the conference for volunteers to get the work started on a local scale, emphasized thereby a complete inability to get precinct and ward captains to enroll the membership of the CIO into the PAC.

R. J. Thomas said: "We are in a very confusing position about political action in the state of Michigan." He complained that local unions pledged to send hundreds of dele-

gates to the conference but never came through on their promise.

It is significant that this conference, officially sponsored by the CIO, could gather together little more than two hundred delegates, which is fewer than the number that attended the conference of the "unofficial" Michigan Commonwealth Federation one week previously—a conference repudiated by the official top leadership of the CIO.

President Thomas Speaks

R. J. Thomas devoted four-fifths of a speech to attacking the Michigan Commonwealth Federation. He made clear that he is for the re-election of Roosevelt. "That's my individual position," he said. "It is not the official position of the CIO. But, on the other hand, the CIO has not said that it will not take such a position." Thomas repeated his opposition to the Little Steel formula and the national service act. The CIO program, he said, is the most progressive yet devised and that is the program for the elections.

In his lengthy speech, Thomas was completely unable to solve one big contradiction: If labor is to oppose the Little Steel formula and the "draft labor" act in the elections, how can it further these objectives and at the same time support Roosevelt, who stands for these anti-labor measures?

Senator Novack, in a speech seconded later by Nat Ganley, Stalinist leader, stated: "We must go into the Democratic primaries and get some of our people nominated."

Role of the Communists

The most virulent speech at the conference against the formation of a Labor Party came from Nat Ganley of Local 155, chief mouthpiece for the latest line of Stalin and Earl Browder: "Either you are for the present CIO policy, which means support to Roosevelt, or you are against it in the third party movement," he said. It is not necessary to report his

THE NAME OF THE NEW PARTY

The name finally decided upon was borrowed directly from the CCF: "Michigan Commonwealth Federation." The same spurious line of reasoning employed in discussing the basis of representation was employed in this connection as well. Silver spoke at some length, complaining how difficult it was to find a name. He said, in effect: "We cannot call ourselves Farmer-Labor Party because we are not a party only of workers, nor are we only a party of workers and farmers. We are a party of the common people."

The "common people" came into their own at this conference. One delegate took the floor to point out that the middle class sections of the "common people" could only get what they want by supporting labor and that the labor nature of the party should not be hidden.

When the matter came to a vote "Labor Party" received about half a dozen votes. "Farmer-Labor Party" received about twenty-five votes. "Commonwealth Federation" was carried by an overwhelming majority. This vote can be attributed more to the success of the CCF than to any other single factor. It is to be noted that the word "Cooperative" has been dropped. The Canadian organization is the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, but the Michigan party will be called Commonwealth Federation.

THE PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference hardly began to discuss its program and platform. This will come before the constitutional convention.

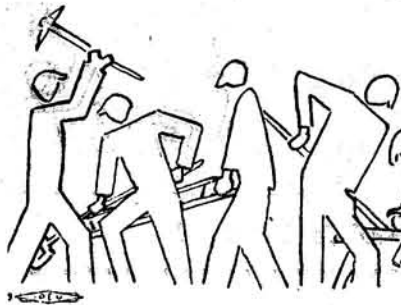
But the fate of our poor socialistic liberals in this connection is very comical. They had hoped that in return for being reasonable and cooperative and of covering up for the "friends of labor" policy, they would be permitted to write the program.

All their attention was devoted to the panel on "Platform and Policy." None other than Maynard Krueger was present for this historic occasion. The panel labored for hours. Their program was reported out briefly and then it was forgotten. When they complained that their report was not discussed and not even given to the delegates in mimeographed form they were told: Not enough time; and we ran out of paper.

FOR CONSISTENT LABOR POLITICAL ACTION

The conference left every important political question unsettled. Supporters of independent political action by labor must go to the coming convention and FIGHT for a CONSISTENT policy. First place is occupied by the crucial question of the attitude toward the so-called progressives in the old parties. The policy must be:

No support to the "friends" of labor. For independent political action.



CIO Wins Three-Way Battle in Philadelphia Transportation

PHILADELPHIA—The victory of the CIO Transport Workers Union over the company union and the AFL Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway & Motor Coach Employees as the bargaining agent for almost eleven thousand transport workers of the Philadelphia Transportation Co. has brought to a close a long and very heated three-way battle.

How Workers Voted

Close to nine thousand of the eleven thousand workers voted in the election that has created much bitterness between the AFL and the CIO in this area, where a great deal of co-operation had previously existed. The fight over who was to represent the PTC workers, plus the struggle in the United Labor Committee (AFL-CIO), which James L. McDevitt of the AFL has just dissolved, has almost completely eclipsed the great victory over the company union which long dominated the field.

The workers were divided into three categories, transportation workers, maintenance workers and office workers. The transportation workers voted CIO, 3118; PTC, 1459; and AFL, 1249. Maintenance workers voted: CIO, 1292; PTC, 356; and AFL, 408. The office workers, whose ballot permitted them to vote for either the company union or no union, voted in the majority for the company union.

The Amalgamated had a clear contest with only the company union up to about a year ago, when the CIO Transport Workers Union entered the field. Since then the Amalgamated has carried on a hysterical anti-communist campaign which has been in part the cause of their defeat.

AFL Didn't Stand Up

In the midst of the campaign the FEPC ordered the company to upgrade Negroes employed in maintenance. Negroes are not employed in any jobs that cause them to come in contact with the public. The company union refused to carry out the order of the FEPC. Both the AFL and the CIO condemned the company union, but the CIO stand was far more outspoken and consistent with the best interests of unionism. The national policy of the AFL on the Negro question was too well known to have caused high hopes.

In November, during the CIO national convention, all CIO members put on their buttons. The company refused to tolerate this, with the result that the street cars in many sections of the city were tied up because of workers' resentment.

The show of militancy on the part of the workers won further adherents to the CIO, despite the fact that their leaders were busy passing motions on the no-strike pledge. Instead of goading the AFL into some kind of progressive action, the strike only caused them to yell "reds" louder.

For a labor organization to call upon workers to vote for it because it "opposed communism" before there was a Dies Committee" or because "the leaders of the TWU are New Yorkers," may speak well for a twobit politician, but it certainly didn't tell the PTC workers what the Amalgamated was going to do if it won, especially after it had been sitting tight for quite a while. On the other hand, the Transport Workers Union concentrated its main line of fire on the company union.

PTC workers voted for the CIO in order to have a progressive union that believes in militant action behind its demands. However, the Quill type of leadership stands for anything but that. Any fight for their demands will soon bring them into conflict with the Communist-dominated leadership of the Transport Workers Union. The PTC workers must make THIS union what THEY want it to be.

WHO ARE THE EIGHTEEN PRISONERS?

The Civil Rights Defense Committee has issued a new pamphlet entitled "Who Are the Eighteen Prisoners in the Minneapolis Labor Case?"

It gives a short history of the case and biographical sketches of the prisoners. The foreword is written by James T. Farrell, well known novelist, who is chairman of the committee.

The pamphlet sells for ten cents and can be procured in any quantity by writing to the committee at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

WORLD EVENTS

By Europacus

Meaning of Strike in North Italy

In spite of the Nazi occupation, in spite of Mussolini's new guard of armed thugs, the North Italian workers are again in the middle of a great struggle. By no means are their energies exhausted. The Italian revolution started last year; it now passes through another stage—not yet the final stage. What an answer to the faint hearted who, every time there is a period of comparative quiet, affirm anew that the Italian workers are passive and have no real interest in politics! The Italian masses have not forgotten that last year it was they who forced the tottering fascist regime to abdicate; the masses have learned the value and the might of their concerted action—the "liberal" and "democratic" leaders have learned nothing.

Churchill's speech supporting Badoglio and the King threw Italian liberal circles into bewilderment. Storza was shocked and Croce was desperate. A meeting of the Liberal, Socialist, Communist and Action Parties was called. What could be done? Somebody hit on a brilliant idea—a strike in protest against Churchill's speech. A strike? Oh, but not a real strike, you know, just something to give the workers a chance to let off some steam. The workers' patience is exhausted; living conditions have become impossible; the people are starving, and the black marketeers are flourishing. Just a token strike—a nice little ten-minute strike, and after that everybody will quietly go home, and the "liberals" et al. will have done their duty.

Why Naples Strike Was Called Off

But even this ten-minute strike was not to the liking of the Allied Military Commission. In that case, decided the "liberal" and "socialist" heroes, if they do not want us to strike, that's really a shame. We'll just have to call off the strike. And so they did. Instead of the strike there was a mass meeting—with

powerful speeches—and everybody went home and tried to sleep on an empty stomach.

What a contrast this despicable mess makes to the workers in the North of Italy. Such incidents show clearly who will shape the destiny of Italy: neither Storza nor Croce nor the "socialists" nor the "Stalinists" of Naples.

Brewster Local Must Fight Company Union-Busting Plans

NEW YORK CITY—The leadership of Brewster Local 365 is dangerously retreating in a desperate effort to ward off some of the heavy blows being struck at their union by the enemies of the labor movement.

Their effort to either sidestep issues that they are forced to answer or to avoid taking up the fight against blows that the company is aiming directly at the union, has placed the entire local in a perilous spot.

The membership, on the other hand, has seen the danger. It has recognized in many recent cases that the backsliding of the local's leadership under the pressure of the company's aggressive acts has only helped to tie a noose around the union's neck, and it has expressed the desire to fight back against these union-busting moves of the company before it is too late.

At the last meeting in Long Island City, when more than 2,000 members present took the union leadership to task for its failure to put up an adequate fight in behalf of four wing department, stewards, who were framed and fired by the company for their fight in behalf of the men in their department, it was a clear indication that the members of the union refuse to lie down before the company's constant effort to break the union's strength in the plant.

Policy on Layoffs Needed

Throughout the shop the workers are constantly in turmoil, fearing impending layoffs. Since Christmas, men and women have been laid off by the thousands, and layoffs occur with such frequency that the one question everyone asks is "Who is next?"

Still the union leaders have not issued one statement in explanation

of their failure to do anything to halt the layoffs, nor do they bother to inform the union members where the axe is about to fall next. No provision has been made to aid laid-off members of the local, and no efforts are being made to organize shops in the surrounding area. The membership wants action on the part of the union to do what it can to prevent these layoffs and to aid those who have become its victims.

Added to this situation where layoffs are ever present, and the sword constantly hangs over the heads of militant and aggressive stewards, there is a virtual freeze on upgrading throughout the plant. There is no cause for this except the desire of the company to lower the shop standards. The membership feels that a fight must be started immediately to end this freeze.

In one of the few departments where the company needs men badly, the machine shop, three "A" and "B" milling machine men were laid off last week at the same time that trainees were hired to work the same machines at seventy-seven cents an hour. This is a direct threat to the entire wage structure in the plant, and the unwillingness of the shop committee to fight this case places every "A" and "B" man in the machine shop in danger.

Men and women in the plant who were laid off have been rehired by the company several days later at a lower rate and classification.

The union must put its foot down immediately. The retreat must be halted or the company will move with greater rapidity in an effort to kill Local 365. The membership must fight to keep every right it has won—rights that were won only through years of bitter sacrifice and struggle.

Aluminum Workers Meet

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Following the announcement that \$250,000 in back wages would be shared by workers in nine Louisville aluminum plants, a three-day convention of the International Council of the AFL Aluminum & Tinfoil Workers of America was held here. The convention was attended by representatives of 35,000 members in the United States and Canada.

Eli Brand, secretary of the Baton Rouge Aluminum Workers Union, criticized before the delegates the government's policy of subsidizing the aluminum industry (Alcoa) in Canada. This, he said, is causing curtailment of production of that metal as much as fifty per cent in some United States plants.

Philip Culter, union organizer in Canada, charged the government with encouraging an anti-union movement in Canada by the aluminum com-

pany. A resolution was passed assailing the "cheap wages" prevailing for workers in Canada.

The United States government pays twenty-six cents per pound for aluminum from Alcoa's subsidized Canadian plant, but as low as fifteen cents per pound for aluminum made in United States plants. Thus the "win the war" Administration furnishes big business with the "ideal" atmosphere for its "sacrificial" participation in the war effort—a guaranteed market for a high priced product, low wages for workers and an anti-labor policy to boot.

A convention resolution condemned proposals for a national service act as a step toward "slave labor" and as a measure which would conscript and impose involuntary servitude upon labor, "contrary to the Constitution of the United States."



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Baruch Plan Is for Monopoly Capitalism--Not Free Economy

By EUGENE VAUGHN

In a recent article discussing the Baruch Plan, it was pointed out that the crux of the plan is to continue in the post-war period the reactionary economic system which Baruch calls a "free economy." It is a misnomer to call the capitalist system "free enterprise." As it functions today it is very far from free. It is an economy based upon the monopolistic control by a few industrialists and financiers. This point needs emphasis and elaboration.

A free economy in the classical sense of the word is an economy composed of many small producers. Each producer turned out only a part of the total supply of the commodity which was sold on the market and consequently free competition prevailed. As many were competing for the same market, all the producers found it necessary to introduce more efficient methods of production, so that they could sell cheaply and undersell their competitors. They had to compete for capital equipment, for raw materials, for labor, on a free and open market. That type of economy, long ago passed, was a free economy.

When Baruch even suggests that such a "free economy" can exist after the war, he is trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the working masses of the United States. We need only to go to a report issued by Baruch's own government to throw this deceit back into Mr. Baruch's teeth. We are referring to the facts revealed by the investigation of the Temporary National Economic Com-

mittee which was submitted to President Roosevelt in March, 1941.

Corporate ownership in the United States is concentrated in the hands of a few large corporations, which in turn are controlled by a small group of wealthy families and individuals. These corporations, by virtue of their large holdings, dictate market policy, business conditions and methods of production. With these super corporations in control of the American economy, it is impossible for the free play of competition to prevail.

For instance, the steel industry of the United States is dominated by the U. S. Steel Corporation, which owns outright forty per cent of the steel holdings in the country. It is two and a half times as large as its closest rival, Bethlehem Steel Corporation, which owns fifteen per cent of the steel holdings in the United States.

Here we see an example where two companies possess outright fifty-five per cent of the steel holdings in the nation and by virtue of this can dominate the entire steel industry.

The aluminum industry is almost completely controlled by one company, the Aluminum Company of America, Alcoa. The production of sleeping and parlor cars is likewise completely controlled by one company, the Pullman Co. The telephone service is practically the monopoly of one company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

One can go on and on to multiply instances upon instance of monopolist control to prove that a free economy

does not exist in the United States.

The concentration of economic power in the United States can better be appreciated by observing the following fact: the total wealth controlled by corporations in this country in the year 1937 was 303 billion dollars, according to the U. S. Treasury Department. However, one-tenth of one per cent of all American corporations controlled forty-five per cent of all corporate assets.

How Monopolists Control

Given this great concentration of economic power and wealth, the leaders of industry can do almost as they like. The malpractices of monopolists are many. New methods, machines and inventions are not used if doing so would mean scrapping existing equipment or if the monopolist believes an innovation will not be profitable or lead to lower prices. A monopolist will leave his factories idle, thus causing unemployment, if he believes that an increase in the supply of commodities will lower prices.

Monopoly control of industry thus impedes the raising of the standard of living by limiting production. It guarantees super profits to a small group of people. No more perfect mechanism for making the poor poorer or the rich richer can be devised.

It is this type of economy which Mr. Baruch wishes to continue into the post-war period, calling it hypocritically a "free economy." The type of system which is to Baruch's bourgeois liking is a capitalist system bound hand and foot by the collective monopolistic control of a few titans of big business and finance.

Only Half the Story

The recognition of the abuses which prevail in a monopolistic society is not enough for the American working class, as it tells only half of the story. Integration of industry has its economic advantages as well. The centralization of control over industry and the integration of the productive process is not a bad thing.

It is the abuse of this integrated organization by monopolists who are concerned with profit and not with the welfare of people that is bad.

But the utilization of the modern system of integrated large-scale production in the interest of the working class is possible only with a working class government controlling production. Baruch thinks in terms of monopoly profit. The working class must think in terms of its own welfare.

Loyal to His Class

Three years ago last week James McNamara died in jail.

He had been imprisoned thirty years when he died. His "crime" was that he tried to organize the workers in Los Angeles. The bosses framed him on the charge that he had thrown a bomb in the building of the Los Angeles Times. There was no tangible evidence—but that didn't matter. Such things as evidence are unimportant to boss courts when they want to put honest and aggressive union leaders out of the way.

McNamara had the opportunity to be a "respectable" labor leader in the eyes of the government and the bosses. But instead he was a loyal member of his class, fighting in the interests of his class, suffering martyrdom in labor's cause.

Setting the Stage for a National Slave Labor Law

By WALTER WEISS

The labor draft isn't dead yet—far from it.

We are told the armed forces have not been getting all the men they need. The President orders a re-examination of occupational deferments. Lo and behold! there is again a "manpower shortage." Very likely, the stage is being set for a new drive on behalf of the Austin-Wadsworth slave labor bill.

There has been talk of allowing some reconversion to civilian production. Dangerous talk, say the Army and Navy. They say a manpower shortage exists—whether one really exists or not. The War Manpower Commission's discovery that the country was over the manpower hump, Mme. Perkins' statements to the same effect, the numerous and serious cutbacks—all a mistake, all an illusion.

Oh No—Not Against Strikes!

President Roosevelt, in calling for a "national service" act on January 12, put FIRST the consideration that "it will prevent strikes."

Nothing is heard now about strike-breaking. Senator Austin always emphasizes in hearings before the Senate Military Affairs Committee that his bill is not offered as a means of stopping strikes. By leading questions, he recently brought Secretary of the Navy Knox to testify that the bill didn't have this as its purpose. Austin himself added that there was no reference to strikes in the bill.

The senator must have given way to a moment of thoughtless excitement on January 4, when, commenting on General Marshall's bitter at-

tack against labor, he said that the rail and steel disputes "accentuate the need for a national service act."

At the same time Representative May, chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, said: "If industrial disputes continue and require it we will bring the bill out—and promptly, too."

About a week later, Austin was speaking more cautiously. On January 12 he told the Senate Military Affairs Committee that his bill was not designed to end strikes, "although it would tend to remove the cause of stoppages." It would do this by removing "competition for higher wages in a tight labor pool."

On February 16, President William Green of the AFL testified that the Austin-Wadsworth bill provided for forced labor. Not at all, said Austin. When there is a shortage of labor, the President must first call for volunteers. If this doesn't meet the situation, the draft is resorted to. However, nobody would be forced to work, even if convicted of violating the law.

That's right. Nobody would be forced to work. A person convicted of refusing to work would merely be fined not more than \$1,000 and would be jailed not more than six months. Perfect "freedom" to work or not to work, as guaranteed by the Constitution, would—you see—remain.

Senator Austin is right. There's nothing about strikes in the bill. It would just give the President the power to assign or to continue workers in particular occupations and particular plants where a shortage existed or was threatened.

Doesn't this mean that strikers

could be "inducted" and ordered back to work as "industrial soldiers"? Doesn't it mean that new workers could be brought in to act as strike-breakers?

Wages and Union Membership

All the supporters of the bill have also emphasized that it does not cut wages nor prevent union membership.

This is about as true as their statements concerning strikes. The bill allows a worker to join a union—but does not oblige him to do so. If a union has a closed or union shop contract, what then? THE EMPLOYERS HAVE BEEN TRYING FOR YEARS TO HAVE THE CLOSED SHOP OUTLAWED.

Wages will not be cut, they say. Can wages be raised? As Austin so blithely says, the bill will do away with "constant wage competition."

The Austin-Wadsworth bill is just a slick lawyer's substitute for an out-and-out anti-strike law. Its words are innocent, its purposes deadly.

Stimson's "Tonic"

Secretary of War Stimson in Senate testimony and in a radio speech,

Millionaires - -

(Continued from page 1)

capital after payment of taxes. Consolidated Aircraft made a profit of 117 per cent AFTER taxes. Of course, this corporation is among the howlers about taxes being too high, but its profit before taxes was 578 per cent!

The whole aircraft industry had the highest profits: 37 per cent after the payment of taxes. About two years ago it was reported that aircraft profits were to be limited to 15 per cent. Right behind aircraft was metal-working machinery with a 25 per cent profit, and screw machine products with 30 per cent. This is the "American way of life" in operation. This is the "free enterprise" system.

One aircraft company came very near going broke in 1942. In 1941 its profit after taxes was 421 per cent, but in 1942 profits had been reduced to the starvation level of only 42 per cent.

North American Aviation managed to squeeze out a 65 per cent profit after taxes. If there are any workers at North American who were there at the time of the strike they will remember that Roosevelt gave the Army its first combat experience against them before it was sent overseas.

The International Machine Tool

showed how good he was at playing Austin's shyster game. The main idea of the bill, said he, is to act as a moral tonic. It will make clear to all citizens what their patriotic duty is. Once they know, they will probably do the right thing. If not—"this moral duty has also behind it the force of appropriate legal sanctions and penalties." In other words, A ONE THOUSAND DOLLAR FINE AND SIX MONTHS IN JAIL.

But this is more than just an anti-strike bill. It will keep workers from leaving jobs for others "which they think will offer them better pay" (Stimson). This will end the "shocking turnover" in industry. INCIDENTALLY, IT WILL NOT END—BUT INCREASE—PROFITS, WHICH HAVE RISEN EACH YEAR OF THE WAR EVEN WITHOUT SUCH AID.

If the closed shop is outlawed, if strikes are broken, if wage standards are cut, if profits soar—all that will be incidental, don't you know! The main purpose of the bill—please forget any hasty statements made a month or two ago—will be, of course, to furnish men for the armed forces and replacements in the shops and mines. This we can't believe.

When these huge profits are approached in another way, it can easily be seen that the biggest crop of brand-new star-spangled millionaires ever known in history is being born today.

Randolph E. Paul, general counsel of the Treasury, said that even if the war ended right now, present tax laws would give the big corporations a "windfall" of forty-five and a half billion dollars. This windfall is called a tax refund to be used for "conversion to peace." The truth of the matter is that this so-called refund is a government subsidy to big business.

Star-Spangled Millionaires Are Being Born

Workers' wages are stabilized, the cost of living rises forty-five per cent, labor leaders chant their no-strike hymn, while the government gives a gift of forty-five and a half billion dollars to big capitalist monopolists to be added to their huge profits, salaries, dividends and interest. This is the "American way of life," the "system of free enterprise." This is the capitalist system.

Hamburg Workers Want New Party

The International Transport Workers Federation releases the following report of Swedish workers who left Hamburg in December: "Systematic dawdling on the job is practically universal. In Swedish undertakings a worker turns out more in eight hours than in Blohm & Voss (the big Hamburg shipyard) in ten. When workers are sent to ships for repairs, where there is little Gestapo supervision, they just go to sleep for hours.

"Small workers' resistance groups regularly hold meetings in the city. There news items of the British radio broadcasts are reported and particularly they listen to the London broadcast entitled 'For German Seamen'... At the shipyard it is very difficult to carry on sabotage. Everywhere there are spies working for the Gestapo or Labor Front, so that workers must be constantly on their guard.

"It is not possible to talk much with foreign workers, partly owing to the language difficulty. Often, however, bread is given to war prisoners looking very bad, although this is strictly prohibited.

"In Hamburg workers' circles there is much discussion about the mistakes of the past and the prospects of the future. A common attitude is that there must be no return to either the Communist Party or the Social-Democratic Party in their old forms. A big Socialist Party must be created, far more radical than the old Social-Democrats, but in no case a party based on dictatorial methods."

Workers Party Convention Discussed Important Issues

Over two hundred delegates, alternates and visitors were present at the third regular national convention of the Workers Party of the United States. The convention, meeting in the midst of war, reflected the triumph of the program and activities of the outstanding revolutionary socialist organization in the country.

Those assembled came from coast to coast and all parts of the country. They were, in their overwhelming number, industrial workers. They were active unionists and in the forefront of the struggle to defend the interests of the working class and the labor movement against the drive of big business, utilizing the war, to smash it. They represented the most oppressed minority in the country, the Negro people. They carried the program of the Workers Party in their daily work; and they were building for the socialist future.

The convention was the high point in the work of the party during the past two years. It met to examine these activities, review the program and policies of the organization and to plan for the days ahead. The discussions were not, however, limited to a review of past work and a plan of action for the future. The delegates were also gathered to discuss important political questions relating to the war and economy, the national question in Europe and Asia, which was under debate for the past year, and to adopt political resolutions laying the foundation for the future work of the party.

The convention opened with an inspiring speech by the party's national secretary, Max Shachtman (see LABOR ACTION, February 28). He reviewed the world problems of the working class and the manner in which the Workers Party lived up to its tasks and duties to its class by reaffirming its anti-war position and carrying on the fight for the best interests of labor and socialism.

CONTENTS OF POLITICAL REPORT

The first point under consideration of the delegates was the political report made by Albert Gates. The report analyzed the developments in the war, the imperialist rivalries between the warring camps and the growing conflicts within the United Nations. It underscored the change in the relative positions of the two warring camps as contrasted to the situation which existed more than two years ago when Germany and her allies appeared victorious. The new turn in favor of the United Nations emphasized, the report went on, that while the war was by no means over, Germany is faced with doom, as are the other members of the Axis.

But the conclusion of the military phases of the war did not imply a lasting peace. On this, even the members of the Allied nations have concurred. Post-war conflicts are inevitable and they are revealed in the divergent views existing between the United States, Great Britain and Russia.

The outstanding feature of the war is the elevation of the United States to first position in the imperialist world. She is the greatest capitalist power and in the given situation her war aims are nothing less than economic and political domination of the world. This domination, the report went on to say, would meet the fiercest resistance of the other powers and thus the post-war period would witness an intense period of economic and political rivalry between the present-day allies.

Just as the capitalist powers will continue their struggle in the post-war period, the struggle between the classes, between the workers and the capitalists in all countries, will also continue and become more intense. The masses of Europe yearn for a change and they have already demonstrated in Italy that they are sick and tired of capitalism.

The Italian experience, the political resolution declares, may be duplicated elsewhere, but the great danger confronting the peoples of the world is the reactionary and counter-revolutionary course pursued by the Big Three of the United Nations. Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill will do everything in their power to destroy the workers' movement on the Continent so as to prevent a socialist revolution. As against the workers, the big powers play their

game with the discredited and reactionary remnants of the pre-war regimes, the Badoglio, the bankrupt Kings, and Vichyites.

Thus, for the American working class, Gates said, a main task is the defense of the European people and the Continental revolution which is on the way. But, in addition, the American workers face a grave post-war situation at home. The tremendous expansion of industry for war needs and the increase in the number of workers will only create a post-war problem of unemployment exceeding the crisis of 1929-39. In addition to unemployment, big business will conduct a reactionary campaign against labor which has already been prepared and organized. The political situation will become more intensified as it is further revealed that the main task of American labor is to travel the road of independent political action through the organization of an independent Labor Party.

TRADE UNION SITUATION AND LABOR PARTY

The political report prepared the discussion which followed on the Labor Party. Two positions were presented to the convention, one in favor of the organization of a Labor Party and to make the agitation for such a course the main external political-agitational activity of the party and the other in opposition to such agitation on the ground that it is a false policy for a revolutionary socialist organization to adopt.

Max Shachtman reported for the majority of the national committee in favor of the campaign for a Labor Party, while Paul Temple represented the minority point of view. (See resolution on Labor Party in LABOR ACTION, December 27, 1943, and January 3, 10, 17, 1944). The discussion was extremely interesting, free of any factional heat. After prolonged debate, the point of view represented by the majority of the National Committee was adopted by an overwhelming vote.

The composition of the convention indicated the importance of the trade union report made by David Coolidge, national labor secretary of the Workers Party. Coolidge traced the developments in the labor movement since Pearl Harbor and showed how the trade union movement has grown in the midst of the war. Its growth, he pointed out, was the result of the militancy of the rank and file, which contrasted to the policy of the labor officialdom.

The official labor movement adopted policies which threatened to bind the unions hand and foot, Coolidge stated. The no-strike pledge, given over the heads of the rank and file, made it possible for the capitalist class to fight the union movement with a degree of effectiveness which would have been impossible under normal circumstances.

In giving up the strike weapon, the leaders of the labor movement weakened the unions. For some time now, the big monopolies have been chipping off gains made by the workers after years of struggle. Were it not for the independent struggle of local unions, of rank and file militants, the unions would not now have the strength they have. But of even more importance, the strike of the coal miners must be looked at as the one event which did more than anything else to defend the integrity and strength of trade unions.

The activities of the workers in this country, Coolidge stated, completely refuted those who believed that the workers would not fight—even in defense of their conditions and rights. The workers have fought, and fought brilliantly in many instances, against the high cost of living, the wage freeze and the heavy burdens which the war has placed primarily on the shoulders of labor.

But this struggle for militant unionism and for the interests of labor requires not merely a struggle on the economic front against capitalism, and not only a struggle on the political front against the parties of big business, but also inside the union movement for progressive unionism. It means a fight against reactionary labor leaders and policies, and especially against the Communist Party, which is the greatest menace in the ranks of the American working class.

Summarizing the trade union report, Coolidge declared that one

of the most important tasks of the active unionists is the organization of progressive groups in all unions for the purpose of carrying on the struggle for militant and progressive unionism. This need is revealed in the many instances in which local unions have done battle in the overall interest of the labor movement against those who weaken it. As the drive of Congress and big business against the trade union movement grows, the importance of the union militants grows, because it is they who form the real foundation for the defense of the labor organizations.

PARTY ACTIVITIES AND RECRUITMENT DRIVE

The organizational report made by Gates disclosed the growth of the party and the general increase in activity despite the losses resulting from the war. The Workers Party, he stated, was the most consistent force in the country, small though it is, in defending the rights of the overwhelming majority of people. He cited its campaigns against the wage freeze, the high cost of living, the failure of the Administration to institute real price control while at the same time the profits of the industrialists and financiers increased beyond all former records. "Our national program," he said, "reflected the interests and desires of the American workers. That is why it is so popular with them."

The issuance of pamphlets by the party (Plenty for All, Against Incentive Pay, For a Cost-Plus Wage) aided the agitational and educational program. The Workers Party carried on in the spirit of a socialist organization, spreading its ideas through the best labor and socialist paper in the country, LABOR ACTION. The theoretical magazine, The New Internationalist, appeared regularly during the past years, devoted primarily to a discussion of the more important theoretical and political questions relating to the present times.

Finally, he said, the Workers Party issued a most important book, The New Course, by Leon Trotsky, combined with The Struggle for the New Course, by Max Shachtman. Thus at one and the same time, the initial fight which Trotsky made in the interests of a democratic revolutionary socialist party against Stalinism was made public in America for the first time, while the essay by Shachtman dealt with the ideas of the Workers Party on the present character of Russia as a bureaucratic-collectivist state having nothing in common with the original workers' state of Lenin and Trotsky.

The convention devoted a considerable period of time to the organizational report. All the activities of the party were subjected to review by the members, praise given where proper, criticism where necessary. In this discussion some very fruitful remarks were made by all delegates on LABOR ACTION, which experienced a phenomenal rise in circulation and influence. This point in the convention revealed a heads-up party, thoroughly aware of the great problems which confront the American workers and what needs to be done about it. It also gave assurance that the post-convention period will find the party more actively engaged than ever before, with an excellent political and organizational program.

Topping off the report and discussion on this point was the adoption by the convention of a proposal for a recruitment drive aimed at bringing new militants into the party. The recruitment drive was presented as an organized and systematic campaign with quotas assigned to branches. The response to this proposal was most enthusiastic. Delegate after delegate took the floor to relate their experiences and to declare that prospects for new members were excellent. They showed how the pamphlets, LABOR ACTION and The New Internationalist had all created a new group of sympathizers and supporters of the Workers Party.

An excellent start has already been made in the post-convention period and all signs point to a successful conclusion to one of the most important activities of the Workers Party in the next few months. Max Shachtman has already completed the first tour decided upon by the convention and his experiences confirm the

BRUCE BLIVEN

By WILLIAM GORMAN

In the New Republic of March 6 there is an article so exceptionally smelly it deserves some comment. It is entitled "The Hang-Back Boys" and was written by one of the editors, Bruce Bliven.

Written as a leading article, it lets out a blast at "ex-communists, socialists, Trotskyists, an ex-liberal editor, a Yale man, a labor publicist" and others. Bliven then makes general accusations, an old, easy and dirty trick. If he tried kicking any dog in particular, the dog might bite back.

Some samples:

"...A number of men who are refusing to take any part in the struggle between fascism and democracy." "They no longer have any sort of program of their own, or if they have one it is indistinguishable from that of the Tories." "While other men fight fascism in this country... the hang-back boys are silent." "Some of these critics are surprisingly friendly to the State Department and speak very mildly of Badoglioism and Darlanism."

We Answer for Ourselves

This writer won't try answering for others, but we can say of the Trotskyists that, while the editors of the New Republic sit quietly in their offices the Trotskyites in Europe have suffered death and torture in the anti-fascist struggle. Also, unlike Bliven's hero, President Roosevelt, we were never "close to the State Department" and we do plenty of justifiable yelling against "Darlanism and Badoglioism." Last but not least we have a program, and not only is it distinguishable from that of the Tories, but it's clearly different from the vagaries of the New Republic.

Bliven complains about the "I-hate-Russia boys." We, on our part, don't hate Russia as we don't hate America. We simply hate the terrorizing, exploiting ruling class headed by Stalin. In the last war, Russia's czar

also joined on the side of the Allies, but the czar didn't become a democrat as a result.

Then there's some whining by Bliven that the "hang-back boys" are not taking a real part in this war between fascism and democracy. We think that the ruling classes of England, the United States and Russia have given the liberals plenty of proof how little democracy is involved in this war. That's what leaves the liberals so frustrated. But why does Bliven let it out on us? Is it because we correctly labeled the war as imperialist from the very day it broke out?

Bliven says that we "talk darkly of secret commitments which were made at Teheran." Does he know of any public commitments that were made at Teheran? Obviously since the whole show wasn't held just to feed Churchill and Roosevelt some caviar, secret discussions, promises and commitments must have been made. Even some congressmen, who—God forbid—are in our category have suspected the same thing.

As his best blast, Bliven accuses us of being a help to the Germans. Whom does Bliven think he's helping in his support of the mass murder of German workers by bombings? He forgets too easily the facts of the First World War. For believing in proletarian internationalism during the First World War, Lenin was constantly slandered, as a German agent. This did not deter him in the least from leading the Russian masses in their successful working class revolution which not only ended Czarism but which brought the war to an end and caused the Kaiser to abdicate.

Roosevelt's Coattails

What bothers Bliven most is criticism of Roosevelt from the left. Thus he says that the left critics "...are opposed to the plan for compulsory national service, overlooking the fact that the President also opposes it, unless it is accompanied by measures to guarantee just treatment of labor." The way Bliven swallows Roosevelt's tall promises makes us gulp. Victor Riesel, a pro-Roosevelt writer on the New York Post, reported that Roosevelt told Murray and Green that he would NOT veto a slave labor act? And the President's cabinet members,

Stewart and Knox, spoke up for the slave-labor act without even breathing a word about labor conditions. And General Marshall's vicious anti-labor attack gave a foretaste of what is meant by a "guarantee" of best treatment to labor. Doesn't Bliven read the papers or is he concentrating so desperately on Roosevelt's coattails that he forgets what he reads in the papers?

'EQUAL RIGHTS'

By V. JENSEN

An organization of wealthy women called the National Women's Party is busy in Washington lobbying for a so-called "equal rights" amendment. They are busy pushing congressmen to sign the petition necessary to bring this amendment out of committee onto the floor, since the House Judiciary Committee has refused to make a favorable report.

A Backward Step

Under the guise of "equal rights," this amendment would mean abandoning all the laws that protect working women from the worst kind of exploitation—laws that the union movement has fought for many years to have passed—laws limiting the hours women may be required to work, regulating health and working conditions, securing minimum wage rates in traditionally low-paid industries, etc. These would cease to be effective if this amendment were passed, as Philip Murray, CIO head, pointed out in his letter to congressmen urging them not to sign the petition.

This amendment would abolish such beneficial provisions as maternity aid, widows' pensions, aid for dependent children and other social security measures which give "unequal" rights to women—but very necessary ones.

To the wealthy ladies, largely of the business and professional groups, busy lobbying in Washington, the plight of the working women does not seem so important. Their main

interest is in removing certain existing inequalities that discriminate mainly against their own groups. In some states there is discrimination against women serving on juries, handling their own property, etc. Admittedly such discriminations should be removed, BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF THE SOCIAL GAINS OF THE WORKING WOMEN AND ORGANIZED LABOR.

A Suggestion

LABOR ACTION suggests to the rich ladies that if they have such a passion for the equality of women there is one noteworthy campaign that they might begin on—THAT IS THE CAMPAIGN FOR EQUAL PAY TO WOMEN FOR EQUAL WORK. For many of them this would be a most convenient campaign—for it could be begun at home, thus saving wartime transportation, hotel expenses in Washington, etc.

They could start by nagging their rich manufacturing and industrialist husbands to pay equal wages to the women who work for them. Some of the ardent and persistent nagging that gets them mink coats might work wonders here—though we are not advising working women to rely on this method.

This campaign on the way, the ladies could branch out to get working women equal in other spheres—for example, seeing that the working woman has someone to take care of her home while she goes to work, and a nice school to keep Junior in while she goes to work, and a chance for an education for herself so that she can advance in her work. In a word, what is needed is a campaign for equality with the conditions of the members of the National Women's Party.

The worthy ladies, if they were really interested in women's "equality," which they are not, would find that this objective demands, not the removal of the present all-too-inadequate safeguards, of the conditions of working class women, but their extension.

It is capitalism, of which these ladies are such hefty and vocal bulwarks, that has kept women down as drudges in the kitchen and factory—even as it keeps working men down. The campaign for equal rights for women is part of the campaign for the rights of all labor.

Not So Dumb

The Army hasn't educated our boys "as to whom they are fighting against and even what they are fighting for," charges Rabbi Brickner after visiting almost all fronts.

You surely can't mean, Rabbi, that our own boys are as dumb as the Italians when asked to tell the difference between Mussolini and Badoglio-Victor Emmanuel!

India in Revolt

By Henry Judd
25 Cents Postpaid
WORKERS PARTY
114 West 14th Street
New York 11, N. Y.

Air Control--A Bone of Contention

By JULIAN STERN

As the British Empire continues its decline and as America more and more usurps its place in the sun, the conflicts between these two become more and more acute. Control of the air is the latest sphere into which this struggle for world dominance has intruded.

A few years ago a fight for hegemony over the airways of the world on a large scale would have seemed far-fetched. Today things are different. Grover Loening, consultant on aircraft to the War Production Board, in September of last year presented some interesting statistics and ideas about the growth of air transportation. Loening estimated that a few years after the war, the air transport industry might be capable of moving one-quarter of the present rail freight and express.

Prior to the war, Great Britain and their United States each had their own principal airline. Great Britain had Imperial Airways (the name was later changed to the British Overseas Airways Corporation), receiving direct government assistance. The United States had Pan American Airways, a privately owned and operated company, but heavily subsidized by mail contracts.

Both governments acted on the principle that one company could best carry their respective country's flag into world competition with the airlines of other nations. However, since then this thesis has been challenged.

Situation Within the United States

From 1927 until about 1940, Pan American, practically the only commercial carrier (with the exception of the small American Export Lines), enjoyed a virtual monopoly in a world-wide air system. In preparation for a conference which never came off to coordinate the air empires of Britain and America, General Henry H. Arnold, commander of the U. S. Air Forces, called a meeting of airline executives on July 7, 1943, in Washington. The purpose

Platform of Workers Party
For a People's Peace and a Workers' World! Against Both Imperialist Camps! For the Victory of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples! For the Victory of the Third Camp of Socialism!
The Workers Party recommends this platform for adoption as the fighting program of the trade union movement and of a national independent Labor Party which it must form.

LABOR MUST DEFEND ITSELF NOW!

- 1. For the defense of all democratic rights! Against wartime dictatorship measures! Abolish wage-freezing and job-freezing!
2. Restore full and unrestricted collective bargaining rights of the unions! Rescind the no-strike pledge! Repeal the Smith-Connally anti-strike law!
3. A higher, not a lower, standard of living! For a \$1.00-an-hour minimum wage law, with time and a half for overtime, double time for Sunday and holiday work, and equal pay for equal work for all industrial and agricultural workers! An "escalator clause" in all wage contracts, hitching wages to the rising cost of living, plus a margin for comforts—a "cost-plus" wage!
4. No tax on wages and no sales tax on consumers' goods! Abolish all taxes on annual incomes of \$5,000 or less!
5. Down with control of rationing and price-fixing by the monopolists and the government bureaucrats! For democratic control of rationing and price-fixing by joint committees of working class organizations, farmers' organizations, cooperatives and consumers' organizations and housewives' leagues.
6. No government contract to plants without a union contract.
7. Maintain and increase all government social services and establish adequate federal medical service, health and accident insurance, old-age pensions, child care, protection for the unemployed!

SOAK THE RICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!

- 8. Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the plutocratic three per cent of the population who own ninety-six per cent of the national wealth!
9. A one hundred per cent tax on all war profits above a five per cent maximum on invested capital! Immediate renegotiation of all war contracts to cut the fabulous profits to this level!
10. A \$25,000 ceiling on total individual incomes!
11. A graduated capital levy on all accumulated wealth over \$50,000 to cover war costs and provide post-war security for labor!

PREPARE NOW TO WIN POST-WAR JOB SECURITY AND PLENTY

- 12. Government planning to guarantee the highest national production and income, a year-around job and a minimum annual wage to all, and a rising standard of living!
13. Conscript all war industries! Nationalize the banks, big industrial monopolies and transportation systems. No handing over of government-built and owned plants and facilities to private ownership!
14. For a two hundred and fifty billion dollar five year program to provide decent housing for all, extensive public works, rural electrification and modernization!
15. For a guaranteed \$5,000 annual income to all workers' families, made possible by a planned rise in the total national income and a thirty-hour maximum work-week.

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO THE DRAFTEES

- 16. The right of free speech, free press and free assembly for the men and women in the armed forces! The unrestricted right of the armed forces to vote in all elections and participate in all political campaigns!
17. For doubling present dependency allowances paid by the government with no deductions from the serviceman's pay!

DOWN WITH JIM CROW AND ANTI-SEMITISM

- 18. For a two years' base pay grant to all demobilized veterans, with option of trade school and higher education facilities at government expense, and guarantee of decent jobs!
19. All discrimination against Negroes, Jews or other minorities in the armed forces or by employers in industry must be made a criminal offense!
20. For complete political, social and economic equality for Negroes!
21. For lifting all immigration barriers against Jewish and other victims of fascist terror! For government aid in rescuing and transporting these victims to safety!

PROTECT THE FARMER

- 22. Adequate government provision of land, technical aid, machinery and supplies to all small farmers! Cancellation of all small farmers' debts to government and banks!
23. Nationalize all absentee-owned farm lands. Abolish tenancy and sharecropping by turning over the lands to those who till it.

PROTECT THE YOUTH

- 24. Adequate government provision for free education of all youth, including trade schools and universities! The right of all youth, male and female, to vote at the age of eighteen! Government-maintained nurseries for the children of working mothers.

AGAINST REACTION—FOR A LABOR PARTY AND A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

- 25. For Union Defense Guards, trained and controlled by the unions, to defend labor, the Negroes, Jews and all racial minorities from native fascists, Jim Crow rioters, anti-Semites, Klansmen, Silver Shirts and other capitalist tools!
26. For a break with bankrupt and reactionary capitalist politics and politicians and complete independence of labor from them! No political support to the Roosevelt government! For a party that is labor's own, an Independent Labor Party, based on the unions and controlled by them!
27. For a workers' government to organize the country for freedom, security, peace and plenty for the masses of the people!
28. Operate all big industry for the welfare of the plain people, with workers' control of production through the unions and plant committees!
29. Democratic control of the distribution and price-fixing of consumers' goods by the labor unions, farmers, consumers' and cooperative organizations.

FOR A DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S PEACE AND A WORKERS' WORLD

- 30. For an end to the war and fascism by a democratic people's peace, without annexations, indemnities, tribute, or the dismemberment and oppression of sovereign nations and peoples!
31. For complete, immediate national independence to all colonial or semi-colonial peoples! Against all old or new annexations, or depriving nations of their sovereignty and independence, by American, British, Russian, German or Japanese imperialism!
32. For a Socialist United States of Europe and a World Socialist Federation! A socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism, recurrent wars, fascist barbarism, oppression and exploitation, and establish a new order of freedom, plenty, peace and security, and world brotherhood!

Shachtman on ALP--

(Continued from page 1)

Both wings of the ALP—on one side Hillman and the Communist Party; and on the other, the "right" wing of Dubinsky, Counts and Rose—have the same political program. They, both are pro-Roosevelt, pro-New Deal, pro-war. Is the fight over the Hillman plan, then, merely a fight for power between rival political gangs?

The Hillman plan, which means putting a trade union base under the ALP, is, in principle, sound, Comrade Shachtman stated. He pointed out that the right wing position, which would keep control in the "branches" and in the hands of certain liberals, is essentially undemocratic since it would prevent the organized workers, on which a Labor Party is supposed to be based, from controlling their own party.

Against Hillman and Stalinists

In spite of the correctness in principle of the Hillman plan, Shachtman pointed out that those who are interested in a genuine Labor Party cannot support Hillman and the Stalinists. They want control of the ALP in order to prevent its developing in the direction of a genuine Labor Party. Hillman and the Stalinists are both on record against in-

dependent political action by labor, against any labor party and against even any third party.

Shachtman made the comparison that to give this combination control of the ALP would be like giving control of a labor union to those who are committed to company unionism—which is preposterous.

Comrade Shachtman analyzed the role of the Stalinists as the extreme right reactionary wing of the labor movement today. They want to destroy the ALP even as a potentially progressive force and to prevent any development toward a genuine Labor Party. The Stalinists need and want the ALP as a machine for winning influence in the Democratic Party in the interests of the Russian bureaucracy. The issue before New York labor right now is, therefore, to prevent the Stalinists from winning control of the ALP—WHICH WOULD THEN BECOME A TOOL OF THE KREMLIN AND THE RUSSIAN FOREIGN OFFICE.

The right wing, Shachtman stated, does not dare tell the whole truth about the Stalinists because both wings support the war and because of fear of offending their Russian ally.

Release Food Stocks--

(Continued from page 1)

with high prices and black market manipulations!

An increased supply of food on the market would certainly knock hell out of high prices and out of the black market.

There is a connection between high prices and high ration values—a connection which works to the benefit of those who are profiting from the situation.

The spectacle of want on one side and unused piles of food on the other has been "explained" as follows: "At least since biblical times it has been considered sound policy to store during the period of harvest in order to have food in reserve for a period of scarcity. Our recent storage situation with respect to

meat, eggs, butter and other livestock products reflects that policy."

The devil, we know, can also quote scripture. THE FACT IS THAT NO FOOD SCARCITY IS EXPECTED IN 1944.

The bad smell reaches to high heaven—and even as far back as biblical days any withholding of food from the people in the interest of private profit had a similar stench.

The food stocks must be released for the use of the people.

Ration values have to be reduced or removed to allow increased consumption of these plentiful foods.

There must be an end of unholy alliances between government and private interests.

The people have had enough of fumbling and behind-the-scene fina-

gling on the important food question. The protests of the masses should be made heard.

But these evils can be ended only by the determined action of the working people in organizing committees of labor, working farmers and consumers, with the aim of getting control of the food situation themselves. And these evils must be ended.

For even in biblical days life was more precious than profits—and nowhere in scripture does it say that children should get one egg a week while tons of eggs spoil in storage.

Neither can the prophets of old be used as authority to justify the starvation of millions of war victims, while huge piles of food remain unused.

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