

A 30% Increase Is Easy for General Motors

TO BACK up the demand for a 30 percent increase in pay, Walter Reuther, UAW vice president, presented an iron-clad argument in a letter to C. E. Wilson, president of General Motors.



"This corporation," wrote Reuther, "has been described by the Federal Trade Commission as the most profitable corporation in the history of the world."

Reuther pointed out that with the slogan, "Victory Is Our Business," GM's profits before taxes in 1944 were \$435 million, or 78 percent more than the yearly average of \$244

million for the pre-war years 1936 through 1939.

The total wage bill of the corporation in 1944 was \$995,094,170. GM could have paid \$1,085,723,926 in 1944, or \$190,629,756 more than it did pay.

"All of this increase would have come out of the extra profits it was making because of the war," states Reuther.

"Between 1939 and 1944 the corporation's net worth increased 22 percent to the staggering sum of \$1,504,071,620. In addition to increasing its net worth, the corporation distributed \$630,565,644 in dividends on common stock and \$45,891,000 in dividends on preferred. The total accumulation to GM stockholders during the war years was \$911,549,088, exclusive of high salaries and bonuses to officers-stockholders.

"During the war the corporation, with generous government aid, has made technological advances which have increased greatly labor's productivity. Yet throughout the war the results of this increased productivity

have been reflected in increased profits, while the wage rates of workers producing the increased output remained frozen."

Further, GM, according to its report to the War Production Board, is able to break even on civilian production at 55 percent of capacity operation. Reuther states its "break-even" point is still lower. Since GM contemplates a 50 percent increase in its post-war production over its pre-war high, there will be additional savings to the company.

Reuther cited the cushions that GM has to tide it over the reconversion period, including:

War savings (increase in net worth, \$235,092,444.

A cash refund from the government of 10 percent of the total excess profits taxes collected throughout the war totalling \$38,533,616.

An insurance fund from the government which provides further cash refunds during two years of reconversion if profits fall below pre-war normal or if you

incur losses, \$156,000,000.

Post-war advertising charged to taxpayers—(85.5 percent of amount spent for war-time advertising; deductible as expense on income tax), \$45,800,000.

The most efficient and advanced machinery which has been either supplied by the government or on which the corporation has first option to buy.

Proposed repeal of the excess profits tax which will enhance GM's financial status tremendously.

The financial position of the corporation is contrasted with that of the average GM worker. Many of them are already unemployed, while those at work are forced to take a 30 percent cut in take-home pay with the forty-hour week. Meanwhile, the cost of living continues to rise.

The arguments are incontrovertible. The UAW deserves the support of all organized labor and progressive forces in its struggle to maintain a decent standard of living.

LABOR ACTION

AS WE GO TO PRESS—

The UAW situation is snowballing rapidly, with intervention by the government through the Department of Labor threatening. LABOR ACTION will continue to cover the Detroit situation for its readers as it develops.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1945

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

BACK UAW 30% DEMAND!

Socialist Youth League Forms

A Socialist Youth organization on a national scale was formed by delegates from five cities attending a youth conference held in conjunction with the recent Active Workers Conference of the Workers Party in Detroit. The conference was concluded with the election of a provisional National Committee for a Socialist Youth organization.

The day-long conference covered an intensive agenda which included talks by Max Shachtman and Ernest Erber on behalf of the Workers Party, reports from the local groups, discussion of plans for a national newspaper and discussion of methods of work among young workers and students.

The conference was opened by Jim Black of Madison, Wis., as temporary chairman. After the seating of delegates and the election of conference officers, Erber was introduced to give a short speech of welcome to

the conference on behalf of the National Committee of the Workers Party. Delegates from Philadelphia, Syracuse, New York City, Madison and Chicago then reported on the activities of their local groups.

VARIOUS YOUTH SECTIONS

The Philadelphia delegates represented the Young Labor League of that city, which was established nearly two years ago and was, therefore, the oldest group attending. The YLL had established its own monthly mimeographed newspaper, and conducted general socialist educational activities among the youth. It voted

(Continued on page 3)

Frankenstein Differs Little from Jeffries

By MARTIN HARVEY

DETROIT, Sept. 16—The Detroit mayoralty campaign in which UAW Vice-President Richard T. Frankenstein is running against Mayor Jeffries is overshadowed at present by the current wave of strikes in Detroit and is marking time during the usual lull between the primaries and the election in November.

The latest development in the situation is the reported admission by top UAW officials that the plan to get nickel contributions for Frankenstein's campaign from union members has brought practically no response from the rank and file of the UAW. Frankenstein's position in the UAW has long been that of chief strikebreaker, a position which he made clear in his opening campaign speech in which he bitterly attacked maintenance workers who were striking for decent pay as a "mobocracy." Now that Frankenstein is turning to this same "mobocracy" for financial support he is being paid back in his own coin.

COMPARED WITH JEFFRIES/

It is extremely difficult to find any important difference between Frankenstein and Jeffries in the campaign. The chief issue up until now has been who can more efficiently clean the rats out of Detroit's alleys. But the workers are more concerned with the problem of finding jobs, of raising wages and of getting decent unemployment compensation. On these questions Frankenstein has little to offer.

Frankenstein's lack of any program

to meet the needs of the workers of Detroit is entirely understandable when you examine what he stands for politically. All his efforts in politics in the labor movement have been directed toward tying that movement to the Democratic Party. In the last presidential election Frankenstein, together with the rest of the CIO leadership, was busy selling the idea that a vote for Roosevelt and other "good" Democrats would bring jobs and prosperity after the war. Almost 400,000 unemployed workers in Detroit today can now testify to the enormity of that lie.

Politically, Frankenstein is not the representative of labor maneuvering in the councils of the Democratic Party. Quite the reverse. He is the representative of the Democratic Party, of capitalist politics, in the ranks of labor. Were it not for the accidental fact that Detroit municipal elections are non-partisan, Frankenstein would be running on the Democratic ticket.

The fact that Frankenstein's politics are capitalist politics might be of secondary importance if the organized labor movement had any check or control over his actions. But he is responsible to no party of labor and is answerable to no one. What is there to prevent Frankenstein, who used his office of UAW vice-president to break strikes in the past, to use the office of Mayor—and the police that go with it—to break strikes that he finds are "unauthorized" in the future?

The real issue in the Detroit campaign, as in the country as a whole, is the question of jobs, of full employment. That issue can be settled satisfactorily for the workers and the masses of people only by government planning on a national scale for full production and full employment.

(Continued on page 2)

HOW TO RECONVERT!



U. S. Maintains Japan's Gestapo, Hirohito

By JESSIE KAAREN

If there is one lesson the American State Department has learned from this war it is that the political awakening of the masses in an enemy country are much more to be feared than the military might of its rulers. That explains why Emperor Hirohito is permitted to retain his "prerogatives" to rule over the Japanese people and it explains the "soft peace."

The United States is trying to be more far-sighted in its handling of Japan than it was in Europe. It is leaving the "nasty job" of policing the Japanese people and even the Korean people to the existing régime—that same régime with which we were at war only a short time ago. Annoyed over the criticism levelled against him, General MacArthur explains why the Japanese bureaucracy is being left intact: "Economically and industrially as well as militarily, Japan is completely exhausted and depleted. She is in a condition of utter collapse. Her governmental structure is controlled completely by occupation forces and is operating only to the extent necessary to insure an orderly and controlled procedure as

will prevent social chaos, disease and starvation."

If the American people think that our army enters Japan as the bearer of democratic ideas from the West, they are in for a very early shock. The Korean revolutionaries who marched down the port to meet the American Army only to be greeted with shots by the Japanese soldiers who fired with the approval of General John R. Hodge of the U. S. Army, have already had their disillusionment.

JAPAN'S GESTAPO

"The Tokyo and Yokohama police forces will be bolstered by American-approved recruits from the disbanded Japanese 'Gestapo'. The decision to use carefully selected members of the Kempeitai, Japan's secret police, was announced by the 8th Army.

"The Kempeitai, which has been built of all the crimes ever committed by the Nazi Gestapo including torture and murder will be demobilized and disbanded before the American troops enter Tokyo.

"The Yokohama chief of police estimated that he would need 1,500 former Kempeitais to aid his 1,400

regular men and it is expected that 2,000 more will be required in Tokyo . . . they will be permitted to arrest civilians only . . ." (New York Post, Sept. 6)

The Japanese government, with the guidance and help of the American army, is preparing a more powerful police state than it had during the

Note to Workers Party Branches

1. Will all branch literature agents please return to the National Office all extra copies of the August New Internationalist for filing and binding purposes, because our supply of the issue has been exhausted.

2. Due to its expanded staff, the National Office is in need of additional standard typewriters. Will any member or sympathizer who has one available write or phone the headquarters. CHelsea 2-9681, 114 West 14th Street, New York City 11.

By MARY BELL

Among five million members of organized labor who are now demanding a thirty per cent increase in wages, the United Auto Workers Union is spearheading the post-war drive of labor against the profit-swollen auto industry. A strategy board of the UAW is petitioning the National Labor Relations Board for a strike ballot in all plants of the automotive "Big Three."

The union has airtight arguments in its case for the wage increases. Cutbacks have reduced the average straight time reconversion pay to \$1.17 an hour, which amounts to \$46.80 per week in contrast to the \$60 which forty-eight hours would bring.

In addition, the union spokesmen have shown what an enormously profitable business the

CP Drive on In IUMSWA

BALTIMORE—Opening a campaign to take over the CIO Shipbuilders Union (IUMSWA) at its coming convention, the Communist-led faction has issued here for national circulation among ship workers a four-page tabloid sheet that unlooses a violent attack upon the national officers of the organization, including John Green, president.

The faction sheet, called "Jobs Now," is published by the Communist-led group of Local 43, based on the Bethlehem-Fairfield yard in this city. The paper blazes the headline: "Ship Employment Program Sabotaged—Group in National Office Fiddles While Your Jobs Go Up in Smoke."

The paper attacks the national office mainly on two counts: (1) the lifting of charters of locals, includ-

(Continued on page 2)

mously profitable business the war was to the automotive companies, putting them into a position where they eminently can afford to pay at a minimum the wartime rates of pay (which weren't high, what with taxes and high prices) without putting more than a slight nick in the companies' profits.

But when labor touches the profits of a corporation, it touches its soul. Chrysler, General Motors and Ford have already stated privately, if not officially, that they will not grant a thirty per cent increase. The thirty per cent increase would not advance the wages of the workers substantially. It would rather keep them at the wartime par. Anything short of the thirty per cent increase would mean a cut in the take-home pay of the workers compared with their wartime take-home envelopes.

The achievement of this demand is the least the UAW leadership should strike for, given their "moratorium" on fighting for labor's rights during the war, their adoption of the no-strike pledge, their sacrifice of the workers' standards for "victory," etc.

"Victory" was the business—and what a lucrative one!—(see top of page one) of the auto barons!

Originally, Walter Reuther, vice-

(Continued on page 2)

men had no part in it. They were just as shocked about the attack on Pearl Harbor as the American public was. As for the Japanese Emperor, he also had his eyes piously shut for the last four years.

In view of that hog wash being printed, it is interesting to get the low-down on the Emperor and the industrialists from a Far East expert, a former advisor to General Chiang Kai-shek, Mr. Owen L. Lattimore.

The Zaibatsu or industrialists, he said, are completely merged with the Gumbatsu or militarists and the primary control was always "civilian."

THE EMPEROR

"Together," he said, "they are like a small octopus with huge tentacles which holds everything in its power. Their 'tool' and 'front' was the Emperor, owner of vast shares and estates and he still is—although now they are loudly disclaiming the militarists."

The Emperor's holdings, he said, amount to thousands of shares in banking, railroad, sugar, utilities, paper and shipping companies, as well

(Continued on page 2)

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Two Significant White Collar Strikes

Clerical workers tied up plants of the giant Westinghouse Corporation in five states this week as their well organized "white collar" independent union grew weary of waiting for the War Labor Board to grant their claim for bonus pay.

On his penmanship, the employers would like to preserve the old servile "loyalty" that made the white col-

lar man feel a cut above the grimy worker in the shop. But they don't want to pay hard cash for that loy-

alty. Therefore, the clerk is organizing as the man in the shop did long ago.

Both of these strikes, one on the radio chains and the other in the offices of Westinghouse, are being conducted by independent unions. Generally speaking, this is a typical reaction of these people moving toward the road of class struggle.

Nevertheless, they sometimes have reason for misgivings. The powerful Musicians Union is bickering with the radio technicians over who is to control the "platter turners," men who handle the disks in recorded broadcasts, and the Westinghouse clerks are resisting efforts to bring them into the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union, CIO, the union holding contracts for most of the Westinghouse plants.

It is easy to understand the reluctance of the clerks to hand themselves over to this union, whose Communist-dominated leadership during the war has had a shameful, do-nothing, strike-breaking record.

Nevertheless, it would be to the advantage of these new unions to ally themselves to the trade union movement as a whole. But the question does not stop there.

This would presumably put GM, the largest corporation in the industry and the bell-wether for it, in a bad spot to compete in the post-war car market, since its competitors would be in production. There is some evidence to indicate that this policy has not been settled and that any one, or all three, of the major corporations may be tackled.

A strike has been in progress at Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Co., supplier of Ford parts, for over three weeks, provoked by the company's firing of union officials and general offensive against the union. The day before the strike policy of the international was announced, the international executive board suspended the 174 for failing to end the "unauthorized" strike. An administrator is in charge of the local. The reason given by the international was that the strike was holding up reconversion and that such lack of discipline jeopardized the bargaining position of the union vis-a-vis the corporations which have charged the union leaders with failure to keep their membership in line.

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A more thorough analysis of this latest development in the CIO Shipbuilder's Union will appear in a forthcoming issue.

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ers of Green's policy against those progressives who fought for the repeal of the no-strike pledge, against the WLB appeasement policy, and for an independent Labor Party.

The Communists sold Green to the shipyard workers as a man to support on the basis of his policies and his leadership. Now they are preparing to do a job on him. It will not be long before no story about Green will be too filthy or vile for them to circulate.

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Longshore 6 Hour Day Fight Bridges New Line at Work

SAN FRANCISCO—The International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union, longtime leader in the fight for the six-hour day, has notified the Waterfront Employers' Association of its intent to fight for the six-hour day and a wage scale of \$1.75 per hour.

The history of the Longshoremen's Union from the '34 strike on has been one of a fight for a shorter work day at a rate of pay high enough to live on. The arbitrator's award of 1935 granted overtime after six hours a day and for all time worked between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. However, their low wage scale, ninety-five cents an hour, prevented the longshoremen from enjoying the shorter work day.

Recently, in line with the international's policy of supporting the war and abiding by the no-strike pledge and the rules of the WLB, the international officials, led by Harry Bridges, attempted to get the men to go for an eight-hour day at a higher hourly rate. This was alleged to be a step toward the genuine six-hour day, but it would have necessitated the removal of the overtime-after-six-hours clause from the contract.

A step forward? Hardly that. Even the "dumb" longshoremen could grasp the phoniness of this line! The entire proposition was slapped back into the lap of the international. But the officials didn't want this hot potato to burn their hands, so they maneuvered John Schomaker, a former leader in the union and long associated with the CP but of late in the party's bad graces, into position to catch it. This he very obligingly did.

Today Bridges can shout that it was

really Schomaker, not he, who was for the eight-hour day. He, Bridges, always was and always would be for the six-hour day! He even reads from the record to prove it and, sure enough, the verbatim report of the July Longshore Caucus yields many statements by Bridges for the six-hour day. There are no statements, however, from Bridges or any other international official AGAINST a resolution calling on the international to draw up a change in the contract to the eight-hour day. As a matter of fact, this resolution was presented by Henry Schmidt, longtime supporter of Bridges and the CP.

In the rush by the officials of the international to jump onto the six-hour bandwagon, this whole proposal was forgotten. No small part in the drama was played by the recent switch in the CP line. With radical phraseology coming back into vogue, Bridges and his supporters feel safe in speaking or even shouting for the six-hour day. But will they fight for it?

Today, the whole perspective is toward two daytime shifts of six hours each, with an hourly scale of \$1.75. Night work and Saturday and Sunday work are to be abolished except in case of emergency. This would mean \$52.50 a week for thirty hours' work and spreading the work opportunities among the new men who would otherwise become unemployed.

Longshoremen go for this program in a big way, and it can be won. But, as is always true when dealing with an employer or the government—and today on the waterfront they are both working as one—a victory is won, not by begging government agencies or boards, but by fighting and showing the willingness to keep on fighting.

Further, any movement by the workers of one section of the waterfront must be supported by all the rest. Craft unionism has died of its own weakness in fighting the boss. The maritime industry must win its demands as a unit. A Maritime Federation is essential.



Communists Somersault in IUMSWA - -

(Continued from page 1) ing Local 43, and (2) carrying on a policy that has undermined the jobs and standards of ship workers.

CP ELECTED GREEN At the last national convention of the union, held in Atlantic City a year ago, the Green administration was re-elected and its policies approved by the solid support of the Communist-led delegations, including Local 43. As reported in LABOR ACTION at the time, the Communist bloc had an absolute majority in the convention. Their slate was carried in the elections of the general executive board.

The report in LABOR ACTION at the time pointed out that the Communists had only taken the preliminary steps necessary to take over completely. It referred to Green's position as being one in which he was only nominally in power. The Communist tactic at the convention was to grease the skids for the Green crowd in order to oust them later. The campaign to oust them is now under way.

The present attack upon Green by the Communists is typical of their cynical and hypocritical politics. They re-elected Green without a single word of public criticism. They appeared in the locals as the defend-

ers of Green's policy against those progressives who fought for the repeal of the no-strike pledge, against the WLB appeasement policy, and for an independent Labor Party.

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FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

"Here Lies a Man"

The New York Times of September 1 carried an interesting obituary item on Gracie Hall Roosevelt, brother of the late President's wife, who left a small (in these days of new war millionaires) net fortune of \$239,395. Among his unpaid creditors were such swank hotels, night clubs and restaurants as Afton Head Inn, Hotel St. Regis, Fift's Monte Carlo, Hotel Belmont, The Plaza, Gallagher's Steak House, El Chico and Restaurant Volain. No "Greasy Spoon" customer here.

But what nominates Mr. Roosevelt for anyone's Hall of Fame was the fact that when he was Controller of the City of Detroit and chairman of Mayor Murphy's Unemployment Bureau, he "proved" to his own satisfaction that a man could eat on \$1.75 a week. The man who could have solved the Detroit unemployment crisis has died in time!

Superseniority

"We are becoming easy prey for those who would make of us a class apart. Yes, apart even from our own families. I think, therefore, that it is significant that my opponents this evening are an industrialist and a general of the United States Army.

I think it is of vital importance to take notice of the source from which this gift of superseniority comes.

"The simplest way to judge the value and nature of a gift is by identifying the givers. When I was a civilian before the war I had no friends who were industrialists. They didn't offer me gifts then, and when I was in the Army I did not fraternize with the generals. All they gave me was orders. (Applause.)

"General Hershey and Mr. Higgins and the other men of their status who offer us job preference are not offering us something that belongs to them. They do not mean to apply the superseniority principle quite that far. THEY ARE GIVING US THE JOBS OF OTHER PEOPLE! They are giving us our fathers' jobs. They are taking the reward for the veteran from just one group of American people—the group to which most of us belong!"—Dennis Wiegman, executive secretary of the American Veterans' Committee, on a Town Hall broadcast, July 26.

Tendency of the Times

A September War Production Board report states that Amer-

ican industry increased its profits in the five-year period 1940 through 1944 to 350 per cent before taxes and 120 per cent after taxes. In each case, income exceeded by far the year 1929, the most profitable previous year. Net value of all industry in this period increased one-third, net working capital doubled and "very pronounced improvement" of American industry in general was noted. A peak profit year stretched to over six billion dollars.

However, the report went on. "The unprecedented wartime expansion may, in other words, be no more than a short-lived demonstration of the flexibility and power of American industry when put to a supreme test." The increasing share of industry in providing employment and contributing to the national income, extension of the work week, and the rising proportion of total population at work were not, according to the WPB, "in keeping with long-term tendencies."

This latter is a coy, technical way of saying that now that government orders to industry are well-nigh over, private industry cannot supply jobs—which is simply what LABOR ACTION has maintained all along.

Back the UAW Fight - -

(Continued from page 1)

president of the UAW, announced that the General Motors Corporation was to be singled out as the first target under the strategy of "concentrating your fire," and would be struck singly if it did not accede to the demands of the union.

This would presumably put GM, the largest corporation in the industry and the bell-wether for it, in a bad spot to compete in the post-war car market, since its competitors would be in production. There is some evidence to indicate that this policy has not been settled and that any one, or all three, of the major corporations may be tackled.

KELSEY-HAYES STRIKE

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fine preview of what this "labor" candidate's administration would be!

However the Kelsey-Hayes strike meshes in with the intentions of the international leadership, there is no doubt that the international acted in a high-handed manner with the strikers of this militant local, who were fighting hard to preserve the elementary rights of the UAW itself.

The international's behavior provoked the picketing of the rooms of R. J. Thomas by UAW militants who were opposed to this cracking down by the top officers. There is no question but that the repression of the rank and file by the UAW officialdom throughout the war, their servile acceptance of the no-strike pledge while labor's gains were being steadily whittled away by the auto magnates, topped by this latest action, makes many a rank and file distrustful of the manner in which the leadership will carry out its present campaign.

Further, the leadership should recognize that it is going to have to arouse and depend upon the courage, initiative and sacrifice of its ranks, such as was displayed in the Kelsey-Hayes strike, to win its fight. And still further, it should take a tip from the class solidarity of the companies against which it will have to fight.

Whatever their individual rivalry, they are united against organized labor. When Ford closed his shops throughout the country and fired some 50,000 workers, using the Kelsey-Hayes strike as an excuse, he was acting in the interests of all the capitalists, who are seeking to destroy organized labor.

While the UAW heads have announced their preference for settling

the issue over a conference table, there is little likelihood that the matter will be solved in this fashion. The companies are now appealing to President Truman and Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach—who has just reorganized the Department of Labor, largely precipitated by the Detroit situation—to intervene in their behalf. Their plea will be that any strikes now would cripple their "reconversion effort," just as during the war it was that strikes would cripple the "war effort" and just as in the future they will cripple "peace-time production."

Only labor is crippled by yielding to such argumentation.

The role of government agencies in this strike will be what it has been during the war. In return for unkept promises of "equality of sacrifice" labor was to maintain peaceful relations with industry and give up its strike weapon for the duration. Now, in return for a quick reconversion and the promise of "full employment" labor will be asked to hold its punches again. The government, in whatever form it intervenes, will effect a "compromise"—of labor's interests, in the "national interest"—of the capitalist class.

President Truman has already indicated, in his recent address to Congress, that he stands for some kind of reorganized conciliation or arbitration through the Department of Labor. The companies are calling for compulsory arbitration of all labor disputes and permanent outlawing of the right to strike.

An all-out struggle for the thirty per cent increase is indicated. The rank and file of the auto workers will see that such a struggle is waged.

U. S. Policy in Japan - -

(Continued from page 1)

as hundreds of thousands of acres of land.

"The only difference," Lattimore added, "is that the civilians or industrialists are the go-slow crowd... the militarists are the go-fast; the Emperor belongs to both of them."

The Japanese capitalists and the American authorities are as one in wanting a tough policing of the Japanese masses. For themselves, the industrialists and their tool, the Emperor, have decided to be satisfied with what they will get out of Japanese-American collaboration.

Both fear a strong proletarian movement that will in all likelihood find allies among the labor movements of China and of other Far Eastern countries. Once the lid is off, the United States will have to fight for its imperialist life in the Far East and the Japanese capitalist system will be finished.

The objection which the liberal press in this country makes to the "soft peace" is not based on these truths, however, but on the fact that Japan is likely to rearm as Germany did after the last war. These writers forget that the United States is now in a position where she can dictate who shall and who shall not have access to the world's raw materials and that if Japan rearms, it will only be with American help and approval.

But there is one sense in which the parallel between events in Germany in 1918 and Japan in 1945 is correct. In both situations, the peace terms were based on the fear of proletarian revolution, and on the desire to have a bulwark against Russia. Except that with regard to the latter country, it must be noted that it now represents a different type of threat to the Allies than it did in 1918. At present it is another imperialist rival.

At that time, it was the inspiration for the proletarian revolution.

It is impossible to tell as yet whether or not there exists an underground organized working class movement in Japan. But from the very fear of revolution which the Japanese and American authorities betray, it is obvious that the Japanese workers and peasants are known to have the capacity for doing a good

job if they can ever acquire freedom of action.

The American labor movement must also practise a little collaboration. We must demand that after all these years of suppression, of starvation, of blood sacrifice on the altar of Japanese capitalism, the Japanese workers should have the right to organize themselves, free from American interference.

Rubber Foremen Strike

By MEL STRONG

AKRON—The plants of the Goodrich Rubber Co. have been closed by a strike of the foremen, who, after organizing about 95 per cent of the foremen, found themselves unrecognized as a bargaining agency by the company.

The foremen are realizing that, after all, they are workers, too for all practical purposes.

For ten days the plants were closed by the arrogant company refused to bargain, using the specious argument that foremen are a part of management. The foremen know better. They realize that they are only the errand boys of the real management and are caught between the militancy of the workers and the union-busting ambitions of the management.

The foremen's demands are very modest but still unacceptable to the management. They want a six and a half hour day corresponding with the workday of the workers. They want an end to indiscriminate firing without regard to seniority and recognition of the Foremen's Association as the collective bargaining agency for the foremen.

The company has stated that its relations with the foremen have always been very satisfactory but this is not borne out in the facts of today, when 95 per cent of the foremen are organized and foremen with fifteen to twenty years' service are on the picket line.

RANK AND FILE SUPPORT

The official policy of the URW Local No. 5 was neutral but the rank and file were not neutral, as evidenced by their desire to give support to the foremen in the strike. In fact at first the union leadership was trying to launch a back-to-work movement but it got exactly nowhere with the rank and file.

Recently, John Saylor, president of Local 5, called upon the Akron Ministerial Association to mediate the strike. This proposal met with a rebuff from the company, and the preachers have gone back to their studies and pulpits. Now many of the workers think that it is time for the union leaders to get back on the job of working for the best interest of the unions. An expression of solidarity and support is the minimum that the rank and file should demand.

Frankenstein, Jeffries

(Continued from page 1)

ment. The present capitalist government can no more do that than could Roosevelt in the thirties or Hoover in 1929. Such planning for abundance is possible only on the basis of production for use—not for monopoly profits.

LABOR'S OWN PARTY

Can monopoly capitalism plan for use? Obviously not. But the working class CAN plan for the welfare of the people. But only with their own government—a workers' government. The first step in that direction is to break with the capitalist parties, to form a Labor Party. Without it, all talk of full employment and sixty million jobs is so much eyewash.

Does Frankenstein's campaign advance in any way the building of an independent Labor Party? How? With his program? His program is essentially the same as Jeffries'. Because he, in some way, represents labor? This Frankenstein would be—and is—the first to deny. He claims to represent "all the people," including, no doubt, the corporation executives themselves. Perhaps because Jeffries and the press which supports him insists on calling Frankenstein a "labor man" and is opposed to the CIO taking over City Hall? But they did exactly the same for Fitzgerald, a hack Democratic politician, who was the PAC-supported candidate for Mayor in the last municipal election.

There is one way in which this

election can be used to further the cause of independent political action by the working class. That is by learning the lesson of the campaign: without a Labor Party which the organized labor movement can control the workers remain unrepresented in the election. A Labor Party cannot be built, REAL labor men cannot be run for office until we can distinguish the real from the false. We must first learn that every "friend of labor," every man with a union card in his pocket (of whom there are dozens if not hundreds among Democratic and Republican officeholders) is not a representative of labor. We must learn that a man like Lieut.-Gov. Kennedy of Pennsylvania, who is a top official of the United Mine Workers, does not represent the mine workers in the government of the State of Pennsylvania but does represent the Democratic Party in the United Mine Workers.

When that lesson is learned a Labor Party will be built. The instruments are at hand. All that is required is that the Political Action Committee of the CIO be transformed into such a party.

Those who want genuine independent political action should not throw up their hands at the present political campaign in Detroit. They, too, have a campaign to fight—and the fight must start now. That campaign is the building of an independent Labor Party.

Workers Party Fund Report

Here are the latest results of the \$5,000 Workers Party Building Fund. A little more pushing and we will get over the top and on the road to \$6,000.

Boston, Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Denver and San Francisco are far above their quotas and still going strong. Akron, Baltimore, Reading, St. Louis, Streator, Syracuse and Youngstown have reached their quotas right on the dot.

Come on you stragglers, let's get going and see if you can't outstrip the leaders. New York started out well but is now down to a snail's pace.

All out. Over the top to \$6,000 by next week!

Table with 4 columns: City, Quota, Pledged, Cash Sent. Lists cities like Akron, Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Denver, Los Angeles, Louisville, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Philadelphia, Reading, Seattle, St. Louis, Streator, San Francisco, Syracuse, Youngstown, and National Office with their respective financial contributions.

Totals \$5,570 Pledged \$6,097 Cash Sent \$4,554

PAUL BERN, Administrative Secretary.

Report 9/18/45

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Workers Party Program for Organized Labor

In the Reconversion and Post-War Period

FOR THE UNEMPLOYED AND VETERANS:

1. Full unemployment insurance beginning with \$30 a week for single men and women and graduated upward for dependents to all workers for whom government and industry do not find jobs.

2. Absorption of all workers thrown into unemployment during reconversion by reduction of the work-week with no reduction in weekly take-home pay.

3. Two years' base pay grant to all demobilized veterans, with the option of trade school and higher educational facilities at government expense, guarantee of adequate family maintenance and guarantee of decent jobs.

FOR THE POST-WAR:

4. A job for every worker with a guaranteed minimum annual wage of \$2,500 per year. A rising standard of living, by means of government planning to insure the highest national production and income.

5. A guaranteed \$5,000 annual income to all workers' families by means of a planned rise in

the national income and a thirty-hour maximum work week.

THESE AIMS TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH:

6. A \$250 billion five-year program to provide decent housing for all, extensive public works, rural electrification and modernization.

7. Conscription of all war industries; nationalization of the banks, big industrial monopolies and transportation systems, and no handing over of government-built and owned plants and facilities to private ownership.

8. A 100 per cent tax on all war profits above a five per cent maximum on invested capital; a \$25,000 ceiling on total individual income, and a graduated capital levy on all accumulated wealth over \$50,000 to cover war costs and provide post-war security for labor.

THIS PROGRAM TO BE CARRIED OUT BY:

9. Control of production by democratically-elected workers' committees.

10. An independent Labor Party and a workers' government.

One-Tenth of the Nation

Negroes and Full Employment

By J. R. Johnson

The pattern of racial relationships is being hammered out by the basic economic and social forces in the country.

The leaders of Negro organizations are compelled to recognize that unemployment is fundamentally not a Negro but a national problem. Walter White, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, gave evidence, before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee on the Murray full employment bill. With a lot of rubbish about the "integrity of our war aims," which we regretfully ignore for the time being, White made it clear that only a federal guarantee of unemployment can save Negroes from the full weight of the oppression and discrimination under which they suffer.

What is important is that this statement by the secretary of the NAACP will do much to concentrate the attention of thousands of Negroes upon their place in the economic system taken as a whole.

JOHN LEWIS' STATEMENT

The day after White came John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers' Union. Lewis urged an amendment so that local prevailing wage scales should not be used as a weapon for the exploitation of Negroes in the South. John L. used some strong words: "Contractors and employers in the South, notoriously anti-union and anti-labor... continue their unwholesome and their vicious exploitation of the Negro race... [The] standard of living in the South... is unwholesome and vicious... and should be abolished."



Whenever the leader of the mine workers speaks with emphasis, he has something of importance in mind. Lewis is drawing attention to the fact that Southern opposition to the Murray bill is not only reactionary in general but is directed especially at keeping the Negroes in their present miserable position. This helps to keep down not only the Negroes but the whites. And as Lewis made clear, this is a threat to labor standards all over the country.

Thus within two days we see foreshadowed the alliance which must come ultimately in the United States, the alliance between the militant labor movement and the Negro organizations. The National Urban League takes much the same stand as White of the NAACP.

Already in the elections of 1943 in Detroit, there was an unorganized yet very significant united front between the labor movement and the Negroes to defeat Mayor Jeffries. The movement sprang out of the tension and passions which followed the riots in the summer of 1943. Thus out of the strictly racial conflicts, and again out of the more national problem of unemployment, there is the tendency of Negro organizations and organized labor to find themselves on the same side, moving against the common enemy.

GOVERNMENT STRESS

This recognition by Negro leaders of the primacy of government in the unemployment question has implications far beyond what is evident to their short-sighted vision. Unemployment is today a political question. The unemployment, or unfair lack of employment, of Negroes is a political question.

Witness the agitation over a national FEPC. Thus Negroes as Negroes find their activity leading

them to the government, to the state. The Negroes seek to compel the private employer to cease his discrimination—and they seek to do so through the government. Sooner or later Negroes will learn that only a workers' government can do this.

The masses of Negroes will have far more voice and weight in a workers' government, based on organizations of the workers, than in any Republican or Democratic Party government.

But the Negroes cannot form a workers' government by themselves. Therefore, the logical thing is for them to declare for a Labor Party and a workers' government to be formed by organized labor.

Well over a million Negroes will be in this from the start. It is the only hope for Negroes to attain their twentieth century emancipation.

PART OF GENERAL PROBLEM

And if, as White and the Urban League recognize, the special problems of Negroes can only be solved in the solution of the general problem of unemployment, then the Negro problem again points to a workers' government and a Labor Party.

Now Walter White and even John L. Lewis may not see this. But that new generation of Negroes who are determined not to stand any more of what their parents had to endure must learn to read the signs of the times and think ahead and act accordingly.

They should recognize their responsibility not only to the Negro cause but to the country as a whole. In declaring now for a Labor Party and a workers' government, they not only point a road for the whole country, they indicate the only solution for the Negroes' problems which have beset them for over three centuries.

BRITISH LABOR PARTY

The Housing Problem

By BRITANNICUS

It is the simplest thing to say that the economy of Britain is in a state of ruin, that the Labor government has been given power to reorganize it and that socialism is now on trial. That is true, but until you examine what it means in concrete terms it remains a lot of words.

To see what the Labor government has to do, it would be well to begin with a simple problem like housing. The Labor government has to build houses or see that houses are built for the population of Britain.

The number of houses in Britain is about twelve and a half million. Of these, five million are over sixty years old. Of the remaining seven million, two million are over a hundred years old.

Isn't it obvious at once that to talk about giving adequate modern housing to the people of Britain involves a fundamental reorganization of the whole economic system?

This is what we have to prove. For all talk about adequate housing which does not envisage a total reconstruction is nonsense, designed to deceive the people. (American workers, please take note.)

Churchill Program

The Churchill government calculated that Britain needed about four million new houses. Before it went out of office it had stated that two years after the end of the war it would have supplied 200,000 houses. No, that is no mistake. Not 2,000,000. No. Only one-tenth of that—200,000.

Between January, 1939, and September, 1944, the number of marriages in Britain was 2,368,298. In another four years we may confidently expect at the very least the same number. The actual number, judging by present averages, will probably be much greater.

Year after year the old houses in Britain are becoming unfit for human habitation. At the rate of building proposed by the Churchill government, the new houses will never catch up with the deterioration of the old. As has been proved over and over again, the situation gets progressively worse. More and more people live in old, dilapidated houses despite the photographs in the papers and the ballyhoo about the marvelous new projects.

Not only is there overcrowding in the old houses. In Scotland it has been found that in the houses built by the municipal authorities, the overcrowding was greater than in the old houses. In the thickly populated urban and industrial areas of Scotland the people are compelled to crowd into the new houses instead of crowding into the old.

The municipal authorities, many of them under the control of labor, continue to build undersized houses. But the truth is, whether they build large or small, they cannot keep up with the pressure of the population. This is from the report of the Scottish Housing Committee of 1944. We may mention that between 1918 and 1938 the unemployed building workers, if employed, could have built two and a half million houses.

Problem of Labor Government

This is the problem faced by the Labor government headed by Prime Minister Attlee. What are their plans? The Churchill government promised 200,000 houses at the end of two years after the war. The Labor government will promise what we don't know as yet. But if they multiply the Churchill government by three, that makes only 600,000. There will still be the five million houses sixty years old, the two million houses one hundred years old.

What is required is a national plan, not to build so many houses every year, but to rebuild or reconstruct the whole of British housing. The first thing is to take over all the land and plan the construction city by city. The next thing is to take over all the houses and ruthlessly plan to get rid of the slums and replace them year by year with new modern houses.

But you cannot stop there. House-building involves timber, concrete, iron, steel, lead, transport and, above all, labor-power. How much of Britain's productive capacity must go to housing, and how much to the replacement of old machinery and the building of new? How many workers should be assigned to the building trades?

This involves control over the whole national economy, not only over the land and the houses, but of all the capital in the country. All talk about providing adequate homes for the population which does not have some complete program of this kind in mind, is pure deceit.

Labor's Timidity But, and this is the tragedy, the Labor government trembles in all its bones at the thought of taking over the land, or taking over the houses, of apportioning labor, coal, oil, steel, transport for the purposes of building a people's Britain.

Have they got the power? Of course, they have. If they told the British people what was required, what they intended to do, and appealed particularly to the trade unions and the millions in the army who support them, the housing question could become the starting-point of a social revolution in Britain.

The great masses in Britain would not only support them enthusiastically. Once they saw that the Labor government, their government, meant business, they would cheerfully endure great sacrifices, great hardships and labor devotedly to lay the foundation of a people's Britain. The capitalists and landlords, particularly in Britain today, would have to accept.

But this would mean that the Labor government would have to break sharply with the King and court, the whole structure of British government as it has been built up during the centuries, break with the ruling staffs of the army, the navy and the air force, break with the whole conception and practice of the Empire—and last but not least, break with the Truman government.

What we have to understand is why so overwhelming a vote for socialism and so powerful a social force as British labor should find its government leaders so weak, so timid, and utterly unable to do more than offer a little more (sometimes less) than a Tory government. This we shall see in the next article.

Editorials

Scuttling Jobless Pay in Senate

With unemployment well over the 3 million mark and steadily increasing, the Senate finance committee last week succeeded in doing a hospital job on the already anemic "\$25-for-twenty-six-weeks" Kilgore unemployment compensation bill, using the threadbare, hypocritical argument of not wanting to interfere with "States' rights."

The bill which will be reported to the Senate, rejects any increases over present state payments which average \$17.74, ranging from \$9 a week in North Carolina to \$19.61 in Michigan.

For any increases in the duration of payments, it would require state Governors to make a formal request of the Federal Government which will supplement the duration of payment but not the amount.

It is also reported by the New York Times that what it consistently headlines as the "idle pay" bill for a \$25 maximum pending in the House Ways and Means Committee does not have the support of more than six of the twenty-five man committee.

The sops in the Senate measure—\$200 maximum travel pay and extension of coverage to 3 million civilian Federal employees—do not make up for the injustice of their action.

TRUMAN'S POSITION

It is reported that Truman in a memo to the committee listed certain items in the bill as "desirable" and others as "essential." The maximum "\$25-for-twenty-six weeks" he labelled "desirable!" How many

necessary items of food and clothing is the jobless worker's harrassed housewife going to cross off her budget averaging \$17.61 as "desirable" but not "essential"?

The motivation of these senatorial servants of private wealth is clear. A large outlay for unemployment compensation would place a greater tax burden on big business. Greater unemployment compensation would mean less competition between the employed and jobless for the jobs which do not exist, and hence tend to keep wages higher.

Congress long ago, with foresight as well as speed, took care of guaranteeing profits to business during the reconversion period, after having furnished it with a market throughout the war. Now, labor gets its "reward" for having worked, sacrificed, endured the no-strike pledges and sent its sons to die.

Big business, bigger and fatter from its lush war profits, takes this round. And it will continue to take the rest until labor gets its own representatives in the Senate and the House, spokesmen of a genuine labor party.

Due to our devotion of an entire page of LABOR ACTION to the important New York mayoralty campaign in this issue, space limitations prevented publication of numerous items. We wish to acknowledge in particular contributions from our field correspondents in Detroit and Buffalo which will appear next week.

STALIN AND THE KURILE ISLANDS

By ALBERT GATES (Conclusion) Elsewhere in his "victory speech" Stalin reached a new low in nationalist degeneration when he identified himself and his government with the imperialist-expansionist policy of Czarism. He said:

"... the defeat of Russian troops in 1904 in the period of the Russo-Japanese War left grave memories in the minds of our people. It was a dark stain on our country. Our people trusted and awaited the day when Japan would be routed and the stain wiped out. "For forty years have we, men of the older generation, waited for this day. And now this day has come."

All of this is untrue. The Russo-Japanese war was extremely unpopular in Russia. The masses hated the war and hoped that the Czar would be defeated. Hundreds of thousands went into hiding and additional hundreds of thousands left the country to avoid military service.

The Bolshevik Party of which Stalin was a member opposed the Russo-Japanese war, denounced Czarist and Japanese imperialism, and hoped for the defeat of Russia in the war! Stalin supported that policy, identified himself with it completely!

The Mensheviks (right-wing socialists) also opposed the war and like the Bolsheviks, were defeatists!

In a word, the whole Russian labor movement opposed the war and called for the defeat of the Czar, holding Russian imperialism primarily responsible for the war, but describing it as imperialist on both sides.

But not only the labor movement opposed the war and was defeatist. The new capitalist class which was just emerging in Russian society also opposed the war and was defeatist, hoping that a Japanese victory would destroy



NEW EMPIRE-BUILDER

the hold of the nobility and the landlords on the nation.

In other words, the overwhelming majority of the country, the organized labor movement, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, and the new capitalist class opposed the war and hoped for a Russian defeat.

It is a typical Stalinist lie to say

Socialist Youth Organization - -

(Continued from page 1) to affiliate to the Workers Party shortly before the conference.

The Syracuse delegates reported that they were a new group, just establishing themselves, and were assembling the nucleus for a stable group.

The New York delegates reported some six months of activity as a youth forum devoted to educating young people on the Marxist point of view on current problems. The development of the group had reached a stage where it constituted itself as the Socialist Youth League with some twenty-five members. It reported active participation in the Shachtman campaign for Mayor, having supplied volunteers for the petition campaign.

The Chicago delegates reported that their group was the result of a left-wing development in the Young Peoples Socialist League, the youth section of Norman Thomas' Socialist Party. A group of YPSL members became convinced that the Socialist Party would never become a serious party of the workers dedicated to revolutionary socialism, and resigned from that organization to affiliate to the Workers Party. Adding to their ranks several young workers from one of Chicago's basic industries, the group has organized itself as the Socialist Youth League, affiliated to the Workers Party.

The Madison delegates reported that their group consists of students at the University of Wisconsin. Although they are not in touch with young workers or the labor movement, they view their future as a very promising one, based upon work among the awakening student body, above all, the young veterans returning to the campus.

ERBER SPEAKS TO YOUTH

Erber, who served as national chairman of the YPSL from 1935 to 1939, then reported on the past experiences of the Socialist Youth movement in this country, on the need which such a movement must fulfill, and what its role should be. He pointed out that the present generation of youth had borne the brunt of the war's suffering and that it would also have to bear the brunt of the coming economic dislocation, with its mass unemployment. Out of this situation the youth would become dissatisfied with the present state of affairs and seek some radical solution. Unless a powerful Socialist Youth movement was on the scene to win the youth as allies of the working class in the struggle for socialism, the discontented youth would fall victim to fascist demagoguery.

This report was thoroughly discussed by the delegates and a series of motions adopted on the building of the national organization. It was decided to wait for a constitutional convention before giving the organization a definite name. Meanwhile, its local affiliates would function under their present names, adding "Affiliated to the National Provisional Committee for a Socialist Youth League."

Shachtman inspired the conference with a brief speech that appealed to the delegates to build a movement to win the young people for the ideas of the Workers Party. He stressed the role of the youth movement as the training ground for activists and leaders for the party organization. He emphasized the need to appeal to the young workers, to concentrate activities around the shops, the working class neighborhoods and the trade unions, and to make the young workers, rather than the students, the foundation of the movement.

The rest of the session was devoted to a discussion of ways and means of conducting the work of the organization. The conference was attended by eleven delegates and twelve visitors. It elected a National Committee of eight members, to which is to be added a representative of the party organization. The National Committee has established its office in New York City, in the national headquarters of the Workers Party. It has designated Shirley Waller of Chicago as national secretary.

LOS ANGELES READERS: Communists Change Their Line Again SPEAKER: HAL DRAPER Question Period St. Paul's Church, 21st St. and Naomt October 1, 8:00 P. M.

NEW YORK READERS: MAX SHACHTMAN Speaks in the Last in a Series of Forum Meetings Being Held on the Roof Terrace of the Hotel Diplomat, 108 W. 43rd Street. on The Coming Rise Of U. S. Labor Friday, September 28, 8 P. M. Admission, 25 Cents

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