

# THE FIGHTING WORKER

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## «Labor Leaders» Kneel To Steel Bosses

July 23, 1942.— The Little Steel decision of the War Labor Board throws light on two major aspects of the present war:

1—Who PAYS for the war?

2—The role of the labor "leaders".

After 10 months of negotiations, and almost 6 months of presentation before the War Labor Board, the steel dispute finally was "settled". Workers are to get a 5½

cent an hour wage increase, or 44 cents a day. According to Lee Pressman, CIO General Counsel, "The Board's decision in effect reduces the standards of the steel workers below the 1937 level". After 5 years of militant strikes and the growth of a powerful Union, the Little Steel workers are worse off than in 1937, when the movement first began on a large scale.

### "LABOR LEADERS" AT WORK

Oddly enough, by the way, Mr. Pressman, like Mr. Phil Murray and the various others advocated acceptance of the rank proposal. The committeemen of the Steelworkers' Locals, a handpicked crew, also accepted the Board's decision and steps are now under way to resume contract negotiations. Thus more months will be spent ironing out the Little Steel dispute and there is no guarantee that even the low 44 cent proposal will be accepted by the companies.

On July 21st the Inland Steel company, one of the principals in the dispute, state that "Inland has reached no decision on the ruling of the War Labor Board". He flatly denied Murray's interpretation that the companies had already agreed to accept the proposal.

### WORKERS' DISCONTENT GROWS

Inland's workers, of course, had some different views from both their employers and their "leaders". After the Board decision, talk of immediate strike grew like a tornado.

The steel workers have received no increase in pay since April of 1941. Since that time the cost of living has skyrocketed by more than 13%, but the wage increase amounts to only 5% of the workers pay. The War Labor Board has thus voted to cut the real pay of the Steel men by at least 8%. The argument given was that it was necessary to "stabilize wages and stop inflation". The demand for a \$1 a day increase was discarded even though the Board admitted the companies were well able to pay.

### TO DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION, FIGHT--

## For A WORKERS' 'Second' Front!

July 22—The Soviet Union is now paying a bitter price for the recent "20-year" Pact and agreement with the "democratic" imperialists. While the much-touted aid remains merely some shipments of war materials, and the indefinite promises of a "western front", the U.S.S.R. is threatened with the immediate loss of another vital sector of her economy. The new Nazi offensive of recent weeks, now on after much delay, threatens to cut off the vital Caucasus from the rest of the U.S.S.R. by closing the northern land approach, like the mouth of a sack.

The Nazi forces at this writing are pounding at Voronezh, Rostov and the approaches of Stalingrad, all of them vital transportation and communication points; the latter two are important industrial centers. The fall of these points to Nazi hands would: 1) deprive the rest of the S. U. of the vital Caucasian oil; 2) break the

Allies supply line which comes up the Volga River past Stalingrad, from Persia. Such an outcome would constitute one of the worst blows to date, to the Soviet Union's defense.

### NATIONALISM IS BETRAYAL

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that Stalinism's nationalism, utilizing merely military methods of warfare must sooner or later spell the doom of the S. U., unless the Soviet workers raise the banner of proletarian internationalism. Hitler undoubtedly used the Pacts to convince the German soldiers that only by supporting his new offensive can the German people avoid a terrible fate at the "United Nations" hands. The failure of a SINGLE LARGE SCALE UPHEAVAL to materialize in Hitler's forces, after a year of the most bloody fighting ON SOVIET, NOT GERMAN, SOIL, is a bitter condemnation of Stalinism's policy of "socialism-in-one-country".

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# Steel Workers Must Fight Wage - Cut

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But the giant profits of the large corporations are being hit only mildly in the "struggle against inflation". Talk of the \$25,000 top individual income remains just that — talk. Even the arch-reactionary Chicago Tribune has commented on the fact that the new tax bill will hardly affect the big corporations, that its main load will fall upon the smaller people.

While the rich seize for themselves the enormous profits of the present mass murder, the steelworkers are being saddled with the burdens. Ten percent for war bonds; 5% deduction for income taxes — a double income tax load; contributions to all sorts of things; a 13% rise in the cost of living — these are only some of the burdens.

Unfortunately, these are only the beginnings. Much worse is coming. The load will be increased steadily, even and particularly AFTER the war, unless the labor movement wakes up from its lethargy, repudiates its sellout leaders and organizes a militant struggle **now** to protect and extend its rights. After all, the great demand for labor today makes it possible to finally get such things as the 30 hours base week, the closed shop, a real living wage and many others.

Only the treachery of labor's misleaders has made possible this new ATTACK against Labor, just at the time when Labor should be advancing firmly. Phil Murray, the Stalinists, and the Hillman crew are willing to give up five years of gains, willing, in fact, to give up almost anything, so that capitalism can continue its carnage and save itself.

The defeat and capitulation in

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## NOTICE

Readers should note that the Demos Press has no connection whatsoever with the Social Science Institute, located at the same address.

Little Steel leads to other defeats and other capitulations. The right to strike is already gone; double time for Sundays is gone; the CIO has given up its fight for a closed shop — they have "compromised" (when no compromise was necessary) on the "maintenance of membership" clause. President Roosevelt now threatens to freeze wages entirely. Enforced savings is the next big goal.

## AGAINST BOSSES' OFFENSIVE

The tentacles of the War Labor Board, the "labor-management committees", the National Labor Relations Board, the various other mediation and arbitration schemes, the "labor advisory council" (read: labor sell-out council) of President Roosevelt, and many other such devices, are tightening inexorably around labor's neck. This is the stuff of which fascism is eventually forged. It is a stage in the process, the disarming of the working class, the undermining of their Unions, the demoralization and confusion of their forces. Tomorrow when the nation is snowed under a 200 billion dollar debt, when inflation sweeps the land, when the middle class is ruined and the working class impoverished beyond our present dreams — tomorrow (in the next few years) the capitalists will try to complete the process and smash the labor movement entirely.

The working class and its Unions and its Revolutionary Marxian organization must anticipate that eventuality. They must defend themselves NOW. And the only defense is an offensive against poverty, the low wage rates, the labor-fakers, and the whole bureaucratic state machinery. The watchword today must be an offensive to get the 30 hour week, to organize workers defense corps, shop steward movements, and workers councils, and to aim at workers control of production for use.

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## "PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION" PROGRESS NOTES

### Sierra Leone Bans Workers' Press

Apparently the British governor of Sierra Leone, west African colony of the British Empire hasn't heard of Vice President Wallace's "People's Revolution", in which all peoples are to be free to read, write and think for themselves, if some of the governor's recent actions are any indication.

We have recently been informed that the following publications have been banned in Sierra Leone: the FIGHTING WORKER, organ of the R.W.L., INTERNATIONAL NEWS, bulletin of the International Contact Commission; The Militant and Fourth International, organs supported by the Cannon Trotskyists; and Labor Action and New International, supported by the Shachtman Trotskyists. Acting under the dictatorial powers granted by the "Undesirable (to whom?) Publications Ordinance" of 1939, he gave no reasons for this move.

This display of "democracy" came along with the exile of Wallace Johnson, leader of the West African Youth League, which opposes British as well as Axis imperialism. With even Mr. Welles of the U. S. State Department apparently admitting that imperialism "must go", it would appear that all who are honestly interested in the rights of toilers everywhere, are duty-bound to protest these actions of the governor of Sierra Leone.

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## The Fighting Worker

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## LIBERALS «COMMEMORATE» MURDERED 'CROPPER

Washington, D. C. — Under the joint auspices of the Workers Defense League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, with the cooperation of the Southern Electoral Reform League, there was held in the Asbury, M. E. here on Sunday, July 12, a "memorial service" to Odell Waller, which would have made that victim of Virginia "justice" turn in his grave had he been able to hear it. The whole tone of the meeting, which was attended by about 150 Negroes and half as many whites, was of religion and super-patriotism. The opening invocation by the pastor of the church, mentioned particularly "those many members of our race who have shown a woeful lack of patriotism" — a somewhat interesting sign.

John Finerty, assistant counsel for Waller, who, as our readers are aware, did not come into the

case until some months after the original trial, when the case had already been carried to the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, was introduced by the chairman of the meeting as "chief counsel" for the defendant. Much was made of the last minute appeal by telephone to Governor Darden for a commutation of sentence, in which it was stated that "he even went down on his knees to the Governor — an accomplishment which, by telephone was something of a feat.

### SLANDER AGAIN!

Finerty's speech was an obvious tissue of lies from beginning to end, as might well have been expected after such an introduction. The highlight of the address was the account of the speaker's conversation with Chief Justice Stone on the night prior to the execution, in which the chief justice is alleged to have made

the astounding statement that "the trial counsel made a technical error, and because he did so, the defendant must die!" Even more astonishing than this, was the fact that the incredible statement was accepted apparently without question by Finerty's gullible audience. (The answer to this slander appeared in the July 13 issue of the FIGHTING WORKER.)

Other speakers were James Carey, National Secretary of the C.I.O., who talked for twenty minutes on the functions of the C.I.O., mentioning as an afterthought that Waller had been unjustly executed; and Miss Layle Lane, member of the March-on-Washington Committee, who described vividly the last minute attempts to save Waller from the chair by an appeal to the President. She mentioned a letter alleged to have been written by the President to Governor Darden of Virginia, prior to the hearing on commutation of sentence, urging the governor "to do what is right" in the matter.

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A new bugaboo has overtaken Leon Henderson, national price administrator. It seems that if we raise wages, we're going to have inflation. In fact, if you believe the jaunty professor, wage rises are probably the most important reasons for inflation.

The whole bourgeois press has seized this point as a club with which to belabor the working class, and force still more concessions.

But **do** wages really cause inflation?

Absolutely not! This is one of the fairy tales capitalism has been feeding the masses for a hundred years. But already in the 1860's Marx gave the answer to this lie. It is embodied in two excellent pamphlets: "Value, Price and Profit", and "Wage Labor and Capital".

You work for a boss for \$5 a day. After the first 4 hours you have created enough additional values for the boss to get back his \$5. The other 4 hours work is "surplus labor", "surplus value". It is the employer's profit, rent and interest.

## Do Wage Raises Cause Inflation?

### WAGES VS. PROFITS

Now what happens if you get \$7.50 a day instead of \$5? Merely that the boss' profit is cut in half. If all the workers in America today received a 50% raise in pay it wouldn't increase the VALUE of the commodity one penny: the same amount of labor time would be necessary to create those values as today. If the bosses were willing to work say on a 10% profit instead of a 20% profit, the price of all the commodities would remain the same.

But that's where the rub comes in. An increase in wages will increase prices **only so long as the capitalists insist on getting the old rate of swollen profits.** Industrial profits are today undoubtedly at the highest level in history. Why not, therefore, let wages go up too?

The answer is child's play. Wage rates and profits (rents and interest) can't go up together, if the prices remain the same. To increase one you must decrease

the other. We, the working class, are fighting to decrease profits (eventually to abolish them) in order to raise wages. Mr. Henderson and his class are anxious to DECREASE wages in order to INCREASE profits. There can be no other course.

A rise in wages will **not** mean inflation.

Workers must expose the deceptive and false economics of Mr. Henderson. To meet the rising cost of living, wage increases must continue to come in, thicker and heavier. If the words of "defending democracy" mean anything, they should mean a sharp increase in wage standards so that workers at least receive a minimum wage in America. General Motors, for example, made over \$2,500 profit last year for each employee on its payroll. It can thus well afford to grant not only \$1 a day increase in pay, but \$4 and \$5 a day — and still make \$1,000 profit on each employee.

# for A WORKERS' '2nd' Front!

(Continued from page 1)

The widescale poverty which the Germans saw in the S. U. with their own eyes, belying the Stalinist bragging about "prosperity", "socialism", etc., has given a new shot in the arm to German nationalism. And Stalin's cry of "death to the German invaders", appeals to Pan-Slavism; promise of 20 more years of "collective security" (imperialist dominated Europe) which they understand to mean a new and worse Versailles "Peace", further drives the German soldiers to desperate continuance of Hitler's offensive.

The only answer to this situation can be the rejection of the Pacts, and of Stalinism. The Soviet workers must work to set up democratically-controlled Soviets, build workers militias, bring the Red Army under Workers control, and call for a Socialist United States of Europe and the world. This alone can break Hitler's grip on the desperate German soldiers, rouse the masses behind Hitler's lines in Europe to revolutionary action.

Not vague Stalinist promises of "a just peace for the German people", but revolutionary internationalist action, fraternization, appeals on a WORKING-CLASS basis as under Lenin, can arouse the German soldiers from their nationalist hysteria.

## ONLY WORKERS ACTION CAN SAVE THE U.S.S.R.!

Those who say that this is not practical ignore the fact that CLASS POLITICS (by the bosses) have given Europe to Hitler, i. e. the bosses' fear of social revolution; and only CLASS POLITICS — by the workers, can sooner or later crush him.

There is no time to delay; in all countries, class conscious workers must do everything in their power to aid the Soviet Union by an independent working-class line. AGAINST THE PACTS! FOR A REVOLUTIONARY DEFENSE OF THE U.S.S.R.! FOR A NEW COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE SOVIET UNION! FOR THE ONLY SECOND FRONT THAT WILL SAVE THE USSR — THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION!

## BAN ON FIGHTING WORKER NEW BLOW TO WORKERS RIGHTS

A letter from the U. S. Post Office to Demos Press, dated July 17, reads in part as follows: "You are informed that the May 16 issue of the 'Fighting Worker' has been held nonmailable under section 600, PL & R 1910..."

The May 16th issue carried as its main article "The New Deal Plans Organized Scarcity", and contained an "Open Letter to F. D. R.", an analysis of May Day 1942, and The Need for a New Communist International. What particular interpretation of Section 600, PL & R, is allegedly violated is not stated. Nor are there

any comments about subsequent issues of the Fighting Worker, yet the Post Office wants all future issues submitted to their scrutiny. Furthermore, although only the May 16th issue of the FW is alleged to be unmailable, the letter also states the International News, and International News Supplement, should be submitted.

This is the second time that attempts have been made to decide on the FW contents. In the interests of defending labor's democratic rights, readers should register their own and their organizations' protest to Ernest Krueger, Chicago Postmaster.

## WALLER

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Even this innocuous epistle, however, the President refused to give out for publication.

In writing the opinion refusing the writ of habeas corpus, the chief justice makes no mention of the astonishing interpretation of law alleged by Finerty. The latter, realizing that some of his hearers may have been aware of this fact, stated that he had specifically requested that it be incorporated in the document, but that the chief justice refused to do so (sic.) However, in reply to Finerty's insistence that this should be made a matter of record for the public to understand such an interpretation of the law, the chief justice is supposed to have said that he "would not interfere with anything you gentlemen see fit to make public"!

The crowning touch of the meeting was a fitting one, when a resolution was adopted endorsing the Pepper-Geyer bill to abolish the poll tax as a pre-requisite to voting, now pending in committee.

## FOR NEW LABOR DEFENSE ORGANIZATION

Two redeeming features only were there to the meeting. The first was the reading of Waller's own statement, a human document of an intense poignancy that contradicted the whole tone of the meeting supposedly held in his honor. The second was a brief two or three minutes comment made by a member of the audience when the meeting was thrown open for discussion, in which he concisely presented a true class-struggle line, at total variance with the reformist character of the earlier part of the meeting. As might be expected, of course, the few words were received without enthusiasm.

The real commemoration of Odell Waller remains to be done, by building a new labor defense movement, militant trade unions, and a new Marxian party.

For Social, Economic and Political  
Equality of the Negro Masses.