

It Is the Same Old Fight - - Wages vs. Profits

—AN EDITORIAL—

Labor is supposed to have received a fifteen per cent increase in wages to meet the rise in the cost of living since January, 1941. In the first place, ALL labor never got this increase.

Secondly, those workers who did get this increase got it months after the cost of living had continued to rise—during which time their wages were actually reduced by the decreased purchasing power of the dollar.

Thirdly, government figures show that the cost of living now stands at twenty-one per cent over the January, 1941, level—SO THAT LABOR RIGHT NOW IS TAKING A WAGE CUT.

Fourthly, the percentage of increase in living cost as figured by the government is not high enough. It does not take into account the alarming deterioration in quality all along the line from meat to clothing. It is deceptive because items like butter, eggs, meat, fruit, vegetables, which weigh heavily in the worker's budget and have gone up as much as fifty per cent, are averaged on the same basis as items which have gone up less but that the workers use less. The actual cost of living to the workers has gone up much more than the figures indicate.

Therefore, like a tidal wave, there is sweeping through the ranks of labor the determination to get more wages. Miners, railroad workers, war production workers, transit workers, garment workers—even candy workers—all have raised their voices to call a halt to the progressive shrinkage of real wages.

Like prowling, preying wolves, the boss press, the National Association of Manufacturers and other boss organizations, and the representatives of THESE PEOPLE in Washington, have raised the howl that labor is upsetting the President's stabilization program.

What stabilization program?

Have war profiteering prices been prevented? Have corporation war profits been eliminated? Will individual, capitalist inflated war incomes be banned? Have the wealthy suffered from high prices and food shortages—or will they?

Four times NO!

Have wages been frozen? Have overtime payments been cut to the bone? Have workers been fixed to jobs or have they been transplanted to others—as the case may be? Have taxes cut big holes in wages? Have prices reduced the purchasing power of the worker's dollar?

Five, ten, twenty times YES!

Have the OPA, the Department of Agriculture, Congress catered to demands of the big farm, big business and big banking bosses to increase prices for the latter's greater profit? Has governmental preoccupation with pleasing the profit-makers caused undue delay in rationing and the early flowering of black markets? Have the workers thus been deprived of necessities?

YES and YES and YES!

Therefore the question: What stabilization program?

There is only a program to make the workers pay for the war and carry all the war burdens—while the bosses carry to their spacious safe deposit boxes nothing more burdensome than nice, crisp, new certificates of additional wealth.

THIS IS THE ANTI-LABOR PROGRAM THAT THE WORKERS NOW WANT TO UPSET.

That is why the bosses and all their spokesmen and agents suddenly become the ardent champions of the non-existent stabilization program. One would think that the bosses always—but always—grant wage increases when they are called for. But—honestly—now they just can't because there is a stabilization program. These pay-triots—who press for war-profiteering prices—who maneuver for every possible profit-producing advantage—must preserve a scrap of paper called the stabilization program.

The only hitch is that the workers seem to remember these pay-triots gentry from somewhere. Aren't they the same bosses who have always fought labor on the question of wages? Haven't they engaged in ruthless union-busting so that workers might not have the united power to enforce wage increases? Haven't they locked workers out of plants to starve them and their families into accepting lower wages? Haven't they employed private gunmen and called for armed governmental assistance against men and women on strike for higher wages? Haven't they spilled the blood of militant workers in a brutal effort to prevent wage increases?

In all these bitter fights over wages, the bosses were out for more profits for themselves—AND THERE WERE NO TWO WAYS ABOUT IT. But today they tell us they are only concerned about the non-existent stabilization program—and so, of course, are the New York World-Telegram and its ilk, and so are the boss representatives in the national capital!

Enough of this camouflage! Make the bosses come out from behind this make-believe stabilization program where they have been piling up their war profits!

This is the same old fight over the division of the product of labor. Are the producers of the nation—the useful productive workers—to be thrown a continuously decreasing share of what they create with their hands and brains while the exploiters, who should be ousted from industry altogether, gobble up an ever-increasing share?

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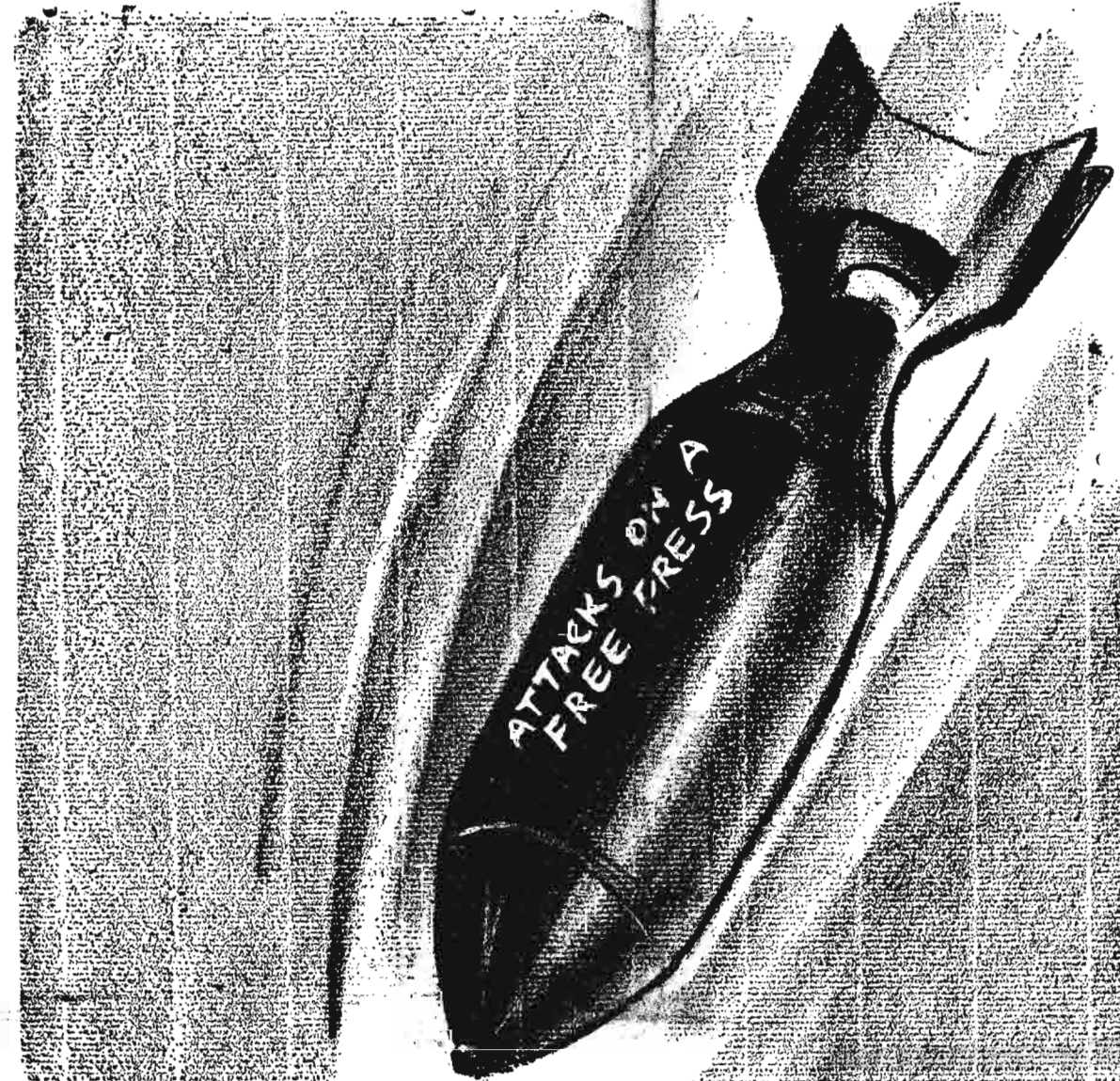
FEBRUARY 8, 1943

PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

LABOR PRESSES NATIONAL DRIVE FOR HIGHER WAGES!

Bombshell in the 'Arsenal of Democracy!'



The American union movement is swinging into action in a concerted drive for higher wages.

With living costs rising, the immediate target of the drive is the WLB Little Steel formula under which living standards have been depressed by administrative decree and wages CUT by artificial statistics.

1. Philip Murray, president of the CIO, has summoned a meeting of the CIO executive board to be held in Washington on February 5. The purpose of the meeting will be to draft a new wage policy in the light of "failure by the Office of Price Administration to check living costs." Murray, denouncing the Little Steel formula as "inadequate and unfair," announced his intention to press for wage increases.

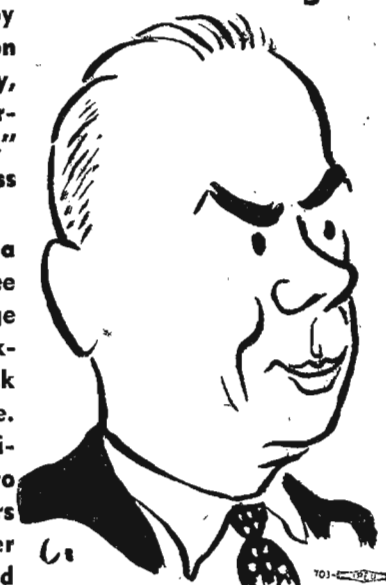
2. John L. Lewis has called a meeting of the policy committee of the UMW to formulate wage demands for the miners. It is expected that the committee will ask for a \$2.00-a-day wage increase. Under the Little Steel formula, bituminous miners are entitled to no increase and anthracite miners to a patently inadequate 5 per cent increase. Lewis, determined to "junk" the Little Steel formula, said: "The War Labor Board has been encouraged to freeze the wage structure. An arbitrary formula has been devised, known as the Little Steel formula, which deprives labor of any wage increase in excess of 15 per cent, subsequent to the date of January, 1941."

3. Garment workers in New York last week staged a two-day stoppage in an effort to compel the industry to grant wage increases. David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, and Julius Hochman, general manager of the Dressmakers-Union, assailed the Little Steel formula as inadequate in the face of rising costs. The garment workers made the additional argument that even under the Little Steel formula they were entitled to an increase because their wages had risen only 10 per cent over the January, 1941, level—and that was in compensation for decreases accepted by the union in 1937 and 1938.

4. The Allied Printing Trades Council of Greater New York, speaking for some 25,000 workers, has announced that it would call a conference of all AFL unions in the city "to plan a program to meet the mounting cost of living." "The motion to call a conference," read the announcement, "was unanimously adopted after many delegates spoke in sharp terms about the rising restlessness of organized workers. Pressure for new wage demands to

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Calls Meeting



State Department Ignores Anti-Semitism And Concentration Camps in North Africa

By R. FAHAN

The scandal of North Africa, where American officials bicker with and bolster up fascist and anti-Semitic officials, acquires a worse stench with each passing day. Perhaps the most ghastly twist to this whole filthy business has been given by an interview which General Giraud, a reactionary and anti-democratic militarist puffed up into an Allied hero by propaganda, gave to the press on the question of anti-Semitism.

In response to the repeated questions which have been asked both in England and America as to why the Hitler-inspired anti-Semitic laws, originally introduced by the Vichyites, have not been repealed, Giraud answered that:

(1) Anti-Jewish legislation would be abolished "gradually," since over-hasty action would "disrupt" the functioning of the North African administration.

(2) He, Giraud, considered this an internal North African problem, which, as the ruler of North Africa, he must face alone; and he did not believe it the concern of outsiders.

(3) He, Giraud, had full confidence in his new civil administrator, Marcel Peyrouton, the former Vichy Minister of Interior, who had been instrumental in enforcing anti-Semitic legislation in metropolitan France, as well as jailing thousands of anti-fascists and anti-Vichyites.

We believe these remarks of Giraud worthy of some study and comment.

"Gradually" Means What?

The phrase about abolishing anti-Semitism "gradually" is an insult to human intelligence. Racial discrimination is repugnant to every half-civilized human being as a matter of principle; discrimination against any racial or color group betrays an

anti-democratic, an anti-human bias which is despicable regardless of whether it takes the form of subtle jokes or brutal murders. Anti-Semitism is either enforced as a governmental policy or it is not.

What does Giraud mean by abolishing it "gradually"? Does he mean that Jews will now be allowed into some of the amusement places from which they have been barred and not into others; does it mean that they will be allowed to practice some of the professions and not others; does it mean that some ghettos will be abolished and not others? How can one justify the continuation of

some discriminatory practices while proudly noting the abolition of others?

And where is the voice of President Roosevelt, he who has sent so many salving messages to American Jews protesting his hatred of anti-Semitism in Germany? Where is his voice denouncing the anti-Semitic practices in the land which the American Army actually controls?

Washington Behind Policy

The New York newspaper PM declares in dispatches from its Wash-

ington correspondent, I. F. Stone, that Washington itself is behind the failure to abolish the anti-Semitic laws of North Africa. Writes Stone:

"If Murphy (the American Ambassador—R. F.) had told Darlan to repeal the anti-Jewish laws and to free the political prisoners... the laws would have been repealed and the prisoners freed long ago. The real difficulty is that the State Department hasn't made up its mind that it wants the anti-Jewish laws repealed and it isn't sure about the political prisoners. It's difficult at one and the same time to put a man like Peyrouton in power and

then free the very men he hunted down and jailed as Petain's Minister of the Interior."

Some very "clever" defenders of the U.S. State Department policy in North Africa have attempted to justify the shameful attitude toward the anti-Semitic problem by saying that the abrogation of the anti-Jewish laws would inflame the Arab population. This statement, even if true, is profoundly reactionary and reprehensible. But the fact that it is nothing more than a miserable pretext behind which to hide the pro-fascist policy of the State Department can

(Continued on page 4)

TWU Calls Rally on Transit Wage Issue

Vacillating Leaders Endanger Transit Union; Play Into Transit Commission's Hands

By GERTRUDE SHAW

New York Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union has called for a public rally at Madison Square Garden on Tuesday, February 9, at 8:00 p.m. Such a demonstration is excellent. Every worker should support it.

The union is also asking "The People of the City of New York" to "Please Write Now to the Mayor." Yes, it is indeed in order for all users of the transit systems to support the men and women who make possible safe travel from one end of the city to another, and to tell the Mayor what they think of his anti-labor policy.

But such supplementary measures are no substitute for action by the workers themselves. The "All-Star Entertainment" to be provided at the rally should not be permitted to obscure the issue. Un-

less the meeting produces a real ultimatum to the Mayor and Board of Transportation, with the full sympathy and support of those assembled in the Garden, it will be another fizzle.

Within TWU Local 100 itself exists the best possible proof of the efficacy of rank and file action. The 1,200 employees of the Fifth Avenue Coach Co.—members of the local—who in the recent past showed their mettle in an admirably militant strike, now get an eight per cent wage increase without having to strike for it. The Fifth Avenue Coach Co. still remembers the bus strike!

But the 32,000 employees on New York City's subways and other transit lines—also members of the local—are still taking the insults of the city's Mayor and Board of Transportation instead of wage increases to catch up with the run-away cost

of living. The city transit workers have not engaged in united militant action to enforce their fair demands. Their officers make strike threats that they have no intention of carrying out.

What Who Holds Dear?

Messrs. La Guardia and Delaney are no dopes. They thumb their noses at a union which does not use its power, while that union—imitating big business—spends its less plentiful and precious money on full-page ads pleading with the Mayor: "For the Sake of All We Hold Dear, Let us Arbitrate!"

But what the Mayor and Board of Transportation of the city hold dear, is not what workers hold dear. Philip Murray, CIO president, who conferred with Mr. Delaney, said about this absolute ruler-by-divine-right:

"I came away with the distinct

impression that he not only was hostile and antagonistic to the union and therefore incapable of negotiating with it in good faith, but also that he is utterly indifferent to the needs and welfare of the employees whose fate he holds in his hands."

Mr. McMahon, president of Local 100, claims that the city makes a net profit of \$1,000 a year on every one of its 32,000 transit workers. This profit is one of the things the Mayor and the Board of Transportation hold dear.

Some three years ago, when the Mayor negotiated the purchase of the IRT and BMT subways from the banks which owned them, the TWU protested that \$315,000,000 was much too high a price because it represented water-flooded stock. However, the city fathers placed the prof-

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Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Camp

WHILE ALLIED LEADERS DEAL WITH FASCISTS, EUROPEAN WORKERS STRIKE IN DIRECT ACTION

It has been announced that Putzi Hanfstaengl, one of the very first members of Hitler's movement, for years a member of the Nazi inner circle, is now collaborating with the State Department. A Labor member of the British Parliament has just asked the Foreign Secretary what was behind the reported contacts of the British foreign service with Count Bethlen, a high Hungarian dignitary—chief representative of the landholding class, long-time Prime Minister and one of those mainly responsible for the "White Terror" in Hungary after the smashing of the Hungarian revolution.

North Africa is now the happy hunting ground of the most reactionary labor-hating clique of the French army. American military and diplomatic leaders are not in the least concerned with the fascist background of their "collaborators." They are only interested in the service these people can render in the American penetration of Europe and in providing a base for easier contact with that part of the old reactionary apparatus in Europe which, while it may not have the force to establish a regime of its own, might at least be a front for the real power exercised by American military force. The role these people will be expected to play is about the same as that of the Indian princes or African chieftains.

But while the "people's war" thus reveals its true nature, news comes out of Europe which clearly indicates that the WORKERS there are the only ones who are really fighting fascism in direct action. Here are some recent reports without any comment:

PORTUGAL:

A victory of the Portuguese transport workers has been reported by the ITWV. Under the Salazar dictatorship only "unions" controlled by the state are allowed, and striking is a punishable offense. Despite this, the dockers in Lisbon went on strike. The government ordered 1,500 arrested. The tramwaymen then sent a letter to Salazar telling him the trams would stop running if the dockers were not released. Within ninety minutes the prisoners were freed.

BELGIUM:

To protest against the wholesale deportations to Germany, the railwaymen of Liege went on strike on December 8. The Germans thereupon threatened to increase the rate of deportations if the men did not work. The threat was of no avail and the strike goes on.

FRANCE:

The papers have all reported the magnificent resistance that the workers of the old harbor district of Marseille put up against the Nazis when they wanted to force them to evacuate this district in order to clear it for fortifications. Here is an eyewitness story showing the resistance of French workers to labor conscription and to the propaganda aimed at getting them to work in Germany: "On the factory walls appeared a poster announcing a speech on the barter [five skilled French workers going to Germany as "bartered" for one war prisoner—E.] by a delegate of the Vichy government's propaganda machine. The workers' committee decided that all workers

would stay away. But since the prefect had given strict orders that Mr. Laval's spokesman be well received, the management made it known that the presence of the personnel was required under penalty of breaking the labor contract. The workers then decided to attend the speech and there to give vent to a demonstration against collaboration.

"The men of Vichy arrived and took their places behind the tables. The workers massed in the back of the workshop and when the government delegate asked them to come forward, they all booed him. From the very beginning of the talk, varied noises covered the speaker's voice (the popping of compressed air pistols, the sliding of bridges, wrenches thrown on the cement...). At the mention of Germany, as at that of Laval, hisses and shouts burst out in the room. When the talk was over, a workman approached the delegate and asked him: 'Are you for the barter?' 'Yes,' 'Then, why don't you leave?' Immediately loud laughter and cheers arose. The same worker then took the floor and explained that he had been a prisoner in Germany, that he had escaped from there just two months ago, that he could speak on the treatment inflicted on the prisoners there and could speak of conditions in the working class. He ended by calling Laval and his men knaves and declaring, amid the cheers of the assembly, that all his comrades, as himself, wished and hoped for the annihilation of the Nazis. The management did not dare to intervene when the workers showed such hostility against Laval, and the meeting ended in the discomfiture of the Vichy delegate."

A report from de Gaulist sources states the following:

"In Loriet, more than 300 skilled workers were picked officially to go to Germany on October 24. The day of their departure, a very ceremonious luncheon was organized in their honor by the German authorities. Since, however, at the last moment the workers learned that the scene was to be filmed for propaganda, they refrained from attending. Later the workers paraded to the station. There 1,500 people demonstrated violently before a police force which failed to respond.

"In Brest, during October, workers from the Arsenal were taken forcibly to the station. Eighty were missing. At Cherbourg in the same circumstances police intervention was overcome. Women threw paving stones at the German soldiers and police, who retreated. There were also some workers who did not show up. At Le Mans cars full of armed soldiers were coupled at the front and rear of the train."

There are two wars on right now. One is the imperialist war which is being increasingly fought not only with military weapons but also with diplomatic ones. In this, members of the different ruling classes move rather easily from one camp into the other, climbing on the band wagon of whoever appears to be the likely winner. The other is the war of the "common people" all over Europe against their oppressors—be they the Nazis or some other labor-hating clique. Yes, there is a "people's war" going on, but it is the workers who are its fighters and heroes.

Europaews.

News and Views from the Labor Front

Ship Local 9 to Elect Shop Stewards

SAN PEDRO—With the knowledge that democratic elections of shop stewards are to take place in the Los Angeles Yard, the situation in Shipyard Local 9 shows signs of looking up.

Up to now Walter Pollard, the dictator appointed by the national office of the union to run the local's affairs in place of the rank and file, has been designating stewards to represent the Los Angeles Shipyard workers in their grievances with the company. Because of the strong resentment of the membership against this undemocratic tampering with one of their greatest rights and because of the natural reaction to Pollard's putting Candell, Alexander, Morrell and other Stalinists on the grievance committees, Pollard has been forced to return to the membership the right to elect its own shop stewards.

Pollard has tried to make it appear

that he had to wage a struggle with the national office to obtain this. So, for example, he shadow-boxed by reading his letter to the national office and their answer. The national office in its letter said that he had the right to make such a decision and, further, that the constitution provides that where local autonomy is suspended, the administrator appointed may establish a "provisional government" if he deems it desirable. Pollard, realizing his unpopularity with the men in the local, tried to appear as the champion of democratic rights, but the men can not be fooled so easily.

The importance of this victory cannot be overemphasized. Not only will the democratic election of shop stewards, a cardinal principle of the CIO movement, give the management something to think about, but it will also renew the men's confidence in their union. Both these things pave the way for building a stronger Local 9. It should not be overlooked that winning this right away from Pollard is the first big victory that the local has won in its fight for the restoration of its autonomy, bureaucratically lifted last December in order to forestall a progressive victory in the annual election.

Progressives should not relax because of this victory and think that Pollard is weakening. Rather, they should understand that this is the way to fight. More pressure on Pollard—greater restoration of autonomy and democratic rights.

The exact time of the election of shop stewards has not been announced, although it is likely that the nominations and election will take place in the second and third weeks of February. It is important for the men in the yard that progressive candidates, men who have shown by their records and deeds where they stand, be chosen. Those who have taken up elections to buy Christmas presents for their leaders, who have acted as company defenders, who have jumped on the Pollard bandwagon when that vehicle was riding roughshod over Local 9's autonomy would certainly not make good shop stewards. Those who have already shown by their support of the staggered week, the giving up of the union hiring hall, and the other sell-outs in the LA Yard contract that they are not with the men, but with the company, must be dealt with accordingly. Men who have such a record could never make good stewards because a steward is a man who is known to defend the union and maintain sound

gains. Racial strife among the workers serve the interest of the employer every time. Thus the workers fight among themselves while the profits roll in (Cletrac just declared a dividend).

Information reaches LABOR ACTION that Cletrac workers have been stalled for many months on a demand for wage increases to meet Cleveland's sky-high prices. The workers would do well to forget their senseless squabbles with their Negro fellow workers and turn their attention to their real interests. And the militancy and initiative that the Negroes have shown in THEIR fight for their standard of living would come in handy when all Cletrac workers go after what they have coming to them.

Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., commander of U.S. forces in the South Pacific, informed the Navy Department today that in no instance have merchant seamen refused to discharge cargo from their vessels at Guadalcanal or in any other way failed to cooperate with U.S. forces ashore in that area.

Marshall E. Dimock, in charge of Merchant Marine recruiting for the Maritime Commission, said there was "no case on record" anywhere in which merchant seamen refused to man the winches on Sunday or any other day.

The election of progressives to the shop steward posts is the first step in increasing the power and strength of the union. Now that the stewards are to be democratically elected, they must obtain the right to elect their own grievance committees, instead of having them appointed by Pollard and his hand-picked executive board. Only in this way can the stewards and the men guarantee a truly representative and fighting committee.

One of the first issues that the newly elected stewards will run into is the question of classifications. Under the new contract, instead of three ratings—mechanic, improver and helper—there are: mechanic, first, second and third class improver, and helpers. The company, in order to cheat, is taking full advantage of this clause and is having me-

chanics' work done by improvers without paying the mechanics' rate. The extent of this practice is so widespread that considerable grumbling and dissatisfaction are heard. This chiseling hits the men right where it hurts most, in the pocket.

The grievance machinery is the proper place to settle matters of reclassification. Those under training should be pushed ahead as rapidly as possible, for actually, even though supposedly under training, they are producing mechanics' work but are receiving improvers' pay, and this gap must be closed quickly.

It should be noted that the practice of having so many rates did not exist on the West Coast until the advent of Pollard. The strictly East Coast system of having different classes of mechanics and improvers is something that the boys back there have been trying to abolish for years. Nipping in the bud the situation now developing in the LA Yard is a must, because once it is firmly established, then there will be no ending it.

Cost of Living Committee

The High Cost of Living Committee set up by the Gandall (Stalinist) forum has back-fired on its originators. The man engineered into the chairmanship by the Stalinists, instead of turning out to be a stooge for them has thrown one of the Stalinists out of the committee and this ex-member of the committee is now no longer working in the yard. The workers in the yards are having a quiet laugh up their sleeves at the discomfort of the Stalinists and are applauding the action of the chairman, who, in spite of his membership in some small town Chamber of Commerce, seems to be sincere in wanting something done about the high cost of living and would not tolerate disruption and sabotage.

However, the union in all probability will establish a High Cost of Living Committee, something which every militant worker is highly in favor of. What actions it takes and how militantly it executes the program set down by the CIO will be commented on in LABOR ACTION.

Meanwhile labor, locally and nationally, was enraged at this fraud. The Akron Industrial Union Council ran a half-page ad in the Beacon exposing the motivation for this deceit. Leo Huberman, educational director for the NMU, stated that there was no union rule against Sunday work! The Los Angeles CIO Council sent in a resolution of protest demanding an investigation of the source of the story.

However, the lie has done its dirty work. Rumor and suspicion are following on its heels and the Heuse has set up an investigating committee which might well aid the anti-labor cause.

This lie was grist to the mill of the anti-labor newspapers. It originated, appropriately enough, with the Akron paper, than which there is no other more consistent labor-baiter. Its latest social sins against the working class movement include thumping for wage-freezing to chain labor to its low standard of living, and opposing the \$25,000 salary limitation in order to allow the profiteers their incentive to continue making profits out of the war.

"Sin has many tools, but a lie is a handle which fits them all."

Cleveland Stalinists Snipe at 'Labor Action'

By G. McDERMOTT

CLEVELAND, Jan. 28—Workers at the Cleveland plant of the Fisher Body Corp. had their intelligence insulted recently by two Communists (Stalinists), who tried to prevent Fisher workers leaving the plant from accepting and reading LABOR ACTION. Their own bundle of Daily Workers forgotten, the Stalinists shouted at the top of their voices: "Don't take LABOR ACTION. It's a fifth column sheet. It's anti-labor and anti-union!" Read the Daily Worker, one hundred per cent behind the war effort." The Stalinists did everything but physically assault Fisher workers who took LABOR ACTION.

Fisher workers who are not fully acquainted with the nature and policies of Stalin's Communist Party may have found this noisy display puzzling. Those men at Fisher who read and have been reading LABOR ACTION knew that, far from being "anti-labor and anti-union," LABOR ACTION carries on an unceasing and energetic fight for labor's rights and in labor's cause.

Why the Attack?

Why, then, the antics of the Stalinists, who masquerade as being pro-labor, while at the same time they unashamedly attack the elementary democratic right of freedom of the press? Fisher workers who have ever seen the Stalinists operate in a union, who remember the "rule-or-ruin" policy of the Stalinists in the UAW, will realize the motives of the CP. For, as their record makes clear, the CP is not in the slightest concerned with the well-being of the unionists they try to dupe, but is concerned completely with protecting the interests of their master in the Kremlin. Uncle Joe, despite a lot of recent whitewash, is still the blood-drenched dictator that he always has been. He is still the totalitarian who destroyed working class governments in Russia, smashed the trade unions and lowered the standard of living.

And the American "communists" follow his dictates. If Stalin hooks up with Hitler, they denounce the war. If Stalin jumps the fence, his boys are right behind him, boosting the war and breaking strikes.

They Are Trailers to Labor.

That is what they mean when they say the Daily Worker is one hundred per cent behind the war. They are right. The Daily Worker and the Stalinists are one hundred per cent behind the war—behind the war on labor, behind the drive to reduce the unions to impotence, the drive to unload the burden of the war onto the backs of labor. The Stalinists, along with the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and all other enemies of labor, are determined to tie up the unions with no-strike pledges, stalling labor boards, government red tape and retreat after retreat.

LABOR ACTION fights these trailers. That is why the Stalinists fear it and try to discredit it. LABOR ACTION, however, is not afraid of crude totalitarian slanders. It is content to let Fisher workers judge LABOR ACTION for themselves.

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G&M Newsstand, Superior and 9th Street.

In Detroit at:

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In Buffalo:

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In No. Philadelphia:

S.E. Corner—19th and Columbia.
N.W. Corner—19th and Market.
N.E. Corner—36th and Turner.

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

This Man Should READ 'Labor Action'

Dear Sir:
Will you kindly desist from sending your publication to my address. Some well-intentioned friend apparently felt I needed LABOR ACTION to complete my education. Unhappily, your journalism seems to me to fall into the same general genre as the Daily Worker or the Chicago Tribune.

A. C. (Wash., D. C.)

'Teen Age Youths Get Rotten Jobs'

Dear Editor:
The war industries are pleading for skilled or semi-skilled workers. Meanwhile there are mechanics, machinists, etc., who are forced to take jobs in non-war industries at less pay because they have 1-A draft classifications.

The best example of this dilemma are the youths of the war generation. Many of them are graduates of vocational schools where for four years they studied to learn a trade. When they graduate, instead of going into a machine shop or ship yard, they go into the Army. Usually a period of a year or less elapses between their graduation and their going into the Army. Meanwhile they are forced to work on odd jobs, knowing that on a certain date they are going into the Army.

Often they are told at the last moment that induction will be postponed a month, presumably because the reception camps are already overcrowded.

Now they have another month of waiting. What are they to do? Most of them have quit their jobs because they thought that they were going into the Army immediately. It is practically impossible for them to get anything but a sweatshop job when the boss knows that they will quit in a month or so.

Bernie Shaw.

How Facts Stack Up On FDR's Promises

Dear Editor:
Some ten years ago Hoover promised "a chicken in every pot" but the breadlines kept growing longer. Today we have the Atlantic Charter, which is supposed, among other things, to promise "freedom from want." But despite all the ballyhoo, some recent little known statements prove that the promises of Roosevelt and Churchill are of the same order as Hoover's.

Two months ago it was Pearl Buck, the famous writer, who exploded the myth that the capitalist democracies stand for freedom from want. She pointed out that while the Allied politicians are damning Hitler for starving Europe, they have said nothing and done nothing about 80 per cent of the people of India who have never had a square meal in their lives!

A few weeks ago, Luis Quintanilla, Mexican Ambassador, said in a radio speech that 85,000,000 of the 125,000,000 people of Latin America are starving. He added that Latin America is characterized by "absence land ownership, lack of industries, disease, illiteracy and a cleav-

age between wealthy minorities who do not work and millions of underdogs who do all the work."

A few days ago Sigrid Undset, the Norwegian novelist, said about the South: "There is no famine here. Yet they live worse than the poorest Chinese peasant. What is going to happen to the children?"

This is the fate of the masses living under the British lash and under the tyrant generals in South America (who are propped up by American imperialism).

Why the Atlantic Charter? It is very simple. The less the capitalist politicians can do for the masses, the more they make promises and scatter lies.

Will Gorman.

Presents His View On Rationing

Dear Editor:
The black market in meat is flourishing throughout the New York metropolitan area and Pennsylvania, according to Charles E. Egan in the New York Times of January 24. Numerous meat dealers in this region who are illegally slaughtering and distributing meat have been caught by the OPA.

Officials of the OPA have announced that they intend to wipe out completely the black market, first, because the exorbitant prices (a violation of the price ceilings) are depriving the vast majority of the population—the lower income consumers—of this food necessity; secondly, because this illegal meat traffic constitutes a menace to public health. Cattle are slaughtered

under unsanitary conditions and are distributed in such a way as to make the danger of epidemics imminent.

Mr. Egan believes rationing is the complete answer to elimination of the black market. "The black markets," he states, "flourish in that period between the development of a shortage and the time when formal rationing of the scarce commodity is invoked. Once rationing comes into force the underground markets wither and die from lack of patronage from the general public."

However, the examination of an outstanding black market, that in "democratic" England, proves the converse to be true, namely, that the black market only begins to flourish with the introduction of rationing. It was not until the latter part of 1941 in England, when the point rationing program went into effect that the black market really "bloomed" into maturity. During the period of shortages preceding the instituting of a ration system there was no real need for the black market. The choice cuts of meat were to be found in the expensive stores, the best selections of all food and clothing were also to be had in the swanky shops—all, of course, for a fancy price.

The price, naturally, barred the working people but did not cause any drastic changes in the rich man's way of life. Once the rationing system was put into effect, however, it constituted a real threat to the luxury standard of living of the ruling class. In order to add to the meager rations allowed by the rationing program food, clothing, gasoline, cigarettes, whiskey and other luxuries were bought illegally and a tremendous wartime racket was born. Through the black market the rich

were able to maintain their standard of living close to their pre-war level.

Rationing, of course, is necessary where shortages develop, but the key to a successful rationing set-up is rigid price enforcement. Housewives, thoroughly familiar with the inability and unwillingness of the OPA to check soaring prices, can have little hope that this same office will be able to prevent the black market that exists from developing into the big business that it has become in England at the expense of the working man. A force of 3,000 OPA inspectors, even with the best of intentions, is unable to police the entire country. It is to the housewives, workers and working farmers that we must turn if we expect rigid enforcement of the price ceilings, rationing and the complete extermination of the black market. For they are the people to whom all these things are a matter of life and death. Food profiteers must be stopped by neighborhood committees of housewives, farmers and workers!

S. Michael (Buffalo).

A Touching Tale Of Rags to Riches

Dear Editor:
The other day the head of the shipyard where I work (Marine Maintenance in Bayonne, N. J.) was indicted on thirteen counts for fraud against the government. If convicted he will be liable to ten years in prison on each of the thirteen counts or a total of 130 years.

This brings to mind what this same gentleman, Gregory Ferend, said at a meeting in the yard the day before

Christmas. He told the men what a great country America is. He told them that only in this country can a man rise from a pauper to a prince. For example, he told the story of his own rise. He came to this country as an immigrant with \$10 in his pocket and he is now the president of a corporation. He emphasized the "fact" that he had never made a dishonest dollar in his life. This speech was delivered just one month before he was indicted for dishonest dealing with the government.

This gives the lie to the fables given in the school text books about enterprising young men who HONESTLY rise to fame and fortune.

C. S.



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Restless Ranks Push Union Leadership Into Action

Labor Presses Drive for Higher Wages to Meet Rising Costs

(Continued from page 1)
 meet the ever-soaring living costs was universal, the delegates said."

J. R. J. Thomas, president of the United Automobile Workers Union, CIO, charged that the Little Steel formula has never been a fair method of deciding what are proper wage increases. He demanded a "realistic formula recognizing an advance of at least 30 per cent in the cost of living since January, 1941, so that the workers through their unions can commence to bargain now for comparable increases in wages."

These are but a few instances selected out of many. Railway workers, office workers—workers in all trades and cities—are similarly demanding wage increases as the movement gains new momentum each day. There is a general realization that the Little Steel formula and the entire WLB set-up are strangleholds on the living standards of American labor.

That the union bureaucrats have found it necessary to speak out in no uncertain terms is indication of the deep restlessness stirring in the ranks. Even the most servile of them are now compelled, at the least, to make a gesture of action so scandalous as the situation becomes.

It is now up to the ranks to see to it that the declarations become something more than gestures, that collective bargaining is restored.

From the very first the Little Steel formula was a gigantic swindle. At the time, the Little Steel workers had asked a dollar-a-day wage increase. A WLB fact-finding panel held that the demand was justifiable both on the ground of need—and on the ground of spiraling profits, which made a wage increase perfectly possible. The WLB, however, rejected the recommendation of its fact-finding panel and granted the steel workers the chisel of a forty-four-cent increase. The labor members of the board protested, refused to vote for the decision... and let it go at that!

The WLB then interpreted its decision as a national policy. We said at the time that, AT BEST, it would maintain whatever miserable standard of living labor "enjoyed" on January 1, 1941—that every worker was to continue "enjoying" the same

shack, and, for millions of terribly underpaid workers, the same swill. The WLB claim that it would adjust gross inequalities was so much eye-wash. It didn't lift a "pinkie" to adjust the gross inequality of the underfed one-third of the nation (remember that from the hey-day of the New Deal?) or of those millions who, while not statistically starving, were mighty near it!

That, we said, was the meaning of the decision at its BEST. In practice, however, it proved far more reprehensible. While labor was straight-jacketed in a formula, prices continued to rise under the infernal machinery of the OPA, which was more concerned with guaranteeing profits than with lowering or controlling prices. Thus, even if a worker received a 15 per cent increase—AND ONLY A TINY FRACTION OF THE

WORKING CLASS RECEIVED THAT—every rise in the cost of living above that represented a WAGE CUT.

Further, severe and onerous taxes were imposed on the working class by way of making it pay for the war. Hence taxes took another cut out of wages. Result: labor was being forced into a LOWER standard of living—with the ultimate goal of reducing it to the 1932 standard, according to Leon Henderson's forecast. And second result: indignation in the ranks of labor has swelled to the point where action is demanded now, and quickly, for wage increases.

Nowhere in the Little Steel formula were profits considered. The employer might be jumping his profit 20, 50, 100, 400 or as much as 2,420 per cent. Millions upon millions of dollars might pour into the bank accounts of the coupon clippers. But labor was limited to a 15 per cent increase—if it could muster the strength for a real fight with the WLB and employers to get that 15 per cent!

Prices and Wages

The grounds well is now so great that the union leaderships are compelled to act. They are calling conferences and meetings. Good! But they have not yet indicated what they propose to do about it. Presumably they will bring pressure on Roosevelt. And it is possible that an upward revision in the formula may be made. Possible—but by no means certain!

That however, seems nowhere near filling the bill. Any restriction formula is an artificial contraption to circumvent labor's independent power. Suppose the formula is fixed at twenty or thirty per cent, and prices continue to rise above that? Already, Prentiss Brown, the new OPA head, forecasts a regular and continuing monthly price increase. The fact is: wages cannot be separated from prices, taxes—or PROFITS! As these go up—wages must go up! And the starting point has to be a DECENT standard of living—a LIVING WAGE!

Part of any adequate wage structure must be a price-fixing program which means price control and profit-guaranteeing. And, essentially, that means taking price-fixing out of the hands of government and dollar-a-year business executives and putting it into the hands of workers' and farmers' committees.

Untie Labor's Hands!

Most important, however, the hands of labor must be untied. They are now tied with the several bonds of WLB, job freezing, and "no-strike" agreements. In its operation the WLB has proved to be what it cannot help but be—an instrument of big business. Note that in most important cases, the labor members had to vote against the majority decision of the board. Government and business representatives as a rule voted together. And with good reason—they both represent the same class.

Labor had no business being on the board in the first place. Once before when labor was getting a rooting from a government board, the CIO, then under the leadership of John L. Lewis, withdrew its representatives—among them, Philip Murray. The board collapsed, the miners got what they were after... and, as a miserable aftermath, the WLB was set up. Labor cannot sit in permanent con-

clave with representatives of business, adjusting "mutual" problems. The problems may be "mutual," but the approach has to be different on both sides. The interests of workers and capitalists do not coincide. They are opposites.

The only kind of conference at which labor can properly sit with management is in a collective bargaining conference where the two sides sit, each representing his own side—and labor's strength ultimately decides. Collective bargaining has been killed by no-strike pledges and by such instruments as the WLB, the end result of which has been to fatten the profiteers and swindle labor.

At the last CIO convention, delegates elicited evidence to prove that the no-strike pledges, made for the ranks by the leadership, had killed collective bargaining—right down to simple grievances. Management increasingly retreats into its comfortable formula: "Take it to the WLB." And, assuming that many thousands of grievances can be taken to the WLB, labor there takes a beating. The WLB has denied increases, has threatened unions with penalties where workers strike and in general it has used the tool of business that it is.

We have reported the movement in the unions, particularly in the UAW, to rescind the no-strike pledge. The leadership of the union has sidetracked the motions made by several locals. No mention is made of them. A barbed-wire entanglement of si-

lence surrounds them. But that is where the sentiment of the ranks lies.

Labor is fed up. It wants a decent price-fixing machinery. It wants relief from unwarranted taxes. It wants higher wages. It wants the RIGHT to strike to get these increases. And, throughout, it has its eyes on the profit figures of the corporations.

A Program for Action

Murray, Lewis, Dubinsky, Thomas and the other union leaders are now out to get higher wages for their memberships. That is the duty and responsibility of union leaders, and we applaud the fact that (at long last) they are acting like union leaders. But we repeat: Something more than vague demonstrations and parleys with Roosevelt is required in the situation. What is required is an all-embracing program, backed with preparation for ACTION. And as part of this program, we propose:

1. An end to the no-strike pledge. A return to collective bargaining!
2. Wage increases to meet the rising cost of living, based on a DECENT standard of living for all workers.
3. Withdraw all labor members from the WLB!
4. Price control and rationing control by committees of union representatives, working class housewives and farmers' delegates.
5. No taxes on wages! Stop taxes on accumulated wealth! Soak the rich!

All Is Not Milk and Honey in British-American Relations

They Clash in Canada, Latin America

By EVERETT WESTON

(Continued from last issue)

The United States has had some experience before this with the growing "independence" of various portions of the British Empire. Canada is no graphic example that it is worth examining it in some detail. Of course, the common border, the common language and culture, have in this case helped bring Canada under United States control, but these factors could not have been decisive.

It was concerning the Treaty of Washington in 1817 that Canada fought for and finally got its first bit of independence from Britain in foreign affairs. There was a long dispute about various things, but principally North Atlantic fishing rights, between the United States and Britain, with Canada insisting on her rights as an independent negotiator. With the love of freedom and democracy that has always been the principal characteristic of American diplomacy, the United States strongly supported this just claim of her sister nation—and ended up by walking home with her shirt. As an example, the United States was given the right to free navigation on the St. Lawrence and in return Canada was permitted full use of—the rivers of Alaska.

Political Relations

With World War I, Canada attained full political independence. She insisted on her right to ratify the Versailles Treaty independently of Britain, and there was a long and heated discussion over it that roughly paralleled that in the United States. From then on Canada was a free dominion in the British Commonwealth of Nations, and on occasion she has played the part of American stooge within that commonwealth. Just one example: The Anglo-Japanese pact, which was designed to divide the Pacific between the two signers, came up for renewal in 1921. Both Britain and Japan on the one hand, and most of the dominions (including Australia and New Zealand) on the other, were all for renewing it without any ado. But the expanding nationalism of Japan was already evident, and it was easy for the United States to fashion pious statements in opposition, made up of equal parts of freedom for the poor Chinese and the "yellow peril." All of these were echoed by Canada, and in the end the Anglo-Japanese pact was not renewed.

It marked, in a sense, a turning point. Japan had gone to London to arrange the pact, but in 1921 Japan and Britain both came to Washington. "The Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments" it was called. Japan had to give Shanghai

back to China. And a commission was set up to study the problem of extra-territoriality in China—a problem which was to prove to be unexpectedly complicated and which the commission never did get around to solving.

Economic Ties

So much for the political side; the economic is no less conclusive. In 1936, 66.1 per cent of Canadian imports came from the United States (compared with 15.2 per cent from the United Kingdom). Of Canadian exports, 41.1 per cent went to the United States (compared with 35.5 per cent to the United Kingdom). Canadian securities now held in the United States pay their holders \$50,000,000 a year.

American investments in Canada total four billion dollars. Fully one-fourth of Canadian manufacturing is by American-controlled companies. Familiar Canadian firms are actually American ones in disguise. Imperial Oil Co. is an alias for Standard Oil of New Jersey, an old friend, Canadian industries, Ltd., which dominates the chemical industry, is also a mask for someone we all know—in Pont General Motors has even gotten around to using the slogan "Better Because Canadian." All in all, in 1938 there were some 1,500 American-controlled companies in Canada, as against ninety-eight companies, with 30 per cent of the capital, controlled by the British.

One of the first of the Roosevelt reciprocal trade pacts was with Canada. Canada lowered tariffs on 767 imports, the United States on about 200. It was renewed without appreciable change in 1939. A standard history text (Carl Wittke, "History of Canada") remarks: "Many neutral observers pointed out that the United States had really driven a hard bargain."

"No Temporary Axis"

In the pre-war and war period, Canada was tied more and more closely to the United States. In 1938 Roosevelt made the Monroe Doctrine, which he had discarded for Latin America (as noted further herein), applicable to Canada. In 1940 came the Ogdensburg agreement for the joint defense of Canada and the United States. Then the fifty cruiser deal, the St. Lawrence waterway, the Canadian-Alaska highway.

By 1941, with the trans-shipment of war goods through Canada to Britain, the Canadian debt to the United States rose to \$400,000,000. Britain was in debt to Canada.

"The link forged by the Canadian-American defense agreement," said Premier King, "is no temporary

axis. It is part of the enduring foundation of a new world order based on friendship and good will."

Inside Latin America

One other sphere of Anglo-American competition (it will be the last) is too important to be overlooked: During the '30's, both the United States and Britain were losing out in Latin America. Germany and Japan, with Italy trailing behind, by the use of various new "unfair" business methods, were in the lead. In 1937 Italy got 31 per cent of South American export trade was with Germany and Italy or the countries since conquered by them. The United States had only 21 per cent, and Britain less than that.

With the outbreak of war in 1939, German and Italian competition was cut off and Japan became the important rival. And since Pearl Harbor, Japan is out and America and Britain are left as the only contenders. For some one who likes a well matched bout, it is not an interesting one to watch.

United States influence over the countries south of it has, in general and with important exceptions, been proportional to the distance. Mexico, the closest, has become increasingly dependent, so that since the war nine tenths of its trade, both import and export, is with the United States. Venezuela makes large oil shipments to Europe, but it is the only Caribbean country not dependent on the United States for at least half of its exports or imports, or both. Further south, both trade and investments and political dominances decrease. At the southern tip of the Americas we have Argentina and Chile, which have actually shown a tendency to political independence. Some have looked on this as proof of Nazi domination, but the general trend in Washington has been to let-tek it away as a minor escapade of our small brothers, one which would be corrected in time.

That the United States has achieved first position in Latin America is certain, but it is difficult to cite figures. For the greatest increase has been since Pearl Harbor, and figures that recent are not available. But, just to give us some idea, we can use the same measuring rod—trade. The following list gives the approximate increase of 1940 figures over 1939. Exports from the United States: Argentina ½, Bolivia ¼, Chile ¼, Panama ½, Brazil ½, Paraguay doubled; Uruguay more than doubled. Imports from the United States: Bolivia, more than three times; principally tin; see recent stories in LABOR ACTION on the strike of the miners, Chile ½, Ecuador ½, Peru ½, and so on.

With this economic dominance has come, as always, political dominance. This has been achieved by Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy, contrasted with the Dollar Diplomacy of his predecessors. The most important difference has been to rely more and more on paid political parties within each country to maintain order, rather than send in the Marines every five years. No qualifications have been set on these beyond loyalty to Standard Oil (or United Fruit, or...), and they include such bloody dictators as Vargas and Batista, whose vicious régimes have become notorious throughout the world. One of the minor industries of Washington is the manufacture of sufficient whitewash to cover the more disgusting portions of these, the new democratic friends and good neighbors of the United States.

Bad Neighbors, Beware

Then, the second important difference, there are more and more congresses of representatives of these worthies. These resemble nothing so much as the many congresses the Stalinists hold, to which are invited such independent organizations as the I.L.D., the Furriers Union, the Independent Voters for Earl Browder, the American People's Mobilization, the American Youth Congress—and the CP itself. Then Robert Minor gives the line, and Marcantonio and Curran concur. And the consternation and indignation if anybody disagrees—Chile or Argentina, for example.

But in the long run, the Good Neighbor Policy also has the Marines to depend on. Nobody could put it better than Nicholas Roosevelt (in "Wanted: Good Neighbors"): "If a nation decides to play the part of a bad neighbor, there is no reason why Uncle Sam should sit by and see himself deprived of what is rightfully his. Implicit in the Good Neighbor Policy is the concept that bad neighbors must be induced to change their ways."

"Southward in our hemisphere," Dr. Virgil Jordan said, "and westward in the Pacific." And to a large extent, he was right. The British Empire is falling apart, and the American Empire sits with its navy open to catch each morsel. But there is one important difference. This is not 1900, nor even 1914. "Independence" for Canada meant domination by the United States. But "independence" for India will mean Indian independence. Too long the workers and colonialists of the world have played the game of changing masters. In this way they are learning fast the other game of abolishing them.

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Vacillation Injures Transit Workers' Cause - -

(Continued from page 1)

the bankers above the protests of workers. They paid the exorbitant price—and the labor of the transit workers produces the handsome interest that the banks are getting on this unwarranted purchase price. The workers themselves, however, get hand-outs of one cent and two cents an hour—presumably to meet the official 21 per cent rise in the cost of living.

Quill Squirms Out of a Hole

On December 23, Michael Quill, international president of the TWU, seemed to be talking turkey. He threatened that unless the case of the transit workers—kicked around from the City Hall to the White House and back for more than two years—was submitted to arbitration within two weeks, the 32,000 transit workers would strike. The two weeks expired, and a membership meeting was called on January 6. The newspaper PM predicted about this meeting: "...It is a foregone conclusion that the rank and file will demand a subway strike."

But that proved to be exactly what the leadership did not want. On January 8, Mr. Murray wrote another of his famous letters to the Mayor, and then sat himself

down on the lid of rank and file discontent. Mr. Quill and Mr. McMahon put their posteriors to the same use, and at the membership meeting employed their combined eloquence to divert the workers from striking. Another one of those resolutions calling for arbitration was passed.

Mr. Quill is an expert at squirming out of holes. He squirmed out of his strike threat of a fortnight before by implying that to strike would be to adopt an "anti-war position" and would be playing into the hands of Messrs. LaGuardia and Delaney, whom he chastised by calling them "pro-Hitler" reactionaries. This weak-kneed backing and filling, this unprincipled playing around with the rank and file, Philip Murray designated as "responsibility, statesmanship and patriotism."

Ranks Boiling Mad

The leadership's sitting on the lid has not, however, stopped the boiling underneath. Beginning January 26 a series of spontaneous strikes broke out on the subways. On the BMT, 800 repair shop men quit and demanded that Delaney come down and explain the so-called pay increases they had received. Some

men got one cent an hour, some two cents, some ten cents, and some got nothing, with no apparent reason for the disparities, for the men are doing the same kind of work.

On the IRT 2,500 men in eight shops sat down, incensed by the insult handed them in their pay envelopes. At one of the IRT power plants 220 men struck. Out in Jamaica 121 workers at the IND inspection barn protested at the employment of a Board of Transportation stooge. At the 207th Street repair shop of the IND 600 men laid off for four hours.

Quill, McMahon and available union officials hot-footed from one strike shop to another, persuading the angry men to go back to work. Quill swam so hard against the stream of rank and file strike sentiment that his appendix gave out. However, the workers are set for action. For instance, the power house men who were induced to return to work are reported to have said that unless there is a settlement in a week, they will walk out and stay out.

The meek increase, now, in effect, with which the Mayor hoped to placate the transit workers—who are struggling against the overwhelming

odds of high prices, high taxes and high everything else—leaves 20,000 of these workers out in the cold with no increases at all. Of the workers who received raises, many "benefited" to the extent of one or two cents an hour. Only a handful of mechanics were given anything like a substantial increase. Even at that, the garage mechanics on the city lines get only 85 cents an hour while garage mechanics on the Fifth Avenue Coach Co. lines make \$1.10 for the same work. Among the workers whose wages were not increased at all there are thousands of married men earning less than \$25 a week, and among those who did get a dry bone there are thousands who still make only a little more than \$25 a week.

In September, 1941, the New York City transit workers were bigheartedly allowed an eight per cent increase in wages by their bountiful masters, whereas the Little Steel formula permitted 15 per cent increases on the basis of January 1, 1941, cost of living levels. Actually, therefore, from January to September, 1941, the transit workers had taken a 15 per cent wage cut. With the 8 per cent wage increase in September that cut was reduced

to 7 per cent. But the cut has been deepening as the cost of living has continued upward, until today the wage cut amounts to around 17 per cent in terms of the purchasing power of the dollar. But their leaders tell these outrageously exploited workers that if they strike they will be aiding the "pro-Hitler" reactionaries.

The transit workers of New York have not only been the mat for the muddy feet of the city fathers, they have been stepped on by Washington as well. The WLB, whose functions are supposed to cover "all industries and all employees," refused to take the case of the transit workers under its jurisdiction. This refusal, be it remembered, came as a result of the desire of the White House to appease the Southern democrats and other bourgeoisie in Congress whose ambition it is to allow each bunch of reactionaries to remain supreme in its own backyard.

The case of the New York City transit workers has reached a climax. The vacillations of the leadership not only endanger the immediate demands of the workers, but the union itself. The rally at Madison Square Garden must mark the beginning of militant action.

Washington Letter
War Leaders Plan Post-War Administration of Europe

By PETER DANIELS

Most rumors circulating in Washington are not worth mentioning, except that some of them are ill-fitting because they express certain trends in international politics; sometimes they reveal the secret thoughts of leading army men and government officials more clearly than do official declarations. This is true of rumors concerning the clash between American and British policies in North Africa.

This clash does not stem from a difference in personalities. We cannot expect the British government to resist American policies only in its intention of fulfilling promises to de Gaulle. There are other and more profound reasons. Fundamental issues of war strategy and war aims are involved. Principally, who is to control post-war Europe?

British war leaders suspect that the occupation of Northern Africa by an American Army was not a mere offensive campaign in preparation of an invasion of Europe this year. It is their opinion that the American government has for the first time given open expression to its policy that the strategic positions in the world are to be controlled by the United States.

It is also said that American militarists prefer the war in Europe not to have an early end, hoping that a completely exhausted Europe could more easily be controlled by one non-European world center than a Europe which still consists of powerful industrial countries.

Great Britain, on the other hand, is seeking the formation of a British-controlled European bloc. Such a bloc would strengthen Britain's empire position and perhaps be the only way for British imperialism to defend its own interests against rivals and competitors.

But there may be a sudden collapse of the fascist administrations in Europe and the beginning of a new world revolutionary struggle. Therefore, attempts are being made to build up colonial armies in Africa. Their primary role will not be to fight the Nazi armies but to form a safeguard against European proletarian revolutions—some kind of insurance against anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist movements.

This policy is not incompatible with large-scale air raids against

German industries on the one hand and attempts to come to an agreement with conservative politicians in Europe on the other. They expect to police the war-stricken countries, largely with the terror machine organized under the Nazis.

Thus, two-fold preparations are being made in expectation of a victory over German militarism. Indirect control of Europe is visualized among those who have a decisive influence upon American policy, if "conservative" politicians or leaders are able to avoid an abrupt collapse of the totalitarian order. These "conservative" politicians are then to become dictators of the type which exists in Latin American countries—the kind that have to rely for support on a strong foreign power. Such a new order in Europe may become impossible during the immediate post-war period when the workers and the ruined middle classes rebel against their old and new masters. Therefore, an occupation of parts of Europe or, at least, of key positions by American troops is also visualized.

This political background is the concern of the military leaders, who feel that they have to play a new role abroad and at home. A conversation with a well informed former New Dealer is very illuminating. He expressed disappointment with the delay of an offensive in Europe and was all-out for an early occupation of Germany in particular. He complained that the American Army staff hopes to leave post-war control of Europe in the hands of "conservative" leaders of the Darlan type.

The question arose as to why the American Army has organized a special camp for the training of American administrators in post-war Europe. This former New Dealer told about American generals who want to utilize the "School for Administrators" for internal purposes as well. That is, some generals want to be prepared for the post-war crisis in America; they believe that in a situation of civil war the Army might be asked to restore order. Military administrators then must be supplied—men who have expert knowledge of administrative tasks and functions. Therefore, these Army leaders consider the training camp as an asset even if the future administrators do not get a chance to apply their training in Europe itself.

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Editorials

Can the Truth Be Published?

Postmaster General Walker has not yet rendered a decision on the action to rescind the second-class mailing privileges of The Militant. It is possible that a decision will be handed down this week. And we mean just that: under the exceptionally bureaucratic powers of the Post Office the Postmaster General can HAND DOWN a decision denying freedom of the press to any publication on his own say-so. The publication then has recourse only to the courts—and a difficult and uncertain recourse that is!

In last week's issue of LABOR ACTION we reported the hearing in Washington on January 21 before a board of three representatives of the Postmaster General. Attorney for the Post Office, William C. O'Brien, informed the hearing board that action had been taken against The Militant at the request of Attorney General Francis Biddle. (This would indicate that the decision to hold up the mailing of LABOR ACTION each week, pending a review of the issue in Washington, was similarly taken at the initiative of Biddle or a member of his office.)

We wish in this editorial to discuss O'Brien's arguments at the hearing, and demonstrate that these constitute a sweeping violation of democratic rights from which no periodical or paper, especially no labor paper, can feel secure. Arguing on the untenable basis that articles in The Militant MIGHT have the "EFFECT" of discouraging enlistment in the armed forces, O'Brien introduced a series of excerpts culled from The Militant which in his (and Biddle's) opinion constitute "sedition" in some vague and undefined way. The excerpts, which included quotations from papers as conservative as the New York Times, cover The Militant's position on the war, on Jim Crow, on labor's rights, and similar issues.

Now, the point must be raised as to what O'Brien (or Biddle—he with the reputation of being a great "liberal") intends to do about other papers which print similar INFORMATION—not necessarily views! For example: O'Brien (and Biddle) seems particularly concerned with articles lambasting Jim Crow in the armed forces. Most of that information is taken from Negro newspapers. Is it to be assumed that O'Brien will proceed against the 200 Negro papers which properly expose the damning facts on Jim Crow in industry, the Army, Navy, and Marines? And is it to be assumed that papers like PM or the New York Post, which print many stories on Jim Crow, will be told to hush up or take the consequences?

The big papers are reasonably safe, though even they are being warned. However, the warning is meant particularly for the Negro, liberal and labor press, which command no millions of dollars and have no Washington lobbies at their disposal. Thus it is plain that whatever action is taken against The

Militant will (or, at least, CAN) be followed with similar action against other papers. Right now, the rights of The Militant and LABOR ACTION are being violated. If Walker, acting on Biddle's and O'Brien's advice, now lifts the second-class mailing privileges of The Militant, other papers will most certainly feel the blow soon after—the more plain-spoken the paper, the more ardently it champions the cause of Negro and white labor, the sooner will it feel that blow.

Of particular interest, too, is O'Brien's assertion that he was not interested in the "truth or falsity" of any article, or in the actual text of any statement he held "seditious." (O'Brien, referring to a statement by James P. Cannon on the war which appeared in The Militant, said that he was not going to be fooled by "wishy washy" statements by Cannon.)

O'Brien, with the confidence of growing reaction, was unusually crass. Biddle himself might POSSIBLY have been more astute. But there is no doubt that what he said is exactly the attitude of Biddle and the Department of Justice.

Morris Milgram, national secretary of the Workers Defense League, put the issue squarely in a letter to Biddle published in last week's LABOR ACTION: Why, instead of harassing labor papers that tell the FACTS about Jim Crow (and facts are evidently "seditious"), doesn't Biddle's office do something about prosecuting those who are responsible for perpetuating the infamy of Jim Crow?—Why doesn't Biddle's office do something to prosecute "employers who rig their costs in war contracts with the government"?—Why doesn't Biddle's office "prosecute people like our Ambassador to Bolivia, Pierre Boal, who used his office... to keep wages low and conditions bad"?

The answer is simple: Biddle has no intention of prosecuting the Jim Crows, the profiteers, the anti-labor manufacturers. The government has no serious intention of wiping out Jim Crow, or squeezing the profiteers any harder than is necessary as a gesture to the people, or shifting the burden of the war from where it now rests, on the shoulders of the workers, onto the shoulders of the bloated rich. Above all, the government (that's all the Biddles and O'Briens) has no intention of letting the truth be known about the war.

That is why they have acted to lift the mailing privileges of The Militant. That is why they delay each issue of LABOR ACTION for "inspection."

And that is equally why every person and periodical who believes in democratic rights—or, more specifically, who believes in letting the truth be known about the crimes daily committed against thirteen million Negroes in this country, about the purposes and aims of the imperialist war, about war profiteering, about the fraud of "equality of sacrifice," about the anti-labor viciousness of congressmen and their mentors—that is why every such person must protest the action of the Post Office Department, must rally to defend a cardinal democratic principle: a free press!

Giraud Upholds Anti-Semitic Practises in North Africa - -

(Continued from page 1)

be seen when one considers that the State Department did not hesitate to accept the appointment of Peyrouton as civil administrator despite the fact that he is bitterly hated by the Arabs who remember his repressive regime as governor of Tunisia in 1936.

Be it remembered that this Peyrouton is also an old hand at concentration camps, having introduced them to quell those Arabs desiring national independence for their countries ruled by France. It is not for nothing that he found it so easy to fit into Hitler's Vichy nest. What should, however, cause reflection is that this foul bird finds a welcome in the nest of the side of the Four Freedoms.

Giraud, for his part, continues to justify his association with the Vichy colonial generals like Boisson, Noguea, etc. He accepts those, he says, who had good intentions, not those who really succumbed to Hitler. This criterion is also apparently accepted by the State Department, as

can be seen by Secretary Hull's bitter defense, last week, of the North African policy.

"Say It Isn't So"

We now have a new criterion for judging the fascists. When one of them is brought to bay, he is to be asked: "Did you really mean it, old boy? Or was your heart always in the right place? Say it wasn't so, please!" And the fascist—Darlan, or Peyrouton, or tomorrow Franco or Mussolini or Goering—will merely have to say that his heart was always in the right place while he was murdering workers and suppressing liberty.

What is really going on in North Africa can be gleaned from some revealing dispatches sent by Drew Middleton to the New York Times in which he reveals the fact that democrats, de Gaulles and anti-fascist forces—not to mention socialists and trade unionists—are still being persecuted and jailed. The mass of people, he reveals, have adopted an attitude of apathy and indifference since they are in a position to see

first hand how the American liberators have allowed the Vichy scoundrels and fascists to continue their rule.

It is against this background that the recent Casablanca conference assumes additional importance. No newspaper has bothered to point to the fact that Roosevelt and Churchill met in a town where Jews are not assured of equal democratic rights; it is too embarrassing and tends to create some more doubt about the already shabby Atlantic Charter.

Yet these facts must be faced. Anti-Semitism still continues to be the policy of the Giraud-Peyrouton government, a government which exists solely by the sufferance of the United States. The anti-fascist political prisoners still rot in jails. The Vichyites and fascists still retain their power.

These are the facts. Let those who would proclaim this a war of freedom and liberation and not a war of imperialist rivalry, explain these facts.

Sparks in the News

By Everett Weston

With that indulgent paternalism common to all big companies, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. recently increased the lunch period of its workers from 35 minutes to...36.

Schulte, Inc., profits amounted to \$54 a share, compared with 4 cents for the previous year. Yes, and after all taxes.

Joseph C. Kissner, 48, collapsed last night in his home while studying his federal income tax report. He was revived by firemen.—AI dispatch from Buffalo.

The (New York) State War Council has formally protested to the Navy Department against the barring of Negroes from taking special training courses at colleges and universities in this state.—New York Times.

Charles M. Elkington, an official of the meats division of the OPA, announced a new sausage formula, providing for the inclusion of soy bean meal or other substitute, to be called the "Victory Sausage."

No matter how you slice it, it's still ersatz.

"Roger Rogers is taking time out to send out letters to all her friends, asking them to write their congressmen regarding the \$25,000 salary ceiling. She encloses a copy of letter she sent—asks you to send them to all your friends, sort of a chain letter idea. That's what I call being interested in what happens to your country."—Hedda Hopper's column.

And that's not all. Ginger has also been busy all over the country selling bonds.

Harding, campaigning for the presidency in 1920, said that if elected he would not "empower the Assistant Secretary of the Navy to draft a constitution for helpless neighbors in the West Indies and jam it down their throats at the point of a bayonet by U.S. Marines." Remember who the Assistant Secretary of the Navy was in 1920? A hint: his initials were FDR.

First Lesson in Semantics: Howard Taft: "International philanthropy."

Henry L. Stimson: "Unselfish service."

Calvin Coolidge: "No imperialistic designs."

Charles Evans Hughes: "Anti-imperialist policy."

Franklin Roosevelt: "Good neighbors."

Song of the Sixty Families: FDR

Ain't no miser. He can be our subsidizer.

"Congressional experts now agree that \$300,000,000,000 is the top debt the nation should carry. At an average of 2 per cent interest, it would cost six billion dollars a year to carry a debt that size—a heavy burden in peacetime."—Newsweek.

At the end of the first week in January the national debt was 112 billion dollars. It has been rising at the rate of two and a half billion dollars a week.

According to the recently published book, "The Red Army," each year during the '30's some 100 Red Army commanders were sent to the Berlin Military Academy for special training. Among them were Marshals Budenny and Shaposhnikov.

"Meadville's District No. 2 Draft Board has been ordered to send ninety-eight men and five Negroes."—Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

The term "Aryan" was coined by the famous German philologist, Friedrich Max Mueller. He wrote:

"I have declared again and again if I say Aryan, I mean neither blood nor bones, nor hair, nor skull; I mean simply those who speak an Aryan language.... To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair, is as great a sinner a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic (long-headed) dictionary or a brachycephalic (round-headed) grammar."

At one time it was the style to ape the British. Cigaretts, for instance, sold better if they were called "Pall Mall." But now, following the political trend, the situation has been reversed, and the British are offering a new brand to their snob trade called "Fifth Avenue."

Meanwhile a new German brand, called "Port Said," and designed to be sold in North Africa, is being exported to Sweden. "Apparently the Germans thought it would be tactless," says a Stockholm dispatch, "to offer them on the home market."

The Public Debt:

1865	\$ 2,846,000,000
1919	26,596,701,000
1942	72,422,000,000
1943 (est.)	135,000,000,000
1944 (est.)	210,549,150,000

Larchmont, N. Y., needed some copper wire to install air raid sirens and applied to the WPB for the necessary priority rating. "The construction described in your application," WPB answered, "should be deferred for the duration of the war."

The OPA is also maintaining its reputation for bureaucratic stupidity. The New York regional office sent out questionnaires to Chinese laundries, with the questions in both English and Chinese. But they did not think to specify that the answers must be in English, as nobody at the OPA reads Chinese.

"Eight workers accused by the Army of responsibility for a series of unauthorized strikes last month at the Bohn Aluminum & Brass Corp. plant (in Detroit) were discharged from their jobs. Seven were dropped by the Bohn corporation at the request of the Army, while the other, who since the strikes had taken a job at the Packard Motor Car Co., was dis-

charged there, also at the Army's request."—AP dispatch.

OPA has lifted the ban on the manufacture of new automobiles—for those costing \$2,500 or more.

"American enlisted men in India travel second-class. The first-class compartments, which seat six and sleep four, are reserved for officers and white civilians. Second-class compartments seat nine and sleep six, the occupants usually being U.S. or British enlisted men and Indians. Third-class coaches, used only by natives, seat from thirty to fifty on hard wooden benches."—Yank.

"Belgian sources reported today that 300 drydock workers had struck at Antwerp and that a power plant near the city was closed by a walk-out."—UP dispatch from London.

Standard Oil's New Policy—and Patents!

A public declaration by James W. Gerard, in the New York Times, is of special interest. Mr. Gerard warns us that the Nazi armies will use poison gas, and he gives us the assurance that America is prepared to retaliate. Then Mr. Gerard declares with apparent indignation:

"International bankers make me sick. I heard one say that we need after the war, a happy and prosperous Germany. After the last war we kissed the good, kind Germans, gave them food and good American money, and they repaid by a gangster war to control the world.... We and the United Nations (after this war) will police Germany...."

Who is this "we" who "kissed" the Germans after the First World War and gave them "good American money"? Mr. Gerard used to be, and still is, closely related to Standard Oil of New Jersey. For many years he has been on the board of directors of this international oil concern which helped finance the German chemical trust, I. G. Farben, and which sought to monopolize world markets in alliance with IGF. At the beginning of this war, Standard Oil was still a partner to secret agreements. Standard Oil was then for appeasement of the Third Reich and for sharing world control with the German chemical trust. When Mr. Gerard says "we will police Germany," he is expressing the desire of Standard Oil to destroy its former partner after having taken over its world patents in secret wartime deals.

In the light of this new Standard Oil policy the fact that Standard Oil was able to take over the German IGF patents at the beginning of this war appears as an ingenious move. For it enables Standard Oil to become the sole heir to German chemical world monopolies.—P.D.

MINERS: Facts and Figures On Mining Hazards

By V. Segundo

The recent strike in the anthracite coal mines focused national attention on the wage demands of the miners. Much more will be heard about this because it is certain that when the union contracts expire, the miners will demand a one or two dollar increase in the daily wage rate. The miner's wage today is appallingly low. Thirty dollars a week is still a good wage in the mines. During the anthracite strike many of the boss papers were compelled to admit that the mine wage was too low for anything approaching a tolerable standard of living, especially in the face of rising prices.

An issue in the dispute between the mine owners and the union is the matter of the six-day week. The miners now have a five-day week, according to their contracts. They object to a sixth day or, if they work this sixth day, want an adequate wage to compensate them for their risk. And their risks are great! In future issues we shall discuss, as we already have on several occasions, the legitimacy of the miners' demands for a higher wage, and their stand on a six-day week. Below, however, we present a few facts on the nature of work in the mines—what the miner faces when he goes underground to dig coal...for a measly twenty-five, thirty or thirty-five dollars a week.—Editor.

This is a day for miners. Not only are miners now deferred from service in the Army, but soldiers who had been miners are being returned to the mines.

Mining is the most dangerous job in which any considerable number of men is employed. The standard life insurance company ratings, for example, add \$10 to the premium for each \$1,000 of insurance, and double indemnity for accidental death is not given. This figure is based on cold statistics, without favor or sentiment. Even mine company clerks, electricians, etc., have to pay an added premium of \$5.00 a \$1,000; the government inspectors themselves have to pay \$2.50. Hot metal workers in a rolling mill, which may seem like a more dangerous job, pay a premium of only \$6.00. The only group of workers that pays more than \$10 is explosive workers, who pay \$15.

In spite of certain improvement, mining is becoming more, not less, dangerous. According to "Employment and Accidents in the Mineral Industries" (U.S. Bureau of Mines, 1940, latest available), the current fatality rate of 1.30 per million man hours is the highest in five years. The injury RATE shows a slow downward tendency over the last ten years, even though the NUMBER of men injured has increased. But both the fatality RATE and the NUMBER of men killed have increased in recent years, the latter markedly. For example, in the bituminous coal industry, there were six major disasters in the year, in which a total of 276 men were killed. "Even the six disasters and their heavy death toll in 1940," reads the Bureau of Mines pamphlet, "should not obscure the creditable progress that the bituminous coal industry has made during the past generation." Here, as throughout their publications (which are virtually the only statistics on mine accidents available), they show a touching interest in the feelings of the bosses.

MOST ACCIDENTS DUE TO EXPLOSIONS
What causes these accidents, these deaths? The Bureau of Mines has published several pamphlets on various aspects of this question, based on samples in one state rather than national surveys. They are probably typical in most cases, and anywhere there is nothing else to go on.

Explosions cause the worst accidents. One pamphlet is about metal mines in Arizona, which during the year considered employed a total of 13,000 men. Of these there were thirty who were killed and seventy who were injured seriously enough to be away from work fourteen days or more. There was an attempt to divide the blame between the injured or killed man, his fellow workers, and other causes. The boss is not mentioned in this list; it is "mine system at fault."

The number of explosions in coal mines is much higher, because the danger is not only from the dynamite used but from coal dust. About 12 per cent of the fatalities in coal mines have been caused by explosions. Most of these are completely preventable. Half, for example, are caused by open lights; some by short circuits; some by fine coal dust blown into the mine by the ventilation fans; only one by smoking. It is technically possible to reduce loss of life from explosions to almost zero by touching off fuses from the surface. But this involves loss of time; all the workers have to leave the mine before the charge is set off. It involves the extra expense of wiring to the surface. These are considerations more important to the companies than miners' lives; it is cheaper to pay compensation insurance.

SILICOSIS—THE MINERS' DISEASE
Besides accidents, there is the risk of getting the miners' disease—silicosis. The average death rate for a sample of Colorado coal miners was 66.17 per 100,000, for Colorado metal miners 60.22 per 100,000. In various localities tested, as many as one-third up to nearly one-half of the miners had the disease in one stage or another. Even if it is not fatal in itself, people with it are much more susceptible to all lung diseases—tuberculosis, pneumonia, influenza. In mining districts deaths from these diseases are directly attributable to their jobs. Apparently no adequate tests have been made as to how many of these cases can be prevented—which is in itself a thing to be fought. But even such precautions as have been worked out are far from universally used.

WORKERS PARTY PLATFORM

Against Both Imperialist War Camps! For the Victory of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples! For the Victory of the Third Camp of Socialism!

LABOR MUST DEFEND ITSELF!

- Hands off the right to strike! For the defense of civil rights and all workers' rights! Against any wartime dictatorship measures!
- \$1.00-an-hour minimum pay! Time and a half for overtime; double time for Sunday and holiday work.
- Wages increases to meet rising costs. No wage or job freezing! Equal pay for equal work!
- For a greater share of the increasing national income. For a higher standard of living!
- No sales tax on consumer goods! No tax on wages! Against forced savings!
- For control of price fixing and rationing by committees of working class organizations, housewives and farmers' organizations. Freeze rents and consumer goods prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living.
- No government contract without a union contract! The closed shop in all war industries!
- Maintain and increase all government social services!

SOAK THE RICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!

- A government levy on capital to cover the cost of the imperialist war. Confiscate all war profits!
- Conscript all war industries under workers' control!
- Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the three percent of the people who own 96 per cent of the national wealth!

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO THE DRAFTEES!

- The right of free speech, free press and free assembly for the men in the armed forces.
- The right of soldiers to vote in all elections.
- The right of all youth, male or female, to vote at the age of eighteen. Old enough to fight; old enough to work; old enough to vote!
- For adequate dependency allowances paid by the government with NO deductions from the soldier's pay.

SMASH JIM CROW!

- Down with Jim Crow and anti-Semitism! All discrimination against Negroes in the Army and Navy or by employers in industry must be made a criminal offense!
- For full political, social and economic equality for Negroes!

BE PREPARED!

- For Workers' Defense Guards, trained and controlled by the unions, against vigilantes and fascist attacks!
- For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government! No political support to the Roosevelt government!
- For Peace Through Socialism! For the independence of all colonies!
- For a World Socialist Federation! Only a socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism and its barbarism!

Leave the Date Open - - February 7. 8 P. M.

REVA CRAINE Labor Action Writer
EMANUEL GARRETT Labor Action Editor

WILL SPEAK AT A MEETING ON

Taxes, Prices, Rationing

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