

FDR, CONGRESS SEEK TO FREEZE WAGES

MAY DAY MANIFESTO Of The Socialist Workers Party

Fellow-Workers of the United States—

Today is May Day, which for more than half a century has been the international holiday of the working class, dedicated to the world brotherhood of those who toil. It is the third May Day of World War II; and within the last three decades this is the seventh May Day which comes amid universal slaughter. That is the kind of world the capitalist rulers have made — a world in which the flower of each generation is sent to its death. May Day is dedicated to ending that world and bringing a world of peace and plenty — the world of socialism.

In the name of "national unity," the traditional May Day parades and demonstrations have been called off this year by the trade union, "socialist" and Stalinist leaders. Leaders of the same stripe did the same thing in all countries during the last war. But despite them, when the time ripened, May Day was celebrated as never before in history. Remember the trail blazed by Karl Liebknecht on May Day 1916, by Lenin and Trotsky on May Day 1917! That is our tradition. The only tradition those who call off May Day parades can point to is that of May Day 1940 in France, when the labor leaders observed "national unity" with Petain and Weygand — and a few days later the "democratic" generals and capitalists capitulated to Hitler, whom they now are serving.

No pressure will ever force us to agree to "national unity" with America's Sixty Families. For we are dedicated to destroying fascism and its capitalist roots, while Rockefeller's Standard Oil, duPont's chemical trust and General Motors, General Electric and all the other international monopolies, are still doing business with the Nazis. Through their joint patent pool American Big Business plans at the end of the war to pay royalties to the Nazi capitalists on profits from munitions — yet Big Business and its political agents pretend to be fighting a war to destroy Nazism! They are no more fighting against fascism than a fight between two gangsters is a war against gangsterism.

At the Riom Trial, three years too late for the French workers to do anything about it, Daladier revealed how "the cartels did everything to hamstring the spreading out of defense orders among manufacturers throughout the country." Exactly the same thing is now happening here, with 56 big corporations corraling over 80 per cent of war orders, much of which they will not deliver for years to come, while tens of thousands of small plants are closing their doors. This is the kind of "national defense" provided by Big Business and the government subservient to it.

When the Senate committee investigating war production heard the facts about the Nazi-Standard Oil tieup, Senator Truman cried out that Big Business was guilty of nothing less than "Treason!" True enough. But this is merely the latest impotent whimper from the Truman Committee. The committee's reports for over two years have proved beyond refutation that war production is at the mercy of a gang of billionaire profiteers and their government agents. But neither the Truman Committee nor anybody else in the government or its supporters proposes any serious solution. At bottom the Truman Committee exposes are nothing but the complaints of small-time bosses who would like to change places with the big profiteers.

The working people of this country cannot leave their fate in the hands of any of these business and government groups. The workers must have their own program with which to conduct a serious struggle against fascism abroad and at home. As the first steps along this line we propose:

Wipe out the Nazi-Big Business patent pool — expropriate the war industries and operate them under workers' control!

Smash the anti-labor campaign of America's Sixty Families — down with all anti-union legislation! Defend the right to strike! Demand a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living!

The bosses' anti-labor campaign is being waged not only in civilian life but also in the army. By lying stories about fabulous wages in the war industries, blaming the workers for the lag in war production, brass-hat lectures about labor's "unwillingness to sacrifice," etc., the draftees are being incited against their fellow-workers. Unfortunately this vile campaign is meeting with some success, particularly because the trade unions have failed to take up the cudgels on behalf of the needs of the worker-soldiers. The unions must come forward for union wages for draftees, their right to hold meetings, their right to a trial by a jury of their fellows instead of by brass-hats, a moratorium on all debts owed by draftees, training camps financed by the government but under control of the trade unions, including special camps to train worker-officers. Therefore we raise the slogan:

For democratic rights for the men in the armed forces! For military training camps under control of the trade unions!

Labor with a white skin cannot be free so long as labor with a black skin is branded. The great contribution of the Negro workers to the growth of unionism — in Ford's and other auto plants, in the packing house plants, in the coal mines, in steel, etc. — is but the beginning of what can be done if the workers of all races firmly unite. That is why every white and Negro worker must speak out:

Against all forms of Jim Crowism! Equal rights for Negroes in the armed forces and the war industries!

The rights of free speech, free press and free assembly must be vigilantly guarded above all in wartime. The most dangerous frameup engineered by the government so far against the labor movement is the Smith "Gag Act" conviction in Minneapolis of 18 members of the Socialist Workers Party and Local 544-CIO; symbolically enough they were sentenced the day war was declared. Many local unions are rallying to aid the appeal to the higher courts, but if this is not to stand as a dangerous precedent the whole labor movement must be united behind the defendants:

Free the class war prisoners and defend the Bill of Rights!

All these tasks which the workers must undertake are political tasks. Indeed, even the most elementary problems facing the workers now are political problems: wages and hours of labor and working conditions are no longer a matter between a group of workers and an individual boss but, as soon as the issue is raised, finds the government intervening through the War Production Board, War Labor Board, etc. Wage-freezing is a major political threat. "Pure and simple" trade unionism is hopelessly outdated. Moreover the major issues, including food-prices and food-rationing, require a united struggle of all the toilers, including tens of millions of workers as yet unorganized and the poor white-collar workers, against Big Business and its political agents. It is obvious that these tasks require more than the trade unions:

Organize an Independent Labor Party based on the trade unions! An end to company unionism on the political field!

Far from telling the American workers to preoccupy themselves merely with so-called "American" problems, we are the first to call upon the workers here to fulfill their duties to the international working class.

Every worker loyal to his class must support the struggle of the Soviet Union against the Nazi invasion. Stalin's crimes should not blind the workers to the fact that the Soviet Union remains a Workers' State, which expropriated the Russian capitalists, nationalized the industries and the land, and thereby laid down the foundations for socialism. It is true that the USSR is today like a great trade union fallen into the hands of a degenerate bureaucracy; but that does not lessen for a moment our duty to defend the union against the bosses.

Likewise every worker must stand with the colonial and semi-colonial countries against their oppressors. China, oppressed for so long by all the imperialist powers, is now fighting a war of national liberation against Japan. We support China in spite of Chiang Kai-Shek's autocratic rule. India is now struggling for national independence against the British yoke. We support India. The struggles of the colonial peoples undermine imperialism and speed the socialist victory of the working class in the "mother" countries. Therefore:

Defend the Soviet Union against all the imperialist powers and against the Stalinist bureaucracy! Defend China and struggle for the complete independence of India and all the colonial peoples!

We make a fundamental distinction between the Soviet Union and the colonial countries on the one hand, and all the imperialist powers ("democratic" or fascist) on the other. The fact that the Soviet Union and China, which are fighting a progressive war, are allied to imperialist powers does not make the war of those imperialist powers a progressive one. When the 13 American colonies were fighting for their independence, they made an alliance with the feudal monarchy of France; but that did not make Louis XVI's fight against Britain a progressive one. To support Britain would be to betray the Indian people. To give political support to the government of America's Sixty Families would be to betray the real struggle against fascism.

Hitler's chief weapon today is not his army but the fear of the German masses that a defeat for Germany would repeat 1918; another and even worse Versailles Treaty, the post-war blockade and starving of Germany, the French occupation of the Ruhr, the economic strangulation of Germany, Anglo-French threats against the German labor movement if it moved toward socialism. In 1933 British and American Big Business, infinitely preferring Hitler to a workers' revolution in Germany, hailed Hitler as Germany's savior, gave him financial assistance to "stabilize" Germany; today their "democratic" threats of post-war "reconstruction" of Germany are even more valuable to Hitler than their previous financial aid. Day in day out Goebbels raises before the German people the spectre of the consequences of defeat. Nor would that situation change if the Anglo-American bloc now adopted a different set of war aims on paper. No matter what the "democratic" imperialists may say, what they have in store for a defeated Germany (not for Big Business' Nazi patent-partners but for the masses) is well understood by the German people. Hence if the "democratic" imperialists remain at the helm, Hitler has little fear of being overthrown so long as German defeat is not certain. That means that the war will last many more years — and its outcome not at all certain — if Britain and the United States remain under capitalist rule.

On the other hand, the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Government in the United States would spell the end of Hitler. Such a government would provide a progressive way out for the German workers whom it would offer full equality in the Socialist United States of Europe and

Carlson Runs For Mayor On A Fighting Socialist Program

Opposes The Boss-O. K.'d Politicians

ST. PAUL, Minn. — When the voters of St. Paul go to the polls on April 28, the only candidate who will offer them a Socialist solution to the terrible problems which capitalism has placed before them is Grace Holmes Carlson, mayoralty candidate of the Socialist Workers Party.

Comrade Carlson received a substantial vote in the March 10 primary election, increasing the Trotskyist vote over that obtained in the 1940 mayoralty race by 89 per cent.

This increase in Trotskyist support was obtained despite a 40 per cent DECREASE in the total vote cast. The primary vote this year was the lightest in the city's history, only 23 per cent of the registered voters going to the polls.

A heavier vote is anticipated in the April 28 final elections, and the Socialist Workers Party is asking the voters of St. Paul to write in the name of Grace Carlson for mayor. Comrade Carlson is well known in St. Paul as a militant socialist, especially since last autumn when as one of the Socialist Workers Party and CIO defendants in the Minneapolis "sedition" trial, she was sentenced to 16 months in jail for advocating her ideas in violation of the notorious Smith "Gag Act." She is now out on bail, pending appeal.

Carlson is the only candidate in the campaign who has a program to protect the interests of the workers in the war, and to show
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GRACE CARLSON, WHO SAYS:

"Because I have opposed imperialist war and because I have put forth the socialist solution to the problems of war and fascism, I and 17 others have been convicted by the federal government.

"But I see no other way out of the bloody chaos of this capitalist system than that of international socialism. This is the only road to a world of peace, freedom and plenty for all.

"I stand for international socialism; I am firmly pledged to the principles of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

"The union of the workers will make the peace of the world. Workers of the world, unite!"

Labor Faces 'Voluntary' Pay Slashes

Union Leaders Show Readiness to Make Another Surrender

A Congressional-Administration squeeze play to compel acceptance by organized labor of a "voluntary" wage-freezing agreement was put into motion this week.

The employers and their political agents are hotly pursuing the advantage they recently won through the week-end and holiday pay concession wrested from the trade union leaders.

Their main strategy of attack on wage standards is following the tested routine used in sending the union leaders into retreat on the right to strike, holiday pay, speedup, etc.

For weeks, Congress and the capitalist press have been paying the way for imposition of a wage-freezing agreement by threats of an all-out anti-labor legislative drive, scheduled to begin April 20.

As was to be expected, at the last moment President Roosevelt summoned his "war labor cabinet" of top AFL and CIO leaders and told them that if they would agree to "voluntary" wage-freezing through War Labor Board action, he would "persuade" Congress to withhold compulsory wage "stabilization" by law.

Then Roosevelt called in Senator Connally, sponsor of the Senate wage-freezing measure, and other Congressional leaders, and secured from them postponement of the anti-labor bills debate pending his message next Monday covering recommendations for wages, prices and profits.

So far as wages are concerned,
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MARITIME COMMISSION AIMS BLOW AT UNIONS

The shipowners-government offensive against the maritime unions made a giant sweep forward this week when the Maritime Commission chartered the entire American merchant fleet and announced that it will henceforth "direct every phase of its operation."

No longer will the unions be able to negotiate with the shipowners directly; instead they will face the situation where any defense of their union conditions will be denounced as a fight against the government. The shipowners will now nominally function as managing-agents for the government, although they will continue to receive the profits from the operations of their fleets. By turning the authority for the loading and dispatching of their ships over to the Maritime Commission, the operators have passed to the government their end of a running fight with the maritime unions.

This is the latest in the series of union-busting maneuvers carried out by the shipowners and government for the past year. Since Pearl Harbor, this campaign has been intensified, flaring into the open last week when Washington threatened the union seamen with the loss of their union hiring halls, abrogation of their union contracts and even mass induction into the Navy, where they would be deprived of all union rights and conditions.

These threats were embodied in a set of proposals put forth both by the Maritime Commission and by the Stalinist leaders of the National Maritime Union, CIO, who have been conducting secret negotiations to impose govern-

ment dictatorship over the maritime unions.

A UNITED FRONT

Faced with an imminent threat to their very existence, all the seafaring unions except the NMU, last week jointly mobilized their forces in Washington to oppose the operators' union-busting drive.

United against the shipowner-government-Stalinist proposals are the Atlantic Gulf District of the Seafarers International Union, AFL, and West Coast affiliate, the Sailors Union of the Pacific, AFL; the Marine Cooks & Stewards, CIO; Marine Firemen, Oilers, Water-tenders & Wipers, independent; and the Masters, Mates & pilots, AFL.

When their prompt and united opposition had apparently blocked the NMU-Maritime Commission proposals, the union representatives left Washington. The government then hastily announced the move it had been holding in reserve, the taking over of the merchant fleets.

This will place the unions in a position where the government will be able to crack down whenever it feels the time to be ripe. The move to rob the unions of their hiring halls and contracts is not being pressed at the moment, but reports from Washington indicate that the government is contemplating doing away with overtime pay and "excessive" bonuses, and plans to disregard the union contract provisions in determining labor conditions.

THE SQUEEZE PLAY

A triple squeeze play was used against the maritime unions:
(1) Secretary of the Navy Knox
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