

STEEL DELEGATES THROUGH CONVENTION

Novack, Billings Speak For CRDC In California

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — Workers in San Francisco marked May Day week 1944 by attending two labor defense meetings at which Warren K. Billings, famous class war prisoner and co-defendant with Tom Mooney in the famous Mooney-Billings labor case, and George Novack, National Secretary of the Civil Rights Defense Committee were the principal speakers.

Sunday afternoon, April 30, they addressed a memorial meeting in honor of the martyrs of American labor, held under the auspices of the General Defense Committee of the IWW. The speakers reviewed the struggle and sacrifices of the great leaders of American labor who were persecuted and murdered by the boss class: the Haymarket martyrs; Joe Hill, working class poet and organizer Frank Little murdered at Butte, Montana; Wesley Everett murdered at Centralia, Washington; Sacco and Vanzetti; Mooney and Billings.

Warren K. Billings told how the employers of San Francisco in collusion with police and state officials put their frameup machinery in operation against Tom Mooney and himself. "They saw the war coming and, as they always have done under circumstances, they saw their chance to put us in prison because of our labor activities."

KNEW CANNON AND DUNNE

In the audience of 200 workers were several old time Wobblay leaders who had known and worked with James P. Cannon and Vincent Dunne. In introducing George Novack the chairman, Henry E. McGuckin, recalled that Cannon was the first to introduce him to a workers' meeting in Kansas City 34 years ago, in 1910.

In his speech, Novack pointed out that the frameup of the 18 in the Minneapolis Labor Case was a direct continuation of the frameups against the IWW leaders in the first world war.

"The capitalist frameup system has been at work in this country for a long time — and the Minneapolis Labor Case is the latest

example. This frameup of working class leaders must be smashed."

Upon the initiative of the workers present, it was recommended that part of the collection should go to the Pardon and Relief Fund of the CRDC.

The meeting of the CRDC was held on Wednesday, May 3rd, at Red Mens Hall. Clarence Rust, noted labor lawyer and member of the National Committee of CRDC, was the first speaker.

He reviewed the legal aspects of the Case. "This Case is of national importance," Rust said in his closing remarks. "It is most gratifying to see that fact being recognized by unions and other organizations, throughout the country."

The walls of the hall gave detailed evidence of this support. Copies of letters of endorsement by prominent people of the city, resolutions and letters of local unions lined the hall, together with posters of the 18 prisoners. Above them were two large streamers carrying the two main slogans of the Committee—Free the 18 and Repeal the Smith Gag Act.

Ernest Besig, Northern California Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, the next speaker, explained why his committee had backed the Case from the very beginning. "The ACLU opposed the passage of the Smith Gag Act and will continue to fight

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New Jersey Strike Teaches Lesson of Government's Role

NEWARK, N. J., May 6 — 1600 workers, members of the UAW-CIO, shut down the six plants of the Breeze Company, for two days last week in protest against the management's deliberate stalling over wage increases. The Breeze workers waited patiently for months for the WLB award, which finally granted them small wage increases. But the Company immediately proceeded to appeal the regional WLB ruling. This deliberate company provocation was answered by a shutdown of the six plants, despite all the efforts of the union leaders to have the men docilely submit to the company's latest stall.

By their action, the Breeze workers indicated that they, like millions of others, are fed up with the no-strike pledge and intend to defend themselves from company attacks. But the Breeze workers struck under the illusion that the government would take over and settle things in their favor. This illusion was soon to be dispelled by the spokesman of the government.

One Army officer correctly explained to the workers, "The Army takes only nominal charge, and the workers still are the employees of the present management."

Under pounding from the military authorities and the flag-waving of their union officials, the men finally returned to work. But the lesson they absorbed as to the role of the government will not soon be forgotten.

The 'Little Straitjacket' Formula



Canadian Auto Workers Fight Ford's Union-Busting Drive

WINDSOR, ONTARIO

Climaxing its months-long campaign of union harassment and provocation, the Ford Motor Company fired a union committeeman and suspended four union stewards. This last union-busting act proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back. 14,000 workers struck to a man on April 20.

The Ford workers were operating under the contract signed two and a half years ago between Local 200 and the Ford Motor Company. The agreement outlines a bargaining procedure which permits the union stewards to take two hours in any day or three hours in two days to bargain on the union grievances. If the stewards needed more time than that provided in the agreement, the union paid them for the extra time spent on settling grievances. The stewards had to notify the foremen whenever they took time off for union business but did not have to obtain permission. This bargaining procedure has been in operation for two and a half years.

Towards the end of March, the company decided to step up its union-busting campaign. Instructions were handed down to all foremen not to permit stewards to take care of union grievances during working hours. The company ruled that if any grievances arose, the stewards could take care of them during their lunch period, which in most cases is 15 to 20 minutes long. The company further ruled that all grievances must first be written out before the men could see their stewards. This company action was a deliberate attempt to destroy the grievance procedure as many of the union men are foreign born and would find it very difficult to write out their grievances.

UNION PROTESTS

The union immediately protested the violation of the contract but the company remained adamant. The union then notified the Wartime Labor Relations Board. The Board ordered the Ford Motor Company to continue the grievance procedure that had been in use for the previous two and a half years, and in the event of complaint on either side, the board would review the complaint within 10 days.

The union accepted the labor board decision. But Mr. Campbell, President of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, contemptuously replied that neither the union nor the board would run the plant. When he climaxed his anti-union campaign by the firings, the men struck.

Campbell thereupon announced that he was cancelling the union

New Stalinist Revelations On Origins Of May Day

Apart from Stalin's order of the Day on May 1, Moscow has released virtually no news concerning the celebration of May Day in the Soviet Union. The Stalinist bureaucracy is now trying to root out every revolutionary tradition. Its efforts in this direction are illustrated in part by the article written in connection with May Day by Ilya Ehrenburg, one of the Kremlin's publicized pen-prostitutes. The theme of this article is that May Day is rooted not in the class struggle at all, but in seasonal changes, to wit, the coming of spring. The text of this new revelation of Stalinism follows:

"From time immemorial man has associated the coming of spring with the idea of the triumph of life. The Greeks created the Eleusinian mysteries; young Persephone held captive by the god of the infernal regions returns to the earth. In spring the early Christians celebrated the triumph of life. Sprouting seed, green shoot and flower-bud inspired man to wage war on darkness."

"Hence arose May Day. Progressive minds associated the will of the peoples for a better world with the spirit of spring. To the frigidity of senile egotism, of gloomy tyranny, they opposed the idea of the brotherhood of nations. Only the purblind will ask whether this is the time to talk of human solidarity, when arms have the floor; whether this is the time to talk of great hope, when spring has laid bare the ruins and graves." (Information Bulletin of Embassy of the USSR in Washington, May 6, vol. IV, No. 54.)

contract and refused to negotiate with the union.

The labor board immediately sent two representatives to get negotiations going again between Local 200 and the Company.

The solidarity of the men in the strike was exceptional. A

huge picket line daily patrolled the plant, not to keep scabs out (there were no scabs) but to demonstrate the solid front and power of the union. All other UAW locals in Windsor rallied behind the Ford strikers. A num-

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Senate Grants Billions To Wall Street; Rejects Demand For Demobilization Pay

By R. Bell

A bill providing for the payment of billions of dollars in cash to war contractors upon the termination of their government contracts, was jammed through the Senate last week in record time. The measure was sponsored by the government's "Post-War Planning Committee" headed by Walter George, poll-tax Senator from Georgia. It provides for the payment of huge sums of money to large war contractors whose contracts are cancelled by the government. Over the protests of organized labor which had strenuously objected to the passage of the bill in its present form, the measure was railroaded through the Senate almost without debate.

An amendment to the bill, known as the Kilgore amendment,

which provided for the payment of unemployment compensation to discharged servicemen and workers laid off by the closing down of war plants, as well as other minor safeguards for labor in the period of reconversion of industry to civilian production, was summarily rejected.

In a letter sent to all Senators, the heads of the AFL and CIO pleaded in vain that some consideration be given the workers. "You will agree," stated the joint letter signed by Green and Murray, "that every contract terminated means the discharge of workers. Certainly, provision for these workers whose resources must be conserved and fully utilized, is at least as important as settling the financial claims of war contractors."

"We wish to stress again," the letter continues, "as we have pointed out in our public testimony, that the preponderance of war contractors are in a sufficiently strong position to weather

Murray Tries To Sidetrack Fight For 17c. Hourly Raise

Officers' Report Whitewashes Roosevelt; Reaffirms Support of Wage Stabilization

BULLETIN

CLEVELAND, O., May 9.—Philip Murray, in a keynote address before the delegates and visitors who jammed the Public Auditorium for the opening of the union's second biennial convention, gave a lengthy reiteration of unconditional support of the no-strike pledge and announced his endorsement of a fourth term for Roosevelt.

Murray made a vigorous defense of the Steel Union's 24-point program, but he failed to project any plan of union action to achieve this program.

The key question of the current wage negotiations now before the WLB, he mentioned only perfunctorily and again, as in the officers' report, he placed all the emphasis on the long-term demand for a guaranteed annual wage.

Murray said that he "never liked the Little Steel formula because it is 'unworkable'", in fact he "detested it since its origin." He "attended its baptism" in June 1942, "participated in its confirmation," and now asserted "with the grace of God I hope to be at its wake." Murray gave no indication however how to put the Little Steel formula in its coffin except through a continuation of the farcical WLB proceedings. Murray's speech indicates that he will seek to turn the steel convention into a political rally for Roosevelt. Hillman is scheduled to address the convention on Wednesday on behalf of the CIO Political Action Committee. The only really spontaneous outburst of applause that Murray received in the course of his speech was when he declared that the union must continue to carry on the fight for better conditions.

By Art Preis

CLEVELAND, Ohio, May 8 — Thousands of delegates and visitors are jamming the over-crowded hotel and restaurant facilities here to attend the CIO United Steel Worker's Second Constitutional Convention, which opens tomorrow at the Public Auditorium for five days of deliberation.

Over 2,300 regular delegates are expected to participate in this largest and most crucial steel labor convention in history. Their decisions on such vital questions as the fight

against the wage-freezing Little Steel formula, the no-strike pledge, the attitude of labor to the War Labor Board, independent labor political action, etc., will be carefully watched by unionists throughout the country.

Two years ago the steel union held its first constitutional convention in the same Public Auditorium where they will now convene again. During the past two years the steel workers have had the opportunity to observe the true effects of Roosevelt's labor policies, the role of his WLB and other agencies for controlling organized labor, and the consequences that have flowed from the servile adherence of Murray and the union leaders to the administration's program.

Dissatisfaction among the ranks of the steel workers has grown acute, particularly during the course of the steel wage negotiations. The steel wage demands have now been stalled through six months of red tape and palaver, and have been hopelessly bogged down in the WLB swamp since February. There are reports that a number of locals have sent resolutions to the convention calling for rescinding the no-strike pledge. But how strong and well-organized the militant opposition to Philip Murray's program of retreat and surrender will be at the convention cannot be gauged in advance. It is certain that Murray will wield a strong hand at the convention and will seek to keep the expression of opposition sentiment at a minimum.

The major points of policy which Murray and his machine aim to hammer out at the convention are indicated in a 77-page official "Report of Officers," which will be publicly

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Trotskyism And The European Revolution

By The Editors

It is clear to all political observers that Europe today stands on the verge of great events. The European revolution which was begun by the Italian masses is sure to flame again. All the so-called theories of the skeptics, the turncoats and the renegades are being destroyed by the march of events. Our ideas, our perspectives, our program are standing up to the test of history and are every day finding vindication in the international arena.

What is necessary today for the Trotskyists throughout the world is to solidify their ranks on the tested program and principles of Trotskyism in preparation for the great tasks that loom ahead. The unification of the Workers International League and the Revolutionary Socialist League in England and the successful launching of a unified Trotskyist organization, the Revolutionary Communist Party, on the basis of the program and statutes of the Fourth International, is a sign of the times. It is an indication that the genuine Trotskyists are closing ranks.

The great resurgence of the class struggle that we see taking place in England today is only a small reflection of the gigantic upsurge we will witness on the European continent on the morrow. In the coming resurgence of the revolutionary movement, we can genuinely help the revolutionary workers hew their path to the revolutionary party, we can help them to build a strong Trotskyist organization, only by drawing a sharp line of demarcation between the genuine Trotskyists and the impostors and muddleheads. Nothing could be more fatal for the Trotskyist movement than to permit instinctive sympathy—for any insurgent groups fighting under the difficult conditions which exist in Europe today—to betray us into political conciliationism.

With this perspective in mind, we wish to especially call attention to the Manifesto recently issued by a group in Italy and published in part in the April 8 issue of The Militant for the information of our readers. The Manifesto reveals that its authors attempt to straddle the Trotskyist position on the Soviet Union, the necessity for unconditional defense of the Soviet Union.

Should the Soviet workers support the war against Hitler, in spite of the fact that it is led

by the reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy? The workers of Italy, of Europe, as of the Soviet Union instinctively answered this question in the affirmative. The authors of this Manifesto, who apparently wish to deny such defense, felt the necessity of equivocating. No group can really be Trotskyist if it attempts to straddle the Russian question. The Manifesto does not call for the defense of the Soviet Union. It does not characterize the Soviet Union as a workers' state. Therefore the Manifesto is not an authentic Trotskyist Manifesto.

It is our solemn duty to point out to all revolutionary workers that any groups arising in Europe today which take a false or ambiguous position on the Russian question, which attempt to construct a program and organization apart from the Trotskyist International movement can accomplish nothing more than the creation of new degenerate parties of the POUM variety. Trotsky warned: "Those who cannot defend old positions will never conquer new ones."

The Trotskyists will pay close attention to all the new manifestations in the European labor movement. They will work most energetically to win all leftward-moving groups to the Trotskyist program and banner. As a matter of fact, the Trotskyists have distinguished themselves in the past for their tactical flexibility in working with leftward-moving groups. But tactical flexibility was of aid in the past and can be of aid in the future in the winning of new adherents to the Trotskyist banner only on the premise that the Trotskyists remain organizationally firm and programmatically irreconcilable.

The Trotskyist movement has a finished program, a tested cadre and a firm organization. We can aid the revolutionary workers in solving the herculean tasks they face only by remaining true to our program and banner. Such a principled position will prove a far more effective weapon in the struggle for building strong Trotskyist parties than any expression of sentimental solidarity at the expense of program.

Great developments loom ahead. The Trotskyists, on whose shoulders rest an historic responsibility, must now be prepared, calmly, confidently and firmly to discharge that responsibility.

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TRADE UNION NOTES

By Joseph Keller

It took a strike at Montgomery Ward's Chicago plant to force Roosevelt to "seize" the plant because of Sewell L. Avery's refusal to comply with two WLB directives.

Taking their cue from Sewell Avery and backed by the Big Business press and Congressional barrage on the Ward Case...

Two leading New York title insurance companies, The Security Title and Guarantee Company of New York and the Kings County Capital Corporation of Brooklyn, simultaneously wired the WLB that they would not comply with a directive of the regional board ordering them to negotiate a contract with Local 96 of the CIO Office Workers union.

Sewell L. Avery was re-elected to the Board of Directors of the U. S. Steel Corporation at its annual stockholders meeting in Hoboken, N. J., last week.

This demonstrative action shows that kind of opposition Philip Murray is trying to knock down with statistics in the drawdown palaver that is now taking place between the CIO steelworkers and the steel companies before the WLB.

The government's "seizure" of

the Montgomery Ward Chicago properties hasn't meant that the anti-labor practices have ceased.

When the union charged last week that the company officials were continuing to dismiss workers for union activities...

The government officials finally put up notices telling the bosses not to fire the workers. A touch of sheer fantasy is introduced by these notices.

Representatives of Ward Local 20, Retail Clerks' Union, are reported to have had a bitter exchange with Stalinist union officials on the floor of the Chicago CIO Council...

After Allen Haywood, CIO Director of Organization, had wired the union that the CIO Longshoremen's Union, headed by Stalinist Harry Bridges...

Leonard Levy, vice-president of the Retail Clerks' international in charge of the strike...

White Murray postures before the WLB steel panel hearings...

Wylie Brown, head of the Phelps Dodge Copper Products Corporation...

re-election of Avery.

Branches Reach Half-Way Mark In 'Militant' Subscription Campaign

We have fulfilled 48% of our quota for 3,000 new readers to The Militant in the three-month Subscription Campaign.

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE WEEK

Buffalo not only moved into first place on the scoreboard, but hit 212% and has now ordered 100 more subscription cards.

Philadelphia jumped from 77% to 120%. New York for the second week in succession sent in the greatest number of subs...

Of the 41 subs credited to Members-at-Large and Friends, 31 of them were obtained by one friend in New York.

FROM OUR MAIL BAG

Reading: "Due to the national importance of the Militant Subscription Drive, the Reading Branch challenges two other branches with the same quota."

New York Local like most of the branches spent several weeks in April organizing the Subscription Campaign and gaining some practical experience...

April the campaign took a big spurt and we are now shifting into second gear. The branch totals for the month were:

Table with columns: Branch, Quota, Subs, Percent. Totals: 500 Quota, 389 Subs, 76%.

No party campaign in recent years has generated such initiative, enthusiasm and socialist competition in the New York membership as the Militant Subscription Campaign.

Philadelphia: "Please send us 25 more sub blanks immediately. We are literally overwhelmed by demand."

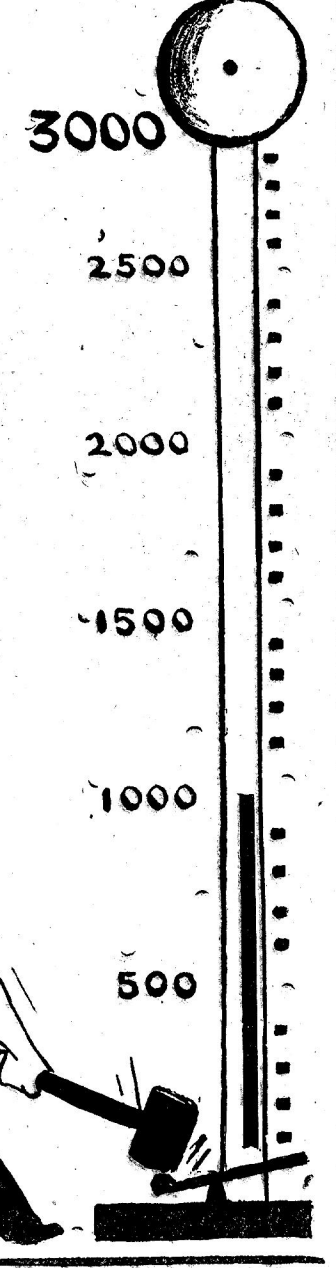
Buffalo: "If you will notice, many of the subscribers are women. To us the most remarkable thing discovered during the campaign is the change in the attitude of women generally."

Los Angeles, Seattle, Bayonne, San Francisco, Toledo, Detroit and Newark report encouraging success.

The branches can be proud of their achievement in reaching the half-way mark of the campaign ahead of schedule.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard table with columns: Branch, Quota, Subs, Percent. Includes cities like Buffalo, Reading, Philadelphia, etc. Totals: 3,000 Quota, 1,451 Subs, 48%.



Labor Party Opponents Whine That 'Now Is Not The Time'

By C. Thomas

The union militants in the Michigan labor movement took a long step toward the building of an Independent Labor Party when they launched the Michigan Commonwealth Federation.

An important debate took place in Detroit recently, sponsored by the West Side Tool and Die Council on the question: "Is This The Time To Organize A New Party?"

NOW IS NOT THE TIME

It has become the custom, for even the deadliest enemies of independent political action, to insist that they have always been for it "in principle" but "now is not the time."

Approximately 10 years ago, at the 1935 AFL convention, a resolution was introduced calling for formation of an independent labor party...

PATRICK HENRY

"They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be next week or next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house?"

THE PROGRAM

The interests of the working class cannot be formulated otherwise than in the shape of a program; the program cannot be advanced otherwise than by creating the instrument for carrying the program into action, the political party.

The guaranteed annual wage is one of the demands of the Steel Workers Union. Conforming as it does to the interests of the working class as a whole...

Delegates Throng Steel Convention

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released tomorrow. This report throughout bears the style and language of Murray himself.

Nowhere in the entire report is the specific demand for the 17 cents an hour wage increase mentioned!

The two specific proposals made are for greater concentration on work through the CIO Political Action Committee...

The whole report is angled to conceal Roosevelt's responsibility for the wage-freezing policy...

WHITEWASH ROOSEVELT

Thus, the report complains that the WLB isn't carrying out the President's program, although it fails to state why Roosevelt himself hasn't brought the matter to the attention of the WLB.

Democratic or Republican parties and exercise no control over its candidates. Both the major parties take their orders from Big Business.

LABOR MISLEADERS

The labor misleaders who occupy the highest positions in the CIO have perpetrated a monstrous hoax on their membership.

Independent political action is no longer a matter of choice but of necessity. The preservation of the unions, the defense of the social gains made by labor...

as a vital and constructive force in this war period." Boiled down, however, the only thing "constructive" the report can point to is the "union security policy of the Board..."

WHY WE ARE IN PRISON

Farewell speeches of the defendants in the Minneapolis Labor Case. The vital words of people condemned to prison for their courageous defense of Socialist ideas.

"We were obliged to tell the truth. We saw the abomination of the imperialist war and we were under compulsion to fight for it at all costs and despite all hazards."

56 pages, paper 10 cents. Pioneer Publishers 116 UNIVERSITY PLACE NEW YORK 3, N. Y.

Advertisement for 'WHO ARE THE PRISONERS IN THE MINNEAPOLIS CASE?' pamphlet, including publisher information and prices.

that it is Roosevelt who is openly spearheading the drive for conscript labor. The report speaks merely of the "agitation of certain groups" who are "more interested in applying compulsory controls to labor than they are in effective utilization of our manpower resources."

The programmatic portion of the report discloses that Murray has nothing to offer the steel workers by way of an independent, effective program to smash the Little Steel formula and beat back the anti-labor offensive.

ORGANIZATION REPORT

The organizational portions of the report do provide an impressive picture of the great potential power and resources in this second largest union in America.

Los Angeles MASS MEETING in SUPPORT of the 18 Sunday, May 21 8 P. M. Chairman: Dr. CLINTON J. TAFT, ACLU.

Speakers: GEORGE NOVACK, CRDC National Secretary; GEORGE DOBSEVAGE, Pres. So. Cal. Steel Council, CIO; OSCAR SORES, Secy. Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; EUGENE JUDD, Vice-Pres. Local 216, UAW-CIO. Embassy Auditorium, North Hall, GRAND STREET at NINTH. Auspices: Los Angeles CRDC.

