

HALT THE WAR-MAKERS! Unite On May Day Against The Imperialists!

MAY DAY — 1946



May Day Manifesto Of National Committee, Socialist Workers Party Of United States

May Day 1946 marks the 60th anniversary of this imperishable international working class holiday.

of Europe and Asia to heaps of smoking rubble. It has killed 50 million combatants and maimed many millions more.

Here in the United States, the stronghold of world capitalism, the organized industrial workers have met the Big Business onslaught against their living standards with a mighty series of militant strike actions.

Who has benefited from this six-year orgy of destruction, these mountains of corpses? Not the peoples who on both sides of the battlefronts paid so costly a price in blood, toil, tears and lives.

Source Of Struggle

On the other side of the Atlantic, the masses of war-shattered Europe are desperately seeking a release from the terrible tortures of capitalist barbarism.

To win support for their war, the spokesmen of the Allied powers promised that victory would bring democracy, freedom, security and an end to reaction and war.

The entire colonial world seethes with revolutionary ferment. Heroic and prolonged armed uprisings for independence are being fought out in Indonesia and Indo-China.

Europe Is Prostrate

Look at prostrate Europe! In complete disregard of the will and welfare of its inhabitants, the new masters have divided the continent into two separate and conflicting spheres of economic, military and diplomatic influence.

All these diverse struggles have a common source in the revulsion and protest of the toiling masses against the terrible consequences of World War II.

Through Red Army occupation and puppet regimes (Continued on Page 2)

House Demolishes OPA Control; Price-Gougers Get Green Light

By Art Preis

Wielding inflationary amendments like sledge-hammers, the House of Representatives in a frenzied twelve-hour session on April 17 smashed almost every bone in the skeleton of the Price Control Act before voting 355 to 42 on April 18 to extend the measure for just nine months after June 30.

Previous periodic extensions of the Act, passed originally in early 1942, had already stripped it down to bare bone. When the howling Congressmen concluded their orgy of amendments last week, about all that was left to the Act was its name.

OPA AIDS PROFITEERS

During the hearings preceding the House actions, Office Of Price Administration and Economic Stabilization officials had pleaded for a one year extension of the Price Control Act without any further crippling amendments. They had pointed out that even under the past four-year operations of the OPA, corporation profits had swelled to the greatest volume in all history.

Moreover, the OPA itself has been more than compliant to-

ward the price-gouging demands of Big Business. It was largely ineffective in halting wartime inflation, the extent of which was concealed by lying government "statistics."

Since V-J Day, the OPA and Economic Stabilization Board have permitted big price increases all along the line and have completely removed price ceilings from thousands of commodities. Just last week, OPA hiked price ceilings to manufacturers of work clothing from 12 to 15 per cent.

"REASONABLE PROFITS"

Nevertheless, the Big Business-dominated House, its inflationary appetite merely whetted by these OPA price concessions, proceeded to wreak havoc on the few remaining legal price re-

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IN THE NEWS

Passed By Mistake

After a House orgy of amending the OPA Extension Act, during which almost any amendment to emasculate price control was promptly adopted, Representative Koppelman of Connecticut rose in disgust to offer an amendment reading: "We express our sympathy to the American people." It carried by a majority in a voice vote. However, when the Congressmen realized what they had previously adopted, they voted it down by a standing vote, 142 to 52.

Still Royal Open Shop

"LONDON, April 15 (AP)—An official of the National Union of Domestic Workers denied today a report published in Reynolds News that Buckingham Palace servants were enrolling in trade unions."

Cut Out Of The Will

"GENEVA, Apr. 13 (AP)—The specter of its last futile gesture in 1939, the expulsion of the Soviet Union from membership, haunted the League of Nations (just before its formal demise) today as delegates sought to dodge a resolution that would give Russia a share of League assets." All the USSR finally received was an expression of friendship.

Books To Burn

Veteran-students are being denied the right to purchase 3,000,000 new standard text-books owned by the Army because a clause in the Army's contract with the publishers forbids resale on civilian markets.

Mine Strikers Fight To Halt Vile Conditions

By Evelyn Atwood

Some 400,000 soft coal miners are going into the fourth week of their strike for far-reaching social demands, involving improved conditions of safety, health and welfare. As yet there has been no evidence of retreat on these vital issues, which the smug operators termed "trivia" after the mine union leaders broke off negotiations two weeks ago.

Representatives of the AFL United Mine Workers, in their negotiations on March 27 in Washington, D. C. with the soft coal barons, presented documented facts and figures about these "trifles," revealing the abominable conditions prevailing in all the bituminous coal mines.

FACTS SUPPORT UMW

These irrefutable facts completely support the UMW contention that only through a Union Health and Welfare Fund can the operators' crimes against the mine workers and their families be eliminated.

The evidence of the union representatives showed that the coal operators have been raising huge sums of money from pay-roll deductions for so-called health and welfare purposes, but they refuse even to disclose how much they collect or how they disburse these funds. In one case alone, Bethlehem Steel was forced to admit that a surplus of almost five million dollars, out of a miners' pool for health and welfare, remained in the corporation's hands to invest as it alone saw fit.

These "disappearing rebates" are simply robberies of the miners, and were uncovered over and over again in the course of the UMW investigation.

Shocking abuses and misuses of funds under the company-doctor and hospitalization systems in some 800 bituminous coal mines were also disclosed. In the "unholy alliance" which exists (Continued on Page 5)

FOURTH INTERNATIONALISTS HOLD WORLD CONFERENCE

SPECIAL TO THE MILITANT

BRUSSELS, April 22—An International Conference of the Fourth International took place early in April in Belgium with representatives from the English, French, German, Belgian, Irish, Dutch, Swiss, Spanish, Canadian and Palestine sections, and from several other countries of the Western Hemisphere and the colonies.

Packers Create Meat Shortages

With meat on the hoof at record levels, the American people in the past few weeks have been facing a virtual meat famine. Meat supplies which were fairly plentiful only a couple of months ago, have suddenly disappeared almost overnight.

This "shortage" has coincided with a tremendous pressure campaign by the big meat packers and corporation ranch owners to eliminate all government price ceilings on meat.

Last week, The Militant exposed the real cause of this deliberately-created shortage in an exclusive article from the meat-packing center of St. Paul. The article disclosed that the meat packing trust is simply refusing to process meat. It is laying off thousands of workers and conducting a huge propaganda campaign threatening an even worse meat famine and unrestricted black market operations unless OPA price ceilings are removed.

PROFITEERS THREATEN

This brazen threat was voiced openly by representatives of the meat profiteers before the Senate Agricultural Committee last week. P. C. Smith, vice-president of Smith and Co., declared: "We believe that if price controls are eliminated the cost of meat to the housewife would not be substantially more, if any more, than she is being forced (Continued on Page 8)

Ban Lifted On 'La Verite', French Trotskyist Paper

PARIS, March 23—Minister of Information Gaston Deferre last week signed papers authorizing full legal rights of publication for La Verite, long-banned weekly organ of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, French section of the Fourth International.

La Verite was the first paper to be published in the underground struggle against Nazi occupation. Government lifting of the ban followed a long and successful international protest campaign against this suppression of the labor press.

In reporting this victory in its fight for legalization, the editors of La Verite announce plans for its publication in a larger format and with an increased circulation in preparation for the coming national election campaigns in France.

SLAIN FERGUSON BROTHER IS EXONERATED BY ARMY

By William S. Farrell

(Special to The Militant)

NEW YORK, Apr. 18—Pfc. Charles Ferguson, 27-year-old Negro veteran and one of two brothers murdered on February 5 in Freeport, L. I., by a Jim-Crow cop, on April 15 was completely cleared by

an army investigation board of a charge of "misconduct." Charles and three other brothers, returning from a family reunion, had protested the refusal of a white restaurant proprietor at the bus terminal to serve them coffee. After their departure, the proprietor called a cop, Joseph Romelka, who trailed the unarmed brothers, lined them up against a wall at the point of a gun and cold-bloodedly shot to death Charles and Alonzo, seriously wounded Ships Cook 3/c Joseph and jailed Richard, 3rd Army Combat veteran.

The Militant played a leading role in exposing the case nationally and demanding justice. The result of his misconduct." The official statement also provided for six months' pay and a life pension for his widow, Mrs. Minnie Ferguson.

In exonerating Charles, the Adjutant-General's Office declared: "Death held to have occurred in line of duty and not (Continued on Page 9)

Big Brass Seek Whitewash For Lichfield Atrocities

The second of the Lichfield courts-martial, resumed after a six-day recess in London last week, continued to follow the same pattern as the first. That is:

1. An enlisted man was being tried for brutalities against inmates of the army's stockade at the 10th Reinforcement Depot in England.

2. Voluminous evidence was introduced, after witnesses had been promised they would be protected against persecution, to show that prisoners of the stockade had been beaten unmercifully on the slightest pretext and that the stockade was in fact run along the lines of a Nazi concentration camp.

3. The evidence also demonstrated conclusively that these crimes had been committed at

the direction of high officers. (A junior officer last week repeated the charge that the Depot's notorious commander, Col. Kilian, had set only one limitation on handling of the prisoners: "Just don't break too many bones.")

4. There were additional signs that the top layers of the officer caste in Europe were actively intervening in an effort to clear their own skirts:

Counsel for the defense had charged a colonel on the staff of Major General John T. Lewis, (Continued on Page 3)

This Conference is the fourth since the foundation of the Fourth International in September 1938 and the first since the end of the hostilities. The Conference met for three days and discussed: (a) the re-

See Editorial 'World Conference Of 4th International' Page 4

port on the activities of the European Secretariat of the Fourth International, and (b) a political report on the international situation and the tasks of the Fourth International.

The Conference elected a new International Executive Committee and a new International Secretariat, and addressed to the workers, the exploited and colonial peoples of the entire world, (Continued on Page 3)

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