

# THE COAL MINERS ARE RIGHT!

By DAVID COOLIDGE and MIKE STEVENS

As this issue of LABOR ACTION goes to press, the miners give no sign of weakening or of giving up their just demands made on the government and the coal operators. So far they have stood their ground, and the latest announcement coming from the meeting of the Policy Committee is to the effect that if their just and fair demands are not met they will lay down their tools at the zero hour and "will not trespass upon the properties of the coal operators in the absence of a contract."

The miners are correct, they are right. They are leading the fight of labor all over the country for relief from the Little Steel formula and the "hold the line" decree of Roosevelt. They need and should have the full and complete support of organized labor and of every single working man and working woman. There can be no question about this. When Lewis says that "the mine workers are hungry," we know exactly what he is talking about. Every worker knows from his own experience with taxes and profiteering prices what Lewis is talking about. Furthermore, Roosevelt, the WLB and the employers know what Lewis is talking about.

## The Only Way to Lick Him!



Perhaps Green, Murray, some other CIO leaders and the Stalinists don't understand. The Stalinists don't want to understand. They are busy helping the bosses get more production, and helping the WLB get its "incentive pay" plan across.

We mustn't be deterred from giving full support to the miners just because Green, Murray, R. J. Thomas and the Stalinists are attempting to becloud the issue by flag-waving and heroic but feeble gestures. The Little Steel formula and the Roosevelt wage decree have the workers bound. If they submit, they will be bound even tighter in the days to come.

This is what the miners are fighting against: the Little Steel formula and the Roosevelt wage decree. All unions and workers who are opposed to these attacks on labor must support the UMWA. The miners have a right to expect this; it is they who are leading this struggle.

The coal operators have rejected every proposal made by the mine workers. These mine operators who are merely tools of the House of Morgan, the House of Mellon and the anthracite coal-carrying railroads, are counting on the WLB, the WPB, the OPA and Byrnes to win a victory for them while they lurk in the background but, as the miners charge, remain

(Continued on page 2)

## A Job for Negro and White Union Men Smash Klanism in Detroit

AN EDITORIAL

The recent Ku Klux Klan anti-Negro and anti-labor hoodlumism in Michigan is a challenge to the whole labor movement in the state and especially to the trade unions in Detroit. In recent weeks the acts of terrorism perpetrated by these mobsters and gangsters were such as to make any decent union man come to the defense and protection of the Negro workers who are the victims of these barbarians of the Klan.

In Ferndale, several weeks ago, a gang of thugs inspired by the Klan and following a fight between a small group of Negro and white students, paraded through a Negro neighborhood, driving Negroes off the streets and hurling bricks through the windows of the houses.

This savage performance was repeated on the night of April 5 in the West Side Section of Detroit. A mob chased women and children from the streets, threw rocks through the windows of Negroes' homes and smashed cars of Negroes who lived in the street. A 10-year old Negro girl, Juanita Arnold, narrowly escaped serious injury or death from a huge piece of concrete hurled into her home at 7321 Central Avenue. The mob, unmolested by the police, disbanded at Warren Avenue after shouting insulting warnings to the Negro citizens that they would be back again with larger forces.

At Ferndale, the police were called as soon as the Klan mob appeared. They arrived long after the damage had been done. One observer of the West Side mob action says that it seemed to him that the police were in sympathy with the mob and their actions. The Michigan Chronicle had the following to say:

"Immediately after the mob began its trek . . . police were called, but residents of the community told this reporter that it was more than half an hour before a squad car was sent to the scene of the disturbance; then, they said, a Negro had to hail the squad car before it would stop.

"Rudolph Davenport said police appeared to be in league with the mob, declaring that he called McGraw police station in plenty of time to arrest members of the mob before it could damage too much property."

"Nearly every Negro in the community called the police station," Davenport said, "but they took their time before answering the calls. By the time they did arrive, the mob had done its damage and disbanded. When the police arrived they said there was nothing they could do about the disturbance unless we could recognize members of the mob."

## An Alarming Situation

This is the sordid story of Detroit and vicinity. It is an alarming story of mob action and mob violence against the Negro people, Negro workers in a stronghold of the CIO, in a community almost controlled by the United Automobile Workers (CIO) - - - the largest union in the world. It is even more alarming and disconcerting that these anti-Negro, anti-union mobs have some union members in their ranks.

We know what the Klan is, and we know how it functions. It seizes on the slightest unpleasant incident to stir up racial hatred and to foment riots and mob activity. On the basis of its spurious and vicious race superiority doctrines, the Klan seeks to create a gulf between Negro and white workers so that cooperation is made more difficult.

Added to this is the fact that the Klan and its dupes are used by anti-labor politicians and bosses who want to weaken the labor movement by stirring up antagonism and hatred between Negro and white workers. Both the politicians and the employers understand this. They know

how to use the ignorance and indifference of some of the white workers to accomplish their own anti-union ends.

Mayor Jeffries understands the situation. He wants to hold the decisive votes of labor, and at the same time not alienate the followers of the Klan and other anti-Negro and anti-labor outfits. At the Cadillac Square demonstration on April 11, Dr. J. J. McClendon, local President of the NAACP, said: "We hold Mayor Jeffries personally responsible" for the brutal attitude of the city police toward Negroes. But the city administration knows what the police are doing, and yet the Mayor does nothing about it. The police are free to wink at the mob, to sympathize with it, or allow it to roam the streets and perpetrate violence on the Negro residents.

It is a thoroughly rotten situation. Right in Detroit, the stronghold of the UAW, Negro women and children are being attacked by mobs while their husbands toil in alleged "arsenals of democracy." And furthermore, it is worse than rotten when one knows that there are men in these mobs who are members of the CIO, and who may belong to the same unions as the husbands of these women.

## Klan Must Be Smashed!

This is a challenge to organized labor that cannot be ignored. No decent union can look the other way while this condition lasts. It strikes right at the heart of the trade unions and especially at the heart of the CIO. The CIO is a power because it seeks to break down the barriers that have heretofore separated the working class on grounds of race, color, creed or nationality.

The CIO has won its victories because it is the one organization that has stood, in words and in practice, for the solidarity of labor - - irrespective of race, color or creed. Anything, any movement, any ideas or programs which in any way lessen this increasing solidarity of white and Negro workers, must not be tolerated by labor. This is what the Klan means to do if permitted. Therefore, THE KLAN MUST BE SMASHED NOW.

Negroes must and will defend their homes and families. They are not cowards and will not let these vile mobs beat them back even though the police are inactive. They proved this during the recent mob violence when scores of Negro workers remained away from work to defend their homes from the mob. This is as it should be. No decent human being is going to see his home attacked and his family maltreated.

Negro and white union members must band themselves together to protect the homes and persons of Negroes, or any other people, who are the victims of these mobs. The unions must do this not only for the protection of the Negro workers but for the protection of the labor movement. The unions must fight against the anti-union Klan and against all other union disrupters.

It is clear now that the only way that this can be done is for union committees of Negro and white workers to be on the scene when these attacks take place. The West Side mob announced that it would be back. Let them come - - but they should be met by good union men: black and white!

Every union should investigate its membership to discover any of its members who are participating in any way in any of these mobs. Such union members should be expelled from the union and driven from the factory. These vicious disrupters and mobsters have no right to be associated with decent workers and loyal union members.

Negro and white workers should take this question up in their locals at once and demand real action that will expose and stop these anti-union mobs.

DRIVE THE ANTI-NEGRO, ANTI-LABOR MOB OUT OF THE UNIONS! SMASH THE KLAN IN DETROIT!

## Sub Drive at Its Half-Way Mark-- 500 in, 500 More to Go by June 15!

By HENRY COLEMAN (Campaign Director)  
APRIL 18-24: SEVENTH WEEK

Akron	23
New York	14
Los Angeles	10
Chicago	10
Buffalo	10
Detroit	8
Cleveland	3
National Office	2
St. Louis and Missouri	2
Reading	1
Weekly Total	83
Grand Total	499

Just ONE sub short of HALF our entire quota for the drive, and still a few days before we reach the exact half-way point of seven and a half weeks! And that one sub will be in—we guarantee it. This week our returns are large enough to keep the drive going forward at a safe speed. Three weeks ago, eighty-three subs would have been something to shout about. But NOW, anything under a hundred doesn't look right. THE WEEKLY QUOTA OF ONE HUNDRED IS STILL IN EFFECT! Next week we expect ACTION on it. Why the temporary slowing down this week? Mainly because New York, Chicago and Detroit slowed down. (The more we get from Detroit, the more we expect!) Cleveland is not yet coming through as it should, but gives indications of doing better next week. Philadelphia: not a single sub! Our subscription list must grow even more rap-

idly than our total circulation. Distributions and sales at factories, newsstands, on the streets and from house to house will not mean much unless they result in subs. Our wide distribution today is, in a sense, only a MEANS of getting a solid foundation of subs. We have talked a lot about this solid foundation, and we intend to keep on talking about it, because if LABOR ACTION's readers don't get the point, our paper will never become the mass agitator that we all want it to be.

We want LABOR ACTION to come weekly to the thousands of workers who have ASKED to get our paper, who have subscribed to it, as a JOLT and a SHOCK—the kind of jolt that clears your brain and makes you say to yourself: "THIS is what I'm going to talk about from now on: at my union meeting, on the job, and even in my own kitchen. And I'm going to talk for ACTION!"

We'll make it that kind of paper, with YOUR help. The first step is more and more subs. And remember: you can generally get or give us a fifty-cent yearly sub as easily as a six-month twenty-five-cent sub—but what a difference it makes to US! Also, talk up the combination sub with The New International, the monthly socialist magazine that supplements LABOR ACTION. You'll probably be surprised to find that a good many people will be interested that you wouldn't have thought of. EVERY LABOR ACTION SUBSCRIBER SHOULD READ THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. It's a pair that fit together like a couple of gauge blocks.

NEXT WEEK AND EACH WEEK AFTER THAT MUST SHOW A STEADY RISE IN OUR WEEKLY TOTAL! NO MORE UPS AND DOWNS! 500 IN, 500 TO GET BY JUNE 15!

LABOR ACTION  
114 West 14th St., New York City

LABOR ACTION, 6 mos., 25c; 1 yr., 50c.  
New International, 6 mos., \$1.00; 1 yr., \$1.50. LABOR ACTION and New International, 6 mos., \$1.00; 1 yr., \$1.75.

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New International  1 yr.,  6 mos.  
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DETROIT WORKERS: If you wish further information about LABOR ACTION, or if you wish to subscribe to LABOR ACTION, write to our Detroit Office—1504 Broadway, Detroit, Mich.

# News and Views from the Labor Front

## Chicago CIO Maps Fight Against Wage Freezing

By HARRY ALLEN

CHICAGO — Representing 200,000 CIO workers, officials of 242 CIO locals in the Chicago district held an overflow conference on April 21 and gave emphatic approval to a broad program of action to combat wage cutting, sub-standard wages, job freezing, mounting prices on food and other necessities of life, and high taxes on workers' incomes.

This significant gathering of CIO labor, reflecting deep-seated anger against inroads on the economic and civil rights of the masses, highlighted the meeting by calling for a national emergency conference of the CIO at Washington to unite labor nationally in struggle for its program.

The conference further specifically called upon the AFL unions to join with the CIO in carrying out its program, suggesting as an initial step the "immediate formation of community-action organizations of CIO, AFL and other neighborhood groups."

Recognizing the need for mobilizing the widest possible mass support and understanding of its program of action, the CIO conference further proposed local community actions by individual organizations and groups, to be preceded by a series of mass meetings, following the proposed national conference.

### Hit McNutt Orders

Among the more important proposals presented by the Chicago CIO's high cost of living and legislative committee, and strongly endorsed by the conference, are:

1. A demand that the WMC-McNutt order freezing workers to their jobs be rescinded. Speakers emphasized that the basis for labor turnover in Chicago is not a labor shortage, for there are still thousands of unemployed skilled and unskilled workers, but in pay inequalities. "Freezing workers to inequitable jobs is unworkable.... Remove the pay inequalities that

cause such job changes." It is time to protect labor, not just the bosses' interests on the job, said a CIO spokesman.

2. Demanding that the OPA revert all prices back to the September 15, 1942, level, reduce prices that are patently high, and forbid any additional price increases, the program calls for the deputization of union members and other citizens by OPA to check on all stores to see that rationing laws and price ceilings are enforced.

There is, however, no need to wait for OPA to deputize the workers. The unions themselves can proceed, together with committees of housewives, organized in every local and on every block, to establish committees to check the food gougers and profiteers, while simultaneously demanding genuine enforcement by the OPA of such regulations as presumably aid the workers and consumers.

On this score, taking note of the operations of the black market as well as the huge profiteering through "legitimate" channels, the conference demanded that "dollars-and-cents price ceilings be set for all necessities of life. Rationing should be extended to cover all the necessities of life so that everyone will be guaranteed his fair share."

### \$30 Minimum Wage

Exposing the myth of general high wage scales, the program calls for a \$30 weekly minimum wage, based on a 75 cents an hour, 40-hour week basis. Anything less, the program states, is "sub-standard." The fact is that there are tens of thousands of Chicago workers who fall into the "sub-standard" wage level.

The Little Steel formula for wages is denounced as inadequate, particularly in view of the enormous increases in prices of food-stuffs, etc. The report adopted by the conference on this score therefore demands increased wages for increased production, as well as a "fair share in any decrease in the cost of production."

The report of the committee still evidences illusions in the War Labor Board for the adjustment of wage inequalities. The program proposes reconsideration by the WLB, with public hearings, of all cases pending prior to April 8 to determine what are "sub-standard" wages. At the same time the report states that the CIO will oppose any imposition by the government of a national wage incentive system.

4. The preamble to the program states its belief in Roosevelt as "labor's friend." Ignoring the anti-labor record of the Roosevelt Administration in recent years particularly, it places sole responsibility for labor's woes and predicament on the "reactionary big business bloc in Congress." Hence there is no reference, either in the program or in the speeches by CIO representatives at the conference, to the need for the labor movement, particularly the CIO, to initiate a movement for independent political action; for the formation of a Labor Party to espouse labor's cause and program in all the legislative chambers in the cities, states and nationally.

### Tax Proposals

5. Denouncing profiteering, which the report states, "is unequaled in the history of our country," the conference called for the repeal of the Victory Tax "because it imposes a flat five per cent burden on all wages down to the worker earning only \$12 a week, with no regard to living costs, family obligations and dependents."

The tax program further proposes tax exemption for single persons earning \$800 or less and married couples earning \$1,500 or less, with an

additional allowance of \$400 for each dependent.

With respect to the incomes of the rich and profiteers, it favors a \$25,000 limitation, after tax payments; a 5% increase on corporate profits; a 5% per cent; five per cent profit limitation for corporations with initial capital investment of \$10,000,000 and four per cent on all amounts above that, together with a 100 per cent excess profits tax on profits above these levels.

The CIO proposals, therefore, still accept responsibility for sharing war costs with the bosses, instead of an outright demand that the bosses pay the costs of their war through a demand, along with other tax proposals, for a capital levy by the government on the corporations to cover the financial costs of the imperialist war—the workers already paying many times over with their bodies and lives in the workshops and on the battlefields.

Whatever limitations and inadequacies there are in the program of action of the Chicago CIO conference, the proposals as a whole point in a highly progressive and militant direction. The conference reflects the pressure of the ranks on the officialdom for protective measures. It is imperative that the laboring masses everywhere adopt similar programs of action and take measures to carry them out.

Locally, the CIO ought to proceed to the early convocation of the proposed series of mass meetings. Without a doubt, a call for a gigantic open air demonstration in support of the program of action, convened jointly by the CIO, AFL and other organizations, or even by the CIO alone, would be supported by tens of thousands of Chicago's exploited workers.

Particularly deserving of support is the proposal for a convocation of a national emergency conference of the CIO to develop the necessary pressure, organization and program for a national struggle against the attacks of the bosses and government upon labor's rights and living standards.

### Miners Act

"Two labor groups in Greater Cincinnati, comprising thirty-one unions affiliated with the United Mine Workers, announced that they had withdrawn their pledges not to strike for the duration because of the failure of the War Labor Board to act on the rise in living costs."—UP dispatch from Cincinnati.

## Local 9 Militants Stymie Company Scheme to Legalize 10-Hour Day 'By Practice'

SAN PEDRO—Determined resistance by the union membership has resulted in a setback for the Los Angeles Shipbuilding & Drydock Co. in its attempt to put over the ten-hour shift.

When the corporation first instructed ten hours in the machine shop to work men hours, with swing shift men reporting at 6:30 p.m. instead of the customary 4:30, it was informed that such a change in shift hours must be negotiated with the union under the existing contract with Local 9, IUMSWA.

As a basis for negotiations, the union proposed that the change be temporary, for thirty days only, that it be applied to repair work only and that, in addition to overtime pay, shift premium money be paid.

The provisions for limitation, and for thirty days only, were made because the company claimed that this was no move to put in the ten-hour day generally but only an expedient to overcome a temporary bottleneck on repair work.

As reported in last weeks LABOR ACTION, the corporation verbally agreed to the above provision, but a special meeting of swing shift workers demanded that it be put in writing. The machine-shop backed this up by knocking off after eight hours of work.

The following Sunday, a special meeting of all shifts was called to consider the corporation's written answer, which differed considerably from the union's original proposals. It did not provide for payment of shift premiums and, instead of a thirty-day limit, it asked for a ten-hour day until "the bottleneck was broken."

However, the company agreed to limit work on the changed shift to repair jobs exclusively. That is, a swing shift man reporting at 6:30 p.m. could work on repairs only. If there was no repair work available, the repair bottleneck obviously must have been broken and the corporation would have no valid excuse for insisting on two ten-hour shifts.

### Militant Gathering

In charge of the meeting, in the absence of Walter S. Pollard, director of Local 9 appointed by the national executive board, was his assistant, Ralph Winstead. He presented a resolution accepting the company's proposal, but stressing that it was to be confined to repair work and retaining the right to press for shift premium pay.

The special meeting, though small, was a gathering of militant union men intent on preserving the eight-hour day. Most of them knew, from first-hand experience with the ten-hour day at the Bethlehem yard, just what was at stake and were determined to oppose the spreading of the two-shift system to the L.A. Shipyard.

In the discussion that followed, the membership used the occasion to impress the appointed officials again

that they want no part of the two-shift ten-hour day system. As for the bottleneck, the management was accused of causing it, if any existed.

Men from the machine shop cited instances of highly skilled mechanics being permitted to quit rather than being given a few cents premium pay. They cited the case of an important machine, the previously operated twenty-four hours daily, now being operated only twenty hours under the proposed system. A score of instances clearly indicated that the company's primary interest was in establishing a precedent for the two-shift plan, rather than overcoming any alleged bottleneck.

### Company Seems Licked

The resolution accepting the company's proposal was passed by a close vote, largely because the machine shop men were convinced that the provision limiting the change in shifts to repair work only would assure the failure of the plan.

In this they seem to be right, for within a few days only a handful of men were being asked to work under the new plan. Vigilant action by the men and their shop stewards kept the company from chiseling on this important part of the agreement.

The corporation, however, is not likely to give up easily in its maneuvers to slip in the ten-hour day. With a national campaign by big business to put it over, and with the National Shipyard Stabilization Committee even now considering it, workers at L.A. Ship will be faced with a serious fight to preserve the eight-hour day.

Every worker must realize that the bosses want more than the ten-hour day. They want the sixty-hour week — WITHOUT OVERTIME PAY. The first step is to establish, legalize by practice, the sixty-hour week, and then have their tools in Congress repeal the Walsh-Healy Act calling for time and a half after forty hours.

What must be learned by the workers is that with their strength they can still put up an effective fight. Even with their local ruled by an appointed director the vigorous pressure of the membership can force the appointed officials into action. The eight-hour day, fruit of bloody years of struggle by working men, must be saved.

## Coolidge Article Is Reprinted by Union Periodical

The Cincinnati Chronicle, an AFL paper, reprints in its April 26 issue the lead story in LABOR ACTION of three weeks ago. Written by David Coolidge, the article analyzed the "incentive pay" scheme and warned labor to guard against it. The Chronicle reprinted the story on its front page in a two-column box, giving credit, of course, to LABOR ACTION.

The Chronicle has reprinted material from LABOR ACTION before. So have other labor papers here and abroad—in the British Isles and in Latin America. For example, did you know that...

### Carlo's Cartoons

are often reprinted by labor periodicals all over the world? Before the war, Belgian and French labor papers, as well as papers in other countries, often reproduced Carlo's cartoons. Today we frequently receive copies of papers from Chile, Uruguay, Scotland or England in which we find reproductions of Carlo's cartoons. The latest such to arrive was a miners' paper from Scotland which chose one of Carlo's biting satires on the Stalinists.

Carlo's cartoons and the other material in LABOR ACTION, is something you can get in its original form ONLY in LABOR ACTION. And it's the best! We place Carlo among the top labor cartoonists in the world, or, for that matter, among the top cartoonists of any kind. If you don't want to miss them—subscribe to LABOR ACTION—today!

Great Lakes Shipyard Worker.

## LABOR ACTION

Announces a Series of Lectures on the War  
By MAX SHACHTMAN  
FRIDAYS AT 8:15 P.M.

May 14—United States in the War.

June 11—Russia in the War.

June 18—Socialism or the Third World War?

Place—Labor Temple, 14th St. and 2nd Ave., New York

Admission—25 cents per lecture.

## Curtiss Workers Demand Pay Increase -- Or Job Release

By WILLIAM GARFIELD

BUFFALO—More than twenty thousand workers in the Curtiss-Wright Corp.'s Buffalo plants are preparing to demand simultaneous release from their jobs unless a decision in their wage case is received from the War Labor Board within three weeks.

Following the lead of the Universal Atlas Cement workers in Pittsburgh, who voted to continue on strike until their demands for a wage increase of 5 1/2 cents an hour are approved by the WLB, the Curtiss workers are sending their demand in duplicate postcard messages to Chairman William H. Davis of the WLB from members of Lodge 585, International Association of Machinists, AFL. The union's demands for a wage increase to supercede the disappearing bonus were certified to the War Labor Board on November 18, two days before that of the Universal Workers.

The postcards, protesting the freeze of wages embodied in the President's last wage decree, were distributed to workers on Monday and Tuesday, said Lou Mayer, president of Lodge 585. He said about 20,000 workers are expected to sign the cards.

At first it was planned to have each worker write his own message of protest on the cards, but the consensus among IAM members was that the same message should appear on all.

The message read:

"If you have not received a de-

cision on our case by May 10th, I am demanding a release from the Curtiss-Wright Buffalo plants. With the drop in the bonus and the small checks I am getting I will want to go to work some place where I can make enough to continue my purchase of War Bonds."

The action was taken in response to strong rank and file pressure in the plants reflecting the mounting anger of the Curtiss workers, who have been given a royal run-around by the War Labor Board and the company ever since the contract of the old company union, the Aircraft, was declared null and void in May, 1942. Since that time, the bonus, which accounted for a large part of the Curtiss worker's "take-home" wage, has been cut almost to nothing by the company's vicious retiming of most jobs. In addition, the cost of living in Buffalo has risen higher than in any other city in New York State (23.4 per cent since September, 1939, according to a Department of Labor announcement) while taxes on workers' incomes have soared. Further, the worker is continually pestered in an "either-or" manner for endless "voluntary" contributions for Red Cross, Community Chest, Cruiser Buffalo, Catholic Charities, etc.

The bonus, which is another phony "incentive" plan devised to make the workers slave more for less money, is a departmental, not an individual bonus. It thus varies,

not only from week to week, but also from department to department. Since the company alone has access to the true time compilations of salvage, scrap and work produced, it has been able to juggle the bonus at will and thus divide the workers and hinder union consciousness. At the time of the ill-fated CIO organizing campaign in Curtiss a year ago, the company boosted the bonus to the highest point it had ever reached in an effort to torpedo the CIO campaign for "freezing" the bonus or else substituting an hourly wage increase in its stead. Immediately after the NLRB elections (which the CIO lost), the company began to juggle the bonus down and has continued this policy ever since. Thus, aircraft workers were again shown in practice how a bonus or "incentive" plan can be used by the bosses to make labor cut its own throat.

All Buffalo workers are watching with keen interest the struggle of the Curtiss men and women with the WLB for a just living wage. All realize that a victory for the Curtiss workers is a victory for all workers and particularly those in aircraft. Bell workers in particular are interested in this struggle because the Bell demands have also been certified to the WLB, and they understand that unless the infamous wage-freeze policy of the WLB is smashed all workers will be helpless before the zooming cost of living.

## The Coal Miners Are Right -- Give Them Your Support!

(Continued from page 1)

"In constant communication with certain political figures in Washington and from them receive encouragement to deny the coal miners of the country an increase in wages."

We agree, and the workers of the country should know that the miners speak the truth when they say of the War Labor Board that it "wields the headsman's axe against the workers of the country. It has fallen to a low estate. It has breached its agreement with labor when it publicly substituted political expediency for equity in the settlement of disputes. The board is malignant in its prejudice against the United

Mine Workers of America and its members. The board has already rendered a decision in the mine workers' case. Its chief headsman so announced again on Saturday, April 24, when he said that the board would follow its ritualistic limitations in deciding the mine workers' case."

This is a correct statement of the case except it must be pointed out that this WLB really never had any "agreement" with labor. How could this outfit of big business men, lawyers and college professors ("the public") have a genuine agreement with labor? The labor members of the board have no influence. The

majority of them have only been captives of the board majority, which was composed of the business men and their stooges, the college professors.

It was a tragic situation which developed when labor permitted its leaders to drag the whole labor movement into the web of the WLB, this "discredited political agency" as it is called in the statement of the UMWA Policy Committee.

For at least six months the leaders of the AFL and the CIO have been expressing mild objections to the policy and procedure of the WLB. Such stink surrounds this outfit that even Murray and Green have had to

hold their noses. And yet they have been telling labor that they must hold on to the WLB. The AFL and CIO leaders retained their back row seats on the board.

Why should labor hold on to the WLB? All that the CIO and AFL leaders can answer is that "it is the best we've got." This should make any militant worker sick enough to vomit. Because it is a lie. This capitalist board isn't all that labor's got. In fact, it isn't anything that labor's got. This board belongs to the bosses and the Democratic Party. (If the Republican Party were the government, it would belong to the bosses

and the Republican Party. There's no difference.) Are Murray, Green and the other AFL-CIO bureaucrats too stupid to understand this?

The miners have some understanding of this matter. That's why they press their demands in the manner they do. They insist on collective bargaining with the employers and not with the WLB. They don't work for the WLB. Thirty thousand or more miners have already demonstrated their understanding of these questions by understanding their picks and shovels and refraining from trespassing on their employers' property.

The outcome of the first phase of

this struggle may be determined before LABOR ACTION appears again. We say the first phase because if the miners do not win this time they will not surrender. They will surely try again. We do not believe the Little Steel formula will stand. We do not believe that the Roosevelt wage decree will stand. The final decision must and will be rendered by the working class.

The mine workers have taken the lead. Murray, Green and the AFL-CIO leadership are wrong. Labor must march around and past this leadership, and give full support to the mine workers. THE MINERS ARE RIGHT!

# The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

## Cleveland Cops Try a Slander

Dear Editor:

Forty-four Cleveland workers were hauled into court this past week under charges of intoxication when found drinking in taverns instead of at work in war plants. This move, directed against "absenteeism," started with a great deal of publicity but for the last few days nothing has appeared about it in the newspapers. This seems strange, considering the nation-wide howl about absenteeism, but the reason for the sudden silence soon becomes apparent. The results of the raids weren't so hot. Thousands and thousands of war workers in Cleveland, and only a measly forty-four fish in the net. And here's the pay-off: only sixteen could be connected at all with war work!

Militant workers in Cleveland, needless to say, are angry about the whole business and resent very much

being treated as runaway slaves. The whole business smells of Hitlerism.

It isn't enough to rob the working class left and right through taxes and high prices. Adding insult to injury, the bosses have their cops raid the saloons, and thus imply that working men are all drunken bums.

This drive in Cleveland, of course, is part of the general scheme of the bosses to palm off on the workers the blame for the mess that war production is in. The screams about absenteeism are camouflage for the chaotic inefficiency of the boss system and are part of their plan to increase their criminal war profits. Standard Oil, Anaconda Copper and Carnegie-Illinois scandals have demonstrated amply who is to blame for lack of production.

If the workers had control of industry, such murderous bungling could not occur, and the fake hue and cry about absenteeism would not be heard. Drafting war industry under workers' control is imperative,

and stupid slander campaigns such as the one tried here in Cleveland only hasten the day.

L. Campbell (April 22).

## Men's Lives Depend On Faulty Steel

Dear Editor:

The Truman Committee revelation that U.S. Steel has faked tests of the steel it produces explains structural failings of many Great Lakes ore carriers that have been commissioned since the war started. There are also indications that the steel now being used in construction of ore boats is of the same defective and inferior quality.

The Truman Committee reported that a great deal of this defective steel is going into maritime boat construction. Great Lakes boat construction falls into this category. There are many facts which tend to prove that this inferior steel has

been the cause of hitherto "unexplained" mishaps these new boats have experienced.

Last fall a carrier, in service but a few months, nearly sank during a squall on one of the lakes. This particular vessel cracked through the double construction the entire way around, with the exception of the top deck. To quote a sailor on board at that time: "The spar deck was all that held her together.... We thought she would sink any minute." Luckily the boat reached a nearby port and was temporarily repaired. Later it was put into drydock and the entire section rebuilt.

Workers in the yards building these ore boats have a great deal to say about the quality of the materials going into their construction. Some of the plates won't stand up under bending, although they are bent while red hot. Welders working on this material claim they can determine when they are working on inferior metal by the way it takes the weld. They report that some of

the steel "just does not act the way it should." It is common knowledge that many plates crack even before the hulls are launched.

Needless to say, the lives of the men who must sail these vessels are greatly endangered. With heavier loads there is a double danger. Inferior steel is only one more danger to confront the Great Lakes sailors. In their rush for profits the shipping companies (in some cases this self-same U.S. Steel Co.) are violating many of the safety standards that were so hard won by the sailors in past years.

Operating the carriers before and after the normal season is another terrific risk the workers are forced to take. Last fall took a heavy toll. This spring many (thirty to forty) boats were trapped in ice flows due to "rushing" the season. The exact outcome of these newly perpetrated dangers to the sailors is yet to be seen.

The organized seamen must investigate these new dangers and take

steps to wipe them out. The bosses must be prevented from sacrificing additional men to enhance their profits under the guise of the "war effort."

Great Lakes Shipyard Worker.

*Europe in Revolt*

*A Review of Political Events*

**EUROPEAN WORKERS FIGHT LABOR CONSCRIPTION**

In recent months the Nazis have accelerated the drive to conscript foreign workers for work in German armament factories. As the Nazis prepare for a new offensive in Russia and prepare to resist an Allied invasion, and as they must keep huge armies all over Europe to repress the subjugated peoples, they are forced to replace the mobilized German workers by foreign slave labor.

From nearly every European country in which the labor draft has recently been introduced come reports of workers' resistance. Here are two typical reports, one from Czechoslovakia and one from Belgium:

Conscription of Czechs for labor in the Reich has met with resistance of many kinds. Crowds demonstrate in front of labor exchanges and, in one Prague suburb, finally broke into the offices and destroyed the card catalogue on which the mobilization is based. Women have been taking their children with them to the labor exchange in order to prove that they have dependents, and to create a commotion. The Prague radio has repeatedly warned people not to go to the exchanges in groups, and ordered women to leave their babies at home.

In one Moravian town, all the stores closed on the day that several hundred young men were to leave for labor in Germany. Half the pop-

ulation went to the station and many of the conscripted took this opportunity to break away and hide in the crowd.

The Swedish paper, *Ny Dag*, of March 9, reports that the Nazi occupying authorities in Belgium ordered 1,200 workers from a large Charleroi metal factory to work in Germany. In protest against this order, all 4,500 workers struck. Striking workmen and employees visited other factories, inciting the workers to show solidarity. The Germans proposed to make an agreement with them whereby only 400 workers were to be sent to Germany, but the strike continued. The next day the workers of the chief factories struck. Work was started again only when the field police arrived, armed with machine guns and threatening to shoot.

Resistance is not limited to conscription. Those workers who are finally forced to work in Germany keep up their fight. A recent report from Italian socialist sources stated: "In Dresden (Germany), five Italian workers, commandeered to forced labor in Germany, asked for higher wages. The Nazis wanted to turn them over to the Italian authorities. When they refused to go back to Italy, the Nazis did the job for Mussolini. Their firing squad executed the five workers without trial."

**ANTI-NAZI MANIFESTATIONS AT MUNICH UNIVERSITY**

The New York Times correspondent in Stockholm cables the following story to his paper. We have no way to check on its accuracy, but this correspondent's reports heretofore have proved reliable. We reprint it here without further comment:

"The pictorial weekly *Veckojournalen* reports that the three Munich University students were executed for spreading anti-Nazi tracts.

"The weekly asserts the victims were a medical student, Sergeant Hans Scholl, veteran of Stalingrad and son of an official of Ulm; his sister, Maria Scholl, a philosophical student, and another medical student, Private Adrian Probst.

"They were guillotined after Gausleiter Gieseler of Munich had demanded that they be publicly hanged on the campus.

"The background of the incident was reported as follows:

"Gausleiter Gieseler in a speech at a university festival February 11 denounced women students for using studies as a pretext to escape war service and declared in an insulting fashion that if they did not want to work in munitions factories they ought at least to bear children, without marriage.

"The women students retorted with

jeers and men students formed lines protecting the girls when policemen charged. A riot ensued in front of the university.

"The following day Munich house walls bore the inscription: 'Revenge for Stalingrad! We want our liberty back!'

"The student body issued two tracts, one an appeal to men and girl students, protesting against Nazism and its suppression of individual thinking and the free expression of opinion and also against the attempt to force uniformity on students.

"The tract praised the men for protecting the girl students and called for a fight to recapture the right of the individual to decide his own destiny, 'without which no spiritual values can be created.'

"The tract concludes with a call to battle against the Nazi Party by resigning from Nazi organizations and by refusing to attend lectures by pro-Nazis. The war was condemned and German youths were urged to establish a new Europe. 'A new faith in liberty and honor dawned,' it said.

"The university was occupied by the police and the schools and probst were arrested for distributing the tracts. They were tried the next day on charges of 'favoring the enemy.'"

**Of Special Interest To Women**

By Susan Green

Much of the chopped beef being sold these days contains seventy-five per cent of fat and twenty-five per cent of meat—whereas the proportions should be the reverse.

Do you suppose that the salvage fat the housewife is urged to turn over to the butcher finds its way back to her table in the chopped beef she buys—and at a price?

It's a wonderful thing to be a banker. It gives a body all sorts of privileges, as we all know—even the privilege of being considered a food expert.

For, lo and behold, Chester C. Davis, appointed by President Roosevelt to become food production and distribution administrator and elbow Wickard out of the way, is former president of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank. And...

Jesse W. Tapp, appointed by Chester C. Davis as his associate administrator, is vice-president of the Bank of America.

WHOSE INTERESTS ARE THESE BANKERS GOING TO LOOK AFTER?

Eighty-one per cent of all the packaged flour produced in this country comes from the mills of sixteen large flour corporations. These giant corporations consequently control the market—and, we are informed by the Department of Justice, they have abolished sordid competitive prices in favor of monopoly prices...at all the market will bear!

How the itch for profits brings the capitalists of the nation together—indeed a touching example of national unity!

Less than one-third of the women employed in manufacturing industries average \$35 a week. These are mainly the better-paid women in the metal-working industries. The largest number of women workers are still to be found in the textile and apparel industries, where their wages are about \$20 a week in textile, and about \$22 in apparel. The thousands of women working in laundries, dry cleaning, beauty shops, hotels, restaurants and other "service" industries earn much less. In the twenty-six states where the minimum wage law is supposed to apply to women, plenty of firms disobey the law with impunity.

The above summary well describes, at least one aspect of the "American way of life" that no underpaid woman worker considers worth preserving. Union organization and militant action are wanted

to effect a quick improvement for the millions of underpaid women workers.

Almost three months ago women war workers of the UAW-CIO met in Detroit to discuss the specific problems facing them as women workers.

They passed some excellent resolutions. Among them were those calling for the up-grading plan in plants for women workers, for the enforcement and extension of equal-pay-for-equal-work, for hiring more Negro women in the plants—to cite only a few of the urgent demands contained in resolutions.

It is time to check. What has been done in the three months since the meeting set itself these tasks? Is there enough progress to date? Or is the situation more or less in status quo?

Merely passing resolutions—no matter how fine they are—is not, as the saying goes, "cooking with gas." In the field of union accomplishments, "cooking with gas" implies a readiness to back up good resolutions with militant action.

The wastage of human life by war cannot be measured by the casualty lists alone. There is also plenty of human sacrifice on the home front, as evidence by the mounting number of industrial accidents. And most tragic of all is the wastage of child life.

Hundreds of thousands of children under 14 and 15 are in industry and agriculture, either full or part time. Millions under 16 and 17 are now wage workers, but at shamefully low wages. Child labor laws have become mere scraps of paper. Boys and girls are working during the day or at night, on hazardous jobs, at machines they do not understand, sapped by fatigue and trapped into accidents and death.

Even younger children are going to work. Teachers report increased absences from school and tell how illegally employed school children fall asleep in class because of exhaustion.

The bosses, who are getting greater profits on the much lower wages of children, are now pressing to put the cloak of legality on their evil practices. All sorts of bills are before state legislatures to legalize the vilest exploitation of child labor. One bill calls for permission to put children on graveyard shifts. One would excuse children of twelve from school for "any occupation directly or indirectly engaged in or connected with the war effort."

While the bosses are permitted to decimate the children on the altar of profit, millions of able-bodied adult workers cannot find jobs—BECAUSE OF RACE DISCRIMINATION. The largest group discriminated against are the Negroes. There are also plenty of Jews in the same boat, as well as other nationalities at present in disfavor.

**The Reasons Behind the Russo-Polish Break Have Little to Do With the Smolensk Corpses**

By MAX SHACHTMAN

The severance of Russo-Polish diplomatic relations by the Kremlin has thrown a beam of light on another corner of imperialist policy in the war.

The immediate cause of the break appeared to be the action of the so-called Polish Government-in-exile on the story spread by the Nazis that the Russians had killed several thousand Polish officers, who were their prisoners in Smolensk in 1940. The Sikorski "government" in London reacted to the story by proposing that the International Red Cross in Geneva conduct an impartial investigation of the Nazi charges against the Russians.

The embarrassed Red Cross officials barred with a decision to undertake an investigation, provided they were called upon to do so by all the interested parties. With one of the interested parties, Russia, categorically denying the Nazi charge, and just as flatly rejecting an investigation, the Red Cross was able to duck the problem more or less gracefully. The continued insistence of the Polish Council in London finally produced the Molotov note to its ambassador in Moscow breaking off all relations.

**A Convenient Pretext**

The Smolensk story is nevertheless only a convenient pretext that climaxes a conflict that has been smoldering for several years, with occasional outbreaks no less spectacular than the recent Moscow action. Whether or not the Nazi story is true cannot now be told. No one is idiotic enough to take the word of Hitler's professional liars.

Besides, even if they are not lying this time, which is more than doubtful in face of their well-established record, it takes a most impressive amount of gall for Hitler, Goebbels & Co. to appear before the world with a look of horrified indignation on their faces over the alleged massacre of the Polish officers.

They have been engaged, since they took power in Germany in 1933, and especially since the outbreak of World War II, in the wholesale murder of entire peoples. The soil of Poland is stuffed with the bodies of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Hitler's victims, defenseless civilians, old people and children, male and female, slain in masses by the fascist butchers. And Poland is not the only country the Nazi fiends have turned into a slaughterhouse. Hitler's avowed aim is not to leave a single Jew alive in Europe; it is an aim he has all but achieved. In lesser, but no less ghastly, degree, all the other peoples now ruled by German imperialism have suffered hellishly at the hands of the Nazis.

This does not mean that the Stalinist regime, whose methods differ in no important respect from those of

Hitler, is not capable of having committed the crime charged against it by the impudent hypocrites in Berlin. To accomplish its aims, the Stalinist bureaucracy in the past has not shrunk from uprooting whole populations from their homes and shipping them transcontinentally like cattle, or even from killing off by the thousands those who stood in its way. Its victims include nobody-knows-how-many tens of thousands of Poles and other peoples whom it exiled, during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact, to the God-forsaken holes in the Russian Empire.

The liberal and conservative apologists for Stalin in the United States and England prefer not to speak of these "trifles" today only because the Kremlin is now an ally of their own imperialist masters. But their silence does not change the facts in the least. Working class socialists have not begun to forget, either, the fact that Stalin cold-bloodedly framed up and murdered thousands of the best and most loyal revolutionary fighters in Russia during the period of the Moscow Trial atrocities.

All these facts permit the conclusion that Stalin's GPU was quite capable of wiping out the Polish officers, as the Nazis charge, just as the facts which are commonly known permit the conclusion that the Nazis may have done it themselves. The truth about the affair, in other words, is not to be found in the mere declarations of people who have been guilty time and again of frame-up, falsehood and mass murder. In this case, we have no reason to believe the accusers on either side. We can only wait until the actual facts are properly established.

**Sikorski's Aims**

Far more important than the ten or twelve thousand Polish officers

(the Nazi liars don't seem to be too sure of their figures) is the real reason for the break in relations between the Kremlin and Sikorski.

The Sikorski group in London is no more a government than the de Gaulle National Committee or the Giraud camarilla in North Africa. If anything, it has even less right to call itself a government. It was not chosen by the Polish people and is not representative of it. It is composed of as reactionary a gang of landowners, feudal barons, capitalists and militaristic thugs as ever disgraced and exploited long-suffering Poland. It is followed by a servile little clique of "socialists" falsely claiming to represent the Polish workers and peasants, who never authorized them to sit at the heels of Sikorski's crew of reactionaries and anti-Semites.

The people behind Sikorski & Co. have one interest and one only in the war, and that interest has as much to do with "democracy" or "national sovereignty" as rape has to do with love. They want only to restore their position of power and rule over the former Polish Empire. This means not only their rule over the Polish people but also over the millions of Ukrainians, White Russians, Jews and Lithuanians who were the particular objects of Polish oppression before the war. The record of that oppression is so vile that there are few democratic imperialists in England or the United States who are prepared to argue that they are for its restoration—and that is saying a lot, because these are people who are usually ready to reargue in favor of even the most reactionary idea of "their side."

Attempting to utilize the fact that they are now under British, and to a certain extent American patronage,

**The India of the Western Hemisphere**

**Puerto Rico Starves for Democracy**

By V. SEGUNDO

As we have seen in the preceding two articles of this series, the present misery of the Puerto Rican people is not a result of the war. On the contrary, malnutrition (a longer and less unpleasantly blunt name for starvation) has been the constant companion of American occupation. The causes are more fundamental than the Caribbean submarine campaign of the Nazis.

The basic cause, again, is that the land is owned by American corporations, which use it to plant sugar and other export crops. The food the jibaro eats must be imported. Any interruptions in the supply from the mainland is cause for immediate panic. A dock-workers' strike of several weeks can disrupt the entire island. For the island's economy is so top-heavy with profit-making crops for the American coupon-clippers that it needs no more than a slight breeze to topple over—onto the backs of the island workers.

And the war has been no slight breeze, but a hurricane rivaling the ones nature sends to ravage the island periodically. If we once understand that the war is not a FUNDAMENTAL cause of Puerto Rico's extreme poverty, we must then grant that it has aggravated the long-existing poverty to truly sub-human levels.

**Food and Shipping**

Before the war, shipping to Puerto Rico amounted to 100,000 tons per month. This was enough to keep the mass of the people genteelly undernourished, but not enough to give three squares to more than the resident Americans and a handful of island well-to-do. An island commission estimated that an absolute minimum of 56,000 tons—about half of the prewar shipping—was needed monthly. It could hardly be said that they were demanding a bottle of milk for every Hotentot.

Actually the War Shipping Board has allocated to the island trade only 30,000 tons monthly—less than a third of the normal trade. And this was after months of inaction, during which virtually no food at all went to the island. It is only during the last month or two that this minimum of 30,000 tons monthly has been exceeded.

The food, once it reaches Puerto Rico, is distributed by the Agricultural Marketing Administration, a federal agency. You might think that with so little food coming in, only necessities would be included. Actually much of the shipping is taken up with various luxury items. You might think that with so little food coming in, some measures for equitable distribution would be taken. Actually, as late as last January, there was no food ration, and there may still be none. The food goes to those who can pay the price. You

might think that a system of direct distribution would be set up. Actually it is all passed through the usual business channels of wholesalers, middlemen, retailers—all of whom make enormous profits for no contribution at all and many of whom were, and are, Franco sympathizers.

With this situation, prices, of course, have shot up. Between March, 1941, and March, 1943, the general cost of living is estimated to have risen by a third. But food prices—the most important for a starving population—increased by much more. Between the beginning of the war and last September there was a rise in food prices of 85 per cent. By the end of the year they went up by another 11 per cent. Staples—the food of the poor man—went up even more. Rice more than doubled its price. Coddish more than tripled. During the same period, wages rose by 30 per cent.

Wages rose by 20 per cent—but only for those who are working. Unemployment is now normalcy, and the man who can find work is so unusual as to seem almost a freak. By last September 160,000, or about 40 per cent of the working population, were out of work. Two and a half months later, in mid-November of last year, the figure had more than doubled. Eight out of every ten workers were then jobless. More recent figures are not available. It is probable that the situation is now slightly improved, but only slightly.

**What Has Been Done?**

This is one side of the scales of imperialism—the needs of the Puerto Rican workers. They are heavy. Against them now we must measure what has been done to alleviate the problem. It will be found to be very light.

One of the things is the shipping of 30,000 tons of food monthly to the island. This was done by the use of flotillas of small boats, mobilized for the purpose. One rather romantic newspaperman has compared it to the Dunquerque evacuation. But large ships, ships full of food, pass Puerto Rico every day. They would not have to be mobilized and sent over with Mr. Minnivers in charge. On the contrary, they need only permission to stop.

But these are not American ships. And under the coastwise shipping laws only American bottoms may ship from one port in the United States to another—including those in Puerto Rico. It will be remembered that immediately the occupation began this was one of the important means of impoverishing the island and enriching the American corporations. It continues to be that, and there is little chance that the Roosevelt government will change it merely because two million people are starving.

Some of the unemployed were absorbed by the WPA. The rolls jumped during last year from 18,000 to 33,000, and there was talk of authorizing 50,000. There was talk—but instead WPA was abolished!

There is talk of increasing the imports of sugar from Puerto Rico. It is badly needed, for the beet sugar crop is a half million tons under last year's yield. But here again, the principal problem—once the sugar beet lobby is dealt with—is shipping, and there seems to be no intention of dealing with the shipping lobby.

The Department of the Interior has a fund of \$15,000,000, appropriated by Congress for the benefit of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Alaska. Just what is being done with that money it has been impossible to find out. A plausible guess, considering the way the budget of every government department is weighted now, is that it is being used to maintain Army occupation. Certainly there is little evidence of its being used to help the Puerto Rican people.

Governor Tugwell has instituted a program of revitalizing the local agricultural processing industry—particularly the manufacture of rum. So far it has hardly begun. "The chief current aspect," according to a recent New York Times story, is the construction of a glass factory, not yet completed, to make bottles.

Tugwell also has been talking about breaking up the large estates. But this is so important that a discussion of it must be deferred to the next article.

The relief of the unemployed has rested principally on the island administration. At a special session, the Legislature appropriated \$10,000,000 for relief, and 70 per cent of the tax on rum—one of the main sources of income—is ear-

marked for relief purposes. But this is as nothing compared with the problem. The estimated cost of the very mild, minimum program of relief suggested by Munoz Marin, Puerto Rican senator, is \$50,000,000. Where it is supposed to come from, no one says. The House Committee on Agriculture approved legislation to provide \$15,000,000—but only on the condition that Tugwell be removed as governor.

**A Story of Morals**

In one of a series of articles on the island in the New York World Telegram, a correspondent told a story to illustrate the shiftlessness of the Puerto Ricans—how pointless it was to try to help them.

"A leading banker in a major city," he writes, "learned of a shipment of rice nearing the island. He knew of a reserve stock from which he was able to buy fifty pounds of rice for distribution among his servants. Five pounds he took to the family at his summer home.

"The next day he could not find his caretaker, but noticed great activity at the man's house. Investigating, he learned that the servant—riceless for more than a month and with no idea when or where there would be more—had boiled the entire five pounds, invited in all his friends, and was holding a fiesta."

Here is a story with several morals. Note that it was the banker who could get the rice. And the banker's servant yet maintained enough of the solidarity of the primitive communism that was once the economy of the island to invite in all his friends and neighbors. Certainly HE will never be a banker. For the banker, and the man who writes for the banker's newspaper, consider him crazy.

Stalin has made no effort to conceal his intention to rule the peoples he enslaved, with Hitler's aid, when the war is over. In fact, he has indicated that the Kremlin's imperialist program goes further than the conquests of 1939 and 1940, not only in Eastern Europe but also in Asia. His Anglo-American allies, of course, have been reluctant to agree to his program in advance. The result has been a half-open, half-concealed, game of jockeying for position between them.

Relations with His Allies

Stalin has demonstratively held off from too close collaboration with the United States and England, as exemplified by his studied insult to Roosevelt and Churchill on the occasion of the Casablanca Conference. His policy has been to say, in effect: "Sign my program of conquest now, or I shall remain stand-offish—or worse." By "worse," he means and can only mean, the threat of a separate peace or a less formal understanding with the ally who preceded England and the United States, namely, Germany. Stalin has no qualms about doing that once. If it suited his book, he would do it again without a minute's hesitation. All that would be funny in such a move would be the embarrassed chorus of

(Continued on page 4)

**In the April New International:**

LEON TROTSKY on "The Workers' State," with an introduction by Max Shachtman.

R. FAHAN on "The Struggle for Air Supremacy."

NOTES OF THE MONTH on "The Roosevelt Edit." Two discussion articles on the National Question: BEN HALL on "National Liberation and Fantasy"; J. R. JOHNSON on "The Way Out for Europe."

A discussion article by CLARA WERTH: "What About the German Revolution?"

KARL MINTER on "Whither Zionism? Whither Jewry—III."

ALFRED FREEMAN on "Appeasement in Theory and Practice."

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# Editorials

## Price Control

It would seem to be an impossibility—but the price situation gives every indication of becoming worse than it is now.

The OPA is reported (in the Newspaper PM) to have submitted to the White House a new plan for price control that weakens the already inept price control structure. Under this new plan present price ceilings, based on the highest prices charged in March, 1942, would be scrapped officially. (Unofficially they have already been scrapped—because prices have NOT been held to the March, 1942, level.) In place of the present arrangement, grocers would be permitted to calculate their prices on the basis of costs, plus a guaranteed profit. These ceiling prices, as arrived at by the grocer, would be refigured each week by the grocer. And, last, the grocer would not have to post ceiling prices.

Thus, by this plan, what little remains of effective price control under the OPA set-up—and that's mighty little!—would go completely out of the window. Here as throughout, the OPA is primarily motivated a deep concern for the profits of business.

It takes little argument to expose the disastrous effects this plan would have. Obviously, the already chaotic price situation would become ten-times more so. Price control would become a hundred times more difficult. We want, however, to pause for a moment over that one provision for cost-plus.

This is nothing new. Most of the government contracts with war industries provide for just that—cost-plus; that is, costs of production PLUS a guaranteed profit. And if the industry can pad its costs - - as several west-coast shipyards are charged with doing when they included contributions to charity in their costs!—so much the bigger the profits. The OPA proposes to extend this profit guarantee to the food industry.

How does it work out? Let us say the total cost of a given article to the grocer is \$1.00, and he operates his business on a government guaranteed profit of 30%. (Many retail businesses operate on that basis.) The cost to the consumer, barring the intervention of other factors which may raise or lower the price, would then be \$1.00, plus 30% of that dollar—or \$1.30.

Now, let us say that the cost of the article to the grocer is rigged up to \$1.50 (and remember there are no effective price controls over food distributors such as wholesalers, processors, etc.). The cost of that article to the consumer will not be \$1.50 plus the original 30c profit—which is scandalous enough. It will be \$1.50, plus 30% of that—or 45 cents—making a total price of \$1.85.

As you can see the opportunity for rigging prices here is substantial. And, what is more, it will all be done by government guaranteed profit. Add to this the simpler opportunities for chiselling and gouging opened by weekly changes in price ceilings,

by the absence of posted prices, and so forth—and you can see just who will benefit from the new plan. Certainly not the working-class consumer with his frozen and inadequate wages!

Like any other boss scheme of intention, it can be scotched in the making. If labor raises sufficient of a howl, this plan will never see the light of day. But that doesn't end our job. We've got to do something about the price situation as it is TODAY, while it is bad enough, and before it becomes worse.

## 'Aiding' Refugees

The right of asylum has always been one of the proudest boasts of democracy. In theory, it is one of the fundamental principles of democratic government. Yet note the scandal of the treatment of refugees by the great democracies, a scandal which is now reaching its climax in the Bermuda Conference.

First, Roosevelt sent the conference to Bermuda, where the press will have the greatest difficulty in covering it properly. This is in keeping with Roosevelt's increasingly displayed policy of keeping the public uninformed as to his anti-democratic war maneuvers.

Next, Hull, having called the conference, sent his representatives there without any policy, so that during the first days they could give no outline of procedure because they were "hammering it out."

**Why? Because the only serious policy you can put forward about refugees is to help them. All this secrecy stems from the fact that the great democracies are not going to do one thing except carry out face-saving intrigues and plots AGAINST the genuinely democratic elements among the refugees—such as the war veterans of the Spanish Civil War still held in concentration camps by Giraud and Eisenhower, who is Giraud's commander-in-chief.**

Scott Lucas, the chairman of the American delegation, and Osbert Peake, the British parliamentarian, say that much must not be expected—because they cannot deal with Hitler's victims during the war, and because there are practical difficulties in the way, such as lack of shipping. But when they were not at war with Hitler, and had plenty of shipping, they did just as little to help the refugees.

What prevented them helping the refugees? The same thing that makes them keep Spanish war veterans in jail, and the same thing that leads them to collaborate with Franco, Darlan, Giraud, Peyrouton and other pro-fascists. They fight only for their own imperialist interests, and are concerned with democratic right only so far as the masses act vigorously. The refugees will be helped when the workers insist that they be helped. Until then, except more hotbeds of intrigue and face-saving as in Bermuda.

# Save Us From These Noble "Friends of the Negro"

By J. R. JOHNSON

The Fair Employment Practices Committee has been in the news recently. After having had the run-around from Roosevelt to the pigeon-hole, Alderman Dickerson of Chicago has announced forthcoming sessions of the committee and claims that he will go ahead, come what may. It is a good move, or, to be more precise, a brave gesture.

But we have had braver gestures before, notably from one Philip Randolph, who announced and organized a March on Washington, only to turn tail and run as soon as Roosevelt shook the whip at him. The Negroes who have been fooled by Randolph will hardly be fooled again by Dickerson. What is required is mass action, not waiting on people like Walter White, Randolph and Dickerson.

What we wish to draw attention to here is the fact that Dickerson is not the chairman of the committee. The chairman is Mark Ethridge, a Southern white man, publisher of the Louisville Courier-Journal and a man who for years masqueraded as a "friend" of the Negro. He is the chief editorial writer of the Macon (Ga.) Telegraph and was praised frequently by The Nation, liberal New York weekly, as a determined defender of Negro rights in the South.

With this great reputation, St. Mark was appointed chairman of the FEPC. But the Negroes wanted their rights, and said so, whereupon Mark turned nasty and pro-

claimed that the South had no intention of lowering its barriers against the Negroes. He has since ceased to function, and his fakery is completely exposed.

Brother Virginius

To be bracketed with Mark is Virginius Dabney, another editorial writer in the South, and a great preacher of "fairer and saner treatment of our Negro citizens!" But Dabney's attitude toward Negroes is the same as that of the rich toward the poor: they will do everything for them except get off their backs.

Dabney has recently been writing of the Negro's struggle for democratic rights. He portrays the notorious Representative Rankin. Rankin, he says, is "notorious," he is "alarmist." Rankin says that communist agitators "are trying to pump Negro or Japanese blood into the veins of our wounded white boys regardless of the dire effect it might have on them or their children." In other words, according to Dabney, Rankin is a Hitlerite.

In Rankin's district, the Rev. James Arthur Parsons, a Negro, decided to run against Rankin for Congress. This in the year 1942, in the second year AD, which you may translate as the year of the great American war for Democracy. Parsons had to fly from Mississippi; in one week there were three lynchings in Mississippi, and Parsons abandoned his candidature. Thus endeth the first lesson.

Dabney's "Logic"

Dabney relates this shameful episode and then comments: "It is all very well to argue that Rankin is a

but-thumping demagogue of the first water; that this is a democracy; that a black man has as much right, under the Constitution, to aspire to Congress as a white man; and that if white Mississippians don't know that Negroes are citizens, it is high time they were taught the facts of life."

But, Dabney goes on: "Such an argument is logical if one wishes to ignore all the human factors involved, but those factors cannot be ignored." This hypocritical self-exposed soundrel wants the Negro's rights ignored, the Constitution ignored, the claim that America is fighting for democracy ignored. All that he does not want ignored are the prejudices of some white Mississippians, and Rankin's determination to use those prejudices to remain a congressman.

These two, St. Mark and Brother Virginius, have exposed themselves for what they are: Negro-baiters and Negro-haters, using sweet words and offering tidbits in order to keep the Negro where he is. Let us be on guard against all such. They are all around us, in white skins and in black, preaching submission, acquiescence, Uncle Tomism, under the guise of friendship for the Negro and sweet reason.

Out with them from the ranks of the Negro struggle. Let them stay where they belong: in the ranks of the capitalist exploiters. It is the duty of all not only to struggle for the democratic rights of the Negro, but to keep a vigilant eye and a sharp tongue ready to detect and denounce all these wolves in sheep's clothing.

# Behind Russo-Polish Break

(Continued from page 3)

apologies for the action by his so-called "communist" parties.

There is no doubt that Stalin has been worried by the counter-game played by his allies on their part, especially by the United States. He would be stupid indeed if he did not understand the significance of all the steps that have already been taken with the clear aim in view of preventing him from realizing Russia's imperialistic ambitions by protecting the no less imperialistic ambitions of England and the United States on the European continent.

He knows the meaning of U.S. support for Giraud as against de Gaulle, because the former is notoriously anti-Moscow. He knows the meaning of the support given Mikhailovitch in Serbia, as against the Partisan groups in which the Stalinists function and which they seem to control to a certain extent. He knows the meaning of the support given the ridiculous figure of Otto Habsburg, who wants to reconstitute the monarchy once known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire—now, as then, a barrier against Russia. Finally, he knows that under the circumstances, two can play the same game.

Naturally, Stalin must trim his sails to the wind. When affairs are going badly for him on the military front, and his dependence on Anglo-American aid is correspondingly greater, he confines his program and protests to sullen mutterings. He not only says nothing about the reactionary rule of the Churchills over India, but is silent about the reactionary rule of the Sikorskis over Poland.

But when his military front is in better shape, or when the military plans of his Anglo-American allies depend to a greater extent than before upon his cooperation, he becomes a lot bolder. His megaphones inside and outside Russia then speak a little less vaguely about the Kremlin's post-war demands. And he himself summons up enough courage to denounce and break with—the Polish imperialists. Not with the real and powerful British imperialists, who actually and presently oppress hundreds of millions of colonial slaves, but with the miserable skeleton of a Polish imperialist government which USED TO exploit and oppress and which WOULD LIKE TO do it again, but which now represents only ambition and not reality. Not Surprising

There is no reason for surprise or misunderstanding of the latest development. A resolution adopted several months ago by the National Committee of the Workers Party, and printed in the March, 1943, issue of The New Internationalist, contains the following paragraphs:

"With the first substantial (though by no means yet conclusive) victories over the Germans, the Stalinist bureaucracy is regaining its self-confidence. With regained self-confidence comes the release of repressed appetites and ambitions, and increased boldness in revealing aims and claims which the exigencies of yesterday's utter dependency upon the Anglo-American partners made it expedient to keep in the background. Obviously-

ly inspired by Moscow, trial balloons are already being sent up to see what the reaction would be to the demand that the bureaucracy will almost certainly put forward as soon as the military and political situations permit it, for its own imperialist, expansionist claims, in Eastern and Southern Europe and in the Orient. To think that, in the case of an Allied victory, the Stalinist will modestly declare that it has driven the invader off its territory, as of August, 1939, and that it is quite content with the restoration of those territorial boundaries, is to be utterly preposterous....

"England and the United States face an ally who does not hesitate to exploit differences between both of them, but follows as much of an independent policy as any of the partners in either of the two big war alliances tries to follow. The relationships with this partner, Russia, go from bad to worse (from the standpoint of Anglo-American imperialism) as the military situation goes from good to better (from the standpoint of Stalinist imperialism and vice versa. As the fear of a German victory diminishes, the demands of the Stalinist regime grow in scope and intensity of presentation, and the apprehensions of Anglo-American imperialism mount correspondingly. Moscow wants the annexation of at least part of Finland, the three small Baltic countries, Eastern Poland, Bessarabia and parts of Rumania, at least part of Manchuria, not less than three of the five northern provinces of China—or a 'protectorate' over these lands which is either the equivalent of annexation or a prologue to it—to say nothing of 'access to the Mediterranean' at Turkey's expense, 'access to the Persian Gulf' at Iran's expense, etc. This is not only indicated by the course of Russia's foreign policy, but has already been made fairly clear by the apologists and spokesmen for the Stalin regime in the USA. The achievement of this program would make Russia a formidable rival to the capitalist-imperialist powers on the European continent and in Asia. This fact is realized, beyond a doubt, both in Washington and in London; and also in Ankara, which requires constant assurances about Russia

from her allies, in the Polish emigre-government circles, which are split right down the middle on the question of Russia's post-war demands, in those Finnish circles which want to withdraw from the war with Russia but fear the consequences, and elsewhere."

What Next?

These are the fundamental factors behind the "Smolensk affair." The interests of the Nazis in driving deeper the wedge between the "United" Nations is, of course, obvious, so obvious that even the columnists understand it. Not so obvious are the fundamental interests of Russia on the one side, and the capitalist-imperialists on the other.

Will the break go deeper? Will it be extended? Without knowing all the details of what is going on behind the scenes, it is hard to say. But it does not seem likely. Anglo-American imperialism cannot afford an open break with Stalin right now. They may compel their vassals in the Sikorski "government", to capitulate to Kien. They may even go further and kick Sikorski & Co. off their payroll and out of existence altogether, and set up a puppet more amenable to Moscow's orders and demands.

If they do, or if they are obliged to make other concessions to appease the Kremlin bureaucracy, they will undoubtedly make a heavily-underlined record of it in their private notebooks as a step backward for which they expect or hope to make Stalin pay them back double at a stage of the war more favorable to them.

These are the methods and morals of imperialist diplomacy, and the only real claim the British and Americans can make is that Stalin is acting just as cynically and unscrupulously and shamelessly as they act, and as imperialists always have acted.

What about the gagged and fettered peoples, whom all these imperialists barter among themselves like so many herds of cattle? Their time will come. When it does come, when they spit out the gag and strike off their fetters, it will be judgment day for all the slave traders, Stalin not excluded.

## THE FUTURE:

### Expert Predicts Mass of Jobless

By Albert Gates

A very important survey on post-war prospects of production and employment has just been completed by S. Morris Livingston, head of the Department of Commerce's National Economic Unit. This survey forecasts mass unemployment at the end of the war, together with an increase in production. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this for every worker in the country.

Right now there is very little unemployment. The war economy has absorbed most of the population. At the beginning of this year there were only one million unemployed! One million unemployed at the height of war production! But this is a low figure when one recalls that in 1940 there were still almost nine million unemployed!

The mass of workers realize that their present employment and wages, offset by the extremely high cost of living, cannot last beyond the war. They are opposed to the Roosevelt edict freezing wages, not only because it is unfair when compared to the enormous profits of big business, but because they realize that if they do not get a living wage now, they will be doomed as soon as the war is over.

This feeling of the worker, based on the experiences of the FIRST WORLD WAR, is not just a mystic belief. Every intelligent observer knows that the worker faces mass unemployment, and the heartaches of WPA and relief.

But Mr. Livingston, a government functionary, demonstrates that unemployment is not a mere possibility after the war, but a dead certainty. He writes that by 1946, if the war is over by then, the capacity to produce with available manpower will be fifteen to twenty per cent greater than in 1940, and ACTUAL OUTPUT will be forty to fifty per cent greater than in 1940. When the war is over the majority of the goods now produced will no longer be required. That means that "the nation's output after the war must substantially exceed the 1940 level if unemployment is to be held within reasonable bounds."

Estimating a total labor force of approximately 59,500,000 in 1946, Mr. Livingston says that there will be a NORMAL army of unemployed of two million. But there has been vast technological progress; which is leading to a highly increased productivity: Mr. Livingston writes:

"Assuming only a continuation of the past trend, the output per man-hour in 1946 will be 13.5 per cent greater than in 1941 and twenty per cent greater than in 1940.... Combining the potential increase in man-hours of employment and the projected increase in output per man-hour, the potential output of available manpower in 1946 would be twenty-five per cent greater than the actual output in 1941 and forty-six per cent above 1940."

Speaking of a reduction of the unemployed army in 1943 to one million, he says that "it is better than we can hope for during a peacetime year." All of which means that, once the war ends, the tremendous employment which exists now, will end.

The conclusion is obvious, and is the essential point of the study made by Mr. Livingston: a mass army of unemployed. Workers on steady jobs today, earning relatively large wages, have nothing to show for their work. The high cost of living, already out of line with income, increased taxation and forced savings, drain everything the workers earn. They won't have anything to lay over for a "rainy day."

There are many reasons why the Roosevelt program should be rejected by the workers and their trade union organizations, but the prospect of mass unemployment and utter insecurity which will follow the close of the war, assuming that it will be over in 1946, is one of the best reasons why the workers must fight on now for their basic needs.

Mr. Murray said that "the United States is confronted with mass unemployment today and the next few months" due to the overproduction of war materials, which "are far more than the United Nations can use or the United States transport."

He estimated that within the next three months 650,000 workers will be idle because of layoffs caused by overproduction. In a bomb plant in McKeesport, Pa., seventy-five per cent of the workers are expected to be turned out because right now there are six times more bombs than the United Nations can use. Another instance he gave is that of 25,000 aircraft workers who will be fired because of the overproduction of certain types of planes.

Mr. Murray further called attention to the fact that 1,500,000 construction workers will be unemployed because of the discontinuance of all building construction for the duration. A consequence of this stoppage will be that some 20,000 steel workers producing heavy steel beams will be laid off.

## 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.
- Wage 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. 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!
- Conscrip all war industries under workers' control!
- Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the three per cent 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 vigilante 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 imperialist and fascist barbarism!

## THE PAMPHLET OF THE HOUR:

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