

Crucial Problems Face Workers at UAW Convention

By ALBERT GATES

On October 4, in the city of Buffalo, the United Automobile Workers will hold its eighth annual convention. In many respects this is the most important convention of the union, for it is confronted with issues of such a crucial nature that the very life of the organization is dependent upon a positive, militant solution of them—in the best tradition of the UAW.

The United Automobile Workers is the largest union in the country and stands near the very top of the honor roll of labor action and achievement. It was born out of struggle, it grew in struggle and its future depends upon the same spirit which gave it birth.

Before this country became a participant in the war, the United Automobile Workers was dominated by a more or less consistent aim: to build the union, to make it the largest union in the world, to make it the most democratic union, the most militant union, and a model of working class struggle and devotion to the cause of all the toilers in America and the world over.

UNION GREW BY MILITANCY

To a considerable extent, the union met its test by resolutely carrying out its main tasks. In order to build the union, the militant automobile workers had to break with the conservative, do-nothing unions of the AFL. Having rid itself of this head hand, which stood in the way of building a mass union in the auto industry, the UAW developed with giant strides. But it did so by its struggle against a band of rapacious, monopolistic automobile magnates who had, prior to that time, built a mass industry and "earned" enormous profits off the toil of an unorganized and severely exploited automobile workers, who suffered the most vicious speed-ups and "incentive" schemes invented by these same auto barons.

The wave of sit-downs and strikes let the world of labor know that there was a mass of workers, sick and tired of the old game, ready to organize themselves to defend their very life's interest. The union won its fight and it grew to mass proportions. But every rank and file automobile worker knows that the union grew, not because it compromised itself or flinched before the terror of the auto plutocracy and its hired agents, but because it fought back hard and resisted, by its own organization and program, the organized forces of reaction.

It not only got recognition for its union, but it recorded tremendous gains for the auto workers.

THE EFFECTS OF THE WAR

With America's entry into the war, the UAW faced a new situation and a series of new problems which affected the entire labor movement.

The conversion of the auto industry to war production, and the placing of the whole country on a war footing, exacted its toll of the labor movement in the same proportion that it enriched industry and the profit-bloated bosses.

What, then, are the main issues which confront the auto workers as they prepare for their annual convention. They are several and they relate to the tasks of the union in relation to the industry, and the problems inside the union itself. As we see it, they are the following:

WHAT THE NO-STRIKE PLEDGE HAS MEANT

1. Upon the insistence of Roosevelt, the labor unions, through their officials, and without consulting the rank and file, adopted the no-strike pledge. In the UAW this proposal was adopted, but only after a bitter fight made by the militant rank and file and on the basis of the following: The workers were PROMISED that in exchange for their cooperation, the Administration would give labor a "square deal." Industry would not take advantage of the surrender of the strike weapon; it would conform to its agreements; collective bargaining would remain in force.

Moreover, the President PROMISED that there would be no war profiteering and no new war millionaires. He added that while the workers could not hope to take advantage of the war for nation-wide wage increases, he promised that the cost of living would be kept down mainly by preventing an uncontrolled rise in prices.

What has actually happened? Industry, that is to say, the bosses, gave up nothing. On the contrary, big business has enriched itself as never before as a result of the war economy. This is especially true of the auto industry.

Prices have not been controlled; the cost of living has risen steadily for the past three years. Wages have been frozen under the President's hold-the-line order. Some workers have received wage increases, but in the main increased payrolls have come as a result of long hours of work, the increased length of the work week.

In addition, the bosses have taken advantage of the no-strike pledge to badger the unions and hinder collective bargaining. They have stalled on re-classifications, upgrading, and wage increases. They have sought under the conditions created by the war and the way the union movement has been hamstrung by its leaderships, to destroy the unions. This, then, is the greatest danger which faces the working class in general, and the auto workers in particular.

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Italian Workers In General Strike

Latest reports from Italy disclose that German military forces are occupying the important cities of the North for the purpose of taking over civilian rule. The results of intensive bombing, coupled with the complete ineptitude of the Badoglio regime, continue to bring the mass of workers into the streets. It is to meet this threat of the militant Italian workers that the Germans have decided to take over complete rule.

The Italian masses, in their revolutionary reawakening, threaten not only their own ruling class, but the representatives of German fascism and any force which will stand in their way toward liberation.

At the same time that the press has reported the action of the German armies, it was announced that a general strike was being prepared by "the new Left Wing coalition, Giustizia e Libertà." The strike has already begun. Conditions are so chaotic in Northern cities that the so-called government of Badoglio is unable to do anything about it.

But even in other districts where the strike has spread, the New York Times reports that "the government attempted to intervene, without invariable success."

A showdown between the Italian masses, led by the working class, and the decrepit regime of the King and his Marshal, is well on the way. The proclamation of the "Left Wing coalition" called for immediate action to suppress "the Badoglio dictatorship, which is fascism without (Benito) Mussolini."

The four demands of the proclamation are presented to indicate the sharpening situation in the country:

1. Immediate interruption of the war.
2. Immediate liberation of all political prisoners under a general amnesty.
3. Suppression of the monarchy.
4. Freedom of the press and liberty for political and syndicalist activity.

This is only the beginning. The Italian workers are moving toward a final conflict with the present regime which must end with its overthrow.

LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 23, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

Workers, Here Is How to Get--

A COST-PLUS WAGE!

By MAX SHACHTMAN

National Secretary, Workers Party

PART TWO

How is the standard of living of the workers taken care of? What is done to meet the rising cost of living that is gnawing away steadily at the standards of American labor?

The capitalists have a carefully-worked-out SYSTEM that takes care of their rising costs, no matter how high they go. That is, as we said before, the COST-PLUS system. They don't have to worry, during peacetime or wartime, about how high the cost of land goes, how high the cost of raw materials goes, how high the cost of machinery and maintenance goes. These costs are covered in their contracts with the government right now. They produce on a COST-PLUS basis—they get whatever it costs them, PLUS a profit.

That is why, as we have pointed out, the capitalists, especially the big, monopolistic corporations, cannot lose.

What They Say to Labor

To the workers, however, the corporations say: "If your costs (that is, the cost of living) go up, that's just too bad. These are hard times. We are all in the same boat. Tighten your belt. Sacrifice for your country. After the war, we will have our huge profits and our carefully-accumulated reserve funds. You will have to be content with a dole, if you can get it. That's the system of free enterprise."

To the workers, the government says: "If your costs go up, that's too bad. There isn't much we can do for you. These are hard times. Tighten your belt. Sacrifice for your country. We are too busy covering the rising costs of the corporations and guaranteeing their profits on the wonderful system of COST-PLUS. What we can do is to promise to roll back prices. Our promises thus far haven't been worth the paper they were written on. But have faith in God and Roosevelt and the system of free enterprise."

To the workers, the labor leaders say: "If your costs go up, that's too bad. There isn't much we can do for you except to run around from one flunkey in Washington to another, begging for a few little scraps for labor. Next month, maybe, we will see the President, or the Vice-President, or a congressman, or his second assistant secretary, and we will try to put in a good word for you. Meanwhile, have patience and, above all, don't try to get back your most powerful weapon of self-defense, the right to strike. Your best bet is to lay on your back like a dead dog, get up to vote for Roosevelt again next year, and pray that somehow all will turn out well in the end."

To the workers, the Communist Party leaders say: "If your costs go up, we have a magnificent solution to your problem. Work harder! Work

longer hours! Speed up till you fall off your feet, and your arms and brains are numb with fatigue! If your present wages do not meet the rising cost of living, you can increase your income by 'incentive pay,' that is, by the good old sweat-shop system, the speed-up system, by doing two jobs where you used to do one. Tighten your belt. Sacrifice for your country. All-out for war and victory. And, above everything else, all-out to assure the power and the victory of the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy, which is our real master."

These are the answers the capitalists, their government, the official labor leaders and the Stalinist bureaucrats give to the burning problem of the rising cost of living.

All of them boil down to one thing: The workers must carry an ever-heavier burden so that the capitalists may carry off ever-heavier profits. They give an anti-labor answer. What is a labor answer?

Labor must work out its own bold plan for a "COST-PLUS WAGE" and fight with all its organized power and determination to get it.

What is a COST-PLUS WAGE?

It is the simplest thing imaginable.

We have seen what the COST-PLUS SYSTEM is for the capitalists. If their costs go up, they are covered in the contract, PLUS their profit. How big a profit? As big as their organized strength enables them to get. If they are small and weak capitalists, they must be content for the time being with a "small" profit. If they are big and powerful capitalists, they are content only with the biggest possible profit. But always AFTER their COSTS have been covered.

The Cost-Plus Wage

A COST-PLUS WAGE is simply the application of this system to the workers!

How? By contracts which provide that wherever and whenever the cost of living goes up, wages are automatically increased to cover the increase, PLUS an additional sum which allows for minimum comforts above a mere subsistence level. We will see later just how high the PLUS can and should be for labor.

What measuring stick can be used to determine the cost of living and its rise? "Everybody" gives different figures on the cost of living and the extent to which it has risen. Which figures would be taken? That sounds like an insurmountable difficulty, an unanswerable objection. But it is nothing of the kind.

The capitalists find no serious difficulty in establishing what THEIR costs are, and the extent to which they have risen, whether the rise is real or only faked up in their swindle-books. They argue it out with their "employer," the government, or with its "adjusters," and they finally come to terms which are more or less satisfactory. They must be

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New Wage Attacks Planned By Congress in '44 Tax Bill

By GERTRUDE SHAW

When Congress reconvenes in the fall, one of the first things it is going to take up is a new tax law. While Congress is vacationing, the ground is being prepared for heavier taxes — ON LABOR.

The President states that the government must have at least twelve billion dollars more revenue, and he generally assures us that we aren't going to mind paying it — NOT MUCH!

Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau puts out all kinds of charts to show that the British and Canadians pay higher income taxes than we do. SO BE PREPARED!

Representatives and senators are stating their points of view on this and that aspect of new taxation, from which we get a pretty good idea of the way this evil wind is blowing.

The rate of income tax on incomes below \$10,000 is going to be raised.

Exemptions for family status and dependents will very likely be decreased.

A compulsory saving feature may be included in the new bill.

Senator Byrd of the Senate Finance Committee has expressed himself in favor of a "stiff" SALES TAX.

There is even talk of an "excess profits" TAX ON WAR WAGES—in line with the lying boss propaganda that not the bosses but the workers are the war profiteers!

Thus the long hand of the capitalist government will reach deeper into the slack pockets of the workers. HOWEVER, INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE NEW TAX BILL WILL CONTINUE HANDLING THE WAR-FATTENED BOSSES WITH KID GLOVES.

Washington correspondents are cautiously dropping bits of opinion to the effect that the big boys of business will not be made to "suffer" by the new tax bill.

The present excess profits tax set-up, which allows the big corporations and the wealthy to get away with their bloody war swag, will probably remain as is.

The allowances to big business for

so-called depletions and for this and that, will continue.

The exemptions to holders of certain kinds of securities and other forms of wealth will stand.

Bernard Baruch, supposed-to-be wizard on war economy, some time ago made the statement: "Even with a fixed price structure and a high excess profits tax there will be HUGE war profits." However—

There is no high excess profits tax. The excess profits tax machinery is a network of convenient holes. And there is no fixed price structure. We all know that.

Therefore, war profits are not only "huge"—a la Baruch. They are super-colossal—a la Roosevelt. AND ALL PREDICTIONS ARE THAT THE NEW TAX BILL WILL ALLOW THEM TO REMAIN SUPER-COLOSSAL.

On the other hand, what's going to happen to workers' wages if the contemplated tax bill is passed? What will be left to the worker's family to live on when MORE THAN twenty per cent will be sliced off his wages each week?

What will be left of that when a definite compulsory percentage will be taken off for so-called saving or bond purchases every week WITHOUT FAIL?

What will be left for buying the necessities of life at war profiteering prices TO WHICH A SALES TAX WILL BE ADDED?

What will be left even to the highest paid workers after all these inroads into their wages PLUS A POSSIBLE "EXCESS PROFITS" TAX because they get a little more than the average wage?

THESE ARE TERRIBLE PROSPECTS FOR THE AMERICAN WORKING PEOPLE.

What is union labor going to do in the face of this newest threat? Will labor allow the fast one that is being put over on it to get faster with each passing year? Will labor continue to be the sucker for the rich? The working class must save itself from the swamp of relentless war exploitation into which we are all being pushed. If justice were done, the workers would pay no cent of war taxes.

Chrysler Workers, Take Notice!

The Chrysler Corporation profit figures for the first six months of 1943 show an increase of forty-three per cent over the same period last year! For the first half of 1943 the net profits are \$12,537,350, after deducting \$25,450,000 for taxes and \$6,000,000 for post-war "rehabilitation." For the same period in 1942 profits were \$8,770,006.

Someone Tell Mr. Wallace

Speaking in Ecuador, Vice-President Henry A. Wallace declared: "If this sacrifice (referring to the war) of blood and strength again brings a concentration of riches in the hands of a few—great fortunes for the privileged and misery and poverty for the people in general—then democracy will have failed, and all this sacrifice will have been in vain."

As a matter of fact, there is no "if" about it. That is exactly what the war has brought—not, will bring. Big business does profit! There is a new class of war millionaires! There are "great fortunes for the privileged and misery and poverty for the people in general."

It only happens that Mr. Wallace is out of tune with the rest of the Administration, with the dollar-a-year business men who serve the interests of their corporations, with the whole kit and kaboodle of the big business world.

And all of this doesn't mean that democracy has failed. It only means that capitalist democracy has failed (for the people)—for capitalist democracy means democracy and rights and privileges for financiers, industrialists and the whole gang of profiteers who live off the backs of the people.

Under socialism, democracy would be something else again. There would not be a class of parasitic profiteers who live by exploiting other people. It couldn't be, because, under socialism, Mr. Wallace, there would be no such thing as private ownership of the means of life (factories, mills, mines, ships, etc.) and no one would or could have the right to profit off the labor of others.

Under socialist democracy, these would be owned socially by the people, and production would be carried on for use, for the needs of the people, and not for profit, as suits the needs and interests of a selfish minority of capitalists.

The Vice-President is obviously a disappointed man. He sees things going the wrong way. But he doesn't know what to do about it. More important, he doesn't quite know what he wants and how to get it. The good life about which he writes and speaks cannot come under capitalism, at any rate, and anyone who thinks it can must suffer his disappointments.

Profits--and More Profits

Despite the "biggest corporate tax bill in the world's history," there has been no halting of the profits of big business. The most recent reports indicate that the figures previously published in LABOR ACTION underestimated the present "take" of all industries and services connected with war production.

There are two reports of interest, one by the National City Bank of New York and the other by Randolph Paul, general counsel for the Treasury Department.

They do not dispute the fact that enormous war profits are made by the American capitalists; they merely disagree as to the size of these profits, both admitting that they are very high!

According to the National City Bank, corporate income for the year 1943, AFTER TAXES, is running fourteen per cent higher than the high year of 1942! This is the figure after an analysis made of 340 industrial corporations.

Here is how the bank lined them up:

Two hundred and eighty-four manufacturing companies reported a 14.4 per cent increase in income over last year.

Stone, clay and glass profits were up 69.7 per cent.

Automobile profits were up 37.2 per cent.

Miscellaneous manufacturers profits were up 46.9 per cent.

Railroad profits were thirty-two per cent over last year, which was a peak for the railroad monopolies. Even public utilities, considered a "stable" enterprise, showed a jump of six per cent in profits over last year.

Says PM: "The bank admitted that these profit figures were probably conservative compared with tax returns, because in their published statements the corporations have deducted huge reserves not allowed as tax deductions."

But Randolph Paul, in his article in Dun's Review, estimates that corporation profits this year, AGAIN AFTER TAXES, will reach \$8,300,000,000. Corporate profits before taxes would reach an estimated \$26,200,000,000, which is "almost four times the 1939 level."

Corporate profits, wrote Mr. Paul, doubled from the year 1939 to 1943. They jumped from \$4,040,000,000 in 1939 (a very profitable year, by the way) to \$4,777,000,000 in 1940, and then stacked up as follows:

Year	Profits, After Taxes
1941	\$7,100,000,000
1942	7,400,000,000
1943 (estimated)	8,300,000,000

These figures are based on ALL companies, those which are making profit out of the war and those which aren't. The profit-making companies,

naturally, are the ones which pay big taxes. Of these tax-paying companies, the report shows that their profit, AFTER TAXES, is \$9,700,000,000. Those companies showing no profit, or which operate at a loss, bring the figure down to the one cited in the chart above.

The whole situation flies in the face of all that has been said in governmental circles, high and low, about preventing war profiteering and a "new class of war millionaires." Exactly the opposite has happened. How to overcome this? Mr. Paul suggests even larger corporate taxes. But that seems to be out already.

In expectation of a new clamor for higher taxes on corporations, big business, through its National Association of Manufacturers and its Chamber of Commerce, and with the aid of its servants in Washington, has already begun a campaign against increasing the taxes on higher corporate profits, declaring that higher taxes would destroy the "incentive of business to produce."

That is why all emphasis is now being directed for a new tax bill to be applied on the workers and all low-income groups. The labor movement and the workers must be on guard against a sharp drive on their living standards through the avenue of a new monstrous tax bill which will further reduce present low incomes.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

How Labor-Management Has Served Business

By WALTER WEISS
Over two months have now passed since Donald Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, finally came through and fulfilled a promise that he had been making to labor leaders for a year or more by appointing two labor men to positions as vice-chairmen of the WPB.

dollar-a-year men who still draw down big salaries from their companies.

The appointments were made at an interesting time, too. The press was recognizing a "growing restlessness among the rank and file (of labor) ... that the leaders ... are finding difficult to control" (U.S. News, June 4). The workers were being strongly moved by the miners' fight and their leaders were showing an undivided loyalty—to the government.

Evidently one big job of the labor production division is to foster labor-management committees, which are supposed to concoct ideas for boosting production. The CIO has taken the initiative in pushing for these committees, but Business Week (June 5) reported that employers were pleased that a conservative AFL man (Keenan) had been put in charge of the production drive. Many business men, says this magazine, feared the committees as potential soviet, which could easily lead to communism. With a wild man like Golden in charge, who knows how soon the revolution might have come?

To comfort the quaking business men further, C. E. Wilson, Nelson's second in command, brought into the WPB a certain Theodore K. Quinn, president of the Maxon Advertising Agency, to put new life into the labor-management committees. For six months, says Business Week (August 7), the committees had been dead, management being indifferent and labor considering them as mere window-dressing.

Management on Top
In a little over a month Quinn is reported to have revived many dead committees and to have raised the total number from 2,000 to 2,245. One thing we can be sure of: Lou Maxon, having recently resigned from the OPA with a statement that denounced a diabolical Red plot to assist the housewives' soviet by putting a grade label on every can (a plot which would have ruined H. J. Heinz and other clients of Mr. Maxon's advertising agency), the business element will regard with considerable calm these management-labor soviet which are being promoted by Mr. Maxon's Mr. Quinn.

Not satisfied with just Mr. Quinn, Wilson proceeded to create a new division in the WPB "to represent management and work in collaboration ... with the ... Labor Production Office (New York Times, July 29).

This manpower consultant division is headed by John W. Nickerson, formerly superintendent of plants for the Cheney Bros. Co. Business Week (August 7) describes him for us as follows: "Nickerson is no lover of organized labor but has worked well with Keenan and Golden." Business Week also assures us that whenever Keenan's office sends a man to clear up a labor trouble spot, one of Nickerson's staff will trail along "to work on management."

Now that we are assured that

Brothers Keenan and Golden have a couple of good solid business men to keep an eye on them, let's see what the brothers themselves have been up to. More steel production is urgently desired, so "This week, Wilson, Quinn, Phil Murray, Golden and Keenan are all due in Pittsburgh to whoop up labor-management committees there" (Business Week, July 3).

Aiding Big Business
The brothers also issue press releases in a big way, sometimes jointly, sometimes separately. Here's just one example, this one from Keenan: "Organized labor deserves credit for effective leadership in helping to boost war production to its present high level. At the same time it should MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY (my emphasis—W.W.) for getting still better results in the months to come. "I say this because a survey by the WPB Labor Production Office indicates that about eighty-five per cent of American war workers are in plants where collective bargaining agreements exist..."

Now and then a practical problem comes up. The Great Lakes Steel Corporation desperately needs twenty bricklayers and doesn't know where to find them. The WPB Steel Division gets Golden on the phone. Golden gets Harry Bates, president of the Bricklayers Union, on the phone. Great Lakes Steel gets the twenty bricklayers (Business Week, July 31).

But this is small stuff compared with the Boeing situation. The army started to cancel contracts in the Seattle area, much to the distress and bewilderment of business men there. Then there appeared on the scene Joseph Keenan to bring enlightenment and lay down the law. He went into a huddle with the business element, informed them that aircraft,

hence Boeing, came first and that the cancellation of contracts would free a labor supply to meet Boeing's need for 9,000 workers. However, if communities in western Washington could find the workers in another way, the contracts would be reinstated.

Solving Boeing's Labor Problems
At once a committee of eight, representing labor, government and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce got busy. In Tacoma the Chamber of Commerce has succeeded in persuading local shippers to release some employees to a Boeing sub-assembly plant being established there. So much of the story from Business Week (July 31).

Time (August 2) fills out the picture with some details which may already be known to our readers. Boeing is short of labor, says Time, because higher wages in the local shipyards draw away workers, because living costs are sky-high and housing accommodations very poor, and because labor relations at Boeing are bad.

In short, workers try to escape from Boeing; but the Army, with the able assistance of Brother Keenan, now a pure and simple government employee, undertakes to drive them back.

Here's another angle to the situation: Keenan tried to persuade Boeing workers to work ten-hour instead of eight-hour shifts. Thus skilled workers would put in twenty-five per cent more man-hours and women, who would not otherwise leave their homes, might be persuaded to work five hours a day, two shifts of such women fitting into one full shift. The change was recommended by the company, the WPB, and the union's district council. The workers rejected it almost unanimously (New York Times, July 25, and Federated Press).

"Labor Has Been Liquidated"

At the CIO convention last November, Walter Reuther stated that labor had no representation in agencies of the government. "Labor has been completely liquidated," he said dramatically. Philip Murray wanted to know what "we" are running in Washington—a war production organization to win the war or a war production organization to destroy labor?

What does Murray think Keenan and Golden are now helping the WPB to run—an organization to win the war or to destroy labor? We'll tell him the answer: Both.

The industrialists don't see much if any difference between the two. When Sidney Hillman was not just a vice-chairman but a co-chairman, absolutely on a par (supposedly) with Knudsen in the late OPM (Office of Production Management), forerunner of the WPB, wasn't he too helping to destroy labor?

This is an old, old story, known to us from many countries. When labor representatives enter a capitalist government, they either cooperate, get kicked out, or resign. Usually they cooperate; then, when no longer needed, they get kicked out. This is the kind of labor representation and influence that Keenan and Golden, Murray and Reuther are seeking. But an independent political party of labor—never!

Coming Attractions

- 1. Post-War Unemployment, by Susan Green.
2. War Manpower Problems, by M. Stevens.
3. Free German Committee, by Max Shaectman.
4. UAW Convention, by Albert Gates.

Other features and specialties!

Detroit Rubber Workers! Do You Smell Something?

By B. L.
That stench you smell isn't from the reclaim plant!

It rises from the profit sheet of the U. S. Rubber Company.

In the first six months of 1943 the company made a profit of \$6,912,466, as compared to \$1,554,841 for the same period last year. This is an increase in profits of 444 per cent!

This is the company, you may recall, which the War Labor Board recently decided should not give its employees an eight-cent-an-hour increase in wages but rather a measly three cents an hour, instead. Eight cents an hour, you see, would be inflationary. Naturally the 444 per cent increase in profits is not inflationary. Anybody who can't see that, of course, can only be a Japanese agent.

U. S. Rubber is singularly blessed in other ways, too, proving once again that the good life is richly rewarded. The United Rubber Workers Local at its Detroit plant is dominated by the Communist Party, which—hard as it may still be for some workers to believe—is about as communist as the anti-labor rat, "I-Am-the-Law" Hague of New Jersey, whom the communists are supporting in the current election campaign.

When workers at the U.S. Detroit plant recently walked out in sympathy with Akron rubber workers who struck against the contemptible WLB decision, the Stalinist oafs in control of the local worked like they never had on a grievance in order to get the men back into the shops. The company loved it!

When the company fired men for participating in the walkout, John Marmon, president of the local, and his bootlicking pals went along happily. The company loved that, too!

UE Officials Sabotage Sperry Shop Stewards

NEW YORK—Again the leadership of Sperry UE local has revealed its undemocratic rule in the union, this time in the way in which it is handling the forthcoming national UE convention.

On the surface, it appeared to be democratic; that is, the UE members voted for the delegates to be sent to the convention. But the UE members should examine how democratic in content these elections were.

Actually, before the Sperry workers could have voted for delegates to represent them, they should have known what the purpose and the issues of this convention are. Only then could they have voted intelligently for someone who could represent their point of view. Otherwise these delegates represent no one but themselves.

Just to cite an example, one of the issues of the convention will be that of incentive pay and what the policy of the union should be toward it. LABOR ACTION has told the workers what this plan means. However, to date Local 450 has made no attempt to find out what the Sperry workers think about incentive pay and how they want to be represented on this issue at the convention.

The only way in which the UE members can be democratically represented at this convention is for the union to hold membership meetings where members can discuss openly and vote on such issues as incentive pay; the War Labor Board and the Little Steel formula. In this way, the delegates already elected can hear from the members themselves exactly what they want their representatives to the convention to say and do. This is the least that can be done,

Oh, the company's crazy about Marmon, McCormick and their communist pals!

They ought to be, seeing how carefully Marmon guards that 444 per cent profit increase made at the expense of the working class and the soldiers of this country. If the company had any feeling for what is the decent thing to do they should give him a seat on the board of directors.

Why do Marmon and his buddies act this way? The reason is simple enough: Marmon and his cronies have not the slightest real interest in the welfare of the working class of the United States. They are interested in the welfare of the wealthy bureaucrats who control the USSE. Hence, unlike 1939, 1940 and 1941, they are now all out for the war against Hitler and for unlimited war production, no matter how high the capitalists' profits rise or how low the workers' standard of living sink.

The company loves it! This is why Marmon and McCormick attack the militant Goodrich local in Akron and scream about its being led by Lewis men, Trotskyites, etc. Goodrich local doesn't believe in allowing the rubber barons to wallow so brazenly in super-profits while workers' families are having a hard time making ends meet.

The Goodrich Company, you may be sure, doesn't love it at all!

The sooner that the Marmon-McCormick clique is tossed out of the leadership of Local 101 and replaced by fighting union men the better for the United States Rubber Company workers.

Four hundred and forty-four per cent increase in profits—PHEW!

Marmon, McCormick and their bootlicking cronies—PHEW!

Brother, that isn't the reclaim plant you smell!

Penn-Jersey Ship Workers Win Fight for Union Men

CAMDEN—Workers at the Penn-Jersey Shipyard here last week showed how some determined labor action gets results.

Following the signing of the contract between the corporation and the CIO Shipbuilders Union, the management sought to weaken the union by getting rid of its leading members. It suddenly fired the steward of the welders' department, Brother Rose. This was doing a good union job in looking out for the interests of the men. If it was possible to fire him on trumped-up charges and get away with it, it could be done to others.

However, the men were on the alert. No sooner did the chief of the company guards escort Brother Rose out of the yard than the men began laying down tools and gathering to discuss the situation. They were persuaded to go back to work by the president of the union local. He told them that the case would be settled by the next morning. However, the case dragged on for three days with hearings, conferences and other delays.

On the fourth day, a Saturday, the men decided to take things into their own hands. The went out at lunch time and refused to come back until the case was settled. It was 2:30 p.m. before the officers of the local succeeded in getting them back to work with a definite promise that on Monday morning it would be "either, or."

Such labor action forced the hand of the company and convinced it that there would be no peace in the yard until it reinstated the welders' steward. The company executives therefore backed down and agreed to re-

instatement.

Meanwhile they had fired eight more men for taking part in the Saturday stoppage. They tried to make a bargain in which they would take back the steward but not the eight men. The mood of the men was such, however, that no such deals could be put over on them. The eight men were taken back also.

These men, however, were not reinstated but merely rehired. It meant the men had lost their seniority and vacation time. This fact was not made clear to the workers in the yard until several days later. When they heard that the company, together with Marshall, the local president, had put this one over on them, the temper of the men boiled over. They forced the officers of the union to call a special membership meeting, at which the men called for the president's resignation because of his laxness in protecting the rights of the men.

A story leaked out, which the president of the local did deny, that he attended a poker party at the home of one of the company officials in the very midst of the trouble in the yard. This incensed the men all the more. There is widespread talk about removing Marshall from office.

The workers at Penn-Jersey have given a lesson to ship workers everywhere. It is action on the spot that counts. A little labor action in the yard is worth a hundred arbitration conferences. And the only way to protect the interests of the whole yard is to protect each and every union man against unfair treatment. The old labor slogan still holds true: "One for all, all for one."

Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

We'll Try to Do Our Best for This Reader

Gentlemen: Enclosed you will find a check for which please send me four sub cards and five copies of the pamphlet "Plenty for All." Keep the work going. The truth is what kicks them in the creek. F. B. (Bokoshe, Okla.)

Labor Action Writer Answers a Reader

Dear Editor: In the August 2 issue of LABOR ACTION you printed a letter signed by Jerry F. Foch, executive secretary-treasurer of the Ferndale Labor Club. Referring to an article I wrote in the July 25 issue entitled "UAW Should Organize Against Klan," the Ferndale Labor Club resents the fact

that I mentioned an attack by a white gang in the Negro neighborhood of Ferndale and denies that this took place.

The reference in that and other articles was NOT to the events of June 21 but to an incident which occurred in March. This incident and others like it in Detroit were important factors which led to the June 21 outbreaks. The event was reported in both the Michigan Chronicle and the Detroit Tribune, both papers dated April 3.

The Michigan Chronicle writes: "Seizing on a fight between colored and white students at Lincoln High School on Nine Mile Road in Ferndale as the provocation, a group of white hoodlums led by members of the Ku Klux Klan instituted a reign of terror among the colored residents of the Eight Mile Road community last Wednesday which did not subside until Friday night as state troopers, city and county officers blanketed the area."

"During the three-day reign of terror the Klan-inspired hoodlums rode through the district in automobiles, firing shots that endangered the lives of persons in homes and business establishments along Eight Mile Road. Windows were smashed in four business establishments on the highway."

Ben Hall (Detroit).

CORRECTION:

In the August 9 issue of LABOR ACTION, the story on the Summit County Labor News, reporting writer John C. Green's call for a Labor Party, was erroneously titled "Akron CIO for Labor Party." While the story is completely accurate, we are sorry to say that the heading was not. We hope, nevertheless, that labor political developments in Akron will soon make it possible to use this heading.

Europe in Revolt A Review of Political Events

WORKERS, NOT PALACE REVOLUTION, OUSTED IL DUCE

Little news came out of Italy this week. A general strike was proclaimed but there is no indication as to developments. There has been relative quiet for the last few days. But this is understandable. The workers, after their first heroic efforts, pause for breath; the organizations which existed under illegal conditions up to now need time to be rebuilt. The political currents also need time to develop.

It has been reported that two important trade union leaders (according to certain reports, high ranking members of the Social-Democratic Party, Amadeo and Buozzi, and asked a deal with Badoglio and asked the workers to refrain "temporarily" from further demonstrations.

This is the old, old story: give a certain type of reformist only the slightest opportunity and he will

climb on any kind of bandwagon. Leading German social-democrats voted their confidence in Hitler's government during the first days of the Nazi regime. There are still social-democratic ministers in Finland and a "legal" Social-Democratic Party in fascist Hungary.

The case of these two Italian leaders is to be explained, not on the ground of individual selfishness. A certain type of reformism will always be on the side of the "lesser evil," be it Hindenburg or Hitler, or Badoglio as against Mussolini. But these renegades cannot stop the course of a revolution. After the first shock which these defections will cause among the workers, developments will take their course and no "labor leader of His Majesty the King of Italy" can stop them.

FIAT WORKERS IN ACTION (FROM TURIN)

The following report from the North Italian underground paper, Italia Libera, of last March is extremely interesting because it proves that the downfall of Mussolini's regime was primarily caused by large strike movements among the workers and not by some differences between the fascist officials and the military clique.

These differences had been in existence for a long time, but it was only after the workers' and soldiers' movement had already completely undermined the structure of fascist Italy that they assumed major proportions. Had it not been for the action of the workers, the "moronic little King" and Badoglio would still be supporting fascism.

"6th March: As a result of the management's announcement, the workers of the Fiat Mirafiori registered a protest at 1:00 p.m. in the canteen. They demanded that the evacuation allowance should be paid to all workers without distinction.

"8th March: In the spare parts section of Fiat Mirafiori work is stopped for a while when the 10 o'clock siren sounds. The same happens in the precision instruments and railway material sections, and in the heavy motors and aero engine sections.

"10th March: The disturbances continue in some forty factories.

"11th March: The disturbances are on a larger scale at the workshops of the Villar Perosa, where workers, both male and female, are arrested. Here—the only occasion—the troops are called in. At the Villar Perosa the night shift does not go on duty. The disturbances spread to the workshops of the Via Assauto di Asti, to the Nobel dynamite factory of Avigliana and to the Sniia Viscosca.

"13th March: On this day the disturbances reach their peak. A leaflet is distributed stating: 'Men and women of Turin—We only needed to stop work to get the promise of the payment of 192 working hours and the cost of living bonus. As soon as we restarted work, these promises were broken. We demand payment of the 192 hours. We have had enough

of flattery, deception, poverty and war. On the 15th all we workers are determined to stop work in all factories until we have obtained: (1) payment of 192 working hours to all men and women workers (2) cost of living bonus; (3) increase of basic ration of bread, meat and fats; (4) the liberation of our comrades who are under arrest and the removal of the city police from the workshops. Right, might and numbers are on our side. If we are determined we are united, we will win. Long live peace and liberty.—The Workers' Committee.'

"The management took a cautious attitude toward the strike, as many high employees were convinced it was impossible to reject the workers' demands," writes Italia Libera. "From the time of the first disturbances the police were called in, both city and carabinieri. Troops were also called in, though with deliberate lack of ostentation, and they only went into action on the 11th in the Villar Perosa ball-bearing factory. But as the authorities feared more trouble in the town, they fetched eighteen armored cars... and paraded them ostentatiously in Via Roma. The cavalry regiment Nice was kept ready in barracks.

"Intervention by officials of the (fascist) Workers Syndicates was most unfortunate, for they were greeted everywhere with cat-calls. The anger of the workers was directed against them in particular.

"Before the 12th, arrests were made on a small scale. On the 12th and 13th the police, faced by the mass of strikers, numbering at one time 40-50,000, were almost powerless. As soon as the disturbances died down arrests on a large scale commenced. They were made during the night in order to attract as little notice as possible."

A month later the workers of the bombed areas of Italy were conceded cost of living allowances, while the fascist authorities saw themselves obliged to draw attention to the existence of the ban on strikes.

Europacus.

Goodyear Walkout Protests 'Incentive Pay' Speed-Up

By J. POWELL

AKRON—The purpose of the incentive plan of production has revealed itself in the recent walkout, Thursday, August 12, in the wheel and brake division of Goodyear Aircraft Corporation here. In this division the company had been able to institute the piecework plan under its new name but its recent attempt to almost double the production has resulted in the mass walkout of an estimated 2,500 employees from twenty-seven different departments.

The new increase in the par from eighteen wheels to twenty-seven wheels was approved by the union shop committee but was strongly rejected by the vote of the workers in the departments involved.

The company disregarded the protests of the workers and attempted

to put the new par into effect, but after a couple of hours at work under the higher par, the workers found it impossible to make out and promptly walked out.

This was an unexpected bombshell in the lap of the union officials, who found themselves in the position of not being able to obtain a meeting with the company to review the jobs and lower the par until the men were sent back to work. Nevertheless the workers stayed away for three days, but at a mass meeting at the union hall consented to return to their jobs under the old plan until the committee and the company should meet with the conciliator.

This is the first strike of any importance to occur at Goodyear Aircraft, which sat tight during the recent rubber strikes. Who said it couldn't happen here?



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FDR and Winnie in Reunion at Quaint Quebec

By Alfred Freeman

In the old-world town of Quebec, far up in backward northeast Canada, a new chapter in the game of imperialist intrigue and diplomacy is being opened by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. All that has thus far come from Quebec has been official silence—and the equally useless webs of guesses which the correspondents spin for lack of anything else to write.

Yet certain estimates are possible. For the meeting is merely another link in the chain of development of the war. Why then does it take place now?

WHAT IS THE MEETING FOR?

First of all, we can most easily conclude as to what it is not about. It is not about, at least in any primary, pressing sense, the Far East. Certain writers, embarrassed by Stalin's continued absence from the Roosevelt-Churchill conference tables, have cooked up the lame tale that Stalin could not attend since FDR and Winnie intend to discuss strategy to beat Japan. That is clearly ridiculous.

The main aspect of the war is, and will remain, the European theater. That is where the Allies decided to concentrate and that is undoubtedly where they'll continue to concentrate. The burning decisions are concerned with Europe, not the Far East. The Allies haven't gotten far enough in the Far East to have any burning decisions to make there.

And the conference, we can just as categorically assert, is not about the French National Committee—even though a statement on that subject may be forthcoming from Quebec. That is small potatoes compared to the problem FDR and Winnie face, despite the whining of the "liberal" columnists.

The conference, we believe, is primarily about one problem: Russia. Roosevelt and Churchill are getting pretty worried about the continued deterioration in relations between themselves and the Stalin regime. They face the unique problem: the closer they come to victory, the closer they come to a certain form of defeat. For though it now appears as if the Allied armies will sooner or later defeat the German army on the battlefield, their big problem will first come after that is achieved.

HOW TO DEAL WITH STALIN?

How will the booty be divided up? FDR and Winnie know damn well that Stalin isn't a revolutionist, that he doesn't give a damn about spreading socialism or anything else in Europe. But they also know that Stalin is very much interested in gaining territorial acquisitions, in improving his strategic imperialist position. So, for a while, America and Britain forget their inter-imperialist differences in order to take up the problem of their partner.

They are, first of all, worried about the possibility of Stalin making a separate peace with Hitler. And if Stalin can't get either a new land front in Western Europe or definite post-war territorial guarantees from his present partners, what is to prevent him from switching sides once more? His devotion to the cause of democracy?

FDR and Churchill are on the spot. They need Stalin's help desperately to lick Germany. But they fear the extent of his power after the war. That is why so many of their strategists counsel invasion, through the Balkans—which can serve not merely as a wedge into Germany, but also as a bar to Russia.

And in the meantime, there now arises the specter of popular revolutions. Italy is the first sign. There will be others. What to do about that? How to impose good, safe, conservative regimes—that is their problem.

ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA

In a sense, Roosevelt and Churchill are caught with their strategical pants down. Each time their armies gain a minor military victory, it raises a major political problem. And Roosevelt and Churchill, dependent upon improvisation, are unprepared. They have no program for post-war Europe other than the platitudes of the Atlantic Charter. They don't know how to handle their boorish partner, Stalin, who insists on his cut of the pirates' booty. And they're getting a little scared at the prospect of the European people taking things into their own hands and ignoring the whole imperialist kaboodle from FDR to Stalin to Hitler. In that respect, Milan is but the beginning.

These, in brief outline, are the problems facing FDR and Winnie in Quebec. Their conference may produce a grandiloquent statement, but it won't produce solutions. For these problems go deep into the marrow of capitalist society; they are part and parcel of that society and they grow constantly sharper as that society decays.

Passports for Vichy

The U.S. State Department is very particular as to whom it admits into the country. For instance, it is practically impossible for hounded, tortured Jews to find asylum here, even if they could get here.

However, Vichyite Col. Coste—plus the Madame, with a dozen trunks of elegant clothes—were received with open arms into Park Lane opulence. The Costes traveled first to that seat of democracy known as Argentina, and then on to New York, on Vichy passports procured "through the intervention of influential friends"—who obviously could be none other than Nazis or Vichyites. The Nazis are not in the habit of allowing Jews, members of the underground or just anti-Nazis to "flee" from France with passports in order and with trunks full of wonderful Parisian dresses, hats, shoes from famous fashion houses. Yet the Costes insult our intelligence by asserting they were obliged to "flee" from Paris.

Col. Coste was in the headlines in 1930 as the first French aviator to fly the Atlantic. Before the German occupation he was connected with Hispano-Suiza aviation motors—AND CONTINUED HIS JOB AFTER THE GERMANS TOOK OVER THE FIRM AS A COLLABORATOR OF THE NAZIS.

What are these pals of the Nazis doing here. BUT THEN—WHAT WAS GIRAUD DOING HERE? —S. G.

A Governor's 'Fact-Finding' Committee Reports Whitewashing the Detroit Massacre

By ROBERT KLEIN

After weeks of investigation of the anti-Negro "riots" which exploded in Detroit June 20-21, causing the death of twenty-five Negroes and nine white persons, and the arrest of 1,800 persons, 1,200 of whom were Negroes, the "Fact-Finding Committee" appointed by Governor Harry F. Kelly of Michigan has issued an 8,500-word report whose two major conclusions are:

1. The riots were started by Negroes who individually and in bands provoked and attacked whites.
 2. The underlying cause for the riots is the insistence on the part of Negro leaders and the Negro press that members of their race be granted equality with whites.
- The committee introduces its report with the statement that it has checked every detail "so that this report might be truthful, unbiased and complete."

The Members of the Committee

But who were the members of this committee appointed to give an unbiased report? William E. Dowling, Wayne County prosecutor; Herbert J. Rushton, state attorney general; John H. Witherspoon, police commissioner, and Oscar C. Olander, state police head. No representative of the Negro people, no representative of the trade unions, not even a representative of the "public" was included. Instead the heads of the police agencies, which every eye-witness account of the riot indicted for criminally neglecting to protect the Negro people, were called upon to give an "unbiased report" of their own malconduct!

One hunts in vain through this typical police report for any mention of the miserable housing conditions in Detroit, the flagrant job-discrimination against Negroes, or the degrading Jim Crowism to which Negroes are subjected. Instead there is the amazing accusation that the Negroes themselves are guilty of the violence unleashed upon them for protesting these "alleged injustices."

What They "Found"

Here is how the "Fact-Finding Committee" classifies the deaths: White: accidental, 1; murdered, 7;

manslaughter, 1. Negro: accidental, 1; justifiable (1), 18; murdered, 3. In other words, seven out of the nine whites killed were "murdered," but only three of the twenty-five Negro deaths are deemed worthy of that classification. The remainder are "justifiable" or "unclassified," whatever those terms may mean.

In introducing the report, the committee states: "Conclusions of a controversial or conjectural nature have no place in this report. They have been studiously avoided that no artificial coloring may be given to the bare facts herewith presented." So the committee winds up its docket of charges against the Negroes with the following "impartial" questions: "Where have these young hoodlums been told they have a license to lawlessness in their 'struggle to secure racial equality'?"

"Who has exhorted them violently to overthrow established social order to obtain 'racial equality'?"

"Who constantly beats the drums of 'Racial prejudice, inequality, intolerance, discrimination' and challenges these hoodlum elements 'militantly' to rise against this alleged oppression?"

They Answer Themselves

Immediately rushing forward to answer its own questions, the committee, which, above all, wanted to avoid conclusions of a controversial nature, says: "Who but the Negro leaders and the Negro press?"

"Frequently recurring through these papers," the report continues, "is the statement: 'This nation cannot exist half free and half slave,' the obvious purpose of which is to drive home to Negro readers the alleged fact of their servitude and to arouse a belligerent reaction."

"Frequently seen through the colored papers are attacks on the policy prevailing in the Red Cross blood donor stations, under which Negro plasma is separated from the white." "And statements of charges made by Negro people, for which there is no support in fact, are worded to leave an impression of conviction of truth with the reader."

And They View with Alarm

These, then, are the charges made against the Negro people, the evi-

dence which convicts them of guilt for the Detroit riot:

1. They have made the preposterous, inflammatory suggestion that the struggle for democracy abroad was linked with the struggle for democracy at home!
2. They have made the mistake of quoting Abraham Lincoln at a time when America was engaged in its war for the Four Freedoms!
3. They have dared to criticize the American Red Cross policy of blood segregation—a policy lifted directly from "Mein Kampf"!
4. They have cited examples of Jim Crow discrimination in the Army and Navy, which have appeared throughout the American press, in such a way as to "leave an impression of conviction of truth with the reader!" This should be enough for one un-

biased report. But the Fact-Finding Committee could not conclude its day's work without repeating as strongly as possible the idea that the Negroes got just what was coming to them: "The committee feels that the fact that the Negroes in Detroit, who constitute less than ten per cent of the population, commit more than seventy-one per cent of the major crimes is one the public should know, that this circumstance may receive the public attention and constructive measures it deserves."

If the committee's report is not indignantly rejected by the workers of Detroit, it is clear that the "constructive measures" can take the form of renewed violence against the Negro people and thus harm the whole trade union movement and the working class.

A War Prison Camp Life Can Be a Beautiful Thing

The common view that capitalist war is an unrelieved horror, offering no opportunities to the rank and file other than the opportunity to slaughter or be slaughtered, is, according to the YMCA, a misapprehension. We learn from Dr. Darius A. Davis, associate general secretary of the World's Committee, YMCA War Prisoners' Aid, that, for the prisoners at least, many cultural vistas are opened by the happy chance of being in a concentration camp on one side or the other!

Dr. Davis urges that CHEERFUL letters be sent to war prisoners: "Don't tell lies, but don't whine," he says. "Sometimes one letter can save a whole camp from depression." This much we can agree with wholeheartedly. German prisoners in England and North Africa, English and American prisoners in Germany, will one day, we hope, be "saved from depression" by one particular letter—a letter that will tell them that the workers in their respective countries are taking things into their own hands and putting an end to the system that makes wars.

But when Dr. Davis urges that relatives should point out to prisoners that this is the chance of a lifetime to learn a new language, a trade, or to study for university credits; that prisoners should be told to write to the War Prisoners Aid, in Geneva, Switzerland, for the books, musical instruments or other things that they want; then we may be pardoned for being a bit doubtful.

Will the War Prisoners Aid in Geneva really assume the responsibility of filling requests for musical saws, harpsichords and base viols? Will the natural desire of an American prisoner in Germany to resume, by correspondence, his course in Anglo-Saxon at CUNY, find fulfillment? Will he be able to study welding, via Geneva, Switzerland, so that he can look forward to high wages for the rest of his life, building invasion barges, and gun mounts, and tanks for World War III?

Somehow the whole thing sounds a little screwy. Maybe war and culture and the useful arts just don't mix. But if anyone can do it, it will be the YMCA!—H. L.

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

While President Roosevelt was fishing on the cool waters of Lake Huron, the cattle slaughterers of the New York region staged a strike. They refused to purchase for slaughter and sale to the public four carloads of choice steers that arrived in the stockyards. These business men, trading the food of the people, struck because they do not like OPA ceiling prices on meat. Presumably they want to set their own prices.

No Connally-Smith anti-strike law was invoked against these bosses. Nobody proclaimed their strike "inflationary." The government did not compel them to open their slaughter houses and provide much needed meat to the public. And President Roosevelt, now back from his vacation, did not even deign to comment on this strike against his so-called "hold-the-line" policy.

When bosses strike for more profits, that's one thing. But when workers strike for more wages to be able to live a little like human beings, that becomes a major crime in a bosses' world.

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THOSE CARLOADS OF STEERS?

They would have netted thousands of pounds of steaks and roasts which the consumers of this region could certainly have used. Where are these steaks and roasts, for which our tongues are fairly hanging out? Undoubtedly they have gone into black market channels. They have found their way to the tables of those who can afford to be soaked black market prices. The ordinary worker's family got no sight nor smell of them.

But these first-class steers would not have been lost to the general public IF THERE WERE IN THIS REGION STRONGLY ORGANIZED COMMITTEES OF HOUSEWIVES AND WORKERS. Such committees would have raised such a howl and would have obtained such publicity over this really criminal strike of slaughterers that the government would doubtless have had to do something to release this meat.

And if the capitalist government's respect for "private enterprise" is too strong for drastic action, what's the matter with the organized working people themselves getting these steers slaughtered and the meat distributed?

Certainly the slaughterhouse workers do not need their altogether superfluous, parasite bosses in order to slaughter cattle!

Many of the gas and electric light companies have started issuing bills every two months, instead of every month. This is a poor arrangement for the housewife. It is so easy to spend the couple of dollars on something else one month, and then find it extremely hard to part with the larger sum the following month.

The companies claim that they have to do this because of the shortage of labor and transportation. THIS EXCUSE MUST BE TAKEN WITH A RAISED EYEBROW.

In the case of Consolidated Edison Company, for instance, its employees revealed that the company saves \$5,000,000 annually by billing every two months instead of every month. Furthermore, this way of billing actually means a hidden rate increase of about five cents for each consumer—giving this powerful trust an extra tidbit of some \$1,691,460 a year.

But what worries the employees most is that the company is permanently reorganizing its checking and bookkeeping departments on this new basis—AND ELIMINATING 1,500 BILLING AND METER-READING JOBS.

The company has given "assurance to employees in the armed forces, that their jobs will be open after the war, BUT ONLY IF THE JOBS STILL EXIST." The cat's out of the bag! Of course, if the billing departments have been reorganized on the new basis, THE JOBS WILL NO LONGER EXIST.

What about the boy when they come marching home—TO THESE ELIMINATED JOBS? "Permanently eliminated jobs" is another aspect of the great unemployment problem that labor must solve by its own militant, progressive, class-conscious action.

One of the first things Mussolini did when he came to power was to start making cannon fodder out of Italian boys, and bearers of cannon fodder out of Italian girls. Hitler imposed the same curriculum of "higher learning" upon Germany.

So there is really nothing surprising that the Stalin dictatorship—going the way of all present-day totalitarian governments—has discovered that "there is an inevitable separation of labor between men and women... The man must be a soldier..."

What of the girls? She is essentially a future mother."

Therefore coeducation is being abolished in Russia. Boys and girls will receive separate "education" suited either to becoming cannon fodder or the bearers of cannon fodder for the Stalin machine. And this kind of training will start with the children in elementary school.

Even within the educational limits of capitalist society, coeducation with the same opportunities for boys and girls has long been accepted as a minimum requirement. Every democratic instinct rebels against governmental regimentation of boys to certain careers and girls to others—to make make automatons of youth in the service of nazistic governments.

But the Stalinists—who have taken in their blundering stride the Moscow witch trials, the extermination of the Bolsheviks, the growth of Russian millionaires, the reestablishment of military castes in the Russian army—will undoubtedly interpret this extremely reactionary step in education as evidence that Stalin's Russia is—if not socialism—then at least the greatest democracy on earth.

LABOR ACTION

A Paper in the Interests of Labor

Published Weekly by the
LABOR ACTION PUBLISHING ASSN.
114 West 14th Street New York 11, N. Y.
(3rd Floor)

Vol. 7, No. 34 August 23, 1943

ALBERT GATES, Editor

Subscription Rate: 60 Cents a Year
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The Spanish Hellhole of "Duce" Franco

By G. Ordo

The American Ambassador to fascist Spain, Professor Carleton F. J. Hayes, leading Catholic layman and apologist for fascism, recently said, in praise of Franco's murder regime:

"The United States stands ready to help Spain, which itself is doing so much with such obvious success to develop a peace economy that can and will carry Spain into a future period of world peace."

ROOSEVELT AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT

Even conservative papers were a bit shocked at the utter shamelessness of this ambassadorial attempt to build up the "butcher of the Spanish masses." The liberals, as is their style, became indignant and made representations to the President, once again pointing out that the State Department has gone out of its way to keep alive the tottering regime of Spanish fascism. But, again, it was to no avail.

Heretofore they had contended that the doings of Secretary of State Hull and his conservative-reactionary coterie were without the knowledge of the President. Now it has become clear that the President has taken no notice of their protestations, for he is guided by military expediency, and military expediency demands, in his mind, bolstering up this regime of human rubbish. The idea of supporting the millions of Spanish people in their struggle against the hated Franco and his blood-sucking aides could never occur to the State Department or the President. That would not fall under the heading of "military expediency."

THE BALANCE SHEET OF FRANCO

Here are some of the tragic facts and figures of four years of Franco Spain, as released only last week by Professor Jose Mancidor, head of a group of Spanish Republican refugees in Mexico City.

Desolation, suffering and tragedy have been Spain's lot of four years under Franco.

Over half a million men and women have been executed—in Madrid alone there were more than 50,000. In the mining region of the Asturias, executions were well over 50,000. In the province of Seville, over 60,000, in Catalonia over 40,000. In summary, more than three per cent of the total population has been eliminated since Franco became the chief of state.

Here is a list of those imprisoned by the devout Spanish dictator:

Madrid: 29,000 persons. Barcelona and its province: 40,000. Asturias: 15,000. Galicia: In the prison of Orense at the end of 1942 there were over 600 prisoners; in the prison of San Simon there are over 1,500. Canarias: In Gande there are over 1,200. Bilbao: 12,000. Santander: In the three jails in the city there are over 4,000 detained and in the penitentiary of Dueso there are 1,900 incarcerated. Burgos: In this famous penitentiary there is a prison population of over 4,000. Zaragoza: In the penitentiary of Torrente at the end of 1942 there were over 4,500 prisoners. Murcia: 5,000. Toledo: In the penitentiary of Ocaña it is calculated there are over 12,000 prisoners. Salamanca: In the two jails in the city there are over 4,000 loyalists. Jaen: 1,400.

A DAY OF RECKONING CERTAIN

This, then, is a picture of Ambassador Hayes' beautiful Spain under Franco, a regime put into power by native fascists, aided directly by Hitler and Mussolini and indirectly by Anglo-French diplomacy and the American arms embargo against the Loyalist government.

If this is the "orderly process of government," you can have it, Mr. President, and so can you, Mr. Secretary of State. A day of reckoning will come and then nothing will stop the Spanish people, the workers and peasants, from ridding themselves of the yoke of their native fascists, their murderous profiteering industrialists and landlords, and all those who stand in the way of true freedom.

Well, Here It Is--

By R. FAHAN

Having just read Ernest Lund's pamphlet, "Plenty for All," I'd like to say a few words about it—especially to the organizers and activists of the Workers Party and the regular supporters of LABOR ACTION.

For a long time you've been complaining—and justly so—about the absence of a popular, simple, but comprehensive booklet which you could give to a newcomer to the socialist movement. You know, the kind of pamphlet which doesn't require a detailed knowledge of the history of the world working class or of the intellectual development of Marx; the kind of pamphlet which does not require verbal appendices explaining what Marx meant in the last section of the Manifesto when he was writing about "Feudal Socialism" or what Lenin meant in his commentaries about Kautsky in "The State and Revolution."

You've wanted the kind of pamphlet which could state our case with a fair degree of completeness, while at the same time requiring no special knowledge of the history of the socialist movement, and its disputes and polemics, on the part of the reader.

Well, here it is. No kidding. It's really here. It's sixty pamphlet pages long, so that it can cover quite a bit of ground. It is simply written but not so simply as to make it appear as if the writer thinks he's addressing a class of backward kindergarten kids.

And its great value is this: Lund has taken the general Marxist concepts of capitalist society—the conquest of nature by the industrial revolution; the expansion and decline of capitalism; the cause of crises; the nature of the war; the antagonism of the classes—and he has given them flesh and blood in terms of American experience which American workers can understand. You won't find the Marxist jargon there, because it doesn't belong there. And at the same time the pamphlet is written in English... not the gesticulating pidgin-English which some socialist agitators mistake for English.

Another virtue: unlike most socialist agitation, Lund writes not only about what's wrong with capitalism, but tries to show what socialism would be like. Maybe you wouldn't agree with a detail or two of his little blueprint, but he certainly hits the nail squarely on the head. (You can take up one of those little details with Lund... after the Workers Republic is established.)

So I think everybody had better get on the beam and see to it that Lund's pamphlet is spread far and wide. It'll be gobbled up by your friends—if you just bother to show it to them.

I'm expecting to see the fifth edition of the pamphlet go to press in about half a year. No reason why it shouldn't. In the meantime, better make sure that all of our friends get themselves a really important first edition.

A Cost-Plus Wage

(Continued from page 1)

more or less satisfactory, because their PLUS, that is, their profits, are the highest in history.

Why can't the workers and their unions do the same thing in their own case? The rank and file worker has his own "statistics" on the cost of living, which he feels directly every single day from what happens to his wages when food and clothing have to be bought and the rent paid. The CIO and the AFL have their statistics on the cost of living and its steady rise. The Department of Labor has its statistics on the same subject. So have the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce.

How to Measure It

Which set of figures would be used as the basis for a COST-PLUS WAGE contract? The one that the workers know to be closest to the truth!

Would the employers readily accept the figures, the basis, proposed by labor? Of course not! They would hem and haw, dodge and twist. They would try to propose the figures most favorable to them, that is, the figures that are furthest from the truth.

Then which would be adopted? *The best, that is, the truest, figures that labor's organized strength could impose at any given time, in any given wage or contract negotiations.*

There is really nothing very new or exceptionally difficult about this. It is what the workers have to do every time they sit down with employers to negotiate a new wage contract. What is new is simply the establishment of a new *basic principle* for such contracts, the COST-PLUS WAGE to protect labor's standard of living.

Would a COST-PLUS WAGE mean that every worker, in every industry, and in every part of the country, would get exactly the same wage?

No, not quite.

In the first place, the cost of living differs from place to place.

In the second place, labor's present living standards differ from place to place and industry to industry.

In the third place, labor's skill differs from trade to trade, or craft to craft. And all these facts have to be taken into practical consideration.

Labor's *ideal* should be based upon the principle that everyone contributes what he can, in physical or mental labor, and gets what he needs. But that is an ideal. It can be realized only in a fully socialist society, where real equality and freedom exist. It cannot be realized in our present-day corrupt capitalist society.

But what we can fight for now is a COST-PLUS wage. The "COST" will be based upon the EXISTING standard of living of any GIVEN group of workers (from highly skilled railroad workers or tool and die makers, down to unskilled workers and day laborers). It will be based upon the standards prevailing in any GIVEN locality, which is automatically adjustable to the rise in the cost of living. It will provide for a "PLUS" for the more highly-skilled, or for the more poorly-paid based upon what they are STRONG ENOUGH to enforce in the contract.

But in EVERY case, it would be based upon the principle of a MINIMUM that corresponds to an acceptable figure of the cost of living, automatically adjustable with every rise in that cost, PLUS an extra margin of income, corresponding to what the capitalist demands as his profit.

Improving the Lot of the Worker

Why should there be a "PLUS"? Isn't a cost-of-living wage good enough?

No. A mere cost-of-living wage means to tie labor down to its present unsatisfactory economic conditions, no matter what happens. It means that labor would accept the principle of never REALLY improving its position. It means that labor would be forever tied to its present status, just like cattle.

Labor must constantly seek to raise itself to a higher position in society, until it reaches the highest, where it properly belongs. If labor in the past had been content to continue working at the prevailing standard of living, it would now be in the state of undernourished and overworked slaves of centuries ago.

How "high" should this "PLUS" be?

As high as the ORGANIZED STRENGTH of labor makes possible in each given case!

Where the union is weak, where the odds against it are heavy, its bargaining power will be less and its "PLUS" smaller.

Where the union is strong, where the workers are determined, where the situation is favorable, the workers can force the employers to grant a higher "PLUS."

Everything depends upon the independent, organized, fighting strength of labor.

"Where is the money to come from for a COST-PLUS WAGE? How can we afford it? How is it to be obtained, especially when the country is at war?"

What Big Business Will Say

These questions will be asked by all reactionaries. They are easy to answer.

CUT DEEPER AND DEEPER SLICES OUT

OF THE BLOOD-PROFITS OF THE CORPORATIONS!!

The capitalist press seeks to exploit the sufferings and sacrifices of our soldiers—that is, of the workers and farmers in uniform—in order to batter down labor and the labor movement. The press cries: There is no time-and-a-half in the foxholes! There are no strikes in the foxholes!

Maybe. But there are no billion-dollar profits for the men in the foxholes, either!

The big corporations, the monopolists, the bankers, are coining unheard-of profits, running into the tens and hundreds of millions of dollars, in the war, and as a result of the war. *These are blood profits!* Why should it be taken for granted that these barons of industry and finance should be guaranteed such fabulous profits out of the blood and suffering of the people? What can possibly be wrong with cutting these blood profits to the bone?

When the soldier "works" for the government, he gets fifty dollars a month. When the corporations "work" for the government, they demand, first of all, a guarantee of COST-PLUS billions in profits!

What possible objection can be raised to the adoption of the principle of COST-PLUS WAGES?

Will the capitalist say that it is wrong, immoral, unpatriotic for workers to demand a COST-PLUS WAGE as a condition for their working in the country's industries? How can he say that with a straight face? Will HE lift a finger to keep industry going without being *guaranteed* his COST-PLUS?

Will the government say that workers should not have a COST-PLUS WAGE, that the country cannot afford it, and so on and so forth?

How is it that the "country" can afford to provide the capitalists with a COST-PLUS SYSTEM, and not the workers? How is it that the government guarantees the capitalists their COST-PLUS, and not the workers?

Is it because it is fundamentally a *capitalist government*, which takes care of capitalists first, last and always? If that is so (and it certainly is!) then labor must organize to get a workers' government, a government of its own, which will take care of labor's interests first, last and always!

Will the capitalist press dare to say that COST-PLUS for the capitalists is good, necessary, just and equitable, whereas COST-PLUS for the workers is bad, unnecessary, selfish and criminal? Let it say that, and reveal itself for the capitalist mouthpiece and tool that it is!

Will the labor leaders, including the Communist Party bureaucrats, say that a COST-PLUS WAGE for the workers is improper, or untimely, or outrageous? Where would they get the brass to make such an argument? Do they challenge for a moment the "right" of the capitalists, the corporations, to operate on a COST-PLUS basis? Why shouldn't labor, which produces everything, work on at least as favorable a principle as the capitalists, who produce nothing but coupon-clipping, unemployment, exploitation and war?

Labor needs and must have a COST-PLUS WAGE!

What Labor Must Do

Labor must establish and enforce the principle, for the present, that its employer, be he a corporation or the government, automatically provides an increase in wages in accordance with the increase in the cost of living—PLUS an extra margin of income to take care of the modest comforts that labor needs and wants and should have, at least for a beginning.

A COST-PLUS WAGE does not exclude regular or periodic wage increases. On the contrary, it provides for them. It is the way to make it possible to meet the rising cost of living AND to increase the standard of living.

To get the COST-PLUS WAGE adopted, labor needs only one thing: its organized power and needs only two things: its organized power and freedom of action.

There are thirteen million organized labor unionists in this country. That is the biggest organized power in the country. Properly organized and properly directed, there is no other power in the country that can withstand it. Properly organized and properly directed, it can achieve any one of its legitimate demands. A COST-PLUS WAGE is such a legitimate demand.

Labor needs freedom of action. Right now, this giant has been shackled by the government and the corporations, assisted by groveling labor leaders, who imposed upon the trade unions the shameful "no-strike" pledge.

Capital has given no such pledge and does not need to give one. It is satisfied with labor's pledge. The harder labor works, the higher go the profits of capital—and the lower goes the standard of living of labor.

Labor must regain its *right to strike*. That is an indispensable pre-condition to organizing the fight for a COST-PLUS WAGE.

That is a concrete answer to the cost-of-living problem. It is a practical answer. It is a *working class answer*.

Let labor gird its mighty loins in the fight to win—A COST-PLUS WAGE!

Ex-SWP-ite Lambastes Cannonites

Young Militant Joins Workers Party

LOS ANGELES—Steve Gerse, militant young member of the Socialist Workers Party, has resigned from that organization, broken with the Cannonite policies and leadership, and joined the ranks of the Workers Party. Gerse is the third revolutionist in recent months to turn against the opportunism and bureaucratic practices of the Cannonites and to become a Workers Party member. In a statement written by him for publication, he says:

Came from the YCL

"Coming to the SWP from the Young Communist League, I was deeply impressed by the brilliance and clarity of the Trotskyist criticism of the treacherous policies of the Stalinists. Especially the anti-imperialist war position of the SWP, list, strike-breaking line of the Stalinists, convinced me that there was an organization that stood for the prosecution of the class struggle during this period of capitalist decay.

"I began a study of the history of the Trotskyist movement, especially the writings of Leon Trotsky. At the same time I enthusiastically entered the mass movement, going to work in a large plant where I functioned with the SWP trade unionists. As I was primarily concerned with the history of the movement as a whole, I was still ignorant of the trade union policy of the party....

"After a few weeks in the organization, however, I discovered that in a union situation that literally cried for active, militant work, the SWPites were doing exactly nothing. Investigation of the national trade union policy of the party revealed that here was not merely an exceptional case in which the forces and other prerequisites for revolutionary work were lacking, but that the directives of the national leadership dictated an abstentionist policy in the trade unions.

"On the other hand, the WP trade unionists were utilizing all of their available forces and conducting a militant struggle in the best interests of the workers. I found that this Marxist policy in the local situation was also consistent with the national position of the WP.

"To me, this was important enough to call for a thorough examination of the entire programs of both organizations, and I was forced to the conclusion that the SWP policy was not merely a mistaken tactic but a case of more basic opportunist degeneration on their part.

Rejects SWP on China

"Simultaneously, I avidly followed the discussion of the Chinese question carried on in the pages of the monthly organs of both parties. The clarity of Max Shachtman's polemic,

his absolute annihilation of the SWP on theoretical grounds, plus my own exploration of the subject convinced me that the SWP position of defense of China in this war constituted a concession to social patriotism and a radical departure from the traditional Trotskyist position on the colonial question.

"After leaving the SWP, I spent a period of several weeks re-examining the above questions as well as the Russian question. Although I have not as yet arrived at a finished, well-rounded position on this last question, I have reached the conclusion that Stalinist Russia is not a workers' state—degenerated or otherwise.

"What were the possibilities of remaining in the SWP and discussing my differences within the party? I soon discovered that ossification, stagnation of thought, unwillingness to think, substitution of "biographical data" for concrete discussion, historical generalities misapplied and offered in place of specific analysis, and obedience to the hierarchy of leaders, sets the tone of each and every discussion in the SWP.

"The general atmosphere of Jesuitical witch-hunting (so reminiscent of the YCL), and denunciation makes it impossible for anyone to carry on a comradely and honest theoretical discussion. Although the SWP main-

tains the formal elements of democratic centralism, such as internal discussions and discussion bulletins, the above-mentioned atmosphere made it a virtual impossibility either to elaborate my own thoughts or to conduct a campaign to convince others.

"In joining the Workers Party, I feel that I am associating myself with the party whose program and activity most closely corresponds to the practice and traditions of revolutionary Marxism. Convinced of the democratically centralized character of this organization, I am certain that facilities for further discussing programmatic questions will be abundantly available."

A Nation of 389,000,000 Fighting for Its Freedom India in Revolt
By Henry Judd
25 Cents Postpaid
WORKERS PARTY
114 West 14th Street
New York 11, N. Y.

Problems Before UAW Workers

While the leadership of the union and the present leaders of the various factions in the union have rejoiced in a common chorus of denunciation of John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers, it was the miners' union which, by its militant action showed the way for all workers in this country. Little wonder, then, that the rank and file auto worker instinctively felt solidarity with the miners. He knew that the fight of the coal miners was his fight. And he was ready to give it support.

On Whom Should Workers Rely?

But the leaders of the union, as of the CIO, at the same time that they fear the actions of the rank and file, have little or no faith in the organized and independent strength of the workers. Thus, from Murray down, they have placed the fate of the union movement on their reliance on a hand-out from the President. On any pretext at all, they run to the White House to see the President. And Roosevelt, in turn, will sometimes see them, and as many times not. Whether they cool their heels in his ante-chambers or stand with hat in hand before his desk, the net result is the same: nothing ever happens. They leave empty-handed and announce that the President has promised to do something for the workers.

It is obvious that the hope of the worker lies not in his reliance on a crumb from Washington but upon the united might and will to struggle for his union, upon a rejection of the no-strike pledge which has become a straightjacket on labor.

The question of rescinding the no-strike pledge is a life and death question for the union movement, especially for the UAW. It is not merely a matter of safeguarding the immediate interests of the American working class. There are far larger perspectives involved: the maintenance and strengthening of the existing union movement in the post-war period.

Make no mistake about it, fellow workers, the no-strike pledge has become a weapon of tremendous power in the hands of the bosses to render the trade unions helpless, in the hope that they can eventually be destroyed.

Organization and Equal Pay

2. Another decisive issue before the convention is the extension of the UAW to the unorganized fields, to bring into its ranks thousands of workers qualified to belong to it. This is especially true of aircraft, where the workers are the victims of low wages while the bosses are having a profit-jag on, aided by the fact that the government has built for their use hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of plants, which guarantee them profits through the contractual system of cost-plus.

In connection with the need for an extended organization drive, there is the necessity for establishing and winning "equal pay for equal work." Unless this is effective, the bosses will use it as a wedge to divide the union and the workers. And this would be in accord with their aim of destroying the UAW.

The auto worker must remember, too, that his industry is now on a total war footing. In the post-war period, in the economic dislocation which will certainly come, and with the additional employment problems created by reconversion, the future of the auto worker is bleak enough.

The unorganized workers will be used as a wedge by the bosses to destroy the standards won by the UAW. This would make it mandatory, if only as a measure of self-defense, for the UAW to organize the whole industry, including aircraft.

But, with the acceptance of the no-strike pledge, such organization has been made doubly difficult. In addition, adherence to the President's hold-the-line order makes it difficult for the union to employ its most attractive feature—the auto workers' wage scale. This is one of the main reasons why some of the leaders of the union are pushing incentive pay. Having failed to stand up for the rights of the union movement and having accepted the hold-the-line order, there is nothing left for them but to embrace incentive pay as a means of getting a little more for the men. This is most dangerous for the UAW, as we shall soon point out.

Wage Increases and Prices

3. Therefore, the union must take a clear-cut stand for wage increases and for the abolition of the hold-the-line order and the WLB which enforces an order admittedly unfair to labor. The hold-the-line order has worked effectively in keeping wages down.

In contrast, however, nothing seriously has been done to control prices, to establish genuine price ceilings or to roll back prices. Nothing has been done to limit salaries and tax all war profits and salaries. The interests opposed to increasing wages, to establishing price ceilings and to rolling back prices are dominant.

Washington has been flooded with dollar-a-year men, i.e., big business or its hirelings, and it is they who run the war economy for their own benefit and at the expense of the workers. All the promises made to the workers up to now have not been worth the paper they were written on. All the promises made now that this time, "seriously," there will be a roll back of prices can be taken at the same value as all previous promises.

For in the meantime, during the past three years, the workers having been paying through the nose, they have borne the burden of the war economy not only through low wages but through taxes and a hundred other ways. They will continue to bear it so long as big business runs the show.

Beware Incentive Pay

To offset the legitimate demands of the workers for wage increases, big business has begun a campaign for the widespread introduction of incentive pay into industry and thus reintroduce their glorified speed-up and piecework system which the workers, succeeded, after heroic struggle, in defeating.

Behind the campaign of the bosses stands the Administration. Helping it is the Communist Party. These considerations alone should make the proposal for incentive pay suspect. But already leading labor leaders, including Murray, have joined in the movement for incentive pay. So far as they are concerned, it offers them a way out of their own impasse, their failure to fight for higher wages and their complete subservience to the Administration.

The cry that incentive pay would increase production and by increasing production raise wages is the biggest lie of all. The workers have increased production ENORMOUSLY in the past three years. The fact is that they have not shared in the wealth they have produced. Only the bosses have profited from the skill and enterprise of the workers. And only they will or can profit from the introduction of this new speed-up and piecework system called incentive pay.

Another invention to win workers to this monstrous fraud is that such wage increases would not be inflationary, since it would merely mean

that the workers would get more pay for increased production, providing there is no increase in the costs of production. But since the production could not and would not mean an increase in the production of consumers' goods. There would still be the lack or low level of production in consumers' good.

The answer to the problem of consumers' goods is to demand complete workers' control of production and union control of rationing! Take it out of the hands of big business! And take the OPA out of the hands of big business!

But, by all means, the UAW must defeat incentive pay proposals. Otherwise, the struggles of the auto workers over the past years against speed-up and piecework will have been in vain. Once the bosses succeed in introducing incentive pay, the struggle to abolish it again will be all the more difficult.

The Factional Struggle

The auto workers' convention faces a deep internal struggle for leadership. It is not merely a struggle for leadership, however. Involved in the present fight is the matter of program, and the question of program is crucial for the union.

In following articles we will analyze the programs of these groups, especially the Reuther-Leonard and the Adde-Frankensteen (which the Stalinists support) factions and show not only how limited they are, but how they fail to respond to the essential interests of the auto workers.

Stalinism—Threat to Labor

6. Finally, the auto workers face the problem of the Stalinist cancer in their union. This is a well-organized, wholly conscious group whose interests lie, not with the American working class and the auto workers, but with the Stalin regime in Russia. The principle which dominates their program and conduct is: we shall do whatever is necessary for the good of Stalin and his ruling group in Russia.

On the face of it, this element in the union can do the UAW the greatest harm. It is the Stalinists who champion incentive pay. It is they who paralyze the workers and seek to prevent a struggle for their most elementary rights. It is they who oppose independent political action of labor. It is they who would destroy union democracy and make a shambles of the UAW. Given half a chance, they would introduce totalitarian methods, for which they are so notorious in Russia and the world over, into the union.

For a Labor Party

7. Despite the efforts of the CIO and AFL officialdoms to head off the growing movement for independent political action of the workers, the former by setting up a committee whose principal task is to prevent the formation of a political party of the workers, and the latter by adherence to its age-old and dangerous policy of "rewarding your friends and punishing your enemies," the need of a Labor Party is being felt by increasing thousands of workers.

The American workers know how they stand insofar as their bosses are concerned. That is, they understand economic action. They are now learning, through actual experience, that the workers cannot have the slightest interests in the Republican and Democratic Parties, since these are both parties of the bosses.

The lessons of the past several years show clearly that if the working class and the labor movement continue to rely upon the "good wishes" and "friendliness" of the professional political servants of big business, they will get it in the neck.

The present Congress, one of the most reactionary in history, can best be described as a viciously anti-labor body. The passage of the Connally-Smith bill is the best evidence, if any were needed, of this fact. Those labor leaders who argue that this bill was passed because of the magnificent fight of the United Mine Workers and John L. Lewis are not merely misleading the workers, but are helping to paralyze the whole union movement to boot.

This bill was in the making for several years. It would have been passed whether or not there was a coal strike. To say that the coal strike brought on the bill is the same thing as saying that the working class should not fight for its rights, which in the present period means fighting for its very life, because reaction might step on it. It means that the workers must do nothing except look to some non-existent Messiah.

The Smith-Connally bill was not a bill designed merely to halt strikes in this period it is a weapon aimed at destroying the union movement. Who passed the bill? Congress! Who was behind the bill? The whole boss class through its organizations, the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce, its congressmen, its press and all its allies in and out of the Administration, and the dominant forces in the Republican and Democratic Parties.

The Union Can Do It

What should such a situation dictate? The organization of an independent party of the workers, a wide-awake Labor Party!

Does the union movement have the strength to build such a party? It is the easiest thing to do it. It has a mass base for such a party in the union movement of 13,000,000 workers. It has tremendous allies in millions of others, unorganized workers, agricultural laborers, middle classes and the youth.

Such a party, embracing and representing the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, would go a long way in defending and extending the interests of all who toil. More than that, it would strike fear in the heart of all reaction.

This too, is of the deepest interest to the auto workers and the workers in general. But in this case, if the auto workers took the lead with a clear-cut demand for the formation of a Labor Party and then proceeded with the initial steps, the whole union movement would be dragged in its wake. It could not be otherwise.

In taking the lead in the organization of a Labor Party, the United Auto Workers would render the greatest possible service to the American working class—just as it was the spark to the organization of the CIO through its mass sit-downs and strikes which broke the resistance of the auto bosses.

On a number of these most important issues which face the convention, the rank and file has already indicated what are its views. At the Michigan State CIO convention the gulf that separated the militants from their leadership was wide indeed. We are certain that so far as the membership of the UAW is concerned, if unhindered by the union bureaucracies, it would have no trouble finding its way to a correct, union-building, pro-working class program. We shall return to this question of program in succeeding articles.