

What Major Tasks Face Trade Union Conventions?

By DAVID COOLIDGE
Labor Editor of Labor Action

The organized labor movement in the United States is getting together in annual conventions. Two great federations of labor, the AFL and the CIO, will convene in Boston and Philadelphia on October 4 and November 1, respectively. Several of the more important internationals of these two federations are also holding their annual conventions. During September and October the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers, the United Automobile Workers and the Industrial Union of Marine & Shipbuilding Workers will have met.

These conventions will be made up of thousands of delegates, representing twelve to fifteen millions of workers. They will come from mine, mill and factory. There will be youth, male and female, attending their first labor convention. There will be grizzled veterans of the picket line and of the class struggle. There will be Negro delegates from the CIO industrial unions. There will be Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, native born and those born beyond the seas.

These thousands of delegates will assemble to hear the annual reports of their national and international officers. They will listen with attention as the officials report on their stewardship during the past year.

Thousands of worker delegates to the various conventions will discuss and vote on urgent and serious questions that confront them daily in the mines, mills and factories. They will pay close attention and give serious consideration to every major issue. They will do this because they represent millions back home who have elected them to be their representatives; to speak and vote for them, to argue for them and to represent their interests. And, too, these delegates, taking responsibility for their own acts, must report to the millions back home on their stewardship.

What are the main problems that these delegates will be confronted with? We can state them simply and directly. All of the conventions and each delegate will be faced with the problem of the Little Steel formula, this high wall which encloses labor in a concentration camp of low wages, and holds the working man and working woman to a permanent low standard of living as long as the formula is operative.

Each convention and delegate will be confronted with the government's job stabilization decree, which makes it impossible for labor to improve its economic status, standard of living and working conditions by moving freely about from one employer to another.

Labor is faced with the Smith-Connally Act, which makes it a penal offense for labor to use its most powerful weapon, its numbers, in an organized and militant manner in order to wring concessions from the bosses.

(Continued on page 4)

Militant Program Needed, Says Akron Labor Writer

The following article was written by John C. Green in the Summit County Labor News, the official publication of the organized labor movement of the Akron, Ohio, vicinity. We are republishing it because it represents a partial program of militancy and progressive action which the labor movement must adopt if it is to survive the growing anti-union campaign of reaction.

Many readers will find in the views of Mr. Green a close similarity to those which have appeared in the columns of this paper. Mr. Green's views are an added reflection of the fact that LABOR ACTION represents the best interests of the American labor movement and the working class in general.

The adoption of the following opinions into a progressive labor program would have an invigorating effect on the workers and it would be a smashing blow against those who seek the destruction of the labor movement either by direct assault or through the adoption of such policies as can only result in a drastic weakening of it.—Editor.

Two important conventions will take place within a few weeks, the United Rubber Workers convention at Toronto and the United Auto Workers convention at Buffalo.

Both conventions will take up an important issue, the no-strike pledge. The Firestone and Goodrich locals, two of the largest rubber unions in the URWA, will present resolutions calling for the revocation of the no-strike pledge. A number of such resolutions will also be brought before the Auto Workers convention. The rank and file of the Auto Workers has always been suspicious of the proposal to tie the union's hands by the no-strike pledge, and it took a lot of persuasion to get the membership to accept this noose around labor's neck.

In most cases the no-strike pledge matter was not brought before the rank and file union members until after the leaders had already given the no-strike pledge to President Roosevelt.

Roosevelt promised many things in return—no lockout, no profiteering, and limitation on profits, no war millionaires, control of the cost of living and no union-busting campaign, etc.

What did organized labor get? Smith-Connally bill, frozen wages, higher taxes on the pay envelope, a continued rise in prices and living costs, and threats of further anti-labor legislation by Congress.

The war profiteers were not affected at all; profits skyrocketed beyond their greatest expectations and they used the no-strike pledge as a club to destroy unionism in the auto and other unions.

In past "Observations," the writer pointed out that, in view of the Smith-Connally anti-labor bill, it became inconsistent for labor to adhere to the anti-strike pledge. It is hoped that both conventions will thoroughly thrash out this matter and come to a decision that will benefit labor organizations and not keep their hands completely tied.

These two conventions can give real leadership to organized labor by revocation of the no-strike pledges, as proposed by the Goodrich and Firestone locals of the URWA and many locals of the UAW.

The War Labor Board, the arm-chair strategists of the war profiteers, has become nothing else but a buffer between enormous profits on one side and frozen wages on the other side. A brick wall for labor to bump its head against. A barricade between war profiteers and organized labor. Their answer is NO to wage earners.

It is time that members of organized labor resign from labor boards. To organized labor they are about as much use as a carbuncle on the neck or a fifth wheel on a wagon.

When wages are frozen and workers are stampeded into greater and greater production efforts, it results in greater and greater profits, and labor holds the bag. It gives something for nothing. Demand wage increases.

The greatest weapon of labor has always been the strike weapon. When labor gave up the right to strike it was putting a gun into the hands of the employers to snipe at labor. And they have taken plenty of pot shots at the unions.

No union leadership is intelligent enough by itself to make decisions for the unions. Decisions made must come directly from the rank and file of the organization. In the past, as well as today, we see top leadership making political and economic decisions for the organized workers—without even consulting the membership. That is wrong. No vital decision should be made before it has been thoroughly discussed by the membership of the union. Bureaucrats in the unions should be removed from office.

Labor must organize the ex-soldiers; machinery should be set in motion to do so. If organized labor does not organize them, the politicians and employers will, and then they will be used against organized labor, as was done before. Act now! Do it once!

LABOR ACTION

SEPTEMBER 27, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

Workers Must Organize Now to

FIGHT LABOR DRAFT!

One of the biggest dangers now facing the American working class is the drive prepared in Washington to push through a universal labor draft. The Austin-Wadsworth Bill, which is calculated to create a condition of veritable slavery for labor, will come before the present session of Congress. The bill has wide support from the reactionary bloc in the Senate and the House. But even more dangerous than the congressional advocates of a labor draft is the fact that a labor draft is favored by the President and his Administration.

The reason given for pushing a labor draft is the manpower shortage. But the current debates in the press and in Washington reveal that the manpower situation is a mess brought about essentially by the bungling of the War Manpower Commission, the War Mobilization Director, Congress and a host of other "experts" in charge of this matter.

A Hundred Per Cent Tax On War Profits Would Answer These Vultures of Big Business

As part of the campaign to repeal the renegotiation of profits law, big business is now testifying before the House Ways and Means Committee. Behind this campaign stands the National Association of Manufacturers, with corporations valued at \$60,000,000,000.

Last week, Ralph S. Damon, representing the airplane manufacturers, testified that the thirty-three per cent clear profits earned by the industry "was merely a bookkeeping figure." Lying about the real position of the airplane companies, he declared:

"Unless changes are made in the renegotiation and tax laws, we will be in the position of the gladiators who said 'We who are about to die salute you.'"

Needless to say, the airplane industry is not about to die. On the contrary, it really began to live when the war began. The government built huge plants for these magnates, supplied all the capital, and gave them contracts which guaranteed high profits! How high were these profits?

Well, figures on eleven big companies revealed that they made \$299,000,000, or 126 per cent last year, on a stockholders' investment of \$238,000,000. With taxes and renegotiations this profit was cut to \$78,000,000, or thirty-three per cent. This, then, is the way a big business is being "wiped out."

L. Y. Speers, president of the Electric Boat Company, also poured out his crocodile tears before the committee and charged that the renegotiation law was "definitely socialistic." Why? Because it cut his war profits down from \$17,840,000 (ten times higher than his pre-war average) to \$8,000,000, or twice as much profit as the company ever made!

BUT---

Committee figures showed what the labor and socialist press pointed out long ago, that, despite the present "high" taxes and renegotiation of contracts, corporations made \$24,000,000,000 in profits in the past three years and still had \$12,000,000,000 left after paying dividends (most of this going to the big officials!).

These profits are greater than any in the history of American business, far greater than in the First World War, when 23,000 new war millionaires were made.

The trouble is that the taxes on corporations and capitalists are not big enough; the taxes on war profits are too small. What is needed is a one hundred per cent tax on all war profits!

"Equality of Sacrifice?" Bunk is hardly a strong enough word. Here are a couple of instances why, right before your eyes.

Stalinist Bureaucrats Champion Reactionary Program

A Report on the Convention of the UERMW

By STANLEY HOLLAND

The ninth annual convention of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America, CIO, is over. It might as well never have taken place, as far as the membership is concerned, for its total accomplishment will add up to one great big minus.

Today, with the rising cost of living and the burden of increased taxation playing havoc with the standard of living of the American worker, it was mandatory for this union convention to attempt to seek a solution to this most pressing problem. Plans for a struggle against the wage freeze, job freeze and tax program should have been rejected and the no-strike pledge rescinded. The reactionary Congress of big business should have been answered with a ringing cry for independent labor political action. These questions, along with the WLB and the Little Steel formula, are of acute interest to the workers.

Avoiding Real Issues

The UE convention either slid over these problems as if they did not exist, or when they bothered to take them up at all they invariably did the wrong thing.

In the last issue of LABOR ACTION we reported on the proceedings of the convention through the first three and a half days. We are now able to report that the last two days of the convention followed the pattern of the opening days by placing its rubber stamp on all the resolutions introduced by the Stalinist-dominated leadership of the UE.

The major questions not previously reported are a resolution calling for the second front, a resolution condemning John L. Lewis (this was the second resolution on Lewis, the first being contained in a previous no-strike pledge), a refusal to nominate James B. Carey, former president of the UE, for re-election to his post

as secretary of the CIO at the forthcoming CIO convention.

These three questions were predetermined by Stalinist party policy. The Stalinists have had control of the UE for the last two years and since that time have been running it with total disregard for the desires of the ranks.

A Stalinist Political Policy

The second front resolution is quite clear in itself. It is a call to American trade unionists by the local agents of Stalinist Russia to give expression to Stalin's present political desires.

Condemnation of John L. Lewis is merely another expression of Stalinist policy. Ever since Moscow changed sides in the war, since Hitler broke his pact with Stalin, his American agents in this country have been told to support the Administration in everything it does. The UE convention did just that. Since trade union militancy and the anti-labor conduct of the Roosevelt Administration are in constant conflict, the Stalinists stand on the side of the Administration and have backed away at all trade union militants.

Therefore, when John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers challenged the Little Steel formula, and with it the anti-labor War Labor Board, the exorbitant price ceilings, and the general miserable conditions forced on workers in this country by the war profiteers, it was the Stalinists (and among them the Stalinist leaders of the UE were the loudest) who joined together with big business in violently attacking him. Hence, by virtue of the same logic, the UE leadership forced through a resolution reaffirming their no-strike pledge, despite the beating that organized labor is taking from the industrial barons, and also called for a fourth term for President Roosevelt.

The resolution for incentive pay that was foisted on the UE membership was the leadership's answer to a need on the part of the organized

labor movement to fight the wage freeze. The incentive pay plan is a new word that has been coined for the old speed-up, piecework system that the trade union movement has constantly fought.

The Stalinists have answered every demand on the part of the workers in the shops for wage increases with "You can't get it now because of the Little Steel formula, but you can make more money with an incentive pay plan." No suggestion to fight wage freezing, for that means bucking Roosevelt's Administration. For that would mean bucking the American capitalists. And they can do neither today, for the foreign policy of Stalinist Russia is to say to the United States: "You do not have to fear an alliance with us. We have no

Starvation in India Result of British Rule

Mass starvation has again hit India. Throughout the province of Bengal the famine has so ravaged the area that the dead lie in the streets. In the city of Calcutta alone, estimated deaths from hunger average about 150 persons in any one day.

Walter Briggs, United Press correspondent in India, has just sent a harrowing story of the mass death and hunger to be found everywhere. He toured the streets of Calcutta and saw the horror with his own eyes.

Briggs tells of walking through the streets of Calcutta at sunrise where he had seen dozens of persons on the sidewalk who had died the previous night. He reports that wherever one turns in the city, one can see children with bloated stomachs, and men and women perishing for lack of strength to move on. The people are waiting for rice, but there is not enough to go around.

The writer further reports that at one time things got so bad that there were not enough facilities to pick

up the huge toll of dead on the streets. Newspaper editors found the death toll so high at times that they were prevented from publishing a complete tally. Briggs saw families waiting in lines five and six blocks long for a plate of watery gruel. He saw three and four year old children digging in rat-pillaged waste from overturned garbage cans.

Yet, right around the corner, state functionaries, politicians, industrialists and other officials gorge themselves on seventeen-course meals!

No help is expected until January, when the harvest comes in. Undoubtedly the situation will grow worse in the coming months.

This story, together with reports of profit grabbing and mismanagement, with stories of the black market, and with other stories that tell how prices rose over 70 per cent on all commodities and up to 800 per cent on some, help to explain the untold

Next Week--

LABOR ACTION will carry full material on the UAW convention to be held in Buffalo on October 4.

That issue will contain first-hand reports on the Shipyard Workers convention, as well as a statement by the Workers Party on the trade union situation.

The discussions over the labor draft have revealed further that the Tydings amendment, which resulted in deferment of more than 1,500,000 agricultural workers out of 12,500,000 (there were only 1,400,000 industrial deferments out of 42,000,000 labor force) not only helped in the creation of the current manpower "shortage," but it has led to a virtual "peonage" of Southern agricultural workers, who are held captive under miserable working conditions and low wages.

When the Baruch report was finally made public, Senator Ferguson of Michigan offered a resolution calling for the abolition of the cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts. Said the senator:

(Continued on page 4)

a militant program to infuse new life blood into the organization. We gave that program last week when we reported on the convention. We repeat it again because it is all-important. Here it is:

1. For militant unionism -- repeal the no-strike pledge!
2. Against incentive pay or any other piecework system; for wage increases!
3. Against the WLB's Little Steel formula!
4. Against the labor draft!
5. For an Independent Labor Party!
6. Organize the unorganized!
7. For a progressive and militant union leadership!

suffering. Several food riots have already been reported.

But behind this story of mass starvation lies the imperialist rule of Great Britain over the millions of Indian people.

India has been the prime object of exploitation for the English capitalists. Untold profits have been soaked out of the blood of the Indian masses. Death to the Indians by starvation means nothing to the English, for they care for nothing but their profits. Out of the present starvation the British imperialists are making a handsome bankroll, for it is they who run the economic life of India.

And India, fighting for her freedom from British imperialist rule, is told by her British overlord that she is not capable of handling her own affairs. Only the fine, educated, rich, bloated, capitalist British imperialist is capable of running India.

These are the fruits of British rule! Independence NOW is the burning need for India!

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Behind the Bosses' Plan For Incentive Pay

The incentive pay speed-up campaign is on again. The War Production Board's big spring push, begun with the aid of all the business magazines, bogged down badly when it came up against labor opposition, especially from the rank and files of the United Automobile Workers Union.

of long hours, frozen wage rates, the steadily rising cost of living—and, in contrast, the ever-rising profits of the flag-waving corporations.

patriotism plus the economic squeeze among the workers. But the economic squeeze on the workers has resulted largely from the "patriotism" of their leaders, who have threatened often enough to quit the War Labor Board and to launch a campaign against the Little Steel formula but have always, when the time came to "put up," patriotically shut up instead.

things are going and go out on strike for a day or two, or perhaps only an hour or two.

Result: the workers earn too much. Then they try to use all their extra money to buy things, that drives prices up, and everybody suffers.

General Motors is nevertheless demanding, in negotiations for a new contract, that the incentive speed-up be reintroduced, although the company knows perfectly well that more workers originally joined the UAW to get rid of the speed-up than for any other single reason.

What a Train Wreck Can Prove

By CHESTER WALTERS
If you've never felt happy and sad at the same time, except at the movies, we suggest that you read those newspaper stories of last weekend's Congressional Limited wreck again. Because that's just the way we felt.

Bosses Understand Incentive Pay

We don't intend to review all this literature, but some of it is of the highest interest to trade unionists, since it shows so clearly what their bosses are thinking about.

People turned their homes into first-aid stations, their cars into ambulances, and their clothes into rags, without much thought of the consequences.

Fudging the Old Game

Judging by all the hullabaloo (WBP propaganda; enthusiastic testimony of Almon E. Roth, an employer member of the WLB before a House committee; a speech of Frederick C. Crawford, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, to 1,500 Los Angeles business men, etc.), you might think incentive pay was something new.

Give Bosses a Free Hand

What is the Times saying? Goods for consumers are scarce, so prices must go up. "Of course! Naturally!" says the Times. Workers are scarce, so the price of labor must go up.

A Reply to NMU on Pegler

We have just received a release from the Knitgoods Workers Union, Local 155, of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, AFL, containing a letter of its manager-secretary, Louis Nelson, to the National Maritime Union of America, in response to an invitation to picket the notorious labor-baiter, Westbrook Pegler.

The Daily Worker has been conducting a vicious, lying campaign against the president of our international union, David Dubinsky.

Hudson Local 154, UAW, Elects Convention Delegates

Hudson Local 154, UAW-CIO, recently elected thirty delegates to the UAW convention, all of whom are committed to fighting against an increase in dues, against incentive or piecework pay, against the Smith-Connelly Act, and to fighting for a raise in wages, roll-back in prices and equal pay for equal work.

The Editor's Comments

Good and Bad Union Politics

For the past several weeks and for some weeks to come, many international labor union conventions have been and will be held. The problems which confront these union conventions naturally reflect the economic and political situation in the country and the unions cannot avoid concerning themselves with what are known as "political questions."

The union movement is primarily an economic movement of the workers. Its essential task is the improvement of the conditions of the workers. Since economic problems, however, are closely related to political questions—they cannot truly be separated—the union movement must concern itself with political questions.

The problems of wages, hours and working conditions intertwine with the problems of relations of the unions to the bosses, the press and the government. It is as impossible to separate the wage problem from "politics" as it is to separate the "political questions" from the economic struggle of the union movement.

The decisive question is whether the unions concern themselves with politics at the expense of the economic interests of the workers, or at the expense of the general interests of the trade union movement. There is such a thing as good politics, just as there is bad politics.

What is "Good Politics"?

For example, in the opinion of this paper, as well as of the writer, the creation of an independent political party of the workers, a Labor Party based upon the trade union movement, is the most important political need of the American working class. Such a party could continue the struggle for labor on the political field. It is indicated by the programs and activities of the two capitalist political parties, by Congress, and, not least of all, the Administration. For labor to depend upon these forces and their rotten boss-controlled and anti-labor political machines is to insure a veritable slaughter of the union movement.

What Kind of Union Politics?

The UERMW convention is a prize example of what a labor union should not and must not do. The main problems of the unions today are how to improve the economic position of the workers, to defend the integrity of the unions against the union-busting campaign of big business, to defeat the anti-labor WLB, the wage freeze and the hold-the-line order, and the profit-mongering of big business. This requires militant independent labor politics.

Under Murray, under Green, under Hillman and the Stalinists, the economic interests of the workers have been subordinated to the rotten politics of the two big capitalist parties. That kind of politics is wrong; that kind of politics must be defeated by the rank and file of the union movement.

The UERMW Convention

We have just had an excellent example of rotten politics in the convention of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers, CIO, a convention completely controlled by the Stalinist "Communist" Party. This convention concerned itself with politics. As a matter of fact, politics dominated everything about the convention. The problems of the work-

On the Daily Worker

May we also point out that labeling Westbrook Pegler a fifth columnist loses its force when you apply the same term against everybody who disagrees with you. Thus, the Daily Worker and the communist press label David Dubinsky, John L. Lewis and many other labor leaders who disagree with you, "fifth columnists."

The Role of the Stalinists

Let us further point to the inconsistency of your position. While you are ready to picket Pegler, you would certainly oppose the picketing of Rickenbacker, who is just as vicious and is just as much an enemy of the labor movement.

Ship Local 9 Rank and File Fight for Union Autonomy

SAN PEDRO—Local 9 membership of the Shipbuilders Union here, in its attempt to elect delegates to the national convention of their union, ran into a series of bureaucratic and dictatorial acts on the part of Walter S. Pollard, the appointed director of the local, with the cooperation of Stalinist stooges.

Delegates Elected Anyway

After these meetings Green wired Pollard to certify the delegates elected in spite of the dictatorship. Pollard, apparently feeling secure in his new-found alliance with the Stalinists, and expecting support from them at the convention, disregarded Green in the same manner as he had disregarded the constitution, and refused to certify them.

ATTENTION!

Detroit Readers of Labor Action—

You are invited to attend a series of four discussions on problems vitally affecting the labor movement:

Sunday, October 3, 8:00 p.m. "The Labor Movement and the Fight for Equal Rights for Negroes"

To be held at the

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Green Orders—Pollard Disposes

The national president of the union, John Green, apparently ordered Pollard to conduct elections for delegates in the regular constitutional fashion. Pollard, knowing that he couldn't get elected by the membership, and determined that no one should go to the convention who was not his, body and soul, was afraid to permit elections.

Fraternally yours,

Knitgoods Workers Union, Local 155, (Signed) Louis Nelson, Manager-Secretary.

only organized and vocal support for Pollard since he arrived.

It was they who supported and put into effect the rule laid down by Pollard that shop stewards should be responsible for the carrying out of the company's rules. It was the Stalinists who tried to intimidate the petition campaign for autonomy. And it was the Stalinists, through their chairman, Bill Bluhm, and his aids, Lopez and Goodwin, who prevented the membership from going on record in favor of elections.

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American Jewish Conference Reveals Terrible Plight of World Jewry

By WILLIAM GORMAN

The American Jewish Conference that met in New York City at the end of August was a significant and impressive landmark in the history of the Jews of this country. It was the first time in twenty-five years that a gathering of such a size had taken place.

The more than five hundred delegates represented higher than ninety per cent of Jewish organizations, encompassing an estimated two and a quarter million people. Nor was publicity lacking. The New York Times, well known for its indifference to the struggles of minority races (Jews and Negroes alike) front-paged the conference twice.

Even the New York capitalist politicians, keeping their ear to the ground and realizing that elections are not far away, came out a week after the conference to request the government to help the Jewish victims of Nazi brutality.

Yet in spite of these superficial signs of momentary success, the conference was a marked failure. More than ever, the Jews today are victims of total reaction and unparalleled anti-Semitism. In contrast with this all-decisive moment, the conference was only an exhibition of futile words, gestures for "unity," dramatic scenes and endless speeches.

In short, the conference did not bring the wracked Jews of Europe one inch nearer to their salvation.

In a Quarter of a Century

It is obvious that the position of the Jews has changed drastically and tragically since the First World War. At that time, the Jews, although numerically not large, had a disproportionate influence in Europe and America.

In Eastern Europe, in the Balkans, Poland and Russia they made up almost the entire middle class, a vital part of the rising capitalist states. In Western Europe and America the

Jews made up a not unimportant section of the capitalist class and of the middle class intelligentsia, journalists, propagandists, civil servants, writers and teachers.

What has happened in the interim of twenty-five years?

Very simply, the Jewish economic and social position in Europe has so deteriorated that the Jews have ceased to play any economic or political role whatever. Instead, a rotting European capitalism has made Jewry into a permanent scapegoat, held responsible for the hunger, war and misery that it produces. Just as in Czarist Russia, every time the corrupt and degenerate monarchy faced the anger of the masses, it would rouse the "Black Hundreds" who would channelize this anger into pogroms on the Jew, so too the Southern Bourbons and the Detroit auto magnates, fearing the consequences of unity of the black and white worker, incessantly fan the flames of race hatred.

The impoverished merchant and professional classes of the semi-feudal Balkans and imperialist Germany were now exhorted to rob, plunder and murder their Jewish competitors. The "foreign" Jewish capitalists were squeezed out by the native ruling class. With their wealth confiscated, their merchants boycotted, their intelligentsia ghettoed, their workers chronically unemployed, the Jews lost all influence in Eastern Europe.

The Terror Against the Jews

In Nazi Germany, the process was swifter, and the terror better organized by the totalitarian capitalist government.

In France, the same process was to culminate in Petain's anti-Jewish laws.

In England and America, anti-Semitism is undoubtedly rising, and the economic dislocation of Jewry has been hastened by the war. If we do

not have government-sponsored pogroms, economic pauperization of the Jewish masses, it is only because we are not yet in the throes of a social upheaval. The Allied economy, compared to that of pre-war Germany and Poland, is relatively healthy. But the American and British ruling classes are holding their Coughlins and Mosleys on leash for the ever-threatening tomorrow, when they will have to defend their wealth in the same manner as did the Polish, German and French capitalists, by pogroms, hooliganism, the murder and expropriation of Jewry.

The liberal New Republic, writing on the Jewish problem, stated:

"It is an astonishing and disquieting fact that during the long series of negotiations and conferences... in Munich, which were marked by a constant stream of major concessions to the Nazis, no serious attempt was made by the democratic governments to obtain at least a modification of anti-Jewish barbarism... There were at times, on the contrary, a marked impatience in official circles with the agitation against the Nazi policy of persecution..."

Evian and Bermuda

Is it any wonder that the Evian conference for refugees, which met in 1938, is hardly remembered by anybody, least of all by the wracked Jewry of Europe? The dignified representatives of the leading capitalist countries got together to convince each other why their respective countries could NOT take in any refugees! And not very much later, Earl Browder, pressed against the wall by a Jewish newspaper columnist, had to admit that Soviet Russia did not allow admission to any sizable number of refugees!

The Jews, fleeing from fascist terror, were left to drown in the seven seas—on the typhus-ridden ghost-ships St. Louis, on cattle boats in the Danube, on the Struma only seventy

miles from shore, on the Patria in the very harbors of Palestine!

Even the Nazi paper, Volkischer Beobachter, gloats over the anti-Semitism of the so-called democratic countries. On June 20, 1943, it wrote: "For years the democratic world has had time to demonstrate in action its alleged love for Jewry by opening its frontiers to them."

And when the victims of Nazi brutality landed "illegally" in Palestine they promptly became victims of British imperialist brutality. The immigrants were clubbed, herded into concentration camps and even transported to Mauritius Island in the Indian Ocean, where they were left to die of malaria!

Only two successive general strikes by the Jews of Palestine have obtained a more tolerable treatment for the impoverished, tortured Jewish immigrants.

And now we have the latest mockery—the Bermuda Conference. Originally planned to be held in Montreal, it was packed off to the island of Bermuda so that nobody could witness the empty gestures of its organizers. Five years have elapsed between the cynical Evian Conference to the fraudulent Bermuda Conference. In that time, approximately three million Jews were murdered. In that time the Allies have neutralized entire countries, bribed politicians, invaded a continent, but have not carried out one concrete action to save the Jews from being slaughtered.

This, then, is the terrible reality facing Jewry today. Did the American Jewish Conference realize it? Did they formulate a consistent program and methods of struggle to defend the very physical existence of the Jewish people and for the ultimate end of anti-Semitism and persecution? Hardly! These problems we will consider in another article.

An "Episode" at Hillburn

By DAN BERGER

After the following story was written, the press announced that warrants were being sought in the Rockland County Court for the arrest of those Negro parents who refused to permit their children to attend the dilapidated Jim Crow school referred to in the article.

J. Edgar Davidson, school board president, stated that the parents would be charged with violating the state compulsory education law. Thus the Hillburn officials not only impose Jim Crow conditions, but they also insist that Negroes accept and like these conditions.

Today, in Hillburn, N. Y., there is being staged an interesting version of the domestic version of President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, highlighted by a repeat performance of the much older and more accustomed privilege of denying a Negro any of the freedoms.

This small town, represented by a part-time mayor, who is a golf-club grounds-keeper, and its school board president, a business executive, is asserting its right to refuse Negro school children entry into the only modern school house in the community. It proposes to continue to segregate them in the dilapidated, unsanitary shed which has been allotted to Hillburn's Negro population.

The strike of the Negro parents and their children against compulsory attendance in a Jim Crow school house is now in its second week. In defiance of the duly constituted authorities, the elected "guardians" of the "democratic" rights, they have formed their own school in a church and are engaged in vigorous united action against the oppression. Their fight has been taken up by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Rockland County American Civil Liberties Union, the American Labor Party and other groups, most of which are clamoring for a review by Governor Dewey of the legal issues involved.

SPACE AND COLOR

Stemming from a conception of Negro citizens' rights and needs like that of Mayor John Creeliman, who believes that "all a Negro wants is a full belly," the affair began when Negro parents refused to register their children at the old wooden school and brought them to the roomy new building for registration last week.

A gerrymander-type of re-zoning of the township had in arbitrary fashion decreed that none of the children living in the main Negro area, west of the railroad tracks, could attend the new school. Peculiarly enough, this Jim Crow zone line ended abruptly at the homes of the mayor and the town clerk—on the west side of the tracks.

Lack of space was not advanced as a reason for the

action by J. Edgar Davidson, head of the school board and manager of the factory which is the town's principal industry. The school has facilities for the accommodation of 180 pupils. The number of pupils now attending is 98; those excluded number 56. Thirty-two Negro children who live in the white zone were permitted to register and are included in the 98. Apparently, an important factor in the attempted segregation is the realization that Negro children would outnumber the whites.

Small, quiet demonstrations and meetings have punctuated the struggle as the Negro families have faced unfulfilled threats of mass arrests and fines. They have settled down to a resolute strike, while over their heads the legalistic skirmishes are fought. The State Education Department has declared its intention of awaiting formal actions and appeals.

The NAACP, represented in Hillburn by its counsel, Thurgood Marshall, is preparing such action and preparing for attempts at intimidation. A citizens' committee, composed of prominent writers and artists, has also taken a hand in publicizing the facts and has appealed to Governor Dewey. Non-partisans and innocent bystanders may be found at their usual stand—the Republicans, invited to join in the defense of democracy, have indicated that they cannot take sides in the dispute; Rockland County's Democrats haven't heard a thing, although they were invited to listen in by the ALP.

FACTS OF LIFE STRIKE HOME

While the "liberals" scurry to unearth a freedom where there is none, while they try to clean house for the author of the Four Freedoms, the Negroes are fighting quietly and steadfastly in Hillburn. To be denied the fruits of their labor is no novelty to them. Now they are denied even the privilege of learning about the illusion of capitalist democracy. But they are learning the need for direct, united action.

A leadership which scrambles hopefully for crumbs off the capitalist government's conference tables continues to urge caution and unselfish optimism. As befuddled as ever, the "liberals" shriek plaintively over each fresh outrage against workers, white and Negro, and at the same time, champion constantly the system and the men who deny the workers the elementary freedoms.

The utter inability of the "liberals," the false leaders, to reconcile purportedly democratic war aims with the reactionary facts of everyday life is being brought home to workers everywhere. Their answer, their solution, is to fight reaction and barbarism, however painted over with golden phrases. At Hillburn, as elsewhere, they are fighting.

Speech of Railroad Lawyer at FEPC Hearing Shows Up Hypocrisy of American Racial Policy

By W. F. CARLTON

Sydney Alderman, counsel for railroad companies, in testifying before the recent hearings of the FEPC on race discrimination on railroads, stated that the roads had to adapt their "operations and employment practices to the prevailing mores and legal systems of the states they serve."

This statement is an excuse for discriminatory practice against Negroes and Mexicans. There are certain things that we should remember and repeat:

First of all, the characterization of the society in which we live as a society ridden with race prejudice is absolutely correct.

The "liberals," of course, raise their usual howl. If we accept what Mr. Alderman says, then we would have to accept the Hitlerite regime in Germany. This can't be true, say the liberals, because there is a war against Germany, and Hitler practices race discrimination and persecution. But it should be clear by now that the war is not being fought because Hitler persecutes Jews or to bring about race equality. Hitler could as well argue that he is fighting to liberate India and Africans from British race prejudice. His agents in Africa and India are saying both these things. They are stupid lies.

The Problem Before the Unions

This plain, blunt statement by Mr. Alderman is to be taken at its full value. American society persecutes Negroes. It is a problem which confronts the American people. But it is especially the problem of the labor movement. Labor must maintain its solidarity, and for this reason alone it must fight against discrimination within its own ranks. It must do that for its own self-defense.

The CIO has given a great lead here, has done and is doing a great work. In defense of labor's power to fight the bosses' anti-labor policies the CIO most unsparringly condemns the practice of railroad unions which discriminate on account of race and

all workers, CIO and otherwise, must agitate for the inclusion of all workers, black, white, yellow and brown, into all unions on terms of equality.

Negroes, Past and Present

First the Negroes were enslaved. Since that time the persecution of the Negroes has been one of the foulest blot on American society. This was true before the Civil War, which ended slavery; it is true since 1864. The Negroes have been promised their equal rights, now by the Republicans, now by the Democrats. Glib and noisy Negroes, hungry for jobs, have conspired with white politicians to deceive the Negroes election after election. The Negroes are sick to death of it.

Now, with the war, "the great war for democracy," official segregation, persecution and hypocrisy have reached such a pitch, and in the armed forces, too, that the colored peoples of the world are aghast when they look toward us, and hundreds of millions of Asiatics listen to the propaganda of the Japanese warlords that the white man is the enemy of the colored races.

America is not Roosevelt and the small minority of capitalists (financiers, industrialists, rich farmers), who rule this country. The millions of workers who made this country what it is have far more right to the title, American, than the small minority of blood-sucking profiteers. Labor cannot continue to allow hundreds of millions of Asiatics and Negroes to brand all Americans with the crimes of imperialism.

We are entering into a new world, a world where, as the advertisements tell us, no country is more than sixty hours from an American airport, a world where the fate of one nation is inextricably intertwined with the fate of all. One World.

Labor Has a Job to Do

Labor faces the choice: to be the servant, the tool of imperialism, bearing the burden and shame of its crimes; or going forward boldly to reconstruct society and open out the new possibilities which lie in our

hands. The time to start is now. And one of the things which is crying for solution is the position of the Negro in American society.

Labor cannot and must not accommodate itself to the evils of American capitalism. This society has had its day. It is now an obstacle in the path of human progress. Labor must set itself the task of cleaning up the mess, must say swiftly and clearly: "You have had 300 years to solve this question. You have used the Negroes against labor, and labor against the Negroes. You have made the term 'white man' hated over half the world. You have even poisoned some of us with your vile prejudices. We have had enough. We are not going into the post-war world carrying the burden you have imposed on American society for so long. We shall clean the country of this filthy plague of race discrimination and prejudice."

All of labor will say this one day. The thing is not to wait but to begin to say it now.

At the Crossroads

The world is at a stage when men all the world over are looking for leadership in all fields, to show them a way out of the hell which capitalist society has plunged us in. A clear statement by American labor that it intends to take the Negro question into its own hands and put an end to one of the most vicious of capitalist abuses will not only lift the forces of real democracy in this country, the working class, to a height of power and enthusiasm never known before.

It will also call forth a response from the workers in Britain, who hate and are ashamed of British imperialism. It will bring new hope to the underground fighters in Europe, and the hundreds of millions of colonial peoples will turn to a new America, the America of the greatest labor movement history has ever known, the only architect capable of building the new world at home and the powerful ally of those who must build it abroad.

From the Pamphlet "Plenty For All"

Fascism is a Product of Capitalism

By ERNEST LUND

Fascism is the ugly child of capitalist decay.

Fascism is the last resort of the capitalist class everywhere—the Thyssens and Krupps, of the Beavers and Hearsts, of the Mitsuis and Mitsubishis, of the du Ponts and Rords.

Fascism is the answer of capitalism to the working class, the answer of concentration camps and machine guns.

Fascism becomes the political form of capitalist rule in the period of the Death Agony of Capitalism.

Fascism in Germany today is a picture of America tomorrow—if the capitalists have their way about it!

Fascism is born out of capitalist decay, out of unemployment, out of hunger, out of discontent, out of bankruptcy.

Fascism is the violent cough out of the tubercular lungs of capitalism. No cough drops will stop it. Only killing the disease itself will stop the cough.

Stopping the cough and leaving the tubercular germs at work is futile. And this is what a mere "defense of democracy" does. Because "democracy" today is also based on capitalism. It can only afford it in time of "capitalist democracy." It has survived in those countries rich enough to survive the epidemic of capitalist crises. It has survived in England because her vast Empire permitted the capitalists to skim off enough cream to keep the population at home satisfied. English "democracy" is based on slavery for millions of Indians, Africans, and Arabs. American democracy is based on the fat accumulated by capitalism in the past and economic exploitation of the world.

Democracy is a luxury for capitalism. It can only afford it in time of prosperity. When capitalism begins slashing wages in time of crisis or rationing food in time of war, and mass discontent arises, it is neces-

sary to dispense with the luxury of democracy. Germany, Italy, Japan, France and smaller capitalist countries have already done away with democracy. England and America, the richest capitalist nations on the earth, have until now still been able to afford this luxury.

The fight against fascism must be an offensive one. Not "defense of democracy," but "down with capitalism," must be the watchword. But the offensive must begin by fighting tooth and nail to DEFEND every democratic right—the right to strike, to speak freely, to write freely, to meet freely, to organize freely.

But everywhere under democratic capitalism the question must arise, to paraphrase Abraham Lincoln: "This house cannot remain divided against itself. Either it will be all slave or it will be all free. Either the capitalist dictators of industry will do away with political democracy and establish fascism, or the mass of the workers will do away with the dictators of industry and establish democracy everywhere."

Hitler did the bidding of Thyssen and Krupp, and struck down the German labor movement. The leaders of the working class parties and unions were arrested, many murdered, others exiled. German capitalism was then free to slash wages and regiment labor for its next job-rearmament and war.

The English and French capitalists feared war. They were still fat from the spoils of the last war. They had little to gain compared to the risk. The risk was great. The war may end in revolution. Hitler feared a revolution, too. But German capitalism was up against the wall. It was being slowly strangled by the capitalist crisis. It was willing to gamble. Hitler played a clever game. He knew that he could move ahead without fear of the English ruling class. They were more afraid of revolution than of Hitler. So he militarized the Rhineland, occupied Aus-

tria, scared Chamberlain into giving him the Sudetenland, grabbed up Czechoslovakia, took Memel, prepared to march into Poland. All the while the English capitalists were hoping he would become satisfied and stop, or direct his blows against Russia. Finally they had to overcome their fear of revolution and go to war.

Not to save democracy! Not to defeat fascism! But to save the British Empire! To prevent the German capitalists from re-dividing the earth!

And the American imperialists are just as interested in the question of democracy or fascism. Witness the scandalous affair in North Africa with the French fascist, Darlan. And now with the arch-reactionary militarist, Giraud, and the monarchist-turned-democratic politician, de Gaulle. Or the maneuvers with the Austrian pretender, Otto of Hapsburg. Or the paeans of democratic praise for bloody dictators like Batista of Cuba and Vargas of Brazil.

World War I was continued in World War II. The imperialist powers of the earth took a breathing period, raised more cannon fodder, prepared and maneuvered for position. Then they continued in 1939 essentially where they left off in 1919.

Again the big industrial giants wrestle for control of the earth. Germany with its allies on one side, England and America and their allies on the other.

Capitalism must expand—or die! "The earth is divided? Then it must be redivided," say the hungry imperialists.

Thirty or forty million men are placed in uniform and given guns to slaughter each other.

Cities are bombed. Ships are sunk. Crops laid waste. Oil wells blown up and oil made from coal. Gunpowder made from cotton and clothing from paper. Coffee allowed to rot in Brazil and substitutes used in

America. Sugar piled up in Puerto Rico and rationed in New York. Millions of strong men sent into the Army and women sent into heavy industry. Liars put on the radio and honest men in jail. Civilization "defended" in Lybia and Guadalcanal, and schools closed in Germany and America.

This is capitalism in its Death Agony.

This is capitalism gone mad. This is World War II—second ugly child of the social crisis of capitalism.

Depression—unemployment—hunger.

Fascism—murder—barbarism. War—mass slaughter—devastation. That is the "normal" life of capitalism today.

That is the foul death stench of capitalism.

That is the REAL enemy of civilization.

Editor's Note --

The article in last week's issue of LABOR ACTION, entitled "Censorship Hides Truth About Europe," by Ria Stone, contained the views of the writer. The editorial board takes no responsibility for them.

India in Revolt

By Henry Judd

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- Plenty for All
- How the Owners of the Machine Have Mismanaged
- Why the Capitalist System Won't Work
- The Death Agony of Capitalism
- The Way Out
- Why Russia Turned Sour
- How It Can Be Done
- Where to Begin

Now, If Only We Didn't Have To Pay Wages

Big business is still on its anti-labor warpath. Such a sentence sounds strange. There never was a time when it wasn't on this warpath. This time, however, we are given another, but old, slant on the anti-labor campaign and it concerns post-war economic prospects.

One Samuel O. Dunn, chairman of the Simmons-Boardman Publishing Corporation, speaking at a Midwest conference on industrial relations, stated that post-war prospects were pretty good if one obstacle could be removed: labor's demand for increased earnings.

The head of the company which published Railway Age, mouthpiece for the railroad corporations, believes

that business can prosper if high taxes on corporations and individuals are removed. This would give the big monopolies enough capital to expand and continue business. The same old lie is advanced that taxes are eating away at business "reserves."

But that isn't all. What is really wrong is that "every substantial increase in the profits of any business or industry starts a movement for an advance in wages."

The facts, however, prove that the current high taxes on business, which are not nearly high enough, have not halted the greatest profits in history. For the past couple of years LABOR ACTION has presented proof that

big business has been the great gainer from war production, that war profits have surpassed anything in the past and that a new class of war millionaires is growing up.

Not only are high profits "earned" by the big monopolies, but they put aside huge reserves of capital through "contingency funds," "reserves," "future improvements," "post-war conversion funds" and other devices to keep from paying proper taxes on their true incomes. But, as we have pointed out before, the business interests are on a wage-cutting campaign, not only for the present, but especially for any post-war period. They are gathering their forces for this fight.

How Roosevelt Interpreted and Supported the Smith-Connally Bill

By WALTER WEISS

It is the Connally-Smith-Roosevelt Act now. That's the right name for the anti-strike law.

The top leadership of the unions have called the law everything imaginable, from the worst anti-labor legislation in a hundred years to "a fascist measure pointed like a revolver at the heart of labor."

But they have purposely concealed Roosevelt's responsibility, first, for its original passage, then for an executive order adding to it extraordinarily severe penalties which, as the United Mine Workers Journal states, "heretofore no one interpreting the Smith-Connally Act breathed into its provisions."

Roosevelt's men in the House of Representatives, Ramspeck and McCormack, didn't oppose anti-strike action but pleaded against making it too harsh. In fact, Ramspeck warned the House to be careful or nothing would be passed, since the Senate would be unwilling to accept some of the House provisions (New York Times, June 4). We shall show more fully, in a future article, that other Administration leaders behaved as badly or worse.

Why the President Vetoes

The President vetoed the bill that was finally passed only because he thought it would not be effective enough in preventing strikes. As Ernest Lindley said in Newsweek, July 5:

"The President's veto...involved no principle, no fundamental question of public policy. The President's veto message was based entirely on the pragmatic argument that Section 8 (providing for strike ballots and a cooling-off period—W.W.)... would promote strikes instead of discouraging them... (Congress) has been led to believe that the President would sign this bill."

The veto message also stated that Section 6 (providing jail sentences and heavy fines for those who in any way encouraged a strike in plants taken over by the government) would result only in punishment of a few leaders. Roosevelt asked Congress to allow him to induce men up to the age of sixty-five. In this way he could control all the strikers, as well as the leaders, and "insure the continuity of war work."

Labor Leaders Mislead

On June 25, the very day that the President vetoed the bill and Congress re-passed it, Louis Stark, the noted labor reporter of the New York Times, wrote that Roosevelt's handpicked War Labor Board was going to ask the President to punish the miners by cancelling the check-off of dues, seizing their six million dollar treasury, and taking civil and criminal action against Lewis.

In spite of all this, Philip Murray

called the veto "statesmanlike"—so did Bill Green—and ended a letter to the President, which he filled with thanks and pledges of loyalty, by signing himself "Gratefully, Philip Murray."

The CIO executive board passed a special resolution, expressing "our deep gratitude to President Roosevelt our Commander-in-Chief," and renewed their no-strike pledge.

Hardly any of the union newspapers told the workers what Roosevelt really said in his veto message but instead praised him extravagantly and condemned Congress. Nor did they point out, as did LABOR ACTION and a few other papers, that Roosevelt sent the veto to Congress when many congressmen from large labor districts were absent. Since the President is no amateur at politics, this indicated that he did not really want the veto to stick.

Sanctions Against Labor

The President's executive order of August 18 provides, so far as labor is concerned, for withholding from a union as an organization "any benefits, privileges or rights" that it may have under a contract until the union proves that it will and CAN obey orders of the War Labor Board.

Obviously this means that a union could be deprived of closed shop or maintenance of membership rights. Roosevelt specifically says that checked-off dues are to be held by the government until the union obeys.

The words quoted above are so broad that they could mean much more—for example, the elimination of a system of union stewards for handling grievances, so that workers would have to deal with the employer as individuals and the very backbone of the union's strength in the shop would be broken.

It is worth observing that all these provisions are calculated to put a maximum of pressure on union officials, on whom Roosevelt has always depended to control the rank and file. Observe that the check-off is not abolished, but the dues are collected and held. This is a bait to the leaders, who are thereby induced to work harder to control the workers. If the check-off were abolished, the union could at least try to collect its own dues. Observe too that the union must not only be willing, but also be ABLE, to obey the WLB. Statements of good intentions by the leaders will not do; they must show that they can control their members.

As for individual members of the unions who disobey the WLB, they may lose their draft deferments or employment privileges (that is, they may lose their jobs and also be blacklisted by the government through the War Manpower Commission—W.W.). Union leaders who wish to prove that they have their

men under control are in this way tempted to report militant workers to the government.

In fact, the Communist Party's yellow Daily Worker (August 20) suggests that this is exactly what ought to be done. "The President's order," says this scabby sheet, "does...make it very important for the union to dissociate itself from the acts of irresponsible groups or leaders..."

More Aspects of the Bill

Workers should note that the above picture, for the most part, does not apply merely to plants that the government has seized. In a letter to the War Labor Board, which accompanied the executive order, Roosevelt said:

"The board may, of course, on its own motion, except during government operation, modify its orders in

any way it deems appropriate to ensure compliance."

The Connally-Smith Act states that the board may NOT act on its own motion to change working conditions during government operation but must wait for a request from the majority of workers or their representatives or from the government operating agency. To get around this complication of the law, the executive order states that the WLB shall report cases of disobedience to Economic Stabilization Director Vinson. He is then DIRECTED (not permitted) to DIRECT (not request) the government operating agency to ask the WLB to punish the offending union.

In other words, the WLB tells Vinson that it wishes to punish a union. He then orders the government operating agency to request the WLB

to punish the union. A rare legal comedy!

That is what the Mine Workers Journal means when it says that the "original design of the law is stretched to make the straight-jacket labor curb complete in every detail."

Why all the rigmarole? Evidently because Roosevelt didn't trust Ickes, who had quarrelled with the WLB about the mine situation. Ickes might, following the clear wording of the law, on his own hook ask the WLB to IMPROVE the miners' conditions. This would be very embarrassing. Now the WLB can, in effect, ask ITSELF to punish the miners, when it sees fit to do so.

If space permitted we would prove here in far greater detail (we shall, however, do so on another occasion) that Roosevelt was not in the least interested in the actual provisions of

the law. He simply rewrote it to suit himself, and in the process made it far harsher.

Despite the lies of the Daily Worker (August 20) and The Nation (August 28) there is nothing in the law that required the President to issue any executive order at all. The law, in fact, provides for its own penalties, which are by no means trifling. This does not mean that Congress will necessarily criticize the President for what he has done. Their law was relatively (but only relatively) mild, merely because they feared the possible effects of severer action. They said as much during debate.

Labor Officials Hide Roosevelt Role

How have the union leaders reacted to the executive order? Almost without exception they have ignored it, acting as if it did not exist. The

union papers simply say nothing at all. Fearing beyond all else an independent party of labor, the union officialdom had already determined on a big political campaign to defeat or to "reform" congressional reactionaries (especially those who voted for the Connally-Smith Act) and to support Roosevelt for a fourth term.

Nothing that he does will alienate their affections from "the best friend that labor ever had in the White House"—provided they can successfully conceal the facts from the rank and file workers. Of this we can be sure: they will not fail for lack of effort. Labor leaders will continue to sit on the WLB and even (as they did in the recent Chrysler case) vote to punish unions, unless the workers stage an internal revolt and find new leaders.

Problems Facing the Union Conventions --

(Continued from page 1)

Each convention will be faced with the problem of what to do about the War Labor Board, that monstrosity composed of labor, employers and "the public." This is the mongrel group of bosses and their cringing stooges, the "public" group, among whom is one Wayne Morse, so-called "liberal," the board's "compliance officer" and, in plain language, its chief cop. This is the board that clutches at the throat of labor in full arrogance and malice, aided and abetted by the "protecting labor group" of the AFL and CIO.

WLB, Taxes and Profiteers

Labor has one important question to decide in connection with this War Labor Board: should its elected officers continue to sit as members of the WLB? Members of the unions cannot fully control and influence the acts of the employer and "public" members of the board, but labor does have the right and the power to control its own elected officials. It has been demonstrated that the labor group on the board has little or no influence to swing the board to the side of labor in any important way. Labor's officials can only support the reactionary acts of the employer members and their lieutenants of the "public" group, as they did in the case of the coal miners, or hand in protests and unavailing minority reports.

Taxes have become a burden too heavy for the workers to bear. What position will the conventions take on this matter? How can labor continue to bear the heavy burden of income taxes and at the same time provide the families of the working class with a decent standard of living?

There is the problem of the OPA and its daily and weekly misrepresentations about controlling and rolling back prices. What does it mean to roll back prices a few cents on articles of food, like peanut butter, after prices have advanced from 25 to 100 per cent? And what worker believes that the OPA or any other

government agency will really do anything effective in connection with price control? The only effective means of price control is to send the food profiteers to jail. These include the big meat packers, the canners, the big dairy monopolies, the chain stores and other huge food distributers and combines. What worker is so stupid or naive as to believe that the government will fill the jails with the profiteers?

The profiteers don't go to jail. They go to Washington and take over the Roosevelt government boards—the WPB, OPA, WLB, etc.

union demonstrates its willingness and capacity to abide by the obligations thereof."

Further, the decree directs that "in the case of non-complying individuals" with decisions of the WLB, the War Manpower Commission may modify or cancel "draft deferments or employment privileges, or both." That is, any worker who refuses to permit himself to be shackled by the boss-ridden WLB may be put into the Army immediately, or he may be denied employment!

Labor's Political Tasks

And this from Roosevelt, the "friend

This brings us to another problem that will face the conventions. This is the question of political action by labor. What will the conventions say on this important matter? The CIO has already spoken. Murray, other CIO leaders and the Stalinist "Communist" Party are for the reelection of Roosevelt; for Roosevelt, with his WLB, his OPA and his WMC. Bill Green and the AFL have not changed a bit. They are still for supporting their "friends" and punishing their enemies.

But there is a rising tide in the ranks of labor, among the rank and file, for genuine independent political action by labor. Some workers are thinking, rather vaguely, it is true, that labor should form its own Independent Labor Party, and break away from the Democratic and Republican Parties. These workers begin to understand that neither the Democratic nor the Republican Party is the party of labor.

All of these are most important questions that will come before the

conventions. Will the delegates insist on adequate, open and democratic discussion of these questions? Or will they permit a leadership already committed to the support of Roosevelt or Willkie, already promised to one or the other of the two boss parties, to sidetrack the discussion and lead it into "safe" channels?

Will the delegates permit the leadership to woo them away from their desire to rescind the no-strike pledge which was given by the trade union leaders without consultation with the membership of the unions which they claim to represent?

If the conventions give adequate attention to the problems before the labor movement, there will be no place on the convention agendas for speeches by government officials, telegrams from Roosevelt, replies thereto and other types of sugar-coated but anti-labor ballyhoo, so highly esteemed by the trade union leadership. And these are the problems which are crucial for the labor movement.

United States Circuit Court of Appeals Affirms "Minneapolis Trial" Verdict

At the time of going to press, it was reported from St. Louis that the United States Circuit Court of Appeals in that district has upheld the conviction of eighteen leading members of the Socialist Workers Party on the charge of sedition and with "conspiring to undermine the loyalty and discipline of American soldiers and sailors."

This is the case more popularly known as the "Minneapolis Trial," and it was the outcome of the struggle between the militant Teamsters Union, Local 544, and Daniel Tobin, international president.

The trial itself, which was fully reported by LABOR ACTION, demonstrated how weak and groundless was the government case. This was verified by the court's sentence of a year and a day to sixteen months. Yet Judge Kimbrough Stone, of the Appeals Court, wrote in his opinion that: "A thorough examination of the record leaves no doubt as to the justice of the verdict."

The tip-off on the case is that it is the first peacetime "sedition trial" in the history of the country. The case will undoubtedly go to the Supreme Court.

Next week's issue of LABOR ACTION will carry full details of the case and of the verdict of the Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Labor Draft and Sanctions

What will labor leaders and the conventions do about the semi-fascist Austin-Wadsworth bill, calling for labor conscription? This is a forced-labor bill that can be used to establish peonage all over the United States, similar to the practices indulged in by some of the Southern states.

Will Roosevelt's vicious decree of August 16, ordering sanctions against labor, come up for free and frank discussion in the various conventions? Or will the union leadership attempt to stifle discussion of this labor-enforcing decree? Is labor prepared and willing to continue voting for a fourth term for Roosevelt after it understands what this man is doing to the unions and the working class?

What does Roosevelt's decree mean? It says that, in cases where a union refuses to comply with the decisions of the WLB the plant may be taken over, union dues may be impounded by the government where there is a check-off, and other "benefits, privileges or rights accruing to it as such under the agreement or proposed agreement with the employer" may be withheld by the WLB "until the

of labor," the "author" of the New Deal, that great experiment in the "four freedoms."

The United Mine Workers Journal correctly says that government "bureaucrats have the power to make a man work on the job they choose for him. They can keep him from getting the job he wants. They can determine his rights as a union man. They tell him what kind of union he can join. They tell him what part of the country he can work in. They tell him what kind of food he can eat. They can and do regulate what he can spend his money for and how far he can travel in his car. If he strikes he can be indicted for it."

All of these things are being done to labor by the Democratic Party, the party of the New Deal, the "New Order," in the United States which seeks to become the "World New Order" under the guidance of Roosevelt.

The Republican Party claims to be all heated up about the "bureaucracy in Washington." They have some freedoms, too, that they want to spread over the earth. Willkie, the titular head of this band of outs trying to get to the trough after twelve lean years, is all ready for his second start. He too loves labor.

Man Power and the Labor Draft --

(Continued from page 1)

"This statement of Mr. Baruch's committee summarized what I have found to be true, and I have every reason to believe that the statement by the manpower utilization section of the War Manpower Commission to a press conference is true to the effect that if a maximum use were obtained from manpower in the Pacific Coast area it would be 25 per cent above what it is now... The cure for this evil is the abolition of cost-plus-fixed-fee contracts."

What these gentlemen fail to point out, however, is that one of the reasons for the "shortage" in the West Coast aircraft industries is the miserable wages paid by those monopolies whose high profits are guaranteed by their cost-plus contracts with the government.

It is only in relation to this question of manpower that one can consider the present dispute over the drafting of fathers. As a matter of fact, fathers have been drafted all along. The estimate of the War Department is that there are 700,000 fathers in the armed forces at the present time.

But if selective service has been drafting fathers all along, why the special hullabaloo about it now? Why did selective service suddenly make a national public issue over it?

One paper revealed that the purpose of the "draft fathers" issue is to compel the entrance into industry of thousands and thousands of fathers in other occupations, not at all attracted

either by conditions of work in war plants, wages or hours, to take such jobs. Thus the "draft fathers" issue is an indirect means of obtaining the objective of a labor draft.

Senator Truman, for example, charged that the Army itself was hoarding manpower.

What stands out in this whole discussion is how the Administration, its big business appointees in charge of war production, the politicians carrying out the manpower program, and the policies themselves, have proved to be highly inefficient, giving rise to the worst kind of bungling.

Industry hoards labor because it doesn't have to pay for it. Cost-plus-fixed-fee takes care of that. The big agricultural interests hoard farm labor and keep large sections of such labor in a state of "peonage," working at low wages. And even the armed forces, according to New Deal Senator Truman, are "wasting men."

In the face of this, the labor draft becomes an even more dangerous threat to the security and freedom of the working class. It makes no difference what name it goes under, whether the Austin-Wadsworth Bill, or any other designation, a labor draft, aside from being unconstitutional, is labor slavery.

It will freeze all workers, decide when and where they shall work, under what conditions and what their wages will be. There will be all kinds of penalties employed to force labor to subordinate itself to any such bill. It will threaten

the very existence of the union movement. But in the end the administrators will make as horrible a mess of manpower under any system of compulsion as they have up to now.

Labor must now organize the fight against a labor draft!

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Sparks in the News

By JOHN BERNE

It is reported that the United States Steel Corporation agreed to operate for the government—WITHOUT FEE OR OTHER COMPENSATION—the new giant steel mill worth \$180,000,000 now being erected in Utah?

Why not? Chances are good that United States Steel will get this very same \$180,000,000 steel mill as a post-war present.

The Russian magazine, The War and the Working Class, which has very little to do with the Russian working class but is merely a mouthpiece for the Kremlin, doesn't like Amgot, in these words: "Amgot is not undertaking the necessary measures for the actual destruction of fascism... The administration itself is of a military government based on principles which have nothing in common with the principles of democracy."

Agreed! But what has Stalin's government to do with the principles of democracy?

To make the fall of the Mussolini regime look altogether kosher, the Italian Royal Commission was set up to investigate the illegal acquisition of wealth by former fascist officials. An incomplete report published by the commission listed many "personalities of the former regime who have accumulated enormous fortunes," including former Cabinet ministers, secretaries of state, ambassadors, etc.

"Particularly fruitful were the findings of the commission in the case of Galazzo Ciano, whose fortune, as well as that of his wife, Edda Mussolini, has been ordered by the commission to be seized," according to a Rome broadcast.

Remember the gag about fascism benefiting the common man!

And how about the fortunes of the Badoglio bunch of fascists? Now, that would make an interesting investigation today.

But how did Lewis help the cause of independent labor politics when he came out in support of Willkie? A low rope is a low rope!

In an editorial supporting the May universal compulsory military training bill, the New York Times wrote: "Until it is demonstrated beyond all doubt that the new peace rests on a solid basis we shall need all the insurance we can provide against the outbreak of another war. Post-war military training and service is one necessary form of such insurance."

That's what they all say—and it finally adds up to another war!

Some days after the event, the Portuguese censorship released the news of widespread strikes. Demonstrations and three days of strikes by tens of thousands of Portuguese workers were announced as ended. The workers had been demanding food.

In Portugal—as everywhere else—war shortages are suffered primarily by the working people.

Victor Riesel, in the New York Post, writes that the CIO is going to town on an organizational campaign. Many organizational wizards of the CIO are on a six-week tour to establish regional headquarters. There is even talk of the union buying up some radio stations to establish "labor's voice" on the air.

Doesn't that sound good? Only—All this commotion is not to organize the unorganized workers. And it is not to start an Independent Labor Party to meet the greatest need of the day. No; it is to have capitalist politician Roosevelt re-elected for a fourth term.

Frederick C. Crawford, president of the National Association of Manufacturers—you know the bunch—was on the air the other night filling the air waves with anti-labor propaganda. Among the gems he uttered was a condemnation of the worker who shifts from job to job looking for "AN EXTRA DOLLAR."

He didn't mention that it is the exclusive privilege of only Mr. Crawford's class to have billions of extra war profits brought to them in their swivel chairs.

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By WALTER WEISS

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