

Congress Out to Soak Workers with 10% Sales Tax

New Tax Plan Is a Wage Cut For All Labor

By GERTRUDE SHAW

There are more ways of cutting wages than by the direct method of cutting wage rates.

Every time prices go up ten points real wages do down ten points. High prices are a wage cut. And there is no roll-back in sight.

Also, every worker sees in his pay envelope that the income taxes he is now paying are an actual monetary wage cut.

In addition, to the extent that bond-buying is compulsory, this too is equivalent to an income slash in the sense that the worker cannot use that money for his immediate needs.

These are huge slices right out of a worker's pay.

But now there is the threat of a ten per cent sales tax—which can mean nothing else but a brand new ten per cent wage cut on top of all the rest.

This new burden is being pushed onto the working people because the Administration wants to raise for war financing \$10,500,000,000 more taxes in 1944 than this year—and big business, Wall Street, America's "Sixty Families," the rich, want you and me to pay most of that \$10,500,000,000.

The National Association of Manufacturers has made it clear to its political servants in Congress that the NAM "believes fiscal and tax policies should be adopted that will... encourage the system of free enterprise." That is the way the capitalist class says: "Hands off our war profits!"

Both Republican and Democratic politicians now considering the tax question in the House Ways and Means Committee, hear their masters' voice.

Thus the committee has rejected the idea of increasing individual income tax rates on higher income brackets.

It has likewise refused to raise estate and gift taxes.

It has no intention of increasing corporation taxes and even balks at stepping up excess profits taxes.

NOVEMBER 1, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

LABOR ACTION

WLB AGAIN TURNS DOWN MINERS' WAGE DEMANDS

By DAVID COOLIDGE

That malicious and contemptible little band of business men and college professors on the War Labor Board has again thumbed its nose at the miners in a decision rejecting the agreement between the Illinois Coal Operators Assn. and the United Mine Workers of America.

Supporting the decision of rejection were William Davis, WLB chairman, a hitherto obscure manipulator of patents for big business; George W. Taylor, vice-chairman; Frank Graham, of the University of North Carolina, and Wayne Morse, the WLB chief cop, known as the board's "compliance officer." Added to these three were Mead, Batt and Horton, for the employers.

Another business member, A. E. Roth, voted against the decision because it was his opinion that the Illinois agreement should have been rejected completely, with no concessions whatsoever.

The four labor captives on the board, Meany, Watt, Brophy and Bittner, "dissented." We do not know their reasons, as no statement from them was carried in the press story announcing the decision.

The board is still mainly concerned to see to it that the miners

do not get any real increase in pay. Since it is now clear to everyone that the board is in a trap and that something has to be done because the miners are again refusing to "work without a contract," this group of envenomed business men decided to offer the miners a gold brick. They are willing for the coal diggers to have their weekly earnings "increased over the 1941-43 agreement by approximately ten dollars per week..." The original demand of the UMWA was for two dollars a day increase in wages. This would amount to twelve dollars a week.

Indian Famine Spreading To Whole Nation

(Reprinted from India Today)

India is in the grip of an appalling famine. Bengal is the worst sufferer, but famine is widespread. Worst of all, it is largely a man-made famine.

When Burma was conquered by Japan, India lost the large imports of rice which are absolutely essential to her. Almost immediately following this initial loss came cyclones, tidal waves and floods which devastated large sections of Bengal.

Simultaneous with these losses of food was the appearance in India of more than 500,000 evacuees from Burma, and a large influx of troops. And shortage of shipping made it difficult to get food from outside the country. For some time after the shortage was an established fact, Indian wheat continued to be exported to the armies in Persia and the Middle East.

The government had ample warning. From the first it was obvious that whatever stocks were on hand must be handled with great care. But it was admitted that the whole situation was bungled. Confusion as to jurisdiction of Center or Province over foodstuffs was allowed to interfere with proper distribution. No sufficient steps were taken to prevent hoarding, both private and public, and the ensuing rise in prices.

Profiteering ran riot, and was so flagrant that the Punjab, with a surplus of wheat, refused to allow it to be exported to Bengal lest the government of Bengal should make a profit on the resale. In Bengal itself, the Governor constantly interfered with his Ministry in the handling of the situation, leading eventually to the enforced resignation of the Prime Minister.

(Continued on page 4)

There is a catch, of course, which the board reveals by saying that "the total effect of what we can approve amounts to a very substantial increase in the mine workers' weekly wage SO LONG AS THE MINERS WORK MORE THAN FORTY HOURS A WEEK" (our emphasis). That is, the board is willing for the miners to get more money—but from overtime work. This is what they consider a wage increase.

Under the present "award," the mine pay would be about \$55.50 per week. For six days the pay would be around \$60. Presumably, if the miners work seven days they can earn enough additional to bring the weekly pay up to around \$70.

The point is, therefore: If you want more money in your pay envelope, then you should be willing to work more hours and more days at your present hourly rate. This, we suppose, does not make for inflation, because we have been told that this method of putting more money into the worker's envelope does not "increase the unit cost of production."

(Continued on page 2)

These Are the People Who Should Pay the Taxes - -

Those to whom ration points, food shortages and high prices mean nothing because they have so much money that they can buy anything and everything in the open or black market.

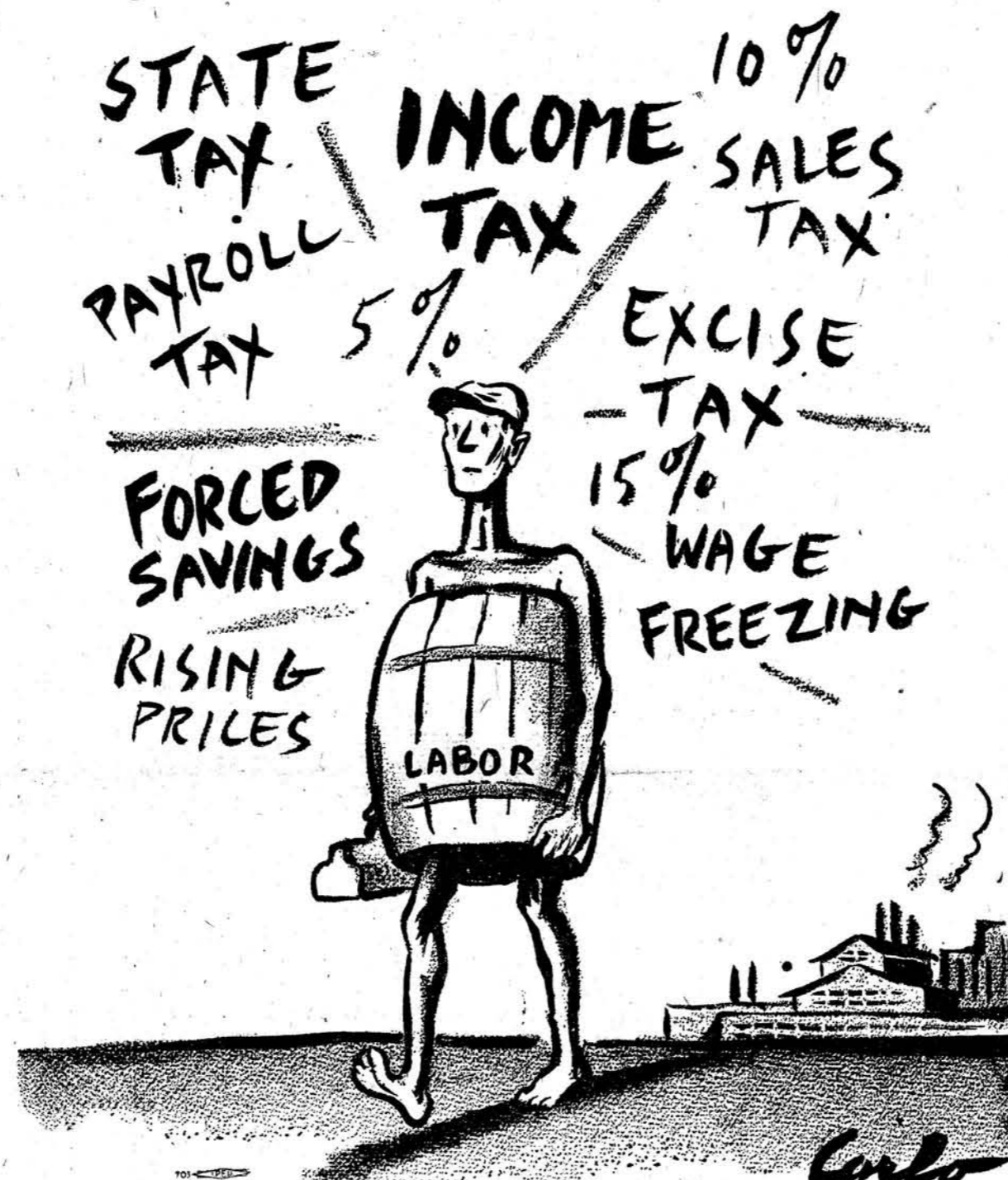
Those whose political power got Congress to pass the Ruml tax law, under which the government will return to them seventy-five per cent of the 1942 taxes—1942 being a bonanza profit year.

Those whose war salaries run into tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars—not counting other sources of income.

Those who coined huge fortunes out of the misery of the last war.

Those who are repeating the process on a larger scale in this war—making war profits to the tune of \$8,000,000,000 in 1943—accumulating a reserve of \$42,000,000,000 thus far.

Getting It From All Sides!



"Neatly Timed" Statistics

Juggling the Cost of Living

By WALTER WEISS

That remarkable cost-of-living index, which the Bureau of Labor Statistics issues monthly, has been attacked so often by labor leaders that Secretary Perkins finally decided it was in need of a good coat of whitewash.

She requested the American Statistical Association to make an impartial study of it. This organization appointed a committee headed by a Columbia University professor to do the job, and the committee gratified Madame Secretary by reporting that the index does a "trustworthy" job (New York Times, October 10).

Business Week (October 16) comments shrewdly that that committee's report was "neatly timed" to coincide with the AFL and other labor conventions.

An Unmeasurable Element

This magazine further points out that the committee stated that no index could truly measure the effect of the war on living standards. As an example, the committee said: "We believe that consumers' goods and services have suffered some loss of quality that is not reflected in the reported prices. No dollar value can be put on this loss. In large part it is an intangible and unmeasurable element of the war. Consumers cannot be compensated for it. The cost-of-living index takes incomplete account of it."

As you see, the committee was a very scholarly, unexcitable group. If you now pay \$1.65 for a \$1.00 shirt, to you it may be a matter of sixty-five cents but to the committee it is an unmeasurable element of the war and you should take the rooking with a smile. Ah, statistics!

Still More Committees

We have not reached the end of the comedy. On October 21, the top labor leaders held their umpteenth

conference with the President, at which he refused to relax the Little Steel formula but promised once again to carry forward the price rollback program.

This program is already a huge joke in all circles, of course. The labor leaders were not happy at the prospect of having nothing more than this to tell the workers, so the President also suggested—a committee "to go into the cost of living, particularly the methods of the Labor Department in securing figures..." (New York Times, October 22).

One committee reports on October 9. The workers still remain unhappy. Good, says the President, we'll give them another committee.

So the British Do It Better?

Some people say that if only Congress would grant more money for subsidies, the President could really batter down the cost of living, as he desires to do. The British, we are told, do these things better. Oh, yeah? Listen to a report from London in the New York Times of October 21:

"The cost of living index in Britain inched up another point during September, largely because of an increase in the cost of food... the food index rose two points, while the general over-all... figure... rose one point."

NEXT WEEK—

- The Three-Power Conference
- Labor's Struggle for Wages
- Summarizing the UAW Convention
- History of the WLB
- New York Elections

Because of the nature of the British index, the two POINT rise in food meant actually a three PER CENT rise.

As we have often pointed out, the present policies of the labor leaders simply cannot cope with the situation. The Little Steel formula must really be broken; committees of labor, housewives and working farmers must actively control prices. This cannot be accomplished so long as labor clings to the no-strike pledge, the War Labor Board and the President's Democratic Party machine.

Russian Demands Before Three Power Conference

By SAM ADAMS

The meeting in Moscow of the foreign ministers of the United States, Great Britain and Russia came after a long period of uncertainty. It has been apparent for a considerable period of time that the relations between the three big powers of the Allies were deteriorating. Their differences extended from immediate military questions to political questions of post-war territorial divisions and the reorganization of Europe.

These differences continue to exist. The purpose of the Moscow meeting is to determine if it is possible to arrive at a common program, to resolve these differences by discussion.

If the meeting between the foreign ministers reaches a point of understanding, then, and only then, will Stalin agree to meet with Roosevelt and Churchill. His refusal to do so

up to now is characteristic. He does not go in for "exploratory" conferences. This is enforced by the fact that none of the conferees, Hull, Eden or Molotov, is in a position to promise or grant anything. At most they can lay on the table some of their positions and smoke out each other.

Russia holds the center of interest at the conference and it is her demands which guide the course of discussions. In almost all respects she determined beforehand what would and what would not be subject to debate at the meeting. Stalin made it clear that he would not agree to a discussion of Russian borders any more than American could agree to discuss its borders (Texas, California, etc.). This was something which Russia would decide for herself.

While the deliberations in Moscow are still shrouded in mystery and

ports continue to conflict, it is certain that Russia still demands the immediate opening of a second front.

This military demand has several political aspects to it: first, Russian objection to any major Allied front in the Balkans, which stems from her position that the Balkans is her sphere of operation and influence. Secondly, she is carrying the brunt of the war and wants relief—on the Western front. No other front is acceptable as a substitute. Even this "purely military" demand is important because the degree of post-war military strength of the individual powers will play an important and perhaps decisive role in the reorganization of Europe.

There are a number of equally important questions which divide the three powers. Russian demands in Eastern Europe are already made (Continued on page 3)

Labor Action Subscribers, Please Note!

Some subscribers have written advising us that they have not been receiving their papers. The business office is taking care to rectify this situation. If there are any other subscribers who have not been receiving the paper regularly, we are asking them to inform us of this fact at once, so that we can correct any errors that might exist. Please send your letters to the

CIRCULATION MANAGER, LABOR ACTION

114 West 14th Street

New York 11, N. Y.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

WLB Again Turns Down Miners' Wage Demands--

(Continued from page 1)
Again, the Little Steel Formula

Under the Illinois agreement, the base pay for an 8½-hour day, including travel time, would have been \$8.50. The board's "experts" discovered that this agreement had hidden away in it a daily wage increase of 37½ cents. This, the board, according to its statement, could not allow. The board could only approve a daily wage of \$8.12½. It was based on the WLB's claim that productive time in an 8½-hour day is 7 hours and 45 minutes. The board's decision means straight time for seven hours and time and a half for 45 minutes.

The board, in turn, approved the overtime provisions of the Illinois agreement because this part of the agreement follows "the statutory provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act... the provisions of the proposed Illinois agreement as to overtime are exactly fitted to the Fair Labor Standards Act and we can therefore approve them."

It is by approving these "statutory" and "overtime" wages that the board very generously announces to the miners that they can approve an addition of from ten to twenty dollars a week in their pay envelopes.

Against the WLB, the UMWA contends that the Illinois agreement "does not involve an hourly wage increase. It lengthens the work day beyond the hours requested by the government. It is in no wise a violation of the 'Little Steel' formula. It meets all the requirements of the government's heretofore stated objections."

Miners Versus Business Men

We don't know all of the details of the Illinois agreement but what the miners say about the matter is good enough for us. We believe what the miners say. We believe this not only for the reason that the miners have competent officials and experts to deal with such questions but also for the reason that we know that the

WLB is composed of business men looking out for the interests of big business; fake liberals also looking out for the interests of big business; and four labor weaklings, without power or influence on the board.

Furthermore, we are against the Little Steel formula. We are against the lengthening of the working hours. We can see no reason why the "government's" hitherto stated objections should be met by the miners.

Without doubt, the little concession that the board is making and over which it gleams so hypocritically, has been prompted by the fact that the miners are marching again. They don't "work without a contract." Added to this is the strike vote being taken by the railroad workers. Remember too that the shipyard workers have been holding a few demonstrations against unsettled wage grievances.

All of labor is dissatisfied and resentful. Even the WLB knows this. Vinson, Byrnes and Roosevelt know it. Murray and Green know it, too! The capitalist press is also dissatisfied and resentful. They don't like the Wagner Labor Relations Act. It makes trouble for their masters, the big industrialists and financiers.

The capitalist press doesn't like the Smith-Connally Act. It is too lenient with labor. They want an all out law banning strikes completely with no loopholes and no thirty-day "cooling-off period."

But the working class is stirring again all over the country. Thousands of miners are out waiting for a contract and a wage increase.

The Labor Situation Today

The railroad workers are having a referendum to determine whether or not they shall go home, tend their vegetable gardens and do the painting they have had in mind for some months now.

What else can they do? What can any of us do?

We are tied to our jobs by the government in Washington.

We have a Little Steel formula to hold our wages down.

There is the WLB striking out against us and spewing its poisonous decisions into every wage situation.

There is Congress listening to the voice of its masters in Wall Street, and coming out with its Smith-Connally anti-labor bill.

Labor leaders from the AFL and

CIO sit on the WLB. They aid and abet the board's anti-labor campaign by their mere presence there. If Meany, Watt, Brophy and Bitner were true to the age-old principles of the labor movement they would rush out of this board in disgust and anger.

If Phil Murray were true to the age-old principles of the labor movement he would not talk nonsense about John L. Lewis being responsible for

the passage of the Smith-Connally bill. Murray ought to know that the attack on Lewis is really an attack on the UMWA. If he is not a complete nincompoop, he knows that an attack on the miners today is also an attack on the CIO and the whole labor movement.

The miners know this. The railroad workers are learning. Other workers will learn.

What else can they do?

Presenting the Record of the WLB as an Anti-Labor Body

Chrysler Case

The board thinks that, NO MATTER WHAT THE BOSS DOES, a union should not strike. Many good union men had the wrong idea that the no-strike pledge was a two-sided proposition: they wouldn't strike, but the company would bargain collectively or would somehow be forced to do so by the government. Everybody was going to cooperate in the interests of the war effort.

But listen to what the WLB said in deciding the big Chrysler case in August (the board has said the same thing many times, before and since):

"The National War Labor Board cannot possible acquiesce in the implied suggestion of the union that labor's no-strike pledge is to be suspended whenever a union claims, WITH OR WITHOUT MERIT, that management is provocative."

"As a matter of fact, the principal contribution of labor to the prosecution of the war under the no-strike agreement is its willingness to refrain from work stoppages despite the existence of grievances and EVEN OF PROVOCATION. It would be a mighty hollow no-strike pledge if it meant only that strikes would be avoided as long as no real or imaginary grievances presented themselves."

"Even if FULL CREDENCE is given to the union's claims of provocative action on the part of management in this case, that is still no excuse for the production-impeding series of strikes which have occurred." (All emphasis ours.)

In this case, everybody knew that the company was provocative. Militant workers and shop stewards were constantly being fired, grievances stalled, and seniority disregarded in transfers and promotions. Almost all the bosses are acting this way, because labor has given up its one real weapon.

Even the board's panel said that both sides were at fault, and recommended that the union be granted a maintenance-of-membership clause. Everybody knew too that the workers had got tired of waiting months for the WLB to do something. There was no arbitration procedure to resort to, either. The union's leaders did ask for this last year as a way out of their troubles, but the company opposed it and the WLB refused at that time to order it.

So what did the WLB do? It refused maintenance-of-membership to the union as a punishment and read the workers the above-quoted moral lecture on what their no-strike pledge really meant. The labor members of the board treacherously voted for this decision, as they have voted for many others equally raw.

The ordinary union members are getting fed up with this kind of "equality of sacrifice." That's why, just after a series of union conventions, which, under pressure of government officials and union leaders, reaffirmed the no-strike pledge, a new wave of "unauthorized" strikes is sweeping the country.

Connally Bill

One of the amazing ideas of the WLB is that the anti-labor Connally-Smith Act, as passed by Congress, is unfair to the employer!

The board kept demanding to know, both before and after the law was passed, why the poor employer should have his plant seized in cases

where the WORKERS disobeyed the WLB's orders.

On August 18, President Roosevelt, who had already indicated in his veto of the Connally-Smith bill, that he agreed with the WLB, proceeded by executive order to REMODEL the law to suit his own and the WLB's views.

One of his changes was this: that the War Manpower Commission might modify or cancel draft deferments or employment privileges, or both, in the case of individuals who did not comply with the WLB's directives. This could be done whether or not the government had seized a plant.

Everyone will recall what a storm of indignation, most of it hypocritical beyond any doubt, was aroused in Congress and the press, when the President first proposed, as a substitute for the Connally-Smith bill, that a bill be passed enabling him to induct men up to sixty-five for striking. The proposal "dishonored" the armed forces, critics complained. This did not prevent the President from issuing the executive order explained above, supposedly in order to enforce the Connally Act.

In the strike of the Alabama coal miners, the President may feel it necessary, in view of the explosiveness of the general labor situation at present, to take over the mines again. If so, the WLB will weep bit-

terly for the employers. The WLB (and the President, too) would prefer to have the miners work as soldiers under military discipline, while the owners retained full control of their property.

The big labor leaders, who denounced and continue to denounce, the Connally-Smith Act so vehemently, still keep silent about the much more vicious ideas of the WLB and the President. They still support the President and picture him as the "captive" of reactionary administrations (whom the President himself appointed) and a reactionary Congress.

They still remain members of the WLB, clothe it with their authority, and even vote in favor of many of the cruelest of its anti-labor decisions.

October N. 1.

The October issue of The New International features the Auto Workers' Convention and Russia in the War.

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW!

Management-Labor Committee

'They're a Speed-Up Device'

Editor's Note: LABOR ACTION time and again has pointed out that the management-labor committees are merely an expedient for squeezing the last ounce of production out of the workers. Some light-minded labor leaders have spoken of these speed-up committees as a step toward "industrial democracy." The following passage from an article by Freda Kirshwey in The Nation of October 23 indicates how British labor feels about this kind of "industrial democracy." Miss Kirshwey's article is entitled "Workers on the Clyde" and is a first-hand report of interviews with Clydeside workers. In England the labor-management committees are known as production committees.

"The shop steward pulled out of his pocket the report of a production-committee meeting at his plant. He was a member of the committee. The plant was changing from two twelve-hour shifts to two eight-hour shifts, and several hundred workers had been laid off. There had been overproduction of certain kinds of guns; so the management claimed at the meeting. He was dubious; you never knew if they were giving the real reasons. It might be that or it might be a shortage of shipping or a lack of raw materials. Anyway, if the reason was actually overproduction, the workers' representatives on the committee argued that they should be making other things—other arms, or if arms were not needed, they should begin to shift over to peace production. 'God knows we need everything in this battered, war-torn country,' said the shop steward.

"But what really disturbed him was the light this incident shed on the role of the joint production committee in his plant. During most of the period of rising production, when the problem was to get more guns out of every hour, every machine, and every worker, the committee seemed to play a real part. The management took it seriously. It discussed labor and time-saving techniques; it considered ideas contributed by the employees. And it helped to make the workers understand the war itself and their part in it. Certainly the existence of the committee had made for better relations between the management and labor; and he himself had felt at one stage that it might, as Sir Stafford Cripps always said, become a step in the direction of plant democracy, a way of drawing labor into the actual process of management. But gradually he (the shop steward) came to doubt the value of the production committee, except as a wartime measure, to be scrapped when the need for war goods ended. And now he was profoundly disillusioned with them, and so, he said, were the other labor members of the committee in his plant. 'They're a speed-up device; that's all they are,' he said. 'When it comes to other problems, we have no power. No power whatsoever. They don't even bother to tell us what's going on.'"

World Events

By Europacis

The Four Freedoms in North Africa

Events in North Africa are nearly completely shrouded by the tight censorship. Only bits of information here and there, properly pieced together, allow one to get something of a picture of what is going on in the North African countries since the Allied occupation.

The French regime in North Africa was among the most cruel in the bloody history of imperialism. It appears that the Arabs of North Africa now have even less rights and are more oppressed than ever before. An American correspondent recently described the conditions of abject mis-

every prevailing among the people. "There must be countless soldiers," he wrote, "who wonder how the concept of freedom from want will apply to the countless Arab children who haunt the streets barefooted and in rags, wrestling playfully in gutters and wearing rags that in most American homes would be considered too filthy even for cleaning."

But not only is there misery and horrible exploitation, there is also the denial of even the most elementary liberties to the millions of Arabs—outnumbering the French ten to one—who inhabit North Africa.

Arabs Ask for Self-Determination

We have received a manifesto which was addressed to President Roosevelt by a number of Algerian dignitaries and which was suppressed by the censorship. In reading this it should be borne in mind that those who wrote it are in no way revolutionaries or even among the more progressive elements among the Arabs. They were, on the contrary, considered most conservative and have always collaborated with the French in the past. If even these elements are now moved to protest and ask for the liberation of the Arab people, this is a sure sign of the state of mind of the Arab population in general.

Here is the text of this highly important document:

"Tangier, June 10. A manifesto was handed over to General Giraud by a group of local dignitaries, regional councilors and members of the financial delegations to be transmitted to President Roosevelt. The manifesto reads:

"Algeria is since November 8 under the occupation of Anglo-American forces. This occupation, isolating the

colony from metropolitan France, has created a real race among the Frenchmen of Algeria—for power. Republicans, de Gaullists, royalists, Jews, each of these groups tries to collaborate with the Allies and to defend its special interests...

"The Algerian people, in order to avoid misunderstanding and to bar the way to aspirations and plans which may be presented tomorrow, submit today the following demands:

"1. The condemnation and abolition of colonialism.

"2. The application of the right of self-determination for all nations, small or large.

"3. Algeria should be given its own independent constitution.

"4. The effective and immediate participation of Algerian Moslems in the government.

"5. The liberation of all political prisoners and 'internees' without regard to their political affiliations."

It is evident that the Atlantic Charter, supposedly guaranteeing self-determination, has no application to North Africa, just as it has no application to India.

Repressions Against the Signers

Two dispatches which have been published by the New York Times recently reveal that repression against those who signed this manifesto has already set in. The Giraud government has interned two high ranking Arab members of the financial delegations (a sort of provincial budgetary commission) for "provoking civil disobedience, trying to impede the functioning of public institutions and disturbing public order during war." They were Sayak Abdel Kader, president of the Arabic section of the financial committee, and Ferhat Abbas.

The two were also accused of "having fomented dissatisfaction that

resulted in all former native members of the Assembly boycotting its meeting."

There is, apparently, a full-fledged campaign of boycott by the Arab members of the local councils going on against the methods of oppression used against them by the present Allied administration. When the Indians waged a similar fight there was at least some protest in this country, whereas now the whole press has remained completely silent on the North African events. The reason is quite obvious: India is a part of the British Empire, and giving an occasional kick to the English is quite well liked in certain quarters.

Three Cent Increase Does Not Meet Needs of Sperry Workers

By ROCCO
NEW YORK—After patiently suffering ten months of stalling by the company, the WLB and their own leadership, Sperry workers have been tossed a miserly three cents an hour increase, retroactive to Jan. 15. The original recommendation by the arbitrator of the union contract was a nickel interim award until the question of raises and rates of pay would be finally settled. The other two cents is still being considered by the WLB. Here is the reward of the union officials' policy of "having faith in Roosevelt," that great "friend of labor," and his WLB.

A mixed reception greeted this award in the plant. To the officials of Local 450, UERMW, this is, of course, their great achievement. "Who said the union wasn't getting anywhere?" "Who says the WLB turned us down once?" "See, we came across, didn't we?"—with such expressions the officials attempt to bolster their prestige.

Those workers who are new to the factory and to factory work are inclined to view the raise as a gain, without question. They tend to overlook the great increase in the cost of living and taxes. They overlook

the fact that their pay checks will still not be as large in the market as they seem in the plant.

The older working men, who remember the early days of organizing in Sperry and the rosy promises of the union leaders, do not see any great victory. Three cents an hour is something; but they recall the old demands of seventy-five-cent minimums, \$1.00 and \$1.25 for machine operators, regular general increases, etc. To them, the present award is quite a come-down and they see that the INTERIM award is likely to be a FINAL award.

These unionists, who have had experience with Sperry, are worried about job evaluation and reclassification. Will these, too, after months of delay, turn out to be a shell of what was hoped for?

What is needed by Sperryites is raises which will cover their constantly rising cost of living and increasingly heavy taxes. The three-cent increase does not meet this need.

The Sperry workers can solve this problem of raises in wartime. But the first step to the solution is to compel their union officers to let their union function as the property of the members and not as the property of the officers.

Russian Meeting --

(Continued from page 1)

clear, and England and America are hardly in a position right now to do anything about them. Russia wants Southern Finland, the Baltic states, Eastern Poland, Bukovina, Bessarabia. She wants an outlet into the Mediterranean and has let hints drop about a base on the Bosphorus. Her demands in Asia are now clearer too. Iran, occupied by Russia and England, is a source of deep differences between the two countries. Stalin has let it be known that he wants an outlet to the Persian Gulf. Nor is that the end of his territorial desires. There are the Northern provinces of China, Sinkiang, and even Manchuria, to be reckoned with.

The United States and Great Britain are greatly disturbed for the simple reason that Russia is fighting the major war with Germany and is winning. They will either have to come to an agreement with Stalin, look on while Stalin takes what he wants, or resolve to war against him. This latter prospect is not an enviable one for either of the three countries after the present long years of fighting are over.

Russia, of course, looks on with great suspicion of the Anglo-American coalition. Stalin wants to domi-

nate Europe, or at least to create sufficient barriers in the central part of the Continent to insure Russia against attack from the West.

America's post-war needs will drive her on to seek domination of Europe, while England too would like to re-establish a balance of power on the Continent under her "benevolent" supervision and control.

Russia's "Free German Committee" was at one and the same time a public announcement of her plans and a rejection of British-American aims to dismember the Third Reich and to destroy its industrial power. Thus the question of what to do with Germany is crucial for the three powers. And here the differences are unmitigable.

The Moscow conference is a struggle for power, in essence no different from those of former years. Just as the conference itself is a form of compromise, so, too, its decisions, which will prepare the forthcoming meeting of the President, the Prime Minister and the Dictator, will be a compromise. The details are impossible to report, since none are given. But the above is at least a summary of the issues which are now in the discussion stage.

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Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor

From a Reader In the South

Dear Sir:

Yours of August 19 received with thanks. In July, I went to Chicago, Ill., to the March on Washington Movement. My subscription was sent to New York from there. After I returned to North Carolina, the paper came. Myself and family enjoy reading the paper. So I decided I would share it with my friends. I shall do all I can to push LABOR ACTION through the South. May I say the paper this week is quite interesting.

H. A. D.

North Carolina.

We Regret This Loss

Dear Sirs:

Please do not send me any more issues of LABOR ACTION or The New International, as I am leaving for the Army.

I WANT to tell you how much LABOR ACTION has meant to me. Of all the publications I have read in the past few years, LA, it seems to me, is the only shining light.

I shall miss reading it. Here's to the future of LA!

Uptate, N. Y.

He Understands What We're For

Dear Editor:

Keep up the good work. LA is tops. I wish more and more people would read it. Your paper is really carrying the torch for the poor man. And after all, are not the poor a good eighty per cent of the total population of any country? Even a youngster without any experience in being a slave can answer that. Enclosed find twenty cents in stamps as a help to LA.

D. B.

J. R.

Greek Leaders 'Disappear' In Cairo

By CHRIS SIKOKIS

The British government has been so disturbed over the continuous agitation against the monarchy by the underground groups in Greece that it sent secret service agents into Greece during the last summer. These agents contacted the underground groups and informed them that they should send representatives to Cairo for a conference that would discuss military and political matters.

On August 10 representatives arrived in Cairo from the three largest underground organizations, the EKKA (National and Social Liberation Group), the EDES (Greek National Democratic Army) and the federated EAM (Greek National Liberation Front).

Exactly what political demands were made of them by the Greek King and the British government, and in turn the demands they made of the Greek King and the British government are to this day almost unknown, due not only to the rigid censorship that the British have clamped down on this situation, but also because the representatives of the underground movements were held incommunicado and, up to the time of this writing, their whereabouts remains a mystery.

A MESSAGE FROM CAIRO

One of the members of this delegation, Mr. Tsirimokos, a former deputy in the Greek Parliament, who is representing the Union of Popular Democracy inside the federated EAM, sent a letter out of Cairo through a secret messenger to friends in New York.

According to Mr. Tsirimokos, all the delegates signed a joint letter on August 17 to the Greek Premier informing him that "... for the sake of national unity, which alone insures the success of the national struggle, as well as for the normal political development of the country, it has become imperative that it be formally announced that the King will not return to Greece before the people have spoken on the form of government they want after the war."

The Greek Premier and the government in exile, according to the letter, agreed to this modest proposal. They probably realized that unless they agreed, the Greek guerrillas would decide for themselves that not only the King would not be permitted to return, but also the Greek Premier and the other large Greek bankers and ship owners, who are also now in exile.

When the King was informed of this proposal, he contacted Winston Churchill. Churchill, of course, has his own ideas as to how the Greeks will be forced to accept the King, and the result of his talk with the King is that the representatives of the Greek underground movement who were in Cairo are "missing."

NO TRACE OF DELEGATION

Basil Vlavianos, editor of the Greek liberal daily, National Herald, in New York, who has been in constant and direct communication with the underground, says that it is now impossible to find out what happened to the delegation and he places the entire responsibility on the British government.

Stelios Pistolakis, another former member of the Greek Parliament, who is now in Philadelphia, stated, in a recent newspaper interview, that the parties and groups which are now directing the underground movement in Greece will have their own government already set up when the Allies invade, and they will not tolerate the return of the King. He added: "What then will be the attitude of the Allies? Will they turn their guns against it and raise the fascist banner of the former ruler of Greece on the Acropolis in the name of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter? If not, as we Greeks firmly believe, why not declare it from now on, openly and firmly?"

Pistolakis can continue with his questions and firm beliefs, but the delegation to Cairo certainly cannot have many illusions left, and the guerrillas in Greece must certainly be tossing away their illusions about the Atlantic Charter very rapidly.

Ask President To Intervene As --

WDL Answers Army in Levy Case

Since the following release was sent out, the Workers Defense League announced that Levy was being held "virtually incommunicado." Morris Milgram, secretary of the Workers Defense League, stated:

"It appears that nearly all of Levy's mail is being held back—including mail from his own family—and that a ban on visitors has been imposed. "We believe that the initial court-martial and conviction of Levy were indefensible. But the petty revenge seemingly being invoked against him now plainly resembles the methods of the concentration camp."

The Workers Defense League, which is directing the campaign to free former Sergeant Alton Levy, imprisoned, the League charges, for protesting discrimination against Negroes at the Lincoln, Neb., Army Air Base, this week released the Army's reply to its protest in the case, and its answer to the Army.

The Army's reply, addressed to League Secretary Morris Milgram, and signed by Major-General Myron C. Cramer, judge advocate general, declared Levy "had a fair trial," denied that Negroes were discriminated against at the base, and said that "Sergeant Levy was not tried for intervening in behalf of what he considered mistreatment of colored soldiers" but for making false derogatory statements about the commanding general and his wife.

Replying to General Cramer, Mr. Milgram declared that Despres' brief to FDR "answers every point in your letter. It shows that Levy's conviction was highly irregular, that evidence warranted neither the finding of guilty nor the sentence, and it shows the importance of the Negro issue in the case. Once the court announced the finding of not guilty, justice demanded an acquittal."

"In the Army's Manual for Courts-Martial prescribed by the President and prepared by your office, the court may reconsider a finding only before it has been announced (7d); and the court's flagrant violation of this provision in the Levy case is a legal indication of prejudice."

Six Points in Brief to FDR
Attorney Despres' letter and brief to FDR on the case urged the President to act under Article of War 50 and commute Private Levy's sentence, restoring his rank. The brief presented these six arguments:

1. The rumors charged to Levy were current talk at the camp, which seethed with rumors. Thus it is unlikely Levy would have told them to two WACs who had been long enough at camp to know them. It is more likely that discussion centered, as Sergeant Bolton testified, around countering the rumors.

2. Levy's championship of Negro soldiers' rights was known to the Base's prosecuting authorities before the specifications were drawn.

3. The inclusion of specification 2 ("Negro soldiers were mistreated") indicates the importance of the Negro issue to the prosecuting officers. No effort was made to establish the truth as to mistreatment.

4. The treatment of at least some if not all Negro soldiers at Lincoln Army Air Base has in fact been discriminatory.

5. The court martial should not properly have been appointed by the same general who was involved in the proceedings.

6. After the court announced a conclusion of not guilty, a finding of guilty was clearly irregular.

The full text of the League's reply to General Cramer follows:

"We have your letter to us of October 4, 1943, and am enclosing for you a copy of the brief filed with the White House by Leon Despres, of Chicago, attorney for Alton L. Levy's family. We believe that this brief answers every point in your letter. It shows that Levy's convictions were highly irregular, that the evidence warranted neither the finding of guilty nor the sentence, and it shows the importance of the Negro issue in the case. Once the court announced its finding of not guilty, justice demanded an acquittal. In the Army's Manual for Courts-Martial and prescribed by the President and prepared by your office, the court may reconsider a finding only before it has been announced (7d); and the court's flagrant violation of this provision in the Levy case is a legal indication of prejudice."

"Although your investigator reported to you no 'mistreatment' or 'discrimination' against Negro soldiers at Lincoln Air Base, his conclusions depend on his standards of 'mistreatment' and 'discrimination.' We believe that the facts already publicly known indicate at least the following: "The Negro soldiers had neither

Negro commissioned officers nor, for the most part, Negro non-commissioned officers.

"The Negro soldiers had markedly less well equipped recreational facilities in the camp, prior to Levy's conviction.

"The Negro soldiers were confined to one small portion (back left section) of the camp theater.

"The Post Exchange for Negro sol-

diers was less extensive and accessible than for the white soldiers.

"Except in the guardhouse, Negro soldiers were wholly segregated from white soldiers in their general living accommodations and mess halls. A new Negro soldier would have to walk about two miles to his mess hall, whereas a new white soldier would have to walk about a quarter of a mile."

Report Wealthy Fascist Behind Hillburn School Jim Crow Case

When the New York State Department of Education ordered the abandonment of the dilapidated Jim Crow Brook School in Hillburn and the enrollment of Negro children in the regular school across the road, which only white children had previously attended, many believed that the conflict there had been ended.

It appears now that this is only the beginning of the fight against race discrimination. The story of Hillburn broke when members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People protested the segregation of children of their race in an old school and demanded that these youngsters be permitted to attend the regular school with the other children of the town.

What the Race-Haters Did

The issue became prominent when radical, labor and liberal circles entered the fight in behalf of the Negro families who demanded their rights. Before long, the organizers of "white supremacy" in Hillburn lost the first round.

After the order from the Department of Education, the Negro children reported to the regular school for enrollment. These new enrollments were accepted, but it was found that the white children suddenly disappeared from the school.

Under the leadership of J. Edgar Davidson, president of the local school committee, and a local house painter, Malcolm Stead, the white parents were whipped into a frenzy, convinced that they should not send their children to the same school with Negro children, but to a private school at Suffern, N. Y., and the parochial school in the vicinity.

An investigation of the transfers revealed that those parents who were unable to pay the required fees to the new school received money for this purpose from "secret" sources, through a committee organized by Davidson and Stead called the "Association for the Advancement of White People."

Walter Winchell in a recent column charges that behind this movement against the Negroes of Hillburn is a prominent native fascist, mentioned often in "Undercover," the book exposing reactionary and fascist movements. This person, who is still unnamed, has remained in the background of this dispute.

A New Wrinkle by Mrs. Barrows

As the case stands now, the Negro children are attending the regular school. The white children attend either the private school at Suffern or the parochial school, where fees are paid.

It is this situation which caused Mrs. Alice Barrows, formerly connected with the U.S. Office of Education, to demand that the school now be closed because it is a segregated institution (caused by the refusal of white parents to send their children to the school).

This proposal was too much for the committee of Rockland County residents, organized to fight the activities of Davidson, Stead and their cowardly backers.

Democratic Assemblyman Burrows of Manhattan replied to Mrs. Barrows, saying that "It is a legal school. No one forced the white children out, as was done earlier with the Negro children. Segregation means a denial of the right to attend, not voluntary withdrawal."

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

Even the newest of the newlywed housewives—to say nothing of the old timers—knows that cold storage has its limits in preserving the freshness of food. For instance, no housewife would buy eggs she knows have been in cold storage from March to October—a matter of seven months.

The Food Distribution Administration and the other government bureaus in charge of allocating food to the Army, to lend-lease and—to US, don't seem to be taking this simple fact into account, and have a very unique idea indeed of "planning" food distribution.

Their idea seems to be to lay their hands on as much as possible for the first two purposes. Then, if they have grabbed too much, they try to unload the left-overs on—US.

This month, when the government found it had overstocked on eggs—for which we are paying fantastic prices because their is supposed to be an acute shortage—it found it could not get any dealer to buy its offerings. There wasn't a single bid for about 20,000 cases of eggs. "We prefer fresh eggs," said one wholesale dealer, "and we understand that the government offerings include eggs that have been in storage since last March. It's like buying a pig in a poke."

Perhaps that is the real reason why the dealers didn't buy these eggs. But just as likely they are satisfied with the fancy "shortage" prices and don't care to throw more eggs onto the market.

At any rate, here are 20,000 cases of eggs WASTED—while thousands of children hardly know what an egg tastes like!

The government has stacked up on every other food—butter, meat, fruit, etc. With the same lack of planning, as displayed regarding eggs, think of

the shameful spoilage, the cruel waste, that must mean!

To the Chicago telephone operator the tax burden is so heavy that she can spend less than half as much money for clothes as she otherwise might.

Arguing the case of these girls for a higher wage before the War Labor Board, the union representative showed that each week these workers pay out \$4.00 IN TAXES, but only about \$3.76 FOR CLOTHES.

Now \$3.76 for shoes, stockings, underwear, girdles, brassieres, slips, dresses, sweaters, blouses, skirts, coats, hats, gloves—is definitely not a lot of money.

If she could keep the \$4.00 she pays out for taxes, she could do a little better—though even then she would be far from a luxury basis at peacetime prices, and today's prices and not peacetime prices.

The Chicago telephone girls are typical of the whole working class. There isn't a family which—because of the tax burden—is not doing without things they need.

Will somebody produce a good reason why working girls must do without essential clothing in order to pay taxes while the rich get richer at the rate of eight billion dollars clear profit a year; while they pile up forty-two billion dollars for a nest egg; while they buy minks and jewels; while they throw parties where neither rations points nor money is a consideration?

With the coming of the harvesting season in Vichy France, reports say that a veritable epidemic of fires has broken out in fields, in bins, in barns and in mills. Both crops and agricultural machinery have been destroyed by French peasants and workers so as to prevent a new supply of food from getting into the hands of the hated Nazi invader.

Men, women and children participated in these firestorms. Men, women and children who are themselves actually starving, with their own hands destroyed food and the machinery for processing food—to keep it from the enemy. Here is heroism of the first order!

Also at this time comes news of an entirely different kind of harvest. The London Tribune reports the profits garnered by the French capitalists collaborating with the Nazis.

The leading French industrialists and financiers are getting a bumper crop of profits in occupied France—as they did in pre-war "free" France. The London Tribune cites a list of French concerns whose profits this year topped those of last year by from fourteen million to two hundred million francs.

I think these starving men, women and children who burn food in their fight against the invader are going to remember the contrast between the burning food and the bumper crop of cold profits. I think they will not be satisfied merely to drive out the Nazi and allow the French capitalist class to put on the garb of "democracy" under de Gaulle or Giraud or some other politician—and continue their profit-grubbing careers.

I think these heroic men, women and children will want to free France from the native French usurpers as well as from the foreign Nazi invader.

A few days ago the Associated Press reported from Kansas City what seemed to be a spontane-

Badoglio Tells His Thoughts On Democracy

By CARL DAVIS

These are the days of the bandwagon jumpers. Since the turn in the war and the general improvement of the military position of the Allies, fascists, semi-fascists and hangers-on of the totalitarian regimes have suddenly blossomed forth as lovers of democracy.

Fighting a purely military war, which is the only kind of war the capitalist regimes of Britain and America are able to fight, they employ or make use of every scoundrel, fascist or semi-fascist they can lay their hands on.

Thus Darlan became a useful person. Franco has his "merits." The dictator Salazar of Portugal is enlisted in the "democratic" cause. King George of Greece and his fascist gang join the "democratic" camp. And so do a host of other reactionaries, anti-Semites and totalitarians.

WHAT MADE BADOGGIO JUMP?

This policy reached its full bloom in the enlistment of Marshal Badoglio on the side of the Allies.

Who is Badoglio? He is a "cousin of the King" and a general who earned his highest laurels under Mussolini's regime. He had heretofore subscribed to all the murderous deeds of the fascist dictatorship. He became the leader of the war against Ethiopia and for some time commanded important sectors of the erstwhile Italian war front.

The steadily accumulating defeats of Italian arms, the worsening conditions at home and the public opposition of the Italian masses led to the downfall of Mussolini. But Mussolini's downfall gave Badoglio his great opportunity. Appointed by the King as the head of the new government, the marshal still sought to continue the war on the side of Germany. He jumped to the Allied cause only when it became clear that nothing could stop the Anglo-American invasion of Italy.

THE "DEMOCRAT" AT WORK

Now the man who was appointed a marshal by Mussolini has blossomed into a "democrat," according to an interview with the New York Times correspondent, Herbert L. Matthews. In this interview, Badoglio promised the restoration of democracy—after the war!

Yet, only a couple of weeks ago, he issued a statement justifying his dictatorial rule in Allied occupied Italy on the ground that the danger of communism was still great. Two liberals who attempted to issue a democratic newspaper were clamped into jail. There is still no sign that there is any real freedom for the people in that part of Italy which he has controlled since Italy's declaration of war against Germany.

Faced with direct questions as to his intentions, the marshal announced that he will retire when the war ends and turn his tasks over to a "political body." When asked what program he had in mind to bring about internal reform, Badoglio replied that he would be "violating precisely those democratic principles that were being established if he undertook a plan of reform that had not been submitted to a legislative body." Nice trick, this one, since it avoided all discussion of how any legislative body will come into existence, or how soon free speech, free press, free organization and free elections will become a fact before such a legislative body is formed.

"THOSE WERE BETTER TIMES"

Everything else in this interview was sham and evasion.

The marshal insisted on conveying to America and England that he had always wanted to fight on their side, and that the Italian people were always anti-German. It was all Mussolini's fault—not the King's, not his own, and not the Italian ruling class's!

But he gave himself away, this gentleman did, when Matthews reminded him of their meeting during the war on Ethiopia. Here the marshal perked up and said "Those were better times for Italy!"

"Do you remember Termaber Pass," he asked eagerly, "and those three days we waited while the road was being repaired and the Negus (Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia) fled?"

It must have warmed his democratic heart to think of how he led the slaughter of half-armed, spear-throwing native warriors in behalf of Italian imperialism. In this one reference, we have a picture of the real Badoglio—a blood-thirsty imperialist!

A WORD ABOUT TERRITORIES

It was again revealed when he discussed the disposition of "Italian territory." Here the marshal acknowledged that Italy would have no claims on territories won from France, Yugoslavia and Greece. "These claims were a purely fascist conception." (They are also allies of Britain and America.)

The marshal avoided mention of Albania, Ethiopia and the other African possessions. Were these perchance not the product of "purely fascist conception"? Or are they different because the marshal had a hand in the conquest of some of them?

Isn't it clear that this leopard hasn't changed a spot?

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The Second Article of a Series

Issues in the Faction Struggle at the Auto Workers' Convention

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The first article in this series on the UAW convention closed with the statement that the Communist Party supporters in the convention received a defeat. The delegates voted down piecework wages by an overwhelming majority and would not be fooled by the Stalinist attempts to put over piecework wages concealed by such high-sounding phrases as "incentive pay wages," or "doesn't Brother Reuther want the workers to have more wages for more production?"

The next issue to come before the convention that was of a highly controversial nature was the fourth term for Roosevelt resolution. We do not mean that this resolution was hotly debated in the convention when we say that it was highly controversial, but rather that here again it was necessary to give heed to the mood of a membership that was beginning to develop doubts.

Two Pro-Roosevelt Resolutions

There were two resolutions, one supported by a majority of the resolutions committee and one presented by the Communist supporters, a minority in the committee. The Stalinist resolution gave unqualified, complete and uncritical support to Roosevelt for a fourth term. In this resolution there was no criticism whatsoever of the Roosevelt labor record, no discussion of any of the anti-labor decrees of Roosevelt, only unconditional surrender.

The majority (Reuther) resolution was timidly and mildly critical of the Roosevelt Administration. The resolution says that, "because of his preoccupation with his military responsibilities, reactionary Southern Democrats, together with industry and farm groups, have grasped at this opportunity to undermine the home front through emancipation of the sound policies of the New Deal." For this reason "it will be impossible to mobilize the same degree of continued enthusiasm and support for the candidacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and for his election for a fourth term if the present Democratic Party policy of appeasement of the foes of progress continues."

The resolution urges Roosevelt "to take an aggressive position on the home front against the foes of the New Deal, of progress and labor within the Democratic Party as well as outside it." If Roosevelt will do this as well as roll back prices, stop war profiteering, revise the Little Steel formula, institute democratic rationing, provide equal opportunity for employment irrespective of race or sex, etc., and "on the basis of an aggressive effort on the part of the President and his Administration to fulfill this program, the membership of the UAW-CIO will mobilize its total resources for a campaign for the re-election of President Roosevelt for a fourth term, the re-election of Vice-President Wallace, and the election of a progressive Congress."

What the Stalinists Wanted

When debate on this resolution opened it was announced that the Communist Party supporters on the committee had withdrawn their resolution. Why shouldn't they? They are experienced enough to know that the Reuther resolution was also a surrender to Roosevelt; that it was formulated in somewhat cautious language because the ranks of the organization are not so stupid that they had not already begun to have doubts about Roosevelt being a "friend of labor." The Reuther-Thomas conditions therefore represented not so much the position of Reuther and Thomas but the pressure of a skeptical rank and file.

Addes, expressing the position of the Communist Party faction, remarked that "I am in full accord with the resolution that has been

presented by your committee. I am glad to learn that the minority have withdrawn their report."

The only speech against the resolution was made by Emil Mazey of Briggs Local 212. When Mazey charged Roosevelt with the direct responsibility for the appointment of anti-labor boards and commissions, he was booed. Most of the boosing came from the Addes faction (allied with the Stalinists), but other delegates joined in.

A Contest for Office

By this time the temper of the convention was rising, in preparation for the contest over the election of officers. The main contests were for the posts of secretary-treasurer and the vice-presidency held by Richard Frankenstein. The Reuther and Addes caucuses had been holding regular meetings and the convention was sharply divided. Everyone understood that this was in fact a contest for control of the International. Thomas was uncontested for re-election.

It must be emphasized again that the struggle between the two groups was for control of the International Board, that is, for control of the union. This does not mean that the fight was a pure and simple struggle for power with no real issues dividing the contestants. To believe that it was merely a struggle over office would create a false picture of the convention and of the real situation in the UAW.

There were and remain important differences between the groups, important programmatic differences, which are far-reaching in relation to the welfare of the International and its membership.

As was said in LABOR ACTION last week, the Reuther group represented to some degree, all to inadequate, it is true, the basic and elementary economic interests of the workers. The element of ambition for power and leadership was probably there. Reuther has it. And so do the others. Reuther may want to become president of the UAW. It may be and probably is true that he would like a high post in the Roosevelt Administration. But of a far more serious nature is the political capitulation of Reuther to the Roosevelt bureaucracy and the war. This was clearly demonstrated in his support of the fourth term for Roosevelt resolution and his cringing attitude on the no-strike pledge.

Addes Retains Post

The struggle for control of the International was centered largely on the post of secretary-treasurer, in many respects a post fully as powerful as that of president. Richard Leonard was the candidate of the Reuther faction, and the incumbent, George Addes, was supported by the Communist Party and other groups. In his platform, Leonard favored: "Full support of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and President Philip Murray... for an all-out offensive against fascism on the battle fronts and against un-American, anti-labor forces on the home front."

Leonard believes that the "war can and must be won without surrender by American labor of its basic rights and standards." He announced his opposition to the Little Steel formula "and all attempts to force on labor undemocratic wage and manpower freezing." Leonard pledged himself to oppose vigorously "interference of any outside political party in the affairs of our union." (Leonard's platform did not explain whether or not this would include vigorous opposition to interference by Roosevelt and the Democratic Party.)

Addes' candidacy for re-election was based largely on his record as secretary-treasurer, his union record

and his "experience." Since it was well known that both candidates were ardent supporters of the war, of Roosevelt and of Phil Murray, there wasn't any need to go into details on these matters.

On these questions the candidates were like two peas in one pod. The struggle therefore reduced itself to one prime consideration for hundreds of delegates: should the Stalinist Communist Party get the opportunity to drive its disrupting wedge into the International.

Addes won by 3,748,235 votes to 3,676,979 for Leonard, a majority of 71,256.

The next contest was between Walter Reuther and Richard Frankenstein. Reuther defeated Frankenstein by a majority of 350. Since there was another vice-president to be elected, Frankenstein had another chance. After casting around for a man to run against him, the Reuther

forces decided to run Leonard, the defeated candidate for secretary-treasurer. There had been some talk of their supporting Tom Di Lorenzo of Brewster Local 365 in New York City. There was discussion on other Reuther leaders, but the final decision was for Leonard. Leonard went down to defeat again by a Frankenstein majority of 253 votes.

The next struggle was for places on the International Executive Board. Those elected were: Leo Lamotte, Melvin Bishop, William Stevenson, Percy Llewellyn, William McAuley, Carl Swanson, Arnold Coxhill, Richard Reisinger, Paul Miley, Richard Gosser, Arnold Atwood, Jos. Mattson, John Livingston, L. H. Michener, George Burt, Thomas Starling, William Blakeley and Charles Kerrigan. The Reuther forces retain the leading influence in the board, but the balance of power is held by Thomas, with his 83 votes.

A Changing Vote

An interesting question arises as to why the delegates acted as they did in connection with the elections of officers and board members. They supported Addes against Leonard. The next day they swing back to Reuther and support him against Frankenstein. Following this they desert the Reuther faction and support Frankenstein against Leonard.

It seemed clear that the delegates were reluctant to give too much power to either faction, the Stalinists-Addes-Frankenstein, or the Reutherites. They were set against turning the union over to the CP, but they were also skeptical about Reuther. Consequently, it is apparent that they decided to keep the status quo, with Thomas as the balance of power.

The majority of the delegates knew that Reuther was closer to their basic economic interests than the Sta-

linists, as was demonstrated on the question of incentive pay. All of the really alert delegates knew that the Communist Party was not to be trusted at all; that this outfit was playing an aggressive and sinister role in support of Moscow, a second front, piecework, union-wrecking, flag-waving, that is, Stalinist politics. On the other hand, they did not believe that their best interests would be served by placing too much power in the hands of Reuther.

The No-Strike Pledge

The resolution on the no-strike pledge did not get to the floor of the convention until Sunday morning, the last day of the convention. It was after all officers had been elected and Roosevelt had been endorsed for a fourth term. Thus, this troublesome question could not in any way enter into the determination of the fitness of the various candidates to hold office.

There were two resolutions: the Reuther majority resolution and a Stalinist minority resolution.

Originally the first resolve of the majority resolution read: "That this convention of the UAW-CIO reaffirm its pledge to the nation and its fighting men to maintain continuous and uninterrupted production of materiel-prosecution of the war." At the insistence of the minority and with the ready consent of the majority, this was amended to insert the phrase "without any qualification" immediately following the word "nation." The majority and the minority were getting together on the no-strike pledge.

The Reuther majority was ready to make other concessions also. The second resolve in the majority resolution read originally: "That in those plants where management is not bargaining in good faith and is taking advantage of the war situation and labor's no-strike pledge to destroy collective bargaining, the International Executive Board shall take steps to insure continuous production by urging government operation of such plants."

Addes introduced a slick but meaningless amendment to the effect that the International Executive Board shall, in order to assure continuous production, urge that under the conditions named, the plants shall be taken over by the President under his emergency powers and not under the provisions of the Smith-Connally Act. The Addes amendment further provided that there should be full rights of collective bargaining in the

conscripted plants and the "elimination of all profits." The amendment was accepted by the majority.

Speech of Emil Mazey

Emil Mazey spoke against the resolution, saying that he was for the "outright revocation of the no-strike pledge." He said that the problems of the workers would not be solved by this resolution. He pointed out that the Addes amendment about taking all the profits was "outright fantastic."

"I am in favor of abolishing profits altogether in those plants," said Mazey. "The interests of the employers and workers are directly opposed to each other." Mazey told the convention that the class struggle is not abolished during wartime but is intensified. He challenged any person in the convention to prove that a single soldier had lost his life because the workers were not producing enough.

Mazey closed with the statement: "In order to establish collective bargaining we must revoke our no-strike pledge."

Mazey's speech got some applause. It is interesting to note that the reception given his no-strike pledge position was received with far greater tolerance than his previous remarks against the fourth term resolution.

Thomas told the convention that before the war he had the best record of any international president for calling strikes. "When the war is over," he said, and if management acts as it does now, "I am going to make a better record than I did before."

The ball was rolling and Addes got up next in support of the pledge. He said that the employers want the convention to repudiate the pledge so that they can provoke strikes/ Strikes during the war will wreck the union. In Germany or Japan, Addes said that he would advise strikes to hamper production. Addes said that he would not say that those in the union who were for revoking the no-strike pledge were fifth columnists. Addes would not make this charge directly and openly, but there could be little doubt that this was what he meant.

As nearly as could be estimated the resolution for reaffirmation of the no-strike pledge carried by a vote of about two to one.

A concluding article will appear in the next issue.

A Conversation Piece--

Two Workers Discuss Russia

By BILL JONES

"Russia?" said a man to me, "that's a terrible place."

"Yes!" said I, "in what way?"

"Why," says he, "the workers are terribly oppressed. They have the worst piecework system in the world. The speed-up is killing. If you come late you get fined. If it happens again, you get jailed and become a convict laborer. Workers are tied to their jobs like serfs. Only stool-pigeons and lickspittles are given permission to change jobs."

"You don't say," gasp I, "but why don't their unions put a stop to such things?"

"Their unions? Don't be funny," says the man with an indulgent smile. "Why, the same people boss the unions who boss the plants. They're just big company unions. You got to join—or else. All the unions do is to enforce these measures against the workers."

"Then why don't the workers organize their own unions and raise some hell?" ask I.

"Man! Where you been all this time?" says he in wonder. "They have the most ruthless and efficient police system in the world. Just say something out of the way and you just disappear. You either turn up in Siberia on convict labor or you get liquidated."

A Privileged Group

"They must sure have a heluva government," says I a little terrified. "You would think they would just gang up on election day and vote out a gang like that."

"Vote out?" says the man, looking at me as though I just landed from Mars. "What do you think they have there, a kindergarten? Why, don't you know they only have one ticket on the ballot, and you either vote for it—or else."

"But they must get something out of it," think I out loud, "or they would not put up with such a government."

"Sure," he begins to enlighten me, "a lot of people get something out of it. But they are the bureaucrats who have all the soft jobs with the big pay. They have the fine homes, their own special stores and restaurants, their own clubs and summer homes. They own automobiles, go to the seashore for vacations, and have money to send their children to college. They are the factory directors, the politicians who have jobs in the Communist Party, the government officials, the collective farm

heads, the trade union bosses, the army officers, and others like that."

"All together they have about fifteen million people who are in this privileged group. They manage to keep the rest of the people in line. Both by propaganda and by force. And when I say force, I mean force. Hitler's terror methods have nothing on them."

"It must sure be hell on the workers," says I, "to be ruled by such a class of bureaucrats."

"But, you're not quite right there, comrade," says the man with a look of concern, "the bureaucrats don't really form a class. They are merely a caste."

"Caste?" ask I quizzically. "I don't get the difference. But it must still be hell to be ruled over by such a dictatorship."

"But you're not quite right again, comrade," says the man, evidently distressed by my ignorance. "Speaking dialectically, there is no dictatorship OVER the working class. There couldn't be. Because in Russia they have a dictatorship of the proletariat, that means a dictatorship OF the working class."

"What?" ask I, scratching my head and wondering if I had dirt in many years. "Please repeat that."

"Speaking dialectically, Russia is ruled by a dictatorship of the working class," says he again.

"Look, Mister," says I, "are you kidding me? I don't know about dialectically, but speaking English it don't make sense. Didn't you just tell me that the Russian workers have this ruling class of bureaucrats exploiting them like all hell?"

"Not CLASS, but caste!" says the man impatiently. "And they don't rule OVER the workers, they just rule on behalf of the workers. In the last analysis, the working class is the ruling class in Russia. And furthermore, the bureaucrats don't exploit the workers. They just make them work long hours for small wages and then steal the product of their labor."

"I don't see where that helps matters," says I, getting a little dizzy from the attempt to follow. "The workers ought to get rid of these fifteen million job holders and organizers of their own government."

"Yes, they should get rid of these people, but the workers don't need to organize their own government," says the man, swallowing hard. "They already have their own government. Don't you know that Russia IS a workers' state? It's badly de-

generated, but it's still a workers' state."

"Are you crazy, or do you think I am?" says I in bewilderment. "If it's some kind of workers' state, why are the workers treated so badly? You yourself say that the terror against the workers is as bad in Russia as in Germany."

"What you have to understand," continues the man, with a great effort at patience, "is that they have a DEGENERATED workers' state. This means it has really nothing to do with the welfare of the workers. All the state is interested in is the welfare of the bureaucrats."

"Then why in the hell are you trying to confuse me by calling it some kind of a workers' state anyway?" ask I, getting a little annoyed. "The workers have nothing to do with it, have they?"

"The workers don't have to have anything to do with it for it to be a workers' state," explains the mystery man. "All you need is that instead of a bunch of capitalists owning the industries they are owned by the workers' state."

Still Running in a Circle

"But what makes it a workers' state?" ask I insistently.

"It owns the nationalized economy, don't it?" replies my educator triumphantly.

"But does nationalized economy mean the same as a workers' state? Do you mean if the government of the U.S. takes over all the industries we have a workers' state?" say I, trying to keep the argument where mortal minds can understand it.

"No, not if the U.S. government takes it over," continues the Hocus Pocus man, "only if a workers state takes it over."

"Then you mean that the workers of Russia own the factories?" ask I, still seeking reason and sense.

"No, that's just a fiction of the bureaucracy," insists the Mental Magician with an angry flourish. "The workers are just told that by Stalin to make them work and fight harder."

"Now look, Mister," say I with a great effort at self-control, "I used to think two and two made four, but after what you say I'm not so sure. What you been drinking, anyway?"

"I haven't had a drop," says the man, with conviction.

"Then how do you get this way?" say I, pressing for an explanation.

"Oh," says he modestly, "I got it all out of a paper called The Militant."

Indian Famine Spreads to Whole Population --

(Continued from page 1)

In the words of the Calcutta Statesman (British owned newspaper): "The present Bengal famine constitutes the worst and most reprehensible administrative breakdown since the political disorders of 1930 and 1931." The same paper frankly states that "the most outstanding factor has been the lack of foresight by India's own civil governments, central and provincial," and adds that "the responsibility for the breakdown inescapably rests in the last resort upon the authority of Britain, and its immediate representatives here."

Indians are dying by the thousand. Descriptions of scenes in India today beggar the imagination. One of the ministry of Bengal stated that the most appalling feature is the death-rate among the destitute who have trickled into Calcutta seeking food. Early in September there were about 80,000 of them walking the streets, lining up at the free kitchens—some run by the government, some by private charities. Many hundreds of these sufferers reached their goal, only to die in the city streets, other hundreds died by the roadside on their way to Calcutta. Police patrols each morning gather the corpses of

those who died of starvation during the preceding night. Cholera, dysentery and typhoid stalk in the wake of famine, especially in the suburbs.

Calcutta's already inadequate hospitals are filled to overflowing. In the first week of October, 527 persons died in Calcutta hospitals from starvation or its attendant diseases, and many more in private homes and on the streets. Even members of the army are succumbing from hunger on the streets of Calcutta. The worst mortality is among the children and the women. A member of the Bengal Assembly said that in Barisal District, once called the granary of Ben-

gal, children and infants were being sold.

One reporter writes of the "haggard face and desiccated bodies of Indian famine victims wandering aimlessly through the streets or lying helpless on the sidewalks of Calcutta and other cities." At every stop, passenger trains are besieged by hungry peasants crying for food. Children dig in piles of garbage, or contend with dogs for scraps. Another report mentions the bloated stomachs of little children, mothers suffering gravely from malnutrition and men collapsing in the streets. Lines five and six blocks long wait

patiently for bowls of thin, watery gruel from a free kitchen. One dispatch describes the "walking skeletons covered with sores."

Although Bengal is the most seriously hit by this disaster, Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, told the House of Commons on September 24 that besides Bengal the areas most affected were parts of Bombay, Madras, Cochin and Travancore. Reports from India also mention Orissa, East Bengal and the Bengal-Assam frontiers, and Bihar. There have been food riots in Kashmir in which seven persons were killed by troops.

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National Secretary, Workers Party

DAVID COOLIDGE
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