

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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Runaway Shop Hit by Ruling

Contract Of I.L.G.W.U. Upheld, Preventing Anti-Labor Move

The powerful International Ladies' Garment Workers Union forced favorable legal action against two "runaway shops", firms which had violated their union contract by moving outside New York and establishing an open-shop. The two firms, the Blue Dale Dress Company and the Blue Fox Dress Company, had signed with the union last February as members of Popular Priced Dress Manufacturers Group Inc., an employers association. On October 29th they locked out the workers from their factory, resigned from the employers' association on October 31st, and the same night secretly moved their machinery to Archbold, Pennsylvania. Their charge was that the ILGWU had created "unnecessary labor strikes," thereby breaching the contract.

It was successfully shown that the latter was not true, that the two firms involved had locked out the workers and had attempted to run a non-union shop. Justice McCook, in his opinion declared that, "regarding the situation as a whole it is clear that the intention was at one stroke to get rid of the obligations of the union contract and to obtain cheaper non-union labor in a more indulgent community."

While the decision will be appealed by the employers, its importance at this time is undeniable. Insofar as the labor movement can get anything out of favorable court decisions, this one will be of aid to the aroused trade union movement of America. Its special importance, of course, is to the various needle trades, since it is far more unusual to hear of steel mills or auto plants slipping away by night. It is the legal support of the principle involved, support which comes not from the liberalism of the bench but from the independent power of the ILGWU, that is of significance to collective bargaining.

French CP, SP Vote Press Gag Laws

On December 8, according to a Havas dispatch, the French Chamber of Deputies adopted, by a vote of 359 to 193, a government bill on the control of the press. This bill, for which both communist and socialist deputies voted, forbids with appropriate penalties the printing or publishing of

1. "news of a nature capable of troubling public order"; and
2. "agitation in any form against French authority in the colonies."

Thus have the communists and socialists voted to give the French state power to suppress revolutionary agitation against capitalist rule at home and against imperialism abroad! Thus have the workers parties pledged themselves, thru a self-imposed prohibition, to abandon the class struggle against capitalist rule in France and against imperialist oppression in the colonies!

Such is the poisoned fruit of the People's Front!

Auto Union Votes to Strike All General Motors Plants

Injunction Out Against Sit-In Fisher Body Strikers; CIO Aids

Two hundred representatives of the United Automobile Workers, representing General Motors, voted for a general strike in the company's plants should the demands worked out be rejected by the management of the corporation. The meeting which took these steps was called in Flint, Michigan. In addition to working out demands, a board of strategy was set up, consisting of the UAWA officials, representatives of the Committee for Industrial Organization, and Glenn McCabe of the Flat Glass Workers, an allied industry now in a general strike. This board will have the authority to call the strike and will supervise the strike machinery.

Eight demands were formulated by the workers as follows: A national conference between the heads of General Motors and the Union (i.e. as opposed to plant agreements); abolition of piece work; thirty hour week and six hour day with time and one-half for overtime; establishment of a minimum wage; reinstatement of all workers discharged unjustly; seniority rights; recognition of the UAWA; mutual agreement as to the speed of the line.

The board of strategy will send a letter to General Motors this week covering these demands.

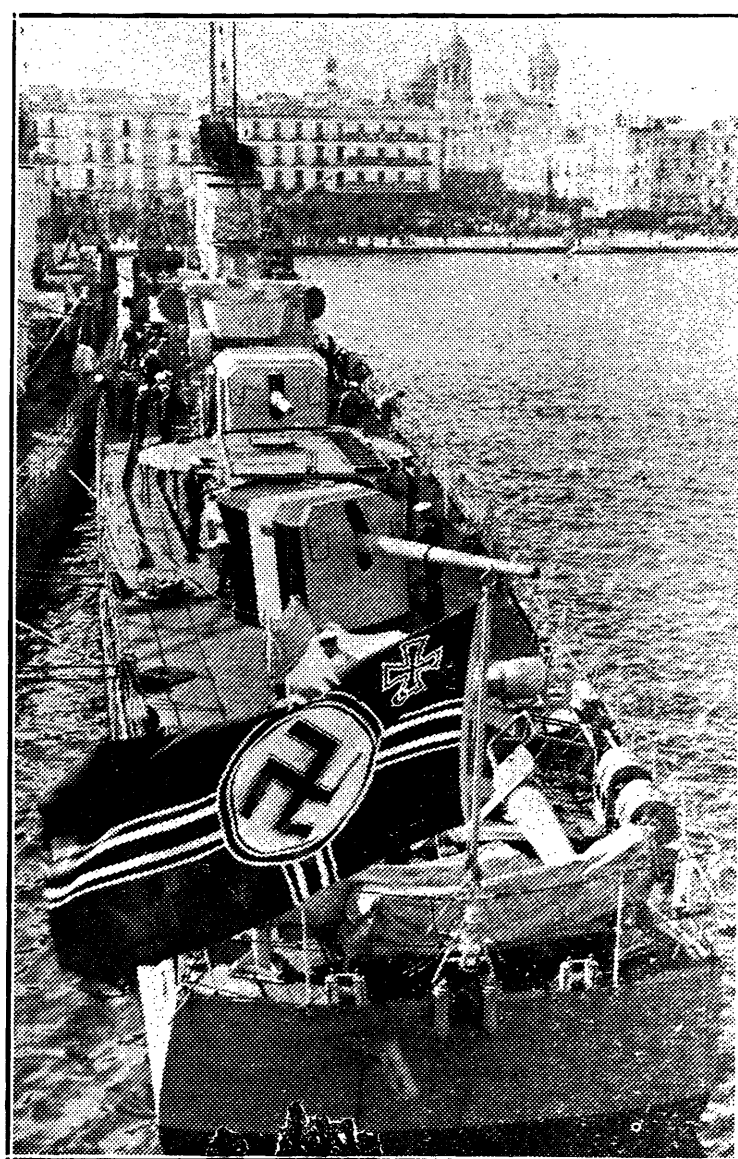
Fighting a sit-down strike in two Fisher body plants in Flint, General Motors has gotten out an injunction to evict the men. The notice was read to the strikers but no move has as yet been made to oust them. The sheriff appeared at the union meeting but did not serve the injunction because "too many people were there". John Brophy, representing the CIO at the meeting, stated that the injunction would be fought by the whole CIO.

Approximately 28,000 men are on strike in eight GM plants throughout the country and about 8,500 are idle due to shutdown plants, it was announced at the conference.

Homer Martin and John Brophy made the main addresses at the conference. Brophy stated that the CIO was "morally and materially behind the efforts of the automobile workers to organize the industry completely and to establish real collective bargaining". Martin pointed out the unreliability of the Auto Labor Board which failed to protect the jobs of 300 workers dismissed for union activity. He stressed the fact that the union, now 100,000 strong, was not merely desirous of general discussions with the management, but ready for real bargaining.

Coincident with the drive to organize the auto industry in general and GM plants in particular, President Roosevelt took a sudden interest in the question of wages and hours. At a press conference in Washington, he let it be known that, while no definite plans were worked out, consideration was being given to some sort of Federal control of wages and hours. He referred to the general increase in hours and decrease in wages since the dismantling of the NRA.

However, the auto workers will



This destroyer is one of the Nazi vessels now engaged in "acts of war" against anti-fascist Spain. It flies the swastika in the port of Cadiz.

The "Mother of Democracy" Plans Financial Aid to Fascist Germany!

(Reprinted from the "New Statesman And Nation" of London, November 21, 1936.) * * *

Official denials notwithstanding, there is no doubt that plans for raising a British loan or loans to assist "economic revival" in Germany and Italy are being strenuously canvassed in the City. Sentiment there among "the people who

not this time give up their independent union strength for the sake of honey'd phrases from Roosevelt. In 1934, Pres. Roosevelt, together with William Green, made the infamous sell-out agreement, which not only did nothing for the workers but worsened their condition, till today, the need of a real union independent of the government as of the company is obvious to all auto workers.

Preparations are also being made by the Federal government to take a hand in strike developments. Edward McGrady, chief troubleshooter of the administration has been recalled from San Francisco, to enter the lists. Other federal mediators are being rushed into the area, and attempts are being made to settle the glass workers strike. John L. Lewis participated in a long conference with Frances Perkins but no statement was issued.

count" is predominantly semi-fascist; and though less concern is felt about Italy, the idea of an economic clash in Hitler's Germany would be most unwelcome to the majority of our financial leaders and, not least, to the Governor of the Bank.

Yet, economic troubles in Germany are accumulating. Prices are soaring, and there is a growing deficiency of many food supplies—as witness the new campaign to substitute vast quantities of plum and apple jam for butter. Owing to the operation of her multitudinous clearing arrangements and special arrangements for payments, Germany's real foreign trade position is wrapped in mystery. But all the available evidence points to the conclusion that she is living considerably beyond her means. She cannot import the food she needs and at the same time finance raw material imports required for the rearmament programme, or otherwise entailed by the Government's prodigal expenditure on strategic roads and other employment giving works.

German emissaries in London are apparently trying to convince the City that Nazism in bankruptcy would be much more dangerous to Germany's neighbors than if it received sufficient financial assistance to tide things over smoothly.

Arms to Spain Banned by U.S.

Roosevelt In Line With England and France In Tacit Aid to Franco

The tacit and unofficial support that has been given to British and French plans for strangling the Spanish revolution by the United States became explicit this week when the Roosevelt administration sharply attacked Cuse, an exporter, for sending arms to the Spanish government. The Neutrality Law gives the president power to put an embargo on arms shipments in wars between nations but not in civil wars. Roosevelt declared the action of Cuse in "taking advantage of this loophole is unpatriotic". Immediate steps are being taken to amend the law so that the president has unqualified and unlimited powers to prevent arms shipments at his discretion.

This is clearly an act against the Spanish workers and against any possible revolutionary movements of oppressed colonial peoples. How "anti-fascist" is the "great humanitarian"! What a symbol of struggle against reaction, against the "economic Tories", at home and abroad! Roosevelt's foreign policy, dictated by the interests of American Imperialism, is every whit as reactionary as parliament-loving England, people's front France, Fascist Germany and Italy—the international bourgeoisie have a common interest in murdering the Spanish workers.

While England's interests in preventing a revolutionary Spain are perhaps greater than the United States, since the Mediterranean is of vital significance to her imperial trade-routes, nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that hundreds of millions of American capital is invested in Spain. (International Telephone and Telegraph has alone invested in its Spanish subsidiary over \$350,000,000 since 1929. In 1928, the House of Morgan loaned the Spanish government twenty million dollars.) In addition various industries have obtained concessions from the former monarchy, concessions not threatened particularly by the col-

(Continued on Page 2)

Sharecropper Fund Drive Is Held Legal

Informed yesterday that the Department of Justice had ruled that there was nothing improper in the distribution of anti-peonage stamps used to raise funds "in the struggle against slavery carried on by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union," officials of the Union declared that "no other decision could have been possible."

H. L. Mitchell, union executive secretary, declared that "the decision of the Department of Justice is a result of our own insistence that it investigate and announce its decision as to whether a labor organization has the right to raise funds from people who love justice, for the purpose of remedying such a tragic situation as now exists."

"The statement of assistant Attorney-General McMahon is a vindication of the legality of steps taken by the Workers Defense League and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in their efforts to eliminate slavery in the cotton fields of the South."

FROM THE SPANISH WORKERS PRESS

LA BATALLA (P.O.U.M.)

"Everybody must feel that he is fighting in one cause, united by the same desire. The workers and the peasants behind the lines know that the militiamen are fighting at the front for their interest and their future. The militiamen must also know why and for what they are fighting. They must understand that the workers and peasants are also working for them. Not only so that they can be fed and clothed and so that they need not be deprived of anything at the front, but also so that they need not be deprived of anything in the future. The militiamen know that when they come back from the front, with the war over and fascism crushed, and become workers and peasants once again, that they will not have to return to their factories, offices and mines under the same bosses who exploited them before, under a manager to order them about, but on the contrary, they will find fellow workers, working in common on what is common property.

"The peasant must know that he is returning to land which is his own, since it is collectivized property. If it were otherwise, the workers and peasants who are now in the militia fighting at the front would not on their return meet with their just reward, which is emancipation and freedom. With the defeat of fascism must come the defeat of the regime which made fascism possible."

December 4th

LA BATALLA (P.O.U.M.)

"War, and especially the prolonged and difficult war which is now going on in Spain, demands a firm economic basis adapted to the demands of the civil war itself. What should this basis be? Should it be the old capitalist economy? That would be impossible for two powerful reasons: 1) because the old economy has been put out of working order and 2) because a revolutionary civil war cannot be made on a basis of capitalist econ-

Fibre Workers Win Demands

Detroit, Mich.—Establishment of a 50c an hour minimum wage for women and 60c for men, another general 5c an hour increase, and time and a half for more than eight hours a day, were won by National Automotive Fibers workers at negotiations following their one-day strike Friday, Dec. 18.

Strikers went back to work on the management's promise of an immediate 5c an hour increase and of further negotiations on other points.

As a result of the negotiations which took place last week the second 5c wage increase was granted and the minimum wages were established. Management also agreed to time and a half for more than eight hours a day and forty-five hours a week to become effective March 1, 1937. It was also arranged that when foremen failed to adjust grievances, workers were to take them up with the management through the union's shop steward system. The strike and consequent negotiations adjusted conditions in one of the worst sweatshops in the industry. Wages had ranged as low as 30c an hour and hours as high as 12 to 14 a day, six and seven days a week. Since organization began several months ago the union has won increases totalling 15c an hour besides those raised more than that by the minimum wage.

omy. A new economy is necessary on a new basis. It can only be on collectivist and socialist tendencies. War economy must be revolutionary economy. This is obviously a transition stage—war communism as they called it in Russia—but even so, in it the first foundation of the socialist economy of the future is laid. One of the greatest reproaches we have to make to the Spanish governments is that they have not known how to adapt the economic and financial resources of the country, banks, transports, heavy industry, etc., to the needs of a long and costly war by means of the energetic and revolutionary measures which were so urgently needed. Whatever measure may be taken and whatever may be desired, the fact remains that the only way to avoid catastrophe is to reorganize the economy, which has been put completely out of joint by the war, on a new socialist basis. Any return to the old social and economic regime is now, from any point of view, impossible."

Dec., 8th.

SOLIDARIDAD OBRERA: (CNT)

"Criticism of opportunists in this paper centers in a strong attack, mainly against those who take advantage of the war situation for their own profit, instead of cooperating and making sacrifices.

"Since the beginning of the military rising, the workers' organizations have taken control of the industrial and agricultural life, working all the necessary enterprises through the management of certain committees and representatives from their respective organizations. Many people have joined the syndicates since July 19th with no other purpose than to find safe refuge and at the same time continue activities corresponding to former bourgeois tendencies.

"While competent and experienced technicians are necessary in managing production and assuring the fulfillment of social needs, many qualified people whose ideology is by no means suited to the struggle against fascism have pushed themselves into responsible posts. Their bourgeois tendencies have become obvious in their general behavior and conduct, their negligence in their duties, their indifference to responsibilities, their frequent use and abuse of automobiles, and the preoccupation with their own greedy and material self satisfaction becomes very noticeable. Instead of living more simply and making more sacrifices during the present double struggle—the war and the economic transformation—they take every advantage for personal benefit. The "Solidaridad Obrero" speaks openly and plainly; it warns those who continue such conduct to be on the look out. The language is explicit: anyone taking advantage of the present situation under disguise of organizational affiliation will be treated severely. To substitute a new bureaucracy for the old is certainly not the object of this revolution and is certainly not worth our sacrifices."

December 8th

OPEN HOUSE

at
131 West 33rd Street
on
JANUARY 23rd

• The housewarming we've promised you will be open to all comers at the cost of only 35 cents. Don't fail to see our new headquarters — and don't fail to let our new headquarters see you SATURDAY NIGHT, JANUARY 23rd.

Within a week, the New Workers School, featuring the famous murals of Diego Rivera, will be ready for visitors. Of course, you will be welcome at all times, but particularly so on the night of our housewarming—January 23rd.

Newsguild Man Flies for Spain

The most spectacular picket of the American Newspaper Guild has gone to Spain to fight against the rebels as a government aviator.

He is Ben Leider, former "flying reporter" for the New York Post, who gave an ultra-modern flair to some of the Guild's strikes by picketing from the air, stunting high overhead and flaunting a trailer strike sign. When the New York Guild had its clash with the Staten Island Advance and the publisher was coming home on the Aquitania, Leider flew down the bay to meet the ship and circled around her as she came up the harbor—while sound apparatus mounted on a launch kept up a verbal barrage. Leider also used part of his last vacation flying to Milwaukee and stunting to aid the Guild strike on the Wisconsin News.

Leider, a veteran of eight years in the air, volunteered to fly for the Spanish Government without pay. He had just previously resigned from the Post to take a full-time flying position.

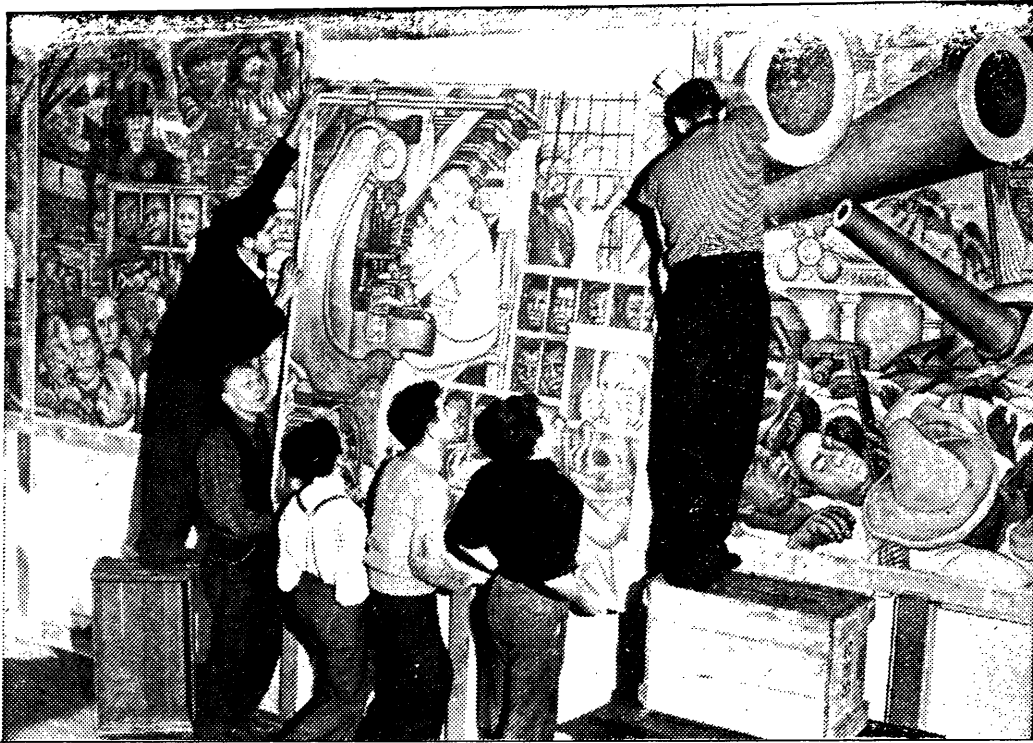
Brockway Hits Trotskyites

FENNER Brockway, who ought to know because he has worked very closely with the Trotskyists, has the following to say about them in a recent article in the New Leader (London) of December 4, 1936:

"... the Trotskyists are everywhere a source of mischief in the workingclass movement. They destroy and do not build. They remain conspiratorial cliques in whatever party they attach themselves to, disintegrating it, making it less effective in the class struggle, antagonizing other sections of the working class. Even in the midst of the crisis in Spain, that is the effect of their influence there at this moment.*

* Brockway does not refer to the POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unity) which Trotsky and his followers condemn in the strongest terms, but to the orthodox Trotsky grouping in

RIVERA MURALS IN NEW SURROUNDINGS



"FRENZIED FINANCE"

When "frenzied finance" gets into big enough figures, it becomes a "model corporation." It can make \$500,000,000 capital out of thin air without sacrificing its claim to respectability. It can fake its books to hide a \$109,000,000 profit and still be cited as a blameless knight in shining armor.

Whenever Big Business comes under fire, Wall Street says: "But look at the American Telephone & Telegraph Company and its president, the noble and urbane Walter S. Gifford. Anyone can see that he could do no wrong. Besides, this is the world's largest corporation, and \$4,250,000,000 can't be wrong."

The Federal Communications commission dug into figures compiled by engineers and accountants who explored the books, equipment and plants of the Bell System and its manufacturing subsidiary, the Western Electric Company.

About \$500,000,000 of Bell's equipment value, it was charged, is sheer "water."

Cyrus G. Hill, the commission's chief engineer, explained how A. T. & T. got away with this enormous grab.

How Gouge Is Worked

Bell buys 92 percent of its equipment from Western Electric, Hill declared, pointing out that Bell bars competition from outside manufac-

turers, and, therefore, Western Electric can charge any price it pleases.

The money is simply transferred from one Bell pocket to another, said Hill. The huge overcharges, amounting to 20 per cent of the Telephone Trust's entire \$2,500,000,000 "equipment value," are added to the overhead, on which the public pays telephone rates.

He next took up the question of the "hand set" or "French" type telephone, on which, he said, the company has collected \$24,000,000 clear profit by means of "excess monthly charges."

Lied to Subscribers

The company collected these extra charges from telephone subscribers who had the new type of 'phone installed, for the alleged reason that this "added to the company's expense." Hill said this claim was false.

"Actually," he declared, "the new 'phones were a tremendous economy, saving wire construction costs and other expenses to the tune of over \$85,000,000."

Adding this sum to the \$24,000,000 profit from excess charges the commission engineer figured that Bell's total profit from the hand sets was \$19,000,000.

He charged that the company has carefully concealed this fact from State regulatory commissions.

BANKERS DECIDE TO WORK WITH FDR

(Continued from Page 4)

well for the genuineness of American democracy as an instrument of mass expression, as machinery for defense of even the most elementary interests of the great majority of the population. Imagine such procedure occurring in the Soviet Union, the land of the proletarian dictatorship. No one could conceive the Five Year Plan or any similar legislation being enacted and subject to application without mass discussion, without millions of workers and farmers considering it and having the right to change it, actually bringing about amendments.

But regardless of what we revolutionists may think of American democracy as a fraudulent but still effective agency of capitalist dictatorship, we must recognize that its vitality and efficacy have been enhanced by the election results.

* * *

This is the sixth article in a series by Jay Lovestone on the Presidential election.

Spain which broke with the organization led by Andres Nin.

** Brockway refers to the policy of assistance following the period of strict neutrality.