

WLB STEEL DECREE IS SLAP AT LABOR!

N. Y. Herald Tribune on Little Steel

From its Editorial Page:

"The board's award of a raise of 44 cents a day to the steel workers was without justification...."

From its Financial Pages:

"Directors of Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. yesterday voted a dividend of 50 cents a share on the common stock...."

Profiteers Pocket Huge Swag In Phony 'Commission Fees' Through 'In' in Washington

By PETER DANIELS

It wasn't until more than a decade after the last war that much of the story of the fabulous fortunes made while most people were suffering came to light. This time the information is leaking out early.

In recent days even the tremendous profits made by the large corporations have been somewhat overshadowed by the revelation of phony "commission fees" given to individuals able to facilitate the nabbing of war contracts. Several of these testified before the House Naval Affairs Committee last week and the attendant publicity has already forced congressional action aimed at barring their activity.

Scrimgeours Do Best

The most profitable deals were carried out by a family of four, the Scrimgeours, whose various members admitted they had grossed \$613,798 in 1941 in fees and had thus far earned about \$250,000 this year. Most of this came through contracts from the Navy Department, which William Scrimgeour, the head of the family, declared was not through "pull," but just because there were "plenty of people down there" he knew. He and his sons would send these people "small sums" for "spare time" activity like giving them public Navy Department material, he said.

An even more instructive case was that of Horace Ward, whose take for a year and a half was \$431,463. Officially recognized by colleagues as the "dean" of war brokers, his technique was based upon lavishly entertaining Navy and Coast Guard officers and remaining close to them at all times. He answered congressional questioning about his generosity by declaring that he was "socially-minded" and was "honored" by the friendship of such people. After his testimony he exclaimed that the committee hearing had made him realize that there might be something "wrong" in receiving his large commissions.

Mirandas of Brewster

These are, of course, not the first publicized get-rich-quick racketeers of the war. There were the Miranda brothers, for instance. These smooth products of the prohibition era started out by showing visiting Latin American dignitaries a good time, then selling them small munitions orders. Still just peanuts, of course. But, while serving time at the Lewisburg federal penitentiary, they conceived the idea of collaborating with former speakase proprietor F. William Zelcer to organize a company to sell supplies to Brewster Aircraft. But this was only a stepping stone,

too. They soon took over Brewster itself and milked it to the tune of \$5,400,000 between November, 1939, and June, 1941 (that is, besides "legitimate" salaries, etc.). When it was discovered that this lucrative undertaking was producing no planes, everyone got a little annoyed and the government took over. But the Mirandas and Zelcer got theirs while the going was good.

Then there was that other ex-convict, James G. Fuller. With former Massachusetts Governor Curley, former NLRB member Donald W. Smith, and several prominent corporation officials and retired Army and Navy officials as fronts, he founded an outfit known as "Engineers Group, Inc.," which was supposed to develop mineral deposits and arrange war contracts. All the company did was net Fuller thousands of dollars from purchasers of stock. Latest reports say he is now happily living in Mexico City.

These are, of course, only the most flagrant of the yet-publicized crooks. Reports of those who are profiting handsomely from the rubber and gasoline rationing are beginning to trickle in. When these become more complete the total of known current thievery will undoubtedly be increased.

Sherman's dictum remains truer than ever for the overwhelming majority. But, as all can clearly see, there are plenty of exceptions.

Visibility Unlimited!



Carlo

Rejects \$1-Day Pay Boost-- Would 'Stabilize' Labor's Living Standard at Low Level

By DAVID COOLIDGE

Philip Murray and other CIO leaders were given a slap in the face last week by the War Labor Board when the employer and "public" members refused to grant the demands of the steel union for a dollar a day increase in pay. This was the reward Murray, Thomas, the Stalinists and others received for their willingness to give up Saturday and Sunday "premium" pay, the strike and other gains that labor had wrested from the bosses over a period of years.

In place of the dollar a day increase the WLB granted the steelworkers 44 cents a day or 5 1/2 cents an hour. They also granted the check-off and a maintenance of membership provision. Bethlehem Steel was instructed to terminate its piecework wage trickery and to institute a minimum hourly wage of 78 cents. It has been the custom of Bethlehem in the past to have an hourly rate and a piece rate which was known as "tonnage." This system was so complicated and crazy that no one could understand it except the corporation's accountants and payroll "experts."

Unemployed On Increase In New York

Manpower Commissioner McNutt, through information supplied by George Sloan, New York City Department of Commerce commissioner, and the State Federation of Labor conference last week, officially admitted to the press the distressing unemployment situation in New York but offered little hope for a solution. He corroborated the previously given figure of 400,000 currently jobless and a half-million more by the end of the year.

The Sloan report, describing developments month by month, declared that employment in the metropolitan area had declined by 7,000 between mid-April and mid-May and by 89,000 (about 9 per cent) between May and June. Analyzing conditions in types of industries and predicting trends therein, it surmised that 60,000 of 100,000 construction workers are out of work and bans on future building should prevent any improvement; over 100,000 are partially or completely unemployed because of diversion of shipping and ship repairing from the New York port; 35,000 apparel workers were unemployed on May 1; furniture and lumber plants, employing 25,400 had practically no war contracts; many of the 879,000 still employed in retail and wholesale trade should expect drastic curtailment when inventories are used up; and steadily decreasing work is in sight for the many small sheet metal, electroplating, printing, publishing and electric fixture shops of the city.

The plans in the report for alleviating this distress were based upon the allocation of more war contracts to the small shops and consumer goods industries. Among the latter the emphasis was, as in all similar reports, on the huge clothing industry. All federal agencies have avoided the New York factories in placing their orders, preferring the low-paying, non-union shops scattered through many small towns all over the country. Sloan pleaded for recognition of the city as a "distress area," which should compel authorities to allot clothing contracts despite the "high-cost" feature of metropolitan plants. The entire issue of the attempt by the WPB, Army, Navy, etc., to overcome union conditions by granting orders to the

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As is usual in such decisions the WLB took a lot of space to give its analysis of the situation and to explain its reasons, motives and ideas. (It is better to say that the eight non-labor members of the board made the decision. The four labor members dissented unanimously.)

The vice-chairman, Dr. George W. Taylor, representing "the public," rendered the decision. He laid down what he called "principles." In brief they were:

1. From January, 1941, to May, 1942, the cost of living increased about 15 per cent. If any workers have received less than a 15 per cent increase in hourly rate of pay for this period "their peacetime standards have been broken." That is, they can't eat as much now as they could before January, 1941. But if they have received an average 15 per cent increase then their "established peacetime standards have been preserved." That is, they can live in the same shack they lived in before, wear the same old clothes and buy the same amount of food, even though it wasn't enough.

The word "established," as used by the board, is very interesting. By the use of this word the board attempts to dodge the question of the workers' peacetime standard of living. No matter how low the wages of the steel workers were in peacetime, this is to be taken as the standard in deciding on an increase. The workers lived in shacks and hovels before January, 1941. The board therefore is only concerned that they hold on to these shacks and do not have to move into the streets or into the trees.

2. Any workers "whose peacetime standards have been preserved" can only get an increase from the board if they can prove that there are "inequalities" and sub-standard conditions "specifically referred to in the President's message of April 27, 1942."

This of course is extremely vague. What are these "inequalities" and "sub-standard conditions"? The board pointed out one such inequality which it says served as a guide, namely, that the cost of living in steel towns had risen faster than in the country as a whole. That is, if pork chops increased ten cents a pound in New York and twelve cents a pound in Buffalo-Lackawanna, then says the board, it is clear that the workers in Buffalo-Lackawanna should have a greater increase in wages than the workers in New York.

Peacetime Standards

This doesn't prove of course that the workers in New York or Buffalo will be able to buy pork chops. As far as the WLB is concerned, there is to be no real increase in the standard of living, no increase in REAL wages. The point that guides the board is that the incomes must be about the same in purchasing power. It isn't fair, says the board, for the workers in New York to be able to buy five pounds of meat a week while the workers in Buffalo-Lackawanna have money only for four

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An Editorial on the WLB Wage Decision:

Raise Labor's Standard of Living!

In the lead article of this issue, we discuss the WLB order as it applies specifically to the steel workers. Here we wish to make some general observations on the WLB findings in so far as they are intended as a national standard in wage disputes.

In rooking the steel workers out of their just demand for a \$1.00-a-day increase, the board held that the cost of living had risen 15 per cent from January to May and that labor was entitled to an increase in pay equal to the rise in the cost of living. Now, at first blush that seems to be a welcome concession from a government agency: wages should keep step with the cost of living. Good. BUT, and this but is all-important...

The starting point and the approach of the WLB order are easily punctured deceptions.

Yes, we favor a rising scale of wages. But, at which point shall wages begin to rise? The WLB says January of 1942. And by saying that, the WLB decrees that labor is entitled to the same level of poverty and misery it "enjoyed" in January.

That the decree is a manifest fraud in the case of the steel workers is evidenced by the unanimous vote of the labor members on the board

against the decision. It is equally a fraud, perhaps a greater one, when applied to other workers.

THE BASIS FOR A RISING SCALE

We repeat, we favor a rising scale of wages—but OUR demand is based on BETTERING the standard of living of the working class. The WLB decision is based on CONTINUING the standard of living of the working class as of January. WE SAY: the rising scale of wages must begin at a DECENT LEVEL OF WAGES. The WLB says: the rising scale of wages begins at whatever level of misery labor lived in January, 1942.

Take it from the rise in the cost of living first—and that, as we shall presently see, is not the whole story. Everyone knows—and if they don't, they need only consult a working class housewife—that prices began their precipitous rise long before January of this year. The WLB, like the Henderson OPA before it, is obscuring a statistically demonstrable fact. We have therefore proposed that price ceilings be set as of June, 1940, and that working class housewives' committees control these prices. (Henderson's answer to consumer control is that he doesn't want an army of "snoops.")

At the very least then, wages should be

scaled upward according to a norm set somewhere near the base of price increase, not near its apex. BUT, even if that were done, it would be insufficient, inadequate and not truly a rising scale of wages by OUR understanding of it.

Suppose wages are scaled as of January this year, or June of two years ago. At best, labor would then be able to maintain whatever standard it had managed to achieve at that time. AND THAT'S THE RUB!

LABOR'S STANDARD IS TOO LOW!

Just a few weeks ago, sharecroppers in Southeast Missouri had to resort to bitterly contested strike action to achieve what? To achieve a miserable 30 cents an hour, \$3.00 a day for work that's seasonal. LABOR ACTION was the only paper in the country that gave adequate attention and space to this struggle. In the circumstances of extreme poverty under which the sharecroppers must live, 30 cents an hour represented a significant advance, and to the extent that they were successful, a brilliant victory. But think of it: we speak of a brilliant victory for workers who win 30 cents an hour! A devastating commentary on the injustices of capitalist rule

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UAW Loses to AFL Union in Buffalo Curtiss Election

Defeat in Key CIO Organizational Drive in Aircraft Is Blow at Entire UAW—Policy of Retreat and Poorly Organized Campaign Responsible

BUFFALO—On July 15, nearly 20,000 workers in the Curtiss Aviation plants of Buffalo elected the International Association of Machinists (IAM) as their collective bargaining agent as against the United Automobile Workers (UAW). The vote was AFL, 9,800; CIO, 7,600; no union, 900.

This event is extremely important and very significant. It is the first time that the UAW-CIO has lost an NLRB election to any AFL union. The defeat came after a long struggle to unionize the plants. The organization of Curtiss began in the winter of 1940. The AFL union, however, was in the field for only three months, since the Aircraft, the company union, was dissolved by the NLRB and its leaders got a charter under the IAM-AFL.

The event is of extreme importance

when it is realized that the organization of aircraft was made the No. 1 point on the agenda of the UAW at its convention in Buffalo in August, 1941. The organization of Curtiss was considered the key to the organization of the whole industry.

The defeat is a terrible blow to the UAW throughout the country. The members now working in aircraft voted to assess themselves \$1 in order to organize their industry and thus protect their wage standards. This defeat and the general failure to make progress in aircraft have detrimental effects on any attempts to raise wages for UAW members.

In Buffalo, the entire CIO movement rested on the Curtiss drive. Its failure was likewise a blow to organizing drives in rubber, steel, etc. It definitely weakened the position of

the Bell Aircraft UAW local.

There are many factors which hindered the drive at all stages and contributed to the defeat. From the very beginning, the CIO had to contend with a very strongly entrenched company union. Fear for a long time kept people from joining the CIO and it wasn't until the company union was dissolved that any considerable number of people joined.

When the CIO first began to give out leaflets, the company gave its first raise in wages. As the CIO campaign got under way, the company gave more wage increases. This, of course, satisfied the men and made the CIO's task more difficult. Though many workers recognized that the raises were due to the CIO activity, in general the company

union was given credit. The men at Curtiss made more money every week (including overtime) than those in other mass production industries, especially Bell—which is CIO. For a long time satisfaction with wage standards hindered the CIO drive.

CIO Delayed Too Long

Another contributory factor in the CIO defeat was the failure of the UAW to take decisive steps or initiative on important questions. There was delay after delay. The company, however, always had something else for the men to look forward to. The men said: "Let's wait and see what kind of raise we get." After the raise was announced in July, 1941, the men had to "wait and see" until September to find out how much each one would actually earn.

The basic reason for the defeat is the recent non-militancy of the CIO and the UAW. In spite of company tactics to placate the workers, the outstanding fact is that most men still wanted a union to settle grievances. This was especially true in the last three months, and is proved by the very small number of non-union votes in the election.

Throughout the entire campaign the UAW failed to educate the workers in the principles of unionism or to impress them with its militant traditions. This though the stewards continually asked for such literature. For many months there were no organizing drives in other areas or other plants. There were no victories to glorify the UAW. There was only the giving

up of past gains—capitulation after capitulation.

The first harmful incident was North American. It was hard to talk union in Curtiss at that time. Workers asked: "What good is a union if you can't strike?" When Frankenstein later called a wage stabilization conference for aircraft, workers asked: "Why should we join a union if the government will guarantee our wage?" And the UAW, in negotiating the contract at the Columbus, Ohio, Curtiss plant included its pet clause on giving up time and a half and double time, the CIO lost very many supporters. No one wanted to give up time and a half for Saturdays and double time for Sundays and holidays.

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Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Third Camp

THE PLIGHT OF EUROPEAN LABOR

The Nazi war machine is in constant need of labor power from the occupied countries to make up for the tremendous losses in German man-power and for the lowered productivity caused by obsolete and over-strained equipment.

Whereas in Poland the Nazis simply drove millions of workers into German plants, in which they are segregated from their German fellow-workers, they tried other methods with the better-skilled workers of Western Europe. At first they used all kinds of propaganda to show those workers the "ideal" conditions existing in German factories. But this failed almost completely. Only a tiny number of workers could be induced to go to Germany voluntarily and those who went were generally the most highly skilled workers for whom there was the most urgent need.

Then the Nazis intimated that those who did not want to go would, for one reason or another, lose their ration card. To be deprived of their ration card means actual starvation in the occupied countries. By this system the Nazis succeeded in driving some 300,000 Belgian and many more French workers into German factories.

But even this was not enough. Unable to supply their needs, the Nazis recently issued a decree instituting compulsory labor in several occupied countries. The following facts, published by the Belgian underground paper, Libre Belgique, seem to indicate that even this decree could not be adequately enforced. According to this newspaper the following incidents, which throw a crude light on Nazi methods as well as on the desperate situation in man-power, occurred recently (quoted from News from Belgium, July 11):

"The Nazis requested the National Railroad Co., a state-owned organization, to send 15,000 railroad workers to Germany. The company refused to comply, and the Nazis went directly into the workshops and held numerous meetings in an attempt to induce the workers to answer their appeal. After months of propaganda, they found among a personnel of about 100,000 people less than 100 workers ready to sign up...."

"Recently the Germans also wanted the postal service, the telegraph and telephone offices and other public services to find 25,000 men to be sent to Germany. The official who received this request asked the Germans for a written order. He was immediately arrested."

DISSOLVE UNIONS IN OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

Not only do the Nazis try to get as many workers as they possibly can to work in Germany, they also gear the existing industry in occupied countries to the production needs of the Nazi war machine. "Slowly they introduce in occupied countries the same methods of coercion against the workers as they have employed since 1933 in Germany. Labor unions have been dissolved everywhere and official labor front "unions" are gradually being imposed.

A report from London (Netherlands Indies News Agency) indicates that Nazi labor spies, paid by employers but chosen by the Nazi authorities, will be employed in all Dutch factories by the end of the month, according to an announcement over the Nazi-controlled Dutch radio. The spies officially will be known as "social foremen," according to a decree issued by the Reich commissioner. "For the social foremen only first-class workers will be selected who will be paid by the management but must act under the instructions of the labor front leader," the decree said. It was made clear that the "social foremen" would have to be members of the Nazi Party.

This is but one example among many. The Nazis deprive the working class of all means of expression and organization, they try to spread distrust among the atomized workers in order to prevent collective action. But all this is of no avail in the long run. European workers with a great tradition and experience of class struggle cannot permanently be kept down. In order to fight against this Nazi system of terror they do not need to be psychologized "nationally." The struggle to reconquer their former rights provides ground enough for their opposition to and hatred of the Nazis.

RANKS FORGING GENUINE LABOR SOLIDARITY

Germany is quickly becoming an industrial melting pot in which workers from all over Europe work together. Closer understanding between them and realization that fundamentally there is no difference; on the contrary that there is commonness of interest between German and foreign workers, is of the greatest importance. Such an understanding between the masses of foreign workers and their German comrades is a thing much dreaded by the Nazis.

That this is nevertheless taking place is illustrated by the following: The London radio reports an interview with a Belgian worker just back from Germany. "The Belgian as well as the French forced labor workers had at first very sharp clashes with the German women workers who worked with them in the same factory. One of them remarked: 'What do you want here? You only help prolong this damned war.' A Belgian worker who understood German informed his comrades and saw to it that they worked as slowly as their German colleagues. Now they all work at exactly the same slow pace. A real solidarity has been established."

Europaeus.

Picketing Forces Conference On Jobs for Negro Women

By MARY BELL

AKRON—After picketing a week and two days before the U. S. Employment Bureau, the group of Negro women fighting for jobs in industry was promised complete cooperation by W. D. Westenbarger, supervisor of the bureau.

Westenbarger told the group that a meeting of heads of unions, leaders of industry and government officials would be called within ten or fifteen days to thrash out the problems of Negro employment and those of various alien and age groups.

While picketing has ceased, pending the outcome of this conference, thousands of leaflets are being distributed to call further public attention to the universal discrimination against Negro women in industry. Petitions are being circulated and additional leaflets are being prepared for direct distribution to factory workers.

One mass meeting has been held, sponsored by various Negro organizations and at which a representative of the CIO Council labor supply committee appeared.

Boss Prejudice

While it took the militant action of Negro women pickets to force the government-labor-industry conference to recognize their grievance, the problem is really simple to solve. A huge demand for labor in the Akron war factories exists. Newspaper and industrial heads moan about a "labor shortage" in the face of people who are forced to picket, distribute leaflets and hold meetings, demanding the right to be trained and to work! The only thing which prevents these Negroes from being employed is the prejudice of bosses against the color of their skin.

While these Negro women have been admitted to the Hower Trade School (machine shops), this school pays no wage at all during the six weeks' training period and guarantees no job after the training has been completed. Consequently, Negro women who registered there were forced to drop out of the school. Negro workers come from the lowest income group, and it is impossible for them to sustain themselves during a long training period, consequently they are forced back into domestic work with its near-starvation wages.

Demands for Conference

The demands which Negro representatives should make of the coming conference are clear:

1. Open the trade schools—Good-year Aircraft particularly, because the greatest demand for labor is there—to Negro women.
2. A union rate of pay while attending the school. This will eliminate the widespread practice of keeping trainees in the school longer than necessary at lower wages than they would be paid on the actual job.

3. Prompt transfer of trainees at the end of training period to an industrial job, in order of seniority, with no discrimination because of color or sex.

Circulate Petition

The Negro people are elsewhere on the move in Akron. The following petition is being distributed by employees of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.:

"We, the undersigned, say that the Negro Firestone employees be allowed to eat in the plant cafeterias, without being subjected to coercion and threats by the foremen. Under the deplorable conditions which now exist colored employees are forced to eat in locker rooms and in toilets, facilities which are intolerable to self-respecting citizens of a democracy. If a plant ruling exists which stipulates that Negroes must eat in separate quarters—although they may die together with whites on the same battlefield—it is unknown to us, but if it does exist, we protest it as a policy in opposition to the wishes of our President, in violation of our country's laws and in direct contradiction to the purposes for which this war is being fought."



Picketing the U. S. Employment Bureau in Akron. The sign reads: "We Have Husbands, Brothers and Sweethearts Fighting While Jobs Are Refused Us."

Goodrich Men Turn Thumbs Down On Labor-Management Committee

AKRON—Labor in Akron was feeling the increasing pressure of the war drive to lower its living standards, but by no means have the rubber workers on the production lines indicated that they intend to let their profiteering employers get away with it.

A series of "incidents" taking place in the last few weeks indicates clearly that the average rank and file worker has begun to look more closely than at any time since Pearl Harbor into the effect the war has on his economic status.

Several weeks ago LABOR ACTION carried an article dealing with the successful sit-down of 300 women in the balloon room of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. These women, many of whom are working for the first time in a factory, have already learned the lesson that their direct action on the job brings them the results they want. Already they have seen through the company's deliberate stalling and run-around policy, as well as the false pleas of the United Rubber Workers top leadership that nothing can (or should) be done to improve their wages and working conditions.

Prepare Contract Fight

At the Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. gates recently, union dues collection committees have been stopping workers and checking up on their union standing in preparation for the union's demand for a new contract embodying higher stand-

ards all around. Slight flurries at the gates have immediately brought the police to the scene and attacks in the press against the "disgraceful and unpatriotic" action of the union.

At the B. F. Goodrich Co. an event of unusual interest has occurred. The union has broken off all collaboration with the labor-management committee that it has been participating in since spring. The immediate cause of the break was the refusal of the company to set up a joint committee to consider industrial deferments from the draft.

Donald Nelson of the WPB refused to step in to compel the company to discuss deferments with the union, which had voiced the suspicion that the company was phenging here as well as elsewhere. Consequently, the Goodrich labor-management committee exists no more. The union brought out that it has spent over \$600 from its treasury on labor-management committee work and the results of such expenditure in terms of promoting increased production or labor welfare were not warranted because the company sabotaged what good proposals the union did bring forward.

Sit-Downs Are Frequent

Almost any day in the week one hears of a new sit-down or stoppage in isolated departments throughout Akron's rubber plants. Most of these are never reported in the press, as they involve relatively small numbers of workers, last only several hours and are usually successful in settling the workers' grievances.

Speaking for the rubber companies, a recent editorial in the Beacon Journal pointed to these increasing "labor difficulties" with alarm, emphasizing that they should be investigated by the FBI for possibly being of "subversive" instigation. So once more the editorial hacks have had to fall back on to their last line of defense—dragging in the mouldy red herring.

Unless everyone KNEW otherwise, one would think these gentlemen stooges did not read with the closest attention the news in their own paper, which is just crammed full of accounts of the rubber companies' enormous profits, predictions of the standing of living falling to that of 1932, steeper income taxes, prices rising in spite of rationing, etc.

As thousands are learning, like the rubber workers, out of their own experiences, we can look forward to increasing stirrings and struggle in the depths of the labor movement to demand what is rightfully labor's.

Porter Postpones Conference On New Repair Agreement For Local 9 Ship Workers

SAN PEDRO, July 19—After promising Local 9 a special conference on repair work in San Pedro this week, Paul R. Porter, chairman of the War Production Board's wage stabilization division, indefinitely postponed it.

Once again, therefore, the CIO shipyard workers are getting a run-around by a government agency. First at Bethlehem, where the government still twiddles its thumbs, then the eight-point sell-out on new work, plus the discriminatory practices of the NLRB which have allowed the AFL to sign one backdoor contract after another in the harbor area, and now the indefinite postponement of the repair conference.

If the new repair agreement ever does go through as proposed, the men on repair will get a better deal than their union brothers on new work got. The proposed new wage rate for repair work would make the base rate for mechanics \$1.34 an hour, an 11.6 per cent raise over the new work rate. But at the same time it provides for all overtime at time and a half instead of double time, as some few repair men are getting. The membership at a special meeting for repair workers on July 13 amended it so that all Sunday work would still be at the double time rate. Repair workers consider themselves entitled to a higher rate because repair is so much dirtier, conditions are more perilous. In San Francisco repair men are already getting the new rate.

It is apparent that the men working only eight hours and not getting much overtime at the doubletime rate will be the winners. This covers the majority of men in repair work. But there are a few who will miss the double time.

Chiseling on Overtime

A real talking point for the new repair agreement is its definition of what constitutes repair work and what constitutes conversion which is classified as new construction. At the present there is a lot of chiseling going on. Nearly all of the repair work is on Navy or Maritime Commission boats and they have only been paying time and a half on overtime on all repair work when the men should be getting double time. They have been getting by with this by "classifying" repair as conversion. The new repair agreement defines conversion as follows:

"Conversion work on a 'new vessel' shall be deemed new construction."

Dubliners Protest Clothes Rationing

Employees in Dublin, many thousands strong, paraded on June 15 in protest against the government recent clothes-rationing order. Every drapery store, tailoring establishment, shoe shop and even the Woolworth chain stores were shut down for the day as part of this demonstration which covered not only Dublin but the entire Free State. In addition, shop assistants and hundreds of girls and men working in clothing industries, whose livelihood had been threatened by the order, were in line.

The demonstrators carried banners bearing such slogans as "Revoke the rationing order, we have a right to live"; "Rationing means unnecessary withdrawal of goods from the public, ruin for the traders and starvation for the workers."

The very remarkable feature about this militant protest is that it took place in spite of the fact that the government had already modified the rationing order. It did so twenty-four hours after the threat of a shut-down was announced, giving the public the right to use 78 instead of 52 coupons and removing the objectionable time restriction under which a man could not buy a suit until next October. But these angry people had their Irish up, and proceeded with their demonstration as a warning against future injustices.

tion work. A 'new vessel' shall be construed to be any newly-constructed floating structure prior to its completion, final acceptance and employment in the service for which it has been constructed.

"Repair work shall be deemed to cover all work on vessels after completion and final acceptance and after the vessel shall have made a passenger or cargo laden voyage or any voyage in the service for which it was constructed."

But the real catch is this: will the union make the companies live up to the new rate of \$1.34 an hour? And will it prevent the shipyard companies from paying time and a half for overtime on "conversion" work which is repair work by the definition in the new agreement? If not, little will be gained by the new repair agreement and those few men who do get the double time will be the losers.

Unemployed--

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small-town shops was not mentioned.

The expressed desire to see small metal and wood factories saved through a small-shop allocations policy by the WPB did not detail any specific proposal for overcoming the dollar-a-year men's complete loyalty to the monopolies and their policy of destroying small outfits.

At a subsequent Washington conference between Mayor La Guardia, Governor Lehman, McNutt, Donald Nelson and War, Navy and Commerce Department officials, this phase was emphasized. According to the conference statement, much was said about the utilization of the Smaller Plants Corp. of the WPB to overcome New York's difficulties.

The conferees were apparently not very optimistic, however, for McNutt did not rush to the press with a revision of his previous estimate of the city's future employment trends.

Conference Sees Jobless Growing In New York City

By PETER DANIELS

Speaking to an AFL sponsored conference on New York City joblessness, Thomas Hill, labor consultant for the WPB, estimated the city's unemployed at 400,000 and declared he believed it would increase to half a million by the end of the year.

After proposing various plans for alleviating this condition, such as utilizing ship repair yards, bringing clothing war contracts to the city, building new plants and pooling small metal shops, Hill has just about given up hope.

Hill's best expectation in the event of the complete success of these measures, was the employment of only about half of the 400,000 unemployed.

The conference was called by the New York State Federation of Labor and the Central Trades and Labor Council in response to the distressing situation among their members and New York workers generally. Two hundred and fifty delegates gave detailed accounts of the conditions in their respective trades, which were corroborated and amplified by the government officials present.

Some of the unemployment figures presented for particular industries were 55,000 in building and construction; 70,000 in building trades; 80,000 in other manufacturing; 5,000 in transportation; 135,000 in trade, real estate, insurance, etc.; 55,000 in service industries (tailors, restaurateurs, etc.) Furthermore, 23,000 longshoremen were declared to be jobless; 5,000 teamsters were out of work; and only 3,000 out of 11,000 painters have jobs, and besides the 70,000 completely unemployed garment workers, 20,000 are working only one or two days.

None of the speakers expressed any optimism. Several spoke of a possible solution through employment of New Yorkers in nearby war-production areas. But none were very hopeful. The reason for this lack of hope was implied by many union spokesmen. New York factories are not receiving more war orders because of the comparatively higher wages and greater union consciousness of New York workers. In fact Fred Umhey of the ILGWU openly accused the government of being responsible for such an anti-labor scab policy in allocating contracts for his industry.

These unemployment statistics for the largest city in the country are particularly revealing in the light of talk of labor conscription. Officials who advocate such a draft naturally deny that their purpose is to destroy union organization and drive living standards down. They declare they are interested only in overcoming a labor shortage.

Raise Labor's Standard of Living--

(Continued from page 1)

Suppose we peg the sharecropper standard at that. (The landlords and government won't. They will seek to depress the standard if they can get away with it). What have we accomplished? Why should their miserable standards be perpetuated for these thousands? Why should they not FIRST be granted a decent standard of living, a wage sufficient for something more than a leaky shack and a piece of sow belly? Once they have achieved that, THEN a rising scale of wages really means something.

Someone says that the sharecroppers are an extreme case. Perhaps. But not so extreme as the editorialists (for example, the one in the New York Post who advised workers not to buy silk shirts) would have us think. There are thousands of agricultural laborers no better off, perhaps even worse, than the sharecroppers. And among industrial workers, the great majority have NEVER approached what a worker (NOT a boss—HIS approach is different) would consider a decent standard of living!

Some time ago the Department of Labor found that an income of \$2,500 was a necessary minimum for a decent living standard. The cost of living has risen enormously since then. But how many workers get even \$2,500 a year, not to speak of the \$500 to \$1,000 that should be added to that now? Very few! Very few indeed! (The Gallup Poll reports average family income for non-farm workers is about \$1,900 a year.)

The WLB liberally allowed labor a perpetuation of its misery and mean standards. We fail to see how any worker can be satisfied with that. Because Henderson's 1932 standard is so utterly mean, let us not be taken in by the liberalization of that standard by the WLB. The steel workers knew what they were about when they asked for a \$1.00-a-day increase. Other workers must make equivalent demands.

Why, the WLB panel which investigated the situation before the board made its decision, established that the national income had risen 21 per cent. Apart from the rise in the cost of living, labor is entitled to its proportion of that increase

in the national income—if not the whole of it. And not only by that share which will go to new workers! Only the merest fraction of the corporation owner's income goes into purchasing the essentials of life. Aside from wages for new workers and the few wage increases won, the increase in national income goes into the boss' pocket as profits, and taxes don't eat it up! HIS standard of living is raised, not merely perpetuated, if you can conceive of raising what is already high enough. Why shouldn't labor's standard of living be increased in accord with the rise in the national income?

In summary: labor has a job to do in elevating its standard of living from being lowered, and in RAISING THAT STANDARD! Virtually without using its tremendous strength, labor forced a concession out of the WLB—the recognition that wages should go up with the cost of living. How much more then could have been achieved, and yet be achieved, if labor brings into play the strength and pressure which it HAS, to demand a DECENT standard of living, and a GENUINE rising scale of wages!

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

The Lowdown on Ford and Housing

Dear Editor:

Every intelligent person knows what Henry Ford is like. He is a malicious anti-Semite who in the past, at least, supported Father Coughlin, has had militant unionists beaten up by his secret police, and has received a medal from Hitler.

Now it seems that he is trying to sabotage a UAW-advocated housing project, to be located next to his Detroit plant for the workers who have to travel far to work. Here are some of the facts as presented by Helen Fuller in the current issue of the New Republic:

Ernest Kanzler is Donald Nelson's Detroit representative, a dollar-a-

year man. It so happens that he is also Edsel Ford's brother-in-law and a prominent Ford Co. representative. Kanzler was "persuaded" by Ford to persuade Donald Nelson to issue a statement freezing the migration to Detroit for the coming year at 75,000 workers, despite the fact that Ford himself estimated that 100,000 workers would be needed by January, 1943.

At the same time, I. A. Capizzi, Ford's attorney, began "persuading" the Truman committee that the Bomber City housing project was a great waste of materials. This immediately put the advocates of the housing project on the defensive and the WPB ordered an investigating committee headed by Maury Maverick to prove that only a minimum of scarce materials will be needed for the project.

It is safe to assume that unless there is a militant wave of protest from the workers of the plant, especially through the UAW, the proposed project will be pigeon-holed.

Helen Fuller gives the following reasons for Henry Ford's sabotage of the housing project:

1. Political: Ford wants to keep Washtenaw County, where the project is to be located, safely Republican for Republican Earl Michener, his pal. This section, which houses many of Ford's executives, including Harry Bennett, is dominated by Ford's political friends, among whom are the Ku Klux Klan, Coughlinites and the Young Republican organization, controlled by Ford and allied with the Minnesota Stassenites.
2. Trade Union: Henry Ford does not want the thousands of militant

UAW workers living together. That may create too much solidarity and friendship for Ford's health and pocketbook.

3. Post-War Planning: Ford wants to keep the price of land down so that after the war, he can buy it cheap.

4. Soy Beans: Henry wants the land to continue the experiment with soy beans, which he intends to use as a substitute for steel in making automobiles after the war.

The sabotage of the Bomber City housing project will have a bad effect upon the health and pocketbooks of thousands of workers who now have to travel miles to work. This is just another example of the "patriotism" of the Sixty Families.

Irving Berg.

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Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

"The deterioration of quality which was predicted as a concomitant of price ceilings has started and by January will have become acute."

Thus matter-of-factly does W. J. Enright inform readers of the New York Times of this expected development of still another device for raising prices.

The ways in which deterioration will show itself are many. For instance, colors will not be as fast as they used to be. Cut and finish will be inferior. In the cheaper priced lines, pre-shrinking of materials will be discontinued—bringing grief to every housewife.

The percentage of wool in winter clothing will be reduced. Cotton or rayon will be substituted, so that warmth—the essential of winter clothing—will be absent.

Heaven alone knows what will go into women's shoes. For men's and boys' shoes much less leather will be used, and soles will be much thinner. Durability, of course, will be shortened.

With a little imagination you can see that there is practically no limit to the methods by which goods can be given less value by lowering the quality—and you can bet your last dollar that all the methods will be used!

THE CRUX OF THE MATTER IS THAT PRICE CEILINGS WILL BE MAINTAINED ON THE INFERIOR GOODS. THE HOUSEWIFE WILL PAY THE SAME—IF NOT MORE—FOR THE JUNK AS SHE DID FOR THE BETTER MERCHANDISE.

The gag about war shortages explains nothing but the desire of the capitalists to make money out of the war. For—given the shortages—the cheaper goods still cost the manufacturer less than the better goods.

Price ceilings have, therefore, become the vehicle whereby the class that thrives on war gets rich by charging high prices for cheap goods!

Why does the worker-consumer, the working class housewife, allow the scandalous robbery to be perpetrated?

Perhaps one reason is that those women of the working class who are in a position—by their organizational experience—to give leadership to the mass of unorganized housewives, are allowing themselves to be led about by the nose!

This was unfortunately the case at the conference held last week at West Park, N. Y., by regional delegates from women's auxiliaries of trade unions.

The conference started off on the wrong foot by giving a vote of confidence to the OPA. What a shame for working class women to back up Leon Henderson—who raises the ceiling on essential foods while firing broadsides at the workers' demands for higher wages TO MEET THE PRICES HE HIMSELF BOOSTS!

The conference wound up with a program to place women from trade union auxiliaries on war price and rationing boards and also to use them as volunteer wardens. On its face it looks like a good idea to get working women on the "in" of the OPA. Ah, but the heart is false!

Miss Ruth Ayres, a big-wig in the consumer division of the OPA, sang the keynote of the whole OPA outfit in the following words: "CONSUMERS' CONFLICTS MUST BE SUBORDINATED TO THE WINNING OF THE WAR."

Where, then, does the interest of the consumer come in? And how are working women going to protect themselves through the OPA, which 'subordinates' their grievances?

The participation of trade union women's auxiliaries in the OPA is like the participation of labor in the labor-management factory committees. The latter is a glorified way of putting the speed-up over on the worker. The former will help put the grade-down of the dollar over on his wife.

Members of trade union women's auxiliaries—having had organizational experience—must do a real job for their class at the present time. They must provide the leadership for forming bona fide consumers' committees to work hand in hand with the unions. THIS IS THE ONLY CHANCE THERE IS OF CONTROLLING PRICES.

The casualties of modern war are on a "total" scale. The more horrible ones are on the battlefields. But those in the civilian lines are just as real. Ask any of the women whom the war has thrown out of their jobs.

Women's hosiery workers numbering 59,000 were "drafted" into the army of unemployed. From the automobile industry 41,000 women workers were also "selected" for the battalions of jobless. About 18,000 women silk workers and 14,000 women workers from jewelry factories were forced into the ranks of pavement pacers. There are tens of thousands more.

A great number of these women have not been able to find other jobs. THOSE WHO ARE OVER THIRTY MAY NEVER FIND OTHER JOBS. They may be strong, capable, experienced, have the "know-how" at their finger tips. But the exploiters of labor don't want them. For the lower wages that women are still being paid, the bosses make sure to get the cream of the crop.

But not all women are thrown on the ash heap at the age of thirty. IT DEPENDS UPON WHAT CLASS THEY BELONG TO. For instance, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt will never lack a lucrative job. Neither will Mrs. Anna Rosenberg, who now holds down remunerative jobs, both government and private.

Women of the upper classes can either wallow in luxury and idleness, if they are built that way; or they can have the pick of classy jobs, if they choose to be career women. There is no 30-year age limit.

And what do you say about the hypocrisy of the advertised campaign "to get women into industry."

There are all these thousands of seasoned women workers walking the streets—but they are not wanted.

There are also thousands of Negro women knocking at the doors of industry—but there is no answer. In spite of the official balhoo, industry as a whole still refuses to employ Negroes—men and women alike. State employment agencies "put on file" applications of Negro women for jobs, and of Negro girls for admission to trade schools. Some openly state that industry doesn't employ Negro women.

Here's a gem of hypocrisy in high places. Women are wanted in industry all right, but—not all women. The bosses are choosy. The women must be young, inexperienced and unorganized—thus more likely to save the boss "labor trouble." And the color of their skin must not be too dark.

These injustices against women workers and against Negroes are LABOR'S PROBLEMS. A resolution on these problems passed at a convention and allowed to slide into oblivion may save the conscience of union leaders too busy planning the war to attend to labor's needs. But rank and file action is what is needed to bring results. These problems concern all workers. They must be handled by the unions with determination, militancy and the will to end these crying wrongs!

Workers, Decide Which Is Right--

This:--

On July 1 all underground coal deposits in England became the property of the government. Not by conscription, of course, but by purchase. Lives and labor are conscripted by the British government, but not property.

The 26,000 private owners will receive from the British Treasury \$265,800,000 for their holdings in the British mines. This is fifteen times their estimated average yearly income. In this way does the British boss class make its sacrifices.

The private coal owners are, furthermore, particular as to how they will be paid. They insist on cash. They fought the proposal to be paid in special government bonds. They couldn't accept these—not even to "help the war effort."

Among the mine owners who will be paid for their property while lives and labor are conscripted, are the ecclesiastical commissioners of the Church of England, the Marquess of Bute, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Londonderry, the Earl of Dudley and the estate of the late Marquess of Lothian—an eloquent enumeration of aristocratic exploiters of British and colonial labor and well-established poachers on British and colonial wealth.

Or This:--

On July 14 Scotland Yard started an investigation of charges filed some time ago against pit boys in two Yorkshire collieries. The charges were that these boys had "seriously sabotaged valuable underground workings." The president of the Yorkshire mine bosses' association brought the charges.

The bosses further accused these youths of being affected by "subversive literature" and called attention to circulation throughout the mining districts of the monthly Socialist Appeal, which they correctly said carries a portrait of the late Leon Trotsky and professes to be the organ of the Fourth International.

These Yorkshire boys are being framed. A reading of the Socialist Appeal shows that neither it nor the Fourth International calls for sabotage.

What they stand for is nationalization of the mines. What they call for is WORKERS' CONTROL of mine production to end chaos and mismanagement.

If the program these Yorkshire youths stand for had been put into effect, they—the dukes, lords, earls and marquesses—might not get their \$265,800,000 in cold cash. That is why these boys are "subversive." If workers' control were accomplished, then the government representatives of the dukes, lords, earls and marquesses would not now control the mines. That is why the Yorkshire boys are "subversive."

Puerto Rico: 44 Years of U.S. Rule

By WILLIAM BRAD

Last week, Bolivar Pagan, Puerto Rican commissioner to Washington, presented Congress with a bill requesting the right for Puerto Ricans to elect their own governor. By this single act all of the hypocrisy of the Atlantic Charter is exposed.

Why simply the right to elect a governor? Why not full independence? Has rule by the United States been so agreeable to Puerto Ricans that they desire to remain under it?

On this last question, at least, there is universal agreement. Commissions sent by Congress to investigate conditions on the island, former Governor Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., present Governor Tugwell, the Red Cross—all official bodies agree that since becoming a colony of the United States in 1898 the position of the population has deteriorated to a permanent starvation level.

Let us briefly glance at conditions in Puerto Rico. The chief occupation of the island is agriculture. There is a coastal plain of very rich soil all about the island. The interior is

mountainous, with rocky, inferior land only suitable for subsistence. Well over 95 per cent of the most arable land, the land of heavy yields, is owned by the tiny group of "colonas" or landlords. But this ownership is largely fraudulent. The real fact is that through long term leases, renting or outright ownership almost 75 per cent of this land is owned by four United States corporations. Four American corporations form the sugar trust, intimately related to Wall Street banks, and completely dominating the economy of Puerto Rico.

Wall Street Domination

This land, roughly about the size of Connecticut, is under complete economic dictatorship by these Wall Street corporations. All the profits, which are derived from sweating the natives, are exported to the United States, leaving the island nothing.

American investments in sugar come to \$54,000,000. Americans are the chief holders of bonds against the Puerto Rican government, totaling \$35,000,000. All the railroads and public utilities are U.S. owned, a large part of the taxes collected and a huge slice of the annual income is drained off to American bankers and coupon clippers. Little of the wealth is permitted to remain in Puerto Rico.

The native Puerto Rican peasantry formed over 90 per cent of the population before the U.S. took over. In 1910 there were 58,371 individual peasant holdings. Today there are less than 25,000, although the population has doubled.

Natives Get Poor Land

Puerto Ricans used to own the rich coastal soil. Today they are driven further and further up into the poor, unyielding mountains. Most of the peasantry has become either completely landless or driven into debt with foreclosure constantly threatening. They have been forced to become day laborers for the landlords and go into the sweatshop factories of the island.

Formerly Puerto Rico raised much of its own food. But American corporations have transformed the island into a huge sugar factory. Today Puerto Rico must import its food and pay heavily for it. Since average earnings of laborers are from 25 to 60 cents a day for farm work or work in the tobacco factories, they don't have much for food. The result is a mass level of semi-starvation.

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India's People Still Demand Freedom!

"Events happening from day to day and the experience which the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of congressmen that British rule in India must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination at its best is evil in itself and a continuing injury to a subject people...."

"The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interests of India but also for the safety of the world, for ending Nazism and fascism, militarism and other forms of imperialism...."

With these words the Indian National Congress, headed by Gandhi, has once again confirmed the overwhelming belief of that nation's 400,000,000 people. "We demand immediate and unconditional independence from British imperialist rule." This is their belief.

Almost three months have passed since the Cripps mission to India failed and His Majesty's loyal servant was unceremoniously booted out of the country. During that period the Japanese have conquered Burma and are now slowly preparing

the way for a full assault upon India from their occupied positions.

During that period the people of India by their steadfast opposition to the British, by their refusal to lift a finger to help the imperialist troops who occupy their nation, have more than confirmed everything that LABOR ACTION has previously written on this matter. Only complete independence will move them into action or self-defense. While their conservative leaders (Gandhi, Nehru & Co.) have kept up a constant game of negotiation—trying to make an agreement with the British masters—the workers and peasants have refused to participate in this treachery. Instead, they forced the expulsion from the Congress of C. R. Rajagopalachariar, the most openly pro-British of all the conservative Congress leaders!

Now the Working Committee of the Congress has adopted a resolution stating that unless the British grant them independence the National

Congress will be forced to launch a nation-wide "civil disobedience" movement against the imperialists. The resolution is full of numerous loopholes and open doors that will permit the resumption of negotiations between England and Gandhi, if the former are willing, but it nevertheless shows how determined and resolute are the people who want to fight NOW for their independence.

The British have already indicated that they will not resume negotiations and that they are set to use force and violence against any national movement when and if it begins. In this they merely prove—once more—the hypocritical nature of their democratic pretenses.

The question of India is still before the world. It will never be settled until imperialist rule of that great country has been wiped out. If the people of India finally start a mass movement for their independence it will be a more than welcome day for the socialist and working class movement.

H. J.

Things Crazy And Not So Crazy---

By Gertrude Shaw

The more one examines the capitalist system—which is the one the peoples of the world are living under—the more cock-eyed and crazy it appears.

Let us look for a moment at the part of the war which pertains to the United States and Japan. This is, of course, a way of examining the capitalist system—for this war is full-blown capitalism.

Everyone knows by now why the war in the Far East is being fought. The rich resources of this blessed part of the earth have been in the hands of the United Nations. Japan now wants them. The fight is on by the dispossessors against the possessors.

Neither of them cared or cares a hoot in hell about the teeming millions inhabiting these regions. No, that is not true. They do care. BOTH THE JAPANESE AND ALLIED IMPERIALISTS CARE ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF DIRT-CHEAP LABOR THEY CAN EXTRACT FROM THE NATIVES.

That millions of people submitted for so long to slavery and grueling exploitation at the hands of invading foreigners, was crazy. That today, like a siren call, arises from the throats of these millions the cry for independence, is not so crazy.

But let us return to the United States and Japan.

WHY THE PRESENT WAR?

While the American, British and Dutch imperialists were the foreign invaders squeezing the wealth out of the Philippines, East Indies, Thailand, Malaya and Burma, the American capitalists felt pretty safe. They were sure of getting—very cheap—the raw materials that American workers turn into finished goods.

The United States was getting from the Far East 95 per cent of the rubber used here. From the same part of the earth came most of the tin consumed here. Many other raw materials found their way across the wide stretches of the Pacific into American factories, where American labor creates profits for the bosses—A VERY CRAZY ARRANGEMENT, WHEN LABOR CAN BE CREATING THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE FOR ITSELF.

But the wily Japanese imperialists saw no reason why the status quo (so comfortable for America's bosses) should not be changed—changed just enough to give them the controlling hand—just enough to give them a monopoly of the raw materials of the Far East. And then, if the great customer across the Pacific should want to buy, it would have to pay the Japanese piper.

This little re-arrangement meant only fighting the present insane war. It meant only throwing all the Japanese resources in men and material into the seething cauldron of war. It meant only the expenditure of hundreds of billions of American wealth and tens of millions of American lives for the Yankee imperialists to try and stop the Japanese—as is now being done.

SO NOW YOU AND I ARE IN IT. AND SO ARE THE JAPANESE EQUIVALENTS OF YOU AND ME. AND THAT IS CRAZY—BECAUSE WE HAVE NOTHING AGAINST THEM AND THEY HAVE NOTHING AGAINST US.

Then what happened?

The Japanese moved into the good hunting grounds where the Allies have been poaching—and presto! rubber, tin, etc., ceased coming to these shores.

GETS CRAZIER ALL THE TIME

That made things stir. The good neighbors in South America—whose rubber industry was destroyed because East Indian labor is even cheaper than South American—were again encouraged to produce rubber. And artificial rubber is put into production with the prospect that it will be stronger and cheaper than the natural product.

The same is true of metals. Various light metals have been released for use. The production restrictions on aluminum have been broken. Magnesium—a lighter, stronger and cheaper metal than aluminum—is being produced in large quantities.

Here you see emerging one part of the crazy pattern of capitalism. South America has always been there—able and more than willing to produce rubber. But the colossus of the North could get it cheaper from the East Indies. The formulae for synthetic rubber were for a long time in the vaults of Standard Oil et al.—but there was no profit then in releasing the new product. Aluminum and magnesium could long ago have been produced economically and plentifully to take the place of light metals from the Far East—but it suited the aluminum monopoly to curtail production and keep prices and profits up.

So the war is being fought to retain the open door for American capitalists to the raw materials of the Far East. But already in the course of the war it becomes evident that the raw materials being fought over can be produced right here—and could have been produced in peacetime as well, if not for the octopus of private profit. HOW ABOUT THAT FOR INSANITY!

Now look at the Japanese side. As pointed out, they are ambitious for a monopoly of the Far Eastern resources. Some of these resources they hope to consume themselves. The rest, however, they planned to sell at monopoly prices—if they win the war and stay in the lands they have invaded. But...

The United States—which took 700,000 of the 800,000 long tons of crude rubber produced in the Far East—will now be a producer of synthetic rubber and getting rubber from South America. If the war lasts a long time—as it seems to be going to—synthetic rubber will become cheap, plentiful and durable. So it will be with other products and with other customer nations.

See the crazy mess! Japan fights a war to get the sources of raw material—but the war itself makes these raw materials no longer as precious as they were before the war, because of successful substitutes. Screwy, isn't it?

Because of this nightmare of topsy-turvy capitalism American and Japanese men are finding their destiny in the unfathomable depths of the Pacific, victims of a world system bereft of all reason.

Reason dictates that the people of the world unite to create international socialism—the world organization for peace. The natural resources of the earth and the new products made possible by science, all can be used and distributed according to human needs—with common sense international planning by the working people of the world.

THAT IS SANE. THAT IS THE ONLY SANITY. The delirious actions of capitalist imperialism gone mad can be halted by the workers of the world marching toward socialism.

Editorials

Congressman May And the Long War

The repercussions of the recent statement of Representative May of Kentucky, chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee, that the war would end perhaps by 1942 and certainly by 1943, have not yet subsided. With remarkable unanimity the military experts of the capitalist press, "informed sources" which are anonymously quoted by Washington correspondents and the other molders of public opinion, have continued to attack May's statement.

Why, then, this terrific barrage at a congressman who is supposed to be in the know with regard to military affairs?

Representative May, for some strange reason of his own, went against the current tide of official capitalist opinion when he predicted a short war. What is more, he clashed with the actual facts.

May predicted that married men would not have to be called in the draft. The other day, the New York State head of Selective Service announced that married men would soon be called. May predicted that the 18-19 year group would not be drafted. The other day, Secretary of War Stimson predicted that they would be drafted—after elections are over, it would seem.

The reason for the dismay and chagrin in high capitalist and government circles at May's statement is that they realize that the present imperialist war shows no signs of coming to an end, that in fact it shows every sign of dragging out for many more years and that a statement of glib optimism such as May's only makes more difficult their already difficult task of selling a long war to an apathetic public.

It is apparent that May was talking through his hat. He was merely trying to soft-soap public opinion. The reason that military commentators like Hanson Baldwin had to attack this soft-soaping, however, was that the leaders of the American government realize that the war is entering into a protracted stalemate stage and that it is necessary for them to break this sad news to the American public.

The imperialist prosecution of the war on the part of both sides has made impossible any quick victory for either side. The people of the world are faced with a situation in which two halves of the world are trying to destroy each other.

The Axis, of course, has no political appeal to the peoples of the world. But the Allies have little of such appeal, either. Best proof of this is their failure to win over the peoples of Malaya and Egypt to their side, as well as their failure to grant independence to the people of India. Since neither side can effectively use political weapons—that is, undermine the enemy by rallying the masses of the world to a global revolutionary crusade—it is obvious that the war will drag on for years as a military stalemate.

It is a tragic fact—the bitter fruit of imperialism—which the ruling circles of this

country are now desperately trying to get across, sugar coated it is true, to the American people. And because the sudden maverick statement of Representative May merely impeded them in this goal they found it necessary to attack him bitterly.

Why the Secrecy?

The State Department apparently never heard about "open covenants openly arrived at"—and this was supposed to have been one of the "gains" netted by humanity as the result of World War I. For our "democratic" State Department has blessed, sanctioned, and established the policy of completely prohibiting all news of diplomatic negotiations. The public is to remain in undisturbed ignorance until the "fait accompli" and the official garbled announcement is made.

Drew Pearson, in his Washington Megry-Go-Round, sums up the muzzling censorship imposed by the State Department as follows: "Secret treaties can be negotiated all over the map, like the secret London Treaty of 1915, promising Italy various concessions after the war, and the American press can't print a word."

President Roosevelt enunciated the "four freedoms" as the grand and glorious aims of World War II. If this is so, why the need for secret diplomacy. If this is so, all international negotiations should be about how to spread these "four freedoms" far and wide, and the voices of the idealistic negotiators should be broadcast throughout the world.

The fact that the strictest secret diplomacy is resorted to proves—beyond the shadow of a doubt—that what the United Nations diplomats are negotiating about is as different from the "four freedoms" as day is from night. The diplomacy of this war—as of the last—is concerned with the revision of the globe: which bunch of imperialists will get this small country, those rich islands, these oil wells, those mineral resources, the power over millions of peoples.

No wonder Churchill was sore when American newspapers published the story of the secret Russian-British agreement on Russian post-war boundaries—to include the little Baltic countries. But American newspapers will not be permitted to repeat such a bad mistake.

WLB Decision Would Keep Labor's Living Standard Low

(Continued from page 1)

and a half pounds. The fact that five pounds may not be enough for the New York worker's family is beside the point: the aim of the WLB, following Roosevelt, is to stabilize (freeze) wages; to equalize misery and want among the workers.

3. "Those groups whose peacetime standards have been broken are entitled to have these standards re-established as a stabilizing factor." That is, if a Bethlehem or Republic Steel worker is about to be evicted from one of the hovels they occupy in South Buffalo or Lackawanna, the board wants to make it possible for the workers to keep these shacks. They are absolutely against the workers setting up housekeeping in the alleys, the public parks, the relief stations or in the homes of the rich. But on the little matter of getting enough wages to move into a BETTER house, to buy MORE and BETTER food or to get some NEW clothing for the wife and kids, the board is as silent as a graveyard after dark. That is, the board is silent on the "five principles." Dr. Taylor, however, does have something to say on this question in explaining the "reasons" for the decision.

"Equality of Sacrifice" Dr. Taylor (who, we remind workers, represents something called "the public") explains that "labor's sacrifice, necessary for stabilizing our domestic economy, has been clearly set forth. For the duration of the war organized labor is expected to forego its quest for an increasing

share of the national income."

By whom has it been "clearly set forth" that labor should make sacrifices "necessary for the stabilizing of our domestic economy?" This demand on the working class has only been made by the bosses, Roosevelt and the Democratic Party, Willkie and the Republican Party, and a few \$20,000 a year labor leaders who are closer to Roosevelt-Willkie and the bosses than they are to the ranks of labor. Why should labor want to stabilize "our domestic economy"? Yes, we are for a "stabilized economy," but NOT an economy stabilized on the basis of capitalist injustice. To agree to the stabilization of "our domestic economy," in Taylor's sense, means to agree to the continuation of capitalism, imperialism and imperialist war. In the words of a Bethlehem Steel worker, any worker who agrees to this "needs to have his head examined."

To agree to any such stabilization is to agree to low wages, long hours, undernourishment, poverty, disease, ignorance and a tumble-down shack as a permanent dwelling place.

Who expects labor to "forego its quest for an increasing share of the national income" for the "duration of the war"? Roosevelt and Willkie? Naturally; that's understandable. The bosses? Of course; the more the workers "forego," the less the bosses will have to "forego." Murray and Green? Green is difficult to discuss. We agree with John L. Lewis, who said that he explored Bill Green's mind for ten years and didn't find anything there. But Murray and Thomas and other CIO leaders want

"equality of sacrifice." The War Labor Board has just given the steel workers a good big dose of the board's conception of "equality of sacrifice." Of course that wasn't what Murray and Thomas meant. They want the bosses to be limited to incomes of not over \$25,000 a year. That's their idea of "equality of sacrifice."

Tom Girdler got \$3,384 a week from Republic Steel last year and Eugene Grace got \$7,211 from Bethlehem Steel. The CIO leaders say that Grace, Girdler and the other big bosses should be cut to \$480 a week. Then you raise the steel workers' pay to around \$42 a week (which the WLB didn't do), keep it there, and behold: "equality of sacrifice!"

On far less than \$480 a week Grace and Girdler can buy enough steak and potatoes for a family of fifty. They will have a sizable sum left for whiskey, furs and golf. But the steel family of five on \$42 a week will have nothing left and will find itself with an increasing burden of debt.

The "stabilization" program of Roosevelt, the bosses and the War Labor Board and the "equality of sacrifice" of Murray and Thomas will produce only equality of misery and poverty among the workers, and higher salaries and dividends for the bosses.

In an article next week we will discuss how this decision affects the workers and the unions and some things that we can do.

STRATEGY: Is America Developing Strategy for War?

By Henry Judd

It is now approaching eight months since America became directly involved in the Second World War. In that period, as everyone recognizes, the American war machine has not achieved notable success.

In the Far Pacific—despite defeats at Midway and in the Coral Sea—the Japanese Navy and its military adjuncts sail the seas of China and the Indian Ocean more or less at will, exploiting, organizing and building their brutal imperialist empire in the territories they have conquered. For the moment at least, they are unchallenged.

In the European and Asiatic battlefields, the Axis Powers retain an unchallenged initiative and offensive. American production and supplies have just begun to reach many of these fronts. Talk of the Second Front remains—TALK. In the interim, the basic and most important front of all—the Russian front—appears in great danger as the German Wehrmacht drives into the Middle East and Caucasus. At best, America is holding tight (Egypt, Alaska); at worst, America is retreating and withdrawing (Russia, Asia). It is important to note that the really important war fronts are scenes of defeat rather than stalemate or victory.

To top it all there is the incredible Senator May, who recently informed us that the war would be over (won) this year, or next at the very latest! This fantasy came from a responsible and recognized spokesman of the American capitalist-imperialist class, whose war this is!

STRATEGY OR CONTINUED MULLING?

In the welter of confusion and defeat, in the maze of contradictions and conflicting decrees that emanate from the war leaders at Washington, is it possible to make out any organized pattern, any system and strategy by which American imperialism hopes to gain its goal of world mastery? Or is it all, as many believe, a hodge-podge of hopeless improvising, without order? Is the American ruling class staggering along from defeat to defeat in its war program? Do the messing up of the shipbuilding program, the rubber and gas conservation schemes, the inability to organize the skilled labor supply so that one industrial area does not have a tremendous shortage, while a nearby area has 400,000 (New York City) unemployed? Do all these factors indicate that American capitalism will be unable to develop a unified, world-wide strategy to meet the war's requirements?

The same questions and doubts are raised by examining the war machine itself—the lack of coordination and unification in the various commands; the absurd situation where air forces (separately representing the Army the Navy and the Marines) participate in battles as independent entities. Certainly the record to date does not speak very well for the future. American imperialism is engaged SOLELY in the military task of holding on; retaining a grip on the Asiatic and African continents.

EYEING HITLER'S METHODS

But it is our business to point out that an increasing section of America's rulers are turning a more acute and interested eye toward the methods employed by Hitler. These gentlemen, representing the monopolists and the finance imperialists, recognize that in Germany the imperialists and expansionists of that nation have found an organization and institution that DOES have a strategy of world conquest, that HAS succeeded (the methods do not matter to these people) in diverting and centralizing the entire energies of 80,000,000 people toward but one goal—the waging and winning of expansionist, imperialist warfare.

For these men recognize that under capitalism war must be waged with a centralization and a total concentration that is still lacking in capitalist America. Among the American rulers there are many capitalists, industrialists and merchants who are actively struggling against this inevitable militarization of the war economy. Fearful of being wiped out in the process (as were large sections of the German capitalist class when the Nazis were put into power), they resist with might and main. The "isolationist" wing of the ruling class is still strong, still regretting the war, still anxious for a peace and a turning toward South America rather than Europe and Africa.

Individual capitalists in the various consumers' goods industries (radio, household articles, etc.) hesitate to convert their industries, use every possible method to obtain raw materials for their "business as usual," and, in general, are ready to sacrifice every last capitalist but themselves.

In a word, there is no organization or party or movement powerful enough to knock together the heads of the American rulers, order them to commit suicide if necessary for the benefit of capitalism as a whole—rather than a section of it—and proceed with a Nazi ruthlessness toward definite imperialist goals.

It is precisely for this reason and to overcome this fatal handicap that the most imperialist-minded section of the rulers have taken the road toward the imposition of a military dictatorship upon America. In their press (the publications of the Henry R. Luce group—Life, Time and Fortune—are the best illustrations) a constant campaign against democratic liberties and institutions (Congress, campaigning, etc.) and, of course, most particularly against the labor movement, are carried on without cease.

Centralization, authority, no mixing up of the commands—these are the war cries of the leading imperialists of our country. The small industrialists and business men must be sacrificed to the big corporations; labor as an independent class with its own institutions must yield to the "greater need"—the winning of the imperialist war. This is their program and they will not hesitate to ape and emulate more and more the dictatorial methods of the nazified states. Hence their current admiration for Stalinist Russia, an admiration based not upon any love for the "socialist experiment," but respect for the centralized war economy, and the straight-jacketed labor movement of Russia.

UAW Loses Curtiss Vote--

(Continued from page 1)

Right in Buffalo the opponents of the CIO had a lot to holler about. "What about Bell?" was the one phrase shouted most often every day for almost one and a half years. The UAW has a contract at Bell, but the men in Curtiss make more money. It is true that Bell is only a new firm and the men have made great wage gains there in the last two years and that Curtiss has been a well-established plant for a long time, but the outstanding fact is that Curtiss workers make more money than men in Bell with the CIO.

Another pet peeve of the anti-CIO forces was the failure to get a contract at the Bethlehem plant in Lackawanna, right outside Buffalo. Here the men have been without a contract for over one year after shutting down the plant and overwhelmingly voting CIO.

This election was not so much a victory for the AFL as a defeat for the CIO. Everyone in the plant views it as such. In the last three months it was obvious that an overwhelming majority were convinced of the need for a union to protect

Not So Dangerous That They Can't Pick Fruit

A half year ago 7,000 to 8,000 California non-citizens of Italian and German birth were told, by Attorney General Biddle's department, to pack up and "git."

No charges were brought against them. No hearings were held. No concern was shown for the human tragedy involved. These people were compelled to abandon their homes, their jobs and farms—and keep moving. It is not stretching the point to say that their plight resembled—with the wholesale evacuation of Japanese, both citizen and non-citizen—a Nazi-inflicted trek of unfortunate Europeans.

Nobody cared about the fate of these evacuees of Italian and German birth. Since February nothing was done about them. But a few weeks ago Lieut. Gen. John L. DeWitt, Western defense commander, issued a proclamation abolishing all "prohibited and restricted areas within the Western defense command."

Immediately the reporters were joyously writing that thousands of Italians and Germans would be returning to the areas from which they had been ousted, "thus making available a substantial number of farmhands and fruit pickers for work in California's fields and orchards."

Hurrying to cover up the implications of the above, the reporter in the New York Times quickly added: "Although General DeWitt's proclamation thus should help the state's economic situation, this consideration was not a motivating factor in this decision, according to observers."

What observers? Such synchronization is too perfect to be coincidental. The powerful fruit growers have set up a hue and cry for labor. These purchasers of cheap labor power—who have been used to herding together at picking time such masses of hungry people anxious to work that the competition for jobs kept wages at a starvation level—don't like the shortage of farm labor. And picking time at hand!

living standards and settle grievances.

Function of a Union

"Join the union to win the war by increasing production"—this was given the entire emphasis in the last three months. One issue of the eight page weekly devoted four pages to Harry Bridges, with seven articles and editorials on him. It is easy to see how little this interested the men who were about to vote on what union should represent them. Many issues of the paper did not have a word about unionism, but plenty of articles on Roosevelt's seven point program, articles by Thomas and Frankenstein on sacrifices the workers would have to undergo.

Whoever joined the CIO did so because he had a grievance in the shop or because of some shop condition. No one joined the union because he wanted to find ways for speed-up. One worker said: "I know a far better way to increase production—smash the unions and push hell out of the men."

The most popular column in the paper was one where individual and departmental grievances were played up. This column, however, had less space than any other feature.

All in all, the campaign of the last three months could not have been conducted on a worse level. The men who did go CIO did not do so because of the CIO literature. It is a cinch that those who joined or voted CIO did so only because of its reputation. THEY VOTED FOR THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE CIO WAS FOUNDED.

Quits SWP, Joins the WP

READING, Pa.—Tinny Adams, well known socialist militant of this city, who has been a member of the Socialist Workers Party since its inception, has just announced his resignation from that party and his affiliation to the Workers Party.

"Since the split in the SWP a little more than to years ago, I have watched both organizations carefully," he said. "The SWP's position on the Chinese question now convinces me beyond doubt that it has been developing in an opportunistic direction, especially on the key question before the working class and the whole world today, the war."

"The Cannon group began with the 'defense of the Soviet Union,' which was and is put forward shamefacedly, and which means in practice defense of one of the imperialist camps. At the crucial moment of America's entry into the war the SWP was the only organization in the entire country that didn't issue a statement of its position."

Further on in his statement, Comrade Adams declares that "there has been a theoretical black-out in the SWP since Comrade Trotsky was murdered. There are no directives from the Center. Very little is done to educate and train our new members; the polemics of Cannon and Wright against the Workers Party are distortions and utterly factional. Genuine and fruitful discussion of any important question is treated by the clique at the head of the party as a 'luxury.'"

In conclusion Adams says: "Taking these things into consideration, I must break with the SWP and urge all militants to join with me in taking their place in the revolutionary Marxian party in the United States, the Workers Party."

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