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LABOR ACTION

JANUARY 21, 1946

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

Electrical, Packinghouse Workers on the Line-

LABOR CAN WIN THIS FIGHT!

Labor Can Win Its Demands!

A 30 PER CENT INCREASE:

1. Labor has lost billions of dollars in wages since the end of the war. Its present demands would merely restore war time take home pay in the face of a continued rise in the cost of living.
2. The Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, as well as the CIO, has calculated that corporations could raise wage rates by 24 per cent and still maintain war-swollen profit levels. Therefore, labor should not give up the fight for—

NO PRICE INCREASES:

1. The big monopolist corporations have billions in reserve. They must not be permitted to cancel out wage increases by price rises which penalize all consumers.
2. Wage increases must come out of the enormous profits extracted from the sweat and toil of labor. Therefore labor should press its demand to

OPEN THE BOOKS:

1. Let labor and the public know the truth about the giant monopolies, their hidden profits and the reserves. It will be seen how easy it is for industry to pay a living wage and provide security for the people.
2. Break the monopoly of the industrial totalitarians who control the lives of millions of workers. If industry cannot pay a living wage and provide security for the workers, then nationalize industry under workers' control and management.

Its Leaders Must Not Retreat!

Spirit of Western Union Pickets High in Second Week of Strike

By PEARL PRENTISS

NEW YORK—7,000 members of American Communications Association, CIO, employees of Western Union, are now in the second week of their strike. Telegraphic communication remains at a standstill. The attempts of the company to break the strike have failed thus far.

The telegraph workers have long stored up grievances against the Western Union Company and are determined to fight to a finish. The struggle of the telegraph workers for a wage increase goes back several years to a Regional Labor Board recommendation that they be granted a 22 cents an hour wage increase. When this was flatly turned down by

the company, the dispute was taken to the War Labor Board, where it met the same fate as did most workers' demands that were brought before that body.

After months of impatient waiting on the part of the low paid workers, the WLB came through with a decision that was easily acceptable to the company but was meaningless to the workers. It reduced the Regional Board recommendation by ten cents, offering a twelve cent raise to the workers. The ACA-CIO workers are unwilling to swallow this cut and today are demanding the 22 cents an hour increase which was originally recommended by the Regional Board

and which the company has adamantly refused to grant.

Full of spirit and confident that they will win their demands, the members of the ACA-CIO are maintaining picket lines in front of all telegraph offices in the city. A mass picket line of 700 to 1,000 people parades before the main Western Union building at 60 Hudson Street 24 hours every day. Members of other CIO unions, carrying signs designating the union they represent, are on the picket line. "Talking Union" and other records are played through the loud amplifier on the sound truck in front of the building. When this reporter was down at the picket line

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ANNOUNCING THE L. A. SUB DRIVE

By REVA CRAINE, Press Manager

The following letter, written by a steel worker in Reading, Pa., is typical of the many letters we have been receiving in recent weeks:

"Comrades:
"For enclosed \$1.00 send four six-month subscriptions as per your offer in the December 31st issue.
"I missed your subscription list in last week's paper. I like to see this paper grow; it's wonderful. The average worker needs only to read one issue and he wakes up.
"Being a steel worker, I expect to start a 'vacation' next Tuesday, the 15th. I hope to sell some LABOR ACTION subs at the strike meetings.
"Yours, for a better world, I remain
CMR, Reading, Pa."

Extra bundles of LABOR ACTION are available for free distribution to workers on strike. Write to Business office.

The subs received for the week ending Friday, January 10th are as follows:

New York	9
National Office	4
Philadelphia	2
Akron	7
Detroit	5
Newark	19
Chicago	2
Oregon	14
Minnesota	1
Cleveland	2
TOTAL	64

LABOR ACTION has some very good news for all readers like CMR who "like to see this paper grow." Plans are now being completed for the expansion of both the size and circulation of LABOR ACTION.

Already the branches of the Workers Party have received an "Advance Bulletin" informing them in part of these plans. In the next issue of LABOR ACTION, we shall be able to print in greater detail just how LABOR

ACTION is going to grow—in size and in circulation.

Right now, we would like to inform all our readers that beginning on February 1st, a super-subscription drive will be initiated to obtain a minimum of 5,000 new subs for LABOR ACTION. The drive will run for three months, at the end of which time we expect the new, expanded LABOR ACTION to appear.

Quotas have been assigned to all branches of the Workers Party and we are now awaiting word from them as to whether they are accepting these quotas, or whether they wish to raise them. These, too, will be published in next week's Press Action.

Getting LABOR ACTION into the homes of as many workers as possible is the duty of every labor militant. We know that many of our readers, not members of the Workers Party, are eager to participate in this subscription drive. You can enter the ranks of the LABOR ACTION Boosters simply by writing for the book of subscription blanks and instructions on how to go about obtaining subs for the paper.

Although with the appearance of the enlarged LABOR ACTION, the price will naturally have to be raised, we are offering subs to the paper at the current introductory rate of 25c for six months. Every worker who sees the paper will certainly want to take advantage of this special offer.

Let's get set now for February 1st—the date of the official opening of the LABOR ACTION SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE.

Workers Party Branches—send us your confirmation on the quotas assigned you!

All readers of LABOR ACTION—enter the sub drive. Send for the special subscription booklets.

All out for that 5,000 goal!

I want to subscribe to LABOR ACTION. Enclosed is _____ for a _____ month subscription.

I want to be a LABOR ACTION Booster. Please send me the subscription booklet.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

Why Don't They Send All the GI's Home?

By JACK WILSON

The GI pressure campaign for immediate return home gathered spectacular world-wide strength during the past week and challenged, in effect if not in intention, the imperialist policies of the Truman Administration.

The fact that protesting GI's added a blistering criticism of the whole army structure and policies to their demands for coming home signified how deeply rooted the present army crisis is. The election of permanent soldiers' committees to direct the campaign and the appeal of some of these committees to the CIO unions to take up their struggle emphasized the gravity of the situation.

AGAINST CASTE SYSTEM

In Paris, 500 GI demonstrators took the unprecedented step of publicly demanding the abolition of all special privileges for officers and a drastic reform of the tyrannical court-martial system. These demands, embodied in an "Enlisted Men's Magna Carta," struck at the very core of the army caste system, which is based on extra privileges and power for the officer clique.

The boiling point on the caste system came after the War Department announced that officers and the first three grades of non-commissioned officers would be given the privilege of bringing their wives, children and fiancées abroad at government expense. The revival of this old peacetime army rule at this particular time added fuel to the fires of discontent raging among the ranks. For it offered exactly nothing to that strata of the army that does all the hard and dirty work, namely, the lowest four grades.

Everywhere the whole army system, as testified by hundreds of letters in Stars and Stripes, Yank and letters to editors in hometown newspapers, has been operating with deadly effect on the morale of GI's. The latter had ideas alien to brass-hat thinking, such as democratic rights, promotions based on merit, etc.

This latest turn in events in the GI protest against occupation duties makes it impossible for Washington politicians and the War Department to dismiss the soldiers as "just a bunch of homesick boys."

U. S. FOREIGN POLICY

The soldiers' demonstrations have raised the whole question of American foreign policy. And they have also focused attention on some of the inherent evils in the instrument of that policy, the brass-hat-dominated army.

The disintegration of the GI's morale was too great to be revived simply by platitudes about "fulfilling in-

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Packinghouse Workers Walk Out!

By PAUL NEWMAN

By the time this article appears, the nation-wide strike of some 300,000 packinghouse workers may be well under way. The strike, scheduled for January 16, is being called by the United Packinghouse Workers, CIO, with the announced support of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butchers, AFL, for the enforcement of a 25 cents per hour wage increase.

In response to the demand of the Packinghouse Workers for this increase, the Big Four of the packing industry—Armour, Wilson, Cudahy and Swift—have countered with the insulting proposal of a 7½ cents an hour increase.

At latest reports, the union-industry-government talks are deadlocked, with the union willing to accept an immediate 17½ cents an hour increase and negotiate for the remaining 7½ cents later, "when the national wage picture becomes clear."

Now, even a 25 cents an hour wage increase is inadequate to provide a decent living standard for the work-

Withdraw The Troops!

(BULLETIN: Over 200 workers and veterans attended the mass meeting called by the Workers Party of New York protesting the Administration's policy on redeployment and occupation. This highly enthusiastic meeting will be fully reported next week. Below is the resolution adopted by the audience.)

We, over 200 people assembled in the soldiers in Manila, Pean, Pacific or Asiatic territories. at a mass meeting at the Hotel Diplomat, called under the auspices of the Workers Party, protest the War Department's delay in the demobilization of the armed forces. We vigorously support the demands expressed in the demonstration of the soldiers in Manila, China, Germany and France and their protests against being kept abroad for purposes of enforcing the reactionary American foreign policy. We further support their demands for greater democratic rights for the enlisted man.

We demand that ALL troops be withdrawn from abroad. We oppose American imperialism and occupation by American troops of the Philippines, Korea, China, Japan, Germany and other European, Pacific, or Asiatic territories.

We furthermore demand an end to the draft and oppose any form of peacetime military conscription. Just as we opposed the crushing of the national sovereignty and the democratic rights of European and Asiatic peoples by Germany and Japan, so we condemn the military occupation of foreign countries by American, British and Russian imperialisms. We are opposed to all attempts to deprive any country or people of their democratic right to national independence and sovereignty in flagrant violation of the principles and promises set forth in the Atlantic Charter.

We are for the right of all peoples to peace and self-determination and against ALL imperialist exploitation—Russian, British or American.

We demand that the American boys be brought home now!

By DAVID COOLIDGE

As LABOR ACTION goes to press, approximately one million workers are on strike in the United States. The majority of them are members of the CIO, the industrial union movement. The latest to join the strikers' ranks are 200,000 electrical, radio and machine workers and 250,000 packinghouse workers.

At least a million more workers would be out on strike if their leaders would heed and accept the challenge being hurled at the labor movement today by the capitalist ruling class and its government at Washington.

The whole labor movement is being challenged by the big employers either to stand up and fight unitedly across the lines separating the various national sections of the trade union movement, or run the risk of being disrupted and seriously weakened.

But this is not all. The labor movement is being confronted by the Truman government with a proposal that the working class take a cut in real wages and also that labor accept what is virtually a new "Little Steel" formula. This is what Truman's "fact-finding" boards are up to: pegging wages for the workers in the mass production industries.

UE, Packers Strike in New Jersey

By SAUL BERG

NEWARK—The workers of the New Jersey plants of General Electric, Westinghouse and the electrical division of General Motors have enthusiastically poured out on the picket lines, determined to win their wage demands.

In an interview with LABOR ACTION, Joseph Carnevale, president of Local 429, United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers, CIO, expressed full confidence in the ability of the workers to carry the fight to a successful conclusion. Local 429 consists of 1500 workers in the Newark plant of General Electric. The membership of this local consists of 85 per cent women workers, mostly young girls, both Negro and white. This morning (Wednesday) hundreds were out on the picket line, undaunted by the cold wave. Mass picket lines are being conducted every morning and again at noon.

Brother Carnevale expressed disgust with Congress' reaction to the strike wave, saying that Congress was all for the companies and uninterested in the welfare of the workers. He pointed out that the union was already putting pressure on the government to make strikers eligible for unemployment compensation.

Yesterday, upon urging by the CIO Council, the Newark City Commission voted 4 to 1 to recommend to the State Legislature that unemployment compensation be granted, and that money be given to the municipalities.

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This is the meaning of the "awards" being made by these fact-finding boards. They are really playing the role of wage stabilization committees. The fact-finding board reiterates again and again in its report, President Truman's formula that labor must take a wage cut from its wartime take-home rates.

The UAW in the beginning asked for a 30 per cent increase. The fact-finders recommended 17.2 per cent. The Oil Workers demanded 31 per cent. The fact-finders said 18 per cent. The Electrical Workers asked 25 cents an hour increase and the recommendation was 19.5 cents an hour. The Packinghouse Workers demanded a 25 cent increase and later, after the pattern was set, offered to settle for 17.5 cents. The Steel Workers demanded approximately a 25 cents hourly increase but Murray agrees to accept 19.5 cents increase. Thus it is clear that the Truman government has decided to grant about the same meager increase to all the striking unions and get the workers back on the job.

The government proposal is one to save the face of the big corporations and the big labor leaders at the same time. The corporations are holding out, but they will agree with the proposals of their government. The workers will find their wages stabilized, just as during the war, while prices will remain where they are and the corporations resume their profit-making, adding billions to the reserves piled up during the war.

MURRAY AND FAIRLESS

The truly reprehensible aspect of the situation is the role of Murray and the top labor bureaucrats. They are capitulating all along the line. The UAW is ready to forget GM's books and the 30 per cent demand and has agreed to take the 17.4 per

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Stymied on this strike-breaking tactic, the next step of the govern-

ment, according to Edgar L. Warren, chief of the Conciliation Service, is "likely" to be the setting up of a "fact-finding" committee. If a fact-finding board fails to settle the dispute, that is, if it fails to persuade the union leaders to lower their demand, the Administration has threatened to "seize" the packing industry under the Smith-Connally Act.

In other words, the government has "threatened" to guarantee the profits of the packers, come what may, while it tries to coax these bad little boys into placating the workers by some sort of "compromise" wage increase.

The packinghouse workers will have a tough battle to win their 25-cent demand. For against them are arrayed the combined forces of the packing corporations and the government in the latter's pretended role of "impartiality." The workers must not be fooled by the intervention of the government in their strike. They can win on the picket line through militancy and solidarity.

PACKERS' PROFITS
The profits of Armour & Co., for example, according to federal court

