

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

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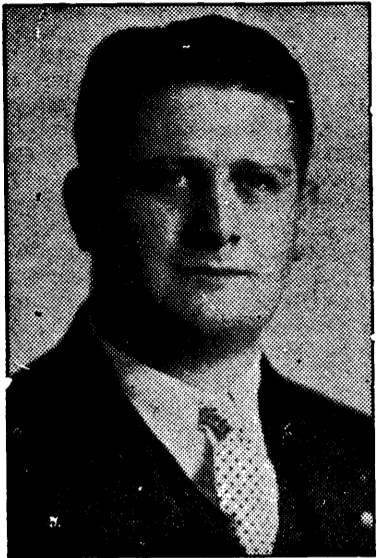
Huge Budget For Big Navy

F.D.R.'s Special Message Makes Arms Outlay Two Billions

Speeding up America's drive to war, President Roosevelt sent a special message on "national defense" to Congress last week. In it, he called for an extraordinary outlay of 800,000,000, in addition to the regular budget provisions of a billion dollars for the coming fiscal year. The proposed expenditure, to be implemented by the Vinson Naval Bill, concerns itself almost exclusively with the creation of "navy second to none," which the President considered the chief task in view of the increased probability of war.

It is clear now that the closest understanding exists between Great Britain and the United States as to common action in the Far East against the Japanese threat to their imperialist position. The Roosevelt message was hailed in the British press as a victory for the Tories, the war party of the empire. England looks upon this naval building program of American imperialism as an aid to the establishment of common front against Japan.

Anti-war organizations have already expressed their hostility to the armaments program. It is necessary for labor immediately to make known its opposition to the Vinson Bill to create a navy to defend the vested interests of American employing class overseas.



RICHARD T. FRANKENSTEEN

U.A.W. Hits Relief Bias

Frankenstein Appeals To Detroit Council On Mayor's Ruling

Detroit, Mich.

The Detroit Common Council last week gave a public hearing to Richard T. Frankensteen, United Auto Workers vice-president, who protested against the decision of the Welfare Commission to sever its connection with the union.

The action of the commission was due to pressure brought to bear on the members by Mayor Richard Reading, Frankensteen declared. The arrangement between

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Lewis Calls for AFL-CIO Unity

A.F.L. Council In Attack On C.I.O.

The next steps in the crusade against the C.I.O. were the main topic of discussion at the quarterly session of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. that began at Miami on January 24.

Exactly what the action of the council will be is not yet clear. That no real steps towards unity will be forthcoming became obvious when President Green summarily rejected John L. Lewis's proposal for the free admission of all C.I.O. unions into the Federation. There is great pressure for the immediate expulsion of the suspended unions, or at least some of them, such as the U.M.W.A. and the A.C.W. On the other hand, there is the feeling that it might be more advisable to play a game of "watchful waiting," meanwhile playing upon differences of opinion in the C.I.O. with the hope of disrupting and destroying it.

The same problem arose in connection with the appeal of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor against President Green's orders to split the labor movement of that state by expelling all C.I.O.

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Miners Meet Hears Ban on Wage Cuts

Nearly 2,000 delegates, representing over 6,000 locals with about 600,000 members in 34 coal-producing states of the United States and Canada, met last week at Washington in the biennial convention of the United Mine Workers of America. In addition to the problems of the U.M.W.A. proper, a number of very important questions of concern to the labor movement as a whole came up for consideration.

In his opening address, President John L. Lewis described the course of the present economic depression in its effects upon the workers and came out with a strong warning against the slashing of wages and prices, as a way out of the crisis. Utilizing the convention as a tribune from which to address the country as a whole, Lewis declared with great emphasis that the labor movement did not intend to take any wage-cuts under pressure of the present depression.

Lewis also took the opportunity to make another appeal to the A. F. of L. to open its doors to the millions of C.I.O. members without discrimination or restriction. Let "charters be issued to the C.I.O. unions," he urged, "and later a joint convention called to arrange the details. It will put the controversy back in the ranks of labor where it belongs and not in the public yard."

William Green, presiding at the sessions of the Executive Council of the A.F. of L. at Miami, promptly rejected Mr. Lewis's proposal.

Naturally, the C.I.O. was one of the central points of discussion, since the U.M.W.A. has, from the very beginning, been the back-

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Farrell, Hacker At Feb. 4 Affair

James T. Farrell, author of "Studs Lonigan" and one of America's most significant writers, and Louis M. Hacker, well-known Marxist historian, will be among the speakers at the send-off party for the delegates of the Independent Communist Labor League to the international revolutionary socialist conference in Paris. The affair will take place on Friday, February 4, at Rivera Hall, 131 West 33rd Street.

The send-off party will be in the nature of a demonstration of solidarity with the revolutionary socialist forces fighting reaction and fascism against the greatest odds throughout the world, especially with the revolutionary anti-fascists in Germany and the P.O.U.M. in Spain.

Other speakers at the send-off will be Lewis Corey, outstanding economist and writer, Jay Lovestone, Bertram D. Wolfe and Edward Welsh. Charles S. Zimmerman, head of Dressmakers Union Local 22, I.L.G.W.U., will be chairman.

Tickets are \$1. All funds will go to the P.O.U.M. and to underground Germany.

The Tory Roosevelt

(We publish below the front-page editorial article of the January 7, 1938 issue of the Tribune, an English socialist paper published in London.—The Editor).

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S speech to Congress . . . conveyed a message of great importance to all men and nations.

"It would seem," he said, "that world peace thru international agreements is most safe in the hands of democratic representative

governments—or, in other words, peace is most greatly jeopardized in and by those nations where democracy has been discarded or has never developed."

Here is a clean bill of health to those governments which, under the mask of democracy, pursue imperialist aims and are prepared to go to war for objects which menace true democracy as strongly as the programs of the fascist dictatorships. . . . This is a misreading of facts which every member of the labor movement and every lover of peace will hotly contest.

It cannot be said too clearly that the aims of capitalism, whether directed by a fascist dictator or by so-called democratic politicians, are essentially identical and mean the same ruthless exploitation for workers, with mass unemployment, the same destruction of political liberty and the same drive to war.

President Roosevelt's conception of democracy is thus shown to be the same as that of Neville Chamberlain and Anthony Eden. It expresses itself in the same language and adopts the same means to demonstrate its will for peace—rearmament.

For it came as no surprise that President Roosevelt, after denouncing the war aims of the fascist dictatorships, made a characteristically veiled threat to pile up even more arms.

Here, again, the facts go far beyond his words. American capitalist democracy, determined to protect and extend its economic dominion, is already rearming as fast as possible and the Panay incident was welcomed as a godsend by the American armament ring.

The need of American, in common with British, capitalism to pursue economic expansion at almost any cost, is made clear by the internal situation of the United

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SWOC Backs Ludlow Bill In Strong Anti-War Stand

The Steel Workers Organizing Committee, with nearly 500,000 members in its ranks, went on record against war, war preparations and a foreign policy leading to war, in a resolution adopted at its recent convention at Pittsburgh. The same resolution endorsed the LaFollette-Ludlow Amendment for a popular referendum before the declaration of a foreign war.

This resolution, headed "Requiring a National Referendum for Declaration of War and for the Withdrawal of American Troops and Civilians from China," served as the basis of the very similar resolution adopted by the United Automobile Workers three weeks ago. Following are the main points included in the S.W.O.C. statement:

1. A denunciation of the organized campaign to drive this country into a war in the Far East "merely for the purpose of protecting the vested interests" of American big business.
2. "Wholehearted endorsement" of the constitutional amendment for a war referendum.
3. The withdrawal of American armed forces from the Far East.
4. A foreign policy not for the "protection of (American) vested interests in foreign countries" but "expressing the wholehearted desire of the American people for international peace."

Altho this resolution was adopted as far back as December 1937, it has so far received no publicity at all in the press, including the Stalinist press which devoted columns to the S.W.O.C. convention.

So complete is the conspiracy of silence that meets any important expression of anti-war sentiment in this country today!

The S.W.O.C. resolution is herewith reproduced in full:

WHEREAS, in recent months the international situation has become most acute with the undeclared wars now under way in Spain and in China; and

WHEREAS, labor is most vitally interested in any policy of this country which may involve the people of this country in a war with another nation, because of the fact that, in a war, labor does most of the dying; and

WHEREAS, an attempt is now being made by the organized press of the country to involve the American people in a conflict with Japan merely for the purpose of protecting the vested interests of a few large scale American corporations in China, such as the Standard Oil Companies, and, for the protection of such interests, American Marines and soldiers have been dispatched to China to remain in the

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SEND OFF TO I.C.L.L. DELEGATES TO PARIS CONFERENCE

Speakers: James T. Farrell, Louis M. Hacker, Lewis Corey, Jay Lovestone, Edward Welsh, Bertram D. Wolfe and others.

Chas. S. Zimmerman FRIDAY, FEB. 4
CHAIRMAN 8 P. M.

RIVERA HALL
131 W. 33 Street

Admission: \$1.
Refreshments Served

Trade Union Notes

By Observer

A GREAT deal has appeared in the press about the recent Lewis-Lamont-Tugwell conference with President Roosevelt. Lewis's official statement to the press, as spokesman of the group, was a mere formality but what he said at the conference itself was anything but that. In the New York Post of January 15, Robert S. Allen reports at length the general line of Lewis's remarks. Perhaps the most significant section is the following:

"In the talk with the President, Lewis sharply criticized the Ickes-Jackson attacks on business. . . He held that, instead of denouncing large corporations, the government should take steps to see that their efficiency and technical power be used to the greatest advantage in increasing production and keeping down prices."

You have to reread these lines two or three times to get the full implication. It means that American labor's most authentic spokesman, for such Lewis is today, has come out flatfootedly against the whole "trust-busting" nonsense that has afflicted American "progressive" politics for half a century. Lewis turns his back on the threadbare petty-bourgeois utopian panaceas now being made to serve their turn again in the latest spasm of New Deal demagoguery. Large-scale production—which, under the present economic system, necessarily means big corporations and trusts—represents a progressive development from the technical and industrial standpoint. It is senseless to try to unscramble the eggs or to turn economic progress backwards by "breaking up" big trusts into little competing companies; it just can't be done and wouldn't be so very desirable if it could. The main thing is to utilize the advantages of large-scale industry for the public benefit in the way of increasing production and keeping down prices, as Lewis urges. Experience teaches us that, in the long run, this can be fully accomplished only by making the trusts public, or social, property, owned and operated by a labor government.

It is amusing to note the embarrassment of the Stalinites in this situation. As devotees of the "People's Front," they worship at the shrine of "trust busting" and nail Ickes and Jackson as latter-day Lenins. But, on the other hand, nothing must be done to "offend" Lewis or to admit that there can possibly be the slightest difference of opinion with him on anything. In this clash between hypocritical, crawling servility and the sacred "line," both somehow prevail. The Stalinist press goes on raving in the style of 1890 populism but a dead silence is discreetly maintained as to Lewis's most significant pronouncements on the subject!

THE "WHITNEY PLAN"

In the welter of "unity" plans and proposals, have you noticed the "Whitney plan"? It was advanced two weeks ago by President Whitney of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen. The idea is to set up a sort of super-council of labor, consisting of an equal number of representatives of the C.I.O., the A. F. of L. and the independent railway brotherhoods. The functions of this Council of Labor would be varied, including the coordination of labor's economic and political activities, as well as the effort to achieve unity in the trade-union movement embracing the brotherhoods side by side with the Federation and the C.I.O.

It is obvious that the "Whitney plan" is no short-cut to unity. For the problem here is not in getting the two sides together for a discussion; that would not be so difficult. The problem is to get the craft-union chiefs who are the real power in the A. F. of L.—the

Whartons, the Freys and the Hutchesons—to permit reunification on such a basis as will allow the free and unhampered development of industrial unionism as the standard system of labor organization. Any other basis would be disastrous to the real and permanent interests of labor and would make not for genuine, lasting unity but rather for impotence and demoralization and, in the end, for even worse division than we have yet had.

Nor would the good offices of the railway brotherhoods as a sort of "impartial mediator" alter this situation very materially, for the essential problem would still remain, altho, of course, the pressure of these powerful unions in the right direction would be more than welcome.

But if the "Whitney plan" is not a short-cut to unity, it has considerable merits on other counts. Such a Council of Labor would help reduce the scope and intensity of inter-union conflict as well as facilitate cooperation in pushing social and labor legislation—both greatly to be desired at the present time. And, of course, the general atmosphere for unity discussions would be vastly improved.

But is the "Whitney plan" practical? There is a well-authenticated report that, at the recent "peace" negotiations in Washington, John L. Lewis proposed to his colleagues that they call upon the Federation to help form a joint C.I.O.-A. F. of L. council for united action on the legislative field. But the other C.I.O. leaders, so the story runs, thought the notion fantastic under existing circumstances and it was dropped. In our opinion, Lewis was absolutely right and his idea quite sound. It's only a pity that the C.I.O. didn't go thru with it and put the matter straight up to the A. F. of L., for every effort to further cooperation among the various sections of the labor movement, however limited such cooperation may be, is something eminently worth while.

Lewis's idea for a joint legislative council of A. F. of L. and C.I.O. is generally along the same lines as the "Whitney plan". Both, we think, merit serious consideration from the labor movement.

DANGER AHEAD

While we're on the "unity" question, we'd like to say a word on the unity resolution recently adopted by the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor. Of course, the stand it took in opposition to the A. F. of L. split order, is to be heartily greeted. But we have a great deal of apprehension about the last paragraph of Resolution No. 2, which reads: "Be it resolved, your committee recommends to the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. to resume peace negotiations and, in the event that such negotiations should fail again, that we appeal to the President of the United States, requesting him to call President Green and President Lewis to meet to bring about peace in the organized labor movement."

Don't the Pennsylvania unionists realize what they're letting themselves in for when they call upon the federal government to interfere in the internal affairs of labor? It's a direct encouragement of the idea of governmental re-

UAW BOARD MAPS PLAN IN WAR ON CRISIS

Realistically charting the union's course on three fronts, the International Executive Board of the United Automobile Workers, meeting at Detroit last week in its first session of 1938, passed resolutions dealing with the depression, war and industrial relations.

Maintenance of wage levels, reduction in the cost of living, adequate relief and a federal low-cost housing program, were demanded in the first resolution, which assailed tactics of big industrialists in the recession.

The second supported the proposed LaFollette-Ludlow war-referendum amendment, asked withdrawal of U. S. military forces from China, endorsed the boycott of Japanese goods and voiced disapproval of the administration's armament program. (The anti-war resolution was published in full in the January 22 issue of the Workers Age.—The Editor.)

The third resolution reaffirmed the union's assurances against unauthorized strikes, declared belief in the mutual responsibility of employer and employee in carrying on collective bargaining and asked for immediate resumption of negotiations with General Motors. Passed unanimously, the resolutions revealed a sober facing of facts and sound analysis of complex developments.

Reports from the Ford organization committee, the G.M. committee, aviation and farm-implementation or-

ganization directors, the Women's Auxiliary as well as other committees and delegations, were heard by the board.

The resolution adopted on the economic situation and the program of organized labor, follows:

"After four brief years of business improvement, industry and the country are again plunged into a sharp decline, reaching proportions that amount to a depression. Once more, a period of recovery, with prosperity for business, has seen the production of goods run away from the purchasing power of the masses. Increased production per man-hour made possible an industrial output, at the peak, 22% above pre-depression levels, while 8,500,000 remained unemployed. Profits passed the pre-depression level by 17% and prices skyrocketed to reduce effective purchasing power still further.

"When depression began to set in again, the big industrialists took advantage of the situation. They forced a slash in relief even before the slump started, and cracked down still further when depression was in sight. With the reduction in government spending during 1937, the prosperity bubble burst.

"Lay-offs and shut-downs have brought lengthening lines of workers back to relief stations. Automobile workers have suffered seriously. On top of this, the industrialists are attempting to use the depression to defeat progressive legislation and to weaken the power of the organized labor movement.

"The U.A.W. outlines the following program which organized workers and the public must realize is necessary to prevent this depression from becoming even more serious:

"1. No wage-cuts: Wage-cuts mean lower purchasing power, longer and worse depression.

"2. Lower cost of living: Bring rents and prices down to levels workers can afford. During recovery, prices ran away from the ability of labor to pay.

"3. Adequate relief: This is the quickest means of increasing purchasing power and of stimulating recovery.

"4. A federal low-cost housing program: Lack of housing facilities, with consequent high rents, and the failure of the building industry to keep pace with recovery for the past four years, combine to make this one of the most necessary and important steps for stimulating recovery.

"5. Funds for relief and housing instead of armaments: Escaping depression by armaments and war is economically unsound and is disastrous for labor which must do the dying in war.

"The International Executive Board of the U.A.W.A. calls upon all its locals to strengthen their machinery for handling relief cases, for obtaining adequate relief appropriations and for proper administration of relief.

"The U.A.W.A. calls upon its members and upon organized labor and the public generally to strive diligently for this program for alleviating the depression and working toward recovery."

A.F.L. COUNCIL IN ANTI-C.I.O. MOVE

(Continued from Page 1) unions. Decision on this appeal was reserved.

The Executive Council considered the request of the International Federation of Trade Unions that the American labor movement call upon the government to join with other "democracies" and the Soviet Union in "financial and economic embargoes" against Japan backed up by a military alliance of these powers. In view of the strong

UMW Meet In Convention

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bone of the industrial-union movement. The convention endorsed completely "each and every action of the International officers in promoting the principles of industrial unionism thru the C.I.O." and decided that the U.M.W.A. should "continue its contributions to the cause of industrial organization."

When the delegates got down to organizational questions, the old problem of district autonomy came up. After a vigorous discussion, it was decided that the 18 districts which did not yet have it be granted a limited degree of autonomy, providing for district conventions to elect all officers except president and secretary-treasurer, who will continue to be named by the International office. There are altogether 30 districts in the U.M.W.A.

Continued support to the Roosevelt administration was pledged by the convention, altho a number of third-term resolutions were not acted upon.

The convention is expected to continue for two weeks.

gulation of unions, to which the President is leaning already. And what that would mean to the labor movement, we don't have to explain!

SOUND AND FURY

The Stalinites have launched a frantic campaign of denunciation against the Stolberg series on the C.I.O. that has just completed its run in the Scripps-Howard press. Every connection they have in the C.I.O. is being mobilized in this holy crusade. And thereby they are merely confirming Stolberg's main thesis of the factional, disruptive line of the Stalinites in the C.I.O.

It is significant that, amidst all the hysterical outbursts from Stalinist and near-Stalinist sources, not one of Stolberg's conclusions or statements of fact has been refuted or even seriously challenged. This is vindication indeed!

War-Mongers At End of Rope

IN the January 26 issue of the Daily Worker, there is the usual jingoistic diatribe by Harry Gannes, in the course of which he says:

"Similarly the United Auto Workers resolution on war—a prize product jammed thru by Lovestoneites, looks to isolated security" (emphasis ours.—The Editor.)

Of all the brazen, unscrupulous chicanery, this takes the cake!

The anti-war resolution of the United Automobile Workers is almost identically word for word the resolution adopted by the Steel Workers Organizing Committee convention last December! Did the "Lovestoneites" "jam it thru" at the S.W.O.C. convention too?

Where were all the Stalinist heroes of chauvinism at the S.W.O.C. convention? Why didn't they open their mouths there?

The anti-war resolution of the U.A.W. was adopted unanimously at the board sessions two weeks ago. Where were Mortimer and Hall, the Stalinist "unity"-group leaders on the board? They spoke against the resolution; why didn't they have the guts to vote against it? Did the "Lovestoneites" "jam it thru" them too?

It must be a bad day for the war makers when they have to resort to such tactics!

U.A.W Hits Relief Bias

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the commission and the U.A.W. was one where the commission accepted preliminary investigation reports by union investigators to expedite relief.

The council heard both Frankenstein's charges and Reading's reply, which was to the effect that what the city wanted to see was if they could handle the welfare thru their own commission and investigators and recognized charities.

Frankenstein maintained the mayor's experiment would result in a great deal of hardship and suffering. He also took the mayor to task for a statement that the U.A.W.'s connections with welfare activities might lead to "abuses." Reading then agreed that U.A.W. investigators made no more errors than regular welfare investigators.

G. R. Harris, chairman of the commission, replied to a question of the mayor by saying: "The U.A.W.'s aid has materially expedited matters and saved the city money."

None of those who spoke, including councilmen, had a single word of support for the mayor. He was the only individual in the council chamber that suggested there was any reason why the arrangement with the U.A.W. should be terminated. Reading tacitly admitted that the commission had taken action at his instructions.

By his statements, Harris showed he regretted the loss of the U.A.W.'s assistance. Councilman Edward J. Jeffries questioned the mayor at length and indicated he was unable to see why the action against the U.A.W. had been taken.

The council asked Frankenstein to present the union's case formally in writing.

peace sentiment in the ranks of the workers, the council was forced to reject this scheme of military "collective security."

Executive Council sessions will probably continue for two weeks.

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