

LABOR ACTION

FEBRUARY 1, 1943

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

"Not Interested In Questions Of Truth" Says P. O. Attorney

At a hearing held January 21 in the Postmaster General's office in Washington at the instigation of Attorney General Francis Biddle, Post Office Attorney William C. O'Brien demanded the suppression of *The Militant*, weekly labor paper. Answering the argument made by *The Militant's* attorney, Albert Goldman, and by Osmond K. Fraenkel, who is helping in the defense of *The Militant* as attorney for the Civil Liberties Union, that neither Biddle nor the Post Office Department had proved that the paper had acted in violation of any law or was guilty of misstating facts, O'Brien summed up the position of his department with the bald statement:

"We are not interested here with questions of truth or falsity. It does not make any difference if everything *The Militant* said is true."

Before a hearing board of three Post Office Department officials selected by Postmaster General Walker, O'Brien introduced into the record a letter from Francis Biddle to the Postmaster General, dated December 28, advising the department to take action to suspend the second-class mailing rights of *The Militant* under the espionage Act of 1917 and according to the infamous precedent of the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of the Milwaukee Leader vs. Bursleson. (Bursleson, as Postmaster General during World War I earned for himself a notorious reputation as a vicious enemy of labor and democratic rights.)

O'Brien then introduced in evidence, as "Exhibit A," a series of excerpts from *The Militant* which were reported in a recent issue of *LABOR ACTION*. In addition, without having previously informed the attorneys for *The Militant*, he introduced as "Exhibit B" a series of seventy-eight excerpts including every issue of the paper from the December 13, 1941, issue to the date of the hearing.

It is impossible within the limitations of our space to detail these excerpts. In brief, however, O'Brien contended that it was impermissible to publish the fact that Jim Crow exists in the armed forces; that labor is carrying the burden of the war and that there is no "equality of sacrifice"; that the war is imperialist in nature; that Roosevelt has collaborated with fascists (Darlan); that profiteering is rampant; that U.S. business men (for example, Standard Oil) had business relations with the Nazi monopolists; that the National Association of Manufacturers is waging a war against labor; that India ought to have its independence; and much else of the same.

In general the excerpts covered every phase of political, economic and social comment. Most astonishing of all, however, the excerpts introduced as charges against *The Militant* included quotations from other

(Continued on page 3)

WDL Sends Protest To Biddle

Below we publish a letter sent by Morris Milgram, national secretary of the Workers Defense League, to Francis Biddle. The Workers Defense League has been extremely active in defending the rights of *LABOR ACTION* and *The Militant*.

Hon. Francis Biddle,
Attorney General of the United States,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Biddle:

At the January 21 hearings on the revocation of the second-class mailing privileges of *The Militant*, instituted by Postmaster General Walker upon your recommendation, an important question of civil rights was raised which needs your personal attention: Have Americans the right to print the truth if it does not give military information to the enemy?

Mr. William C. O'Brien, arguing for the Post Office solicitor, stated that "The Post Office does not charge that the paper's statements are false." He argued that it is a violation of the law to dwell at length on any incontrovertible facts—he gave as examples the horrors of wounds, the restrictions of discipline—which would discourage enlistment in the armed forces.

His position was, of course, clear before the hearings, notice for which was accompanied by excerpts from this weekly, dating back to December, 1941. The charges cover material, alleging:

1. This is an imperialist war which Marxists cannot support.
2. Employers are making huge profits while workers are forced to make needless sacrifices.
3. Discrimination against Negroes continues in the armed forces and war industry.

Mr. Biddle, you know that point 1 (Continued on page 3)

Impounding of Diseased Bootleg Meat Fixes Light on Detroit Black Market

By V. JENSEN

DETROIT — The impounding here last week of several tons of diseased bootleg meat has sensationally exposed what has been common knowledge and cause for complaint among Detroit housewives for months—the story of Detroit's Black Market.

For months Detroit housewives have been going to the butcher to find that there was no meat, or that if they were steady customers willing to pay way above ceiling prices, they might get a piece of meat, and even that was likely to be bootleg meat, uninspected and diseased.

It's a long, sad, sordid story of bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption and now crime.

When OPA first set quotas for meat for the Detroit area it did so arbitrarily, refusing to take into account the influx of 35,000 workers into the area in the past fourteen months. These hard-working people are not vegetarians. By November a serious shortage had developed. In December a mistake of the OPA in neglecting to notify retailers of increased ceilings diverted holiday meat and fowl to New York and other centers where retailers had more notified that they could pay more and charge more per pound. In

\$-a-Year Men Infest Dep't. of Agriculture As Hunger Looms and Wages Are Attacked

By GERTRUDE SHAW

Secretary of Agriculture Wickard is a master of understatement. In his annual report to the President, just released, he says that "we may have to revise some ideas about supplies of food available to consumers in the next few months, even of the foods which we appear to have in comfortable quantities."

January a further cut went into effect.

There are "ceilings" on wholesale and retail prices, but none on the prices that farmers can ask. Michigan and Ohio farmers are turning to more profitable markets than Detroit. Then the big packers come down and bid higher prices and corner some meat. Of course they are out to make their profit.

So they sell to retailers. They bill retailers at OPA prices and the amount above OPA prices is typed on a small piece of paper with nothing else on it. The retailer pays the OPA price by check and the amount above in cash—just to keep the record clear. Of course all this is passed on to the housewife, who has to do more than pinch pennies in Detroit; she has to wring them out.

The housewife and the OPA of course knew all this before the diseased meat was impounded last week. But the OPA, with only seven inspectors for the 3,500 meat shops in the Detroit area, could only wag a bony finger in warning like the toothless old crone it really is. Meaning (Continued on page 2)

Time for a Labor Party!



\$-a-Year Men Infest Dep't. of Agriculture As Hunger Looms and Wages Are Attacked

However, Donald Montgomery, who for seven years was consumers' counsel of the Department of Agriculture, formulates the bungled food situation into the human equation. He says:

"It will mean hunger, the hollow as well as the hidden kind. It will mean starvation for many of our American people. No question about that. Maybe those who starve won't fall over dead in the street. There are other ways to starve that are slower, less obvious, and less disturbing to public pride."

The working people who are faced with the stark reality described by Mr. Montgomery must put a very pointed question to Mr. Wickard: "Will the

dollar-a-year men in the Department of Agriculture use their key positions for the production of food for the people—OR FOR PROFITS FOR THEIR COMPANIES?"

This is merely a rhetorical question. Everyone knows of the excellent job dollar-a-year men have been doing.—FOR THEIR COMPANIES! The Truman and other congressional reports have disclosed the unremitting efforts of these self-sacrificing representatives of big business in government, to steer war orders—at most attractive contract terms—to their real paymasters.

There are forty-three such stogees in the Department of Agriculture—by Mr. Wickard's own count.

The Associated Press reported that "Mr. Wickard directed that they be invited to accept positions as full-time, paid employees and relinquish compensation from a private corporation or similar enterprise."

These attacks must be fought vigorously by the International. In the great organizing campaign of 1936-37 the UAW brought GM to its knees and proved that the strength of labor organized along industrial lines on the basis of a militant class struggle policy was stronger than this mighty corporation. The same thing must be done again. A program of militant action against these union busters must be carried out.

The first step in such a program is to call a special convention of the UAW to rescind the no-strike (Continued on page 2)

Bosses Attack Local 719

General Motors Suspends President of Fighting Local, Fires Steward

CHICAGO—In line with the national offensive of General Motors Corp. against the UAW-CIO, the Electro-Motive Division of GMC is carrying out a vicious attack against Local 719.

This general offensive of capital against labor has taken concrete form in the Electro-Motive plant in the past several weeks. A steward and a committee were fired on flimsy excuses, eight men were given six to eight days of disciplinary layoffs and more recently the president of the local was suspended temporarily "pending further investigations"

That's a laugh—no, a howl! Mr. Wickard does not throw the dollar-a-year stogees of the big farm interests out of his department on their ears. No, not that. He makes respectable "full-time, paid employees" out of them.

About the "relinquishing" of compensation from their firms and backers, it need only be said that there are ways of "relinquishing" that DO NOT RELINQUISH—even though the same is not true about starving.

So the set-up in government is this: 1) Congress—influenced by the farm bloc, which has just succeeded in getting an increase in parity that will slap at least ten per cent onto food prices; 2) the Department of Agriculture—honeycombed with camouflaged dollar-a-year men; and 3) an OPA whose outstanding accomplishment is raising ceilings on consumer goods, now headed by a man appointed because of his ability to get along with the reactionary Congress.

Where are YOU, little men and women, who—even if you don't fall over dead in the street—must neces-

The two principal spokesmen of the United Nations, Roosevelt and Churchill, have completed their sensational meeting in Casablanca, but what was accomplished during the ten days of secret sessions, if the official reports are to be believed, is far less significant and important to the workers of this and other countries than what was obviously not accomplished.

In spite of the spectacular setting of the conference, and the dramatic publicity following it, it seems clear that the decisions adopted by the representatives of the United States and England were primarily of a military character. There are no signs, however, that any of the pressing political problems were brought one

step closer to solution. In anything, the character and results of the Casablanca conference indicate that these problems have become more acute.

What military decisions were taken was naturally not disclosed. In any case, it is not what we are concerned with. It is sufficient to realize at least three things which do not require any special military knowledge:

1. The myth of Nazi invincibility has been violently shaken on the Russian and North African fronts in the last few months, and if Germany's capacity for blitzkrieg has not been exhausted, it has at least been seriously impaired.

2. At the same time, however, despite the defeats suffered by the Germans, the end of the war in Europe is not even in sight. Not even the most optimistic responsible statesman on the Allied side sees a victory before another two years; many give a remoter date. Hitler and Goebbels have stopped talking altogether about an early victory. The conflict is settling down more and more to a war of grisly, devastating attrition.

3. As for the East, no substantial dent has yet been made in the empire which Japan has won and seems to be consolidating, and optimism on an early end to the war in that sphere is not to be found in either camp.

The predominance of military personages in attendance at Casablanca indicates that the main point on the agenda was the bolstering and extension of the recently improved military position of the Allies.

The improvement in the military position of the Allies has been accompanied, however, by a steady deterioration of their political position or, more accurately, by a multiplication and intensification of their own inner political problems and conflicts. It is to these problems that Wendell Willkie undoubtedly referred when he hastened to describe the results of the Casablanca conference as "disappointing." A similar position seems already to be taken by at least sections of the British labor and liberal press.

This feeling of "disappointment" will undoubtedly be shared by more and more people particularly by those who believe that this is fundamentally a war for democracy, or against fascism, and who are therefore really disappointed to learn, as the days and months and years go by, that the war is no such thing, and, consequently, is not being conducted as if it were that kind of war.

We cannot go into the necessary (Continued on page 4)

The only place you can be—or be represented—is on your own, self-organized, food committees of workers, poor farmers and housewives. The organized little men and women (workers and workers' housewives) must themselves find the ways to enforce price controls and real rationing—and to get food produced for consumption regardless of the profits of the big business and big farm interests. That's where the little men and women of the country will be represented (Continued on page 3)

ILG Workers Seek Action on Wage Demands by Stoppage

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The "stoppage" in the New York dress industry which began Tuesday morning, and the reasons for the strike given by the ILGWU leadership, raise some interesting questions.

In the first place, President Dubinsky and General Manager Hechman say that the "stoppage" is "spontaneous." What does this mean when the facts in the case are taken into consideration? The union asked for an increase in pay, or "wage equalization." The employers refused. Then the unions asked the employers to consent to arbitration. This request was presented to the employers on September 23, four months ago. All that the employer associations have done since then is stall. They wanted the OPA to approve an increase before they discussed wage increases. The union replied correctly that "we are not concerned with the OPA. We have no stopping before the OPA. We don't participate in profits."

Furthermore, Mr. Dubinsky de-

clared that "We cannot hold back our workers any longer, and we will make no more attempts to do so." At another point Dubinsky said: "All we can say is that our workers will not carry the burden for the continually rising cost of living. The employers have continually evaded and have finally rejected our offer of arbitration. The conferences are over. The workers will now take such action as they see fit and we cannot stop them."

These are brave new words by Dubinsky. Not only brave, but democratic new words: "The workers will take such action as they see fit" But in the circumstances as related by Dubinsky, they don't add up to spontaneity. There have been long negotiations which got nowhere. Of course these workers are disgruntled and want to strike. What else can they do? But there is nothing spontaneous about it. After weeks of organized and planned negotiations they got nothing (Continued on page 3)

Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Camp

THEY ARE UNITED AGAINST THE NATIVES

An Associated Press reporter described the occupation of a Libyan town by the British: "Italian police had been expecting the British. The Italian prefect had been receiving the order from Rome to remain with his entire administrative staff to protect the remaining civilians from the Arabs. He put the entire police force at the disposal of the visitors. About 100 Italian police had been left behind to guard the 300 Italian civilians from the Arabs, who appeared to hate the Italians."

What an illustration of the basic imperialist character of the war. The moment the "natives threaten" the moment the people held in oppression by both warring camps stir, then the differences between the camps are forgotten and they both unite against the oppressed natives. Italian police and British troops will join to see to it that the Arabs are kept in the same state of subservience. There was certainly very little talk about the FOUR FREEDOMS when the British had their little chat with the Italian prefect!

In French North Africa, a new expert in policing has just been hired. Peyrouton, ex-Minister of Police under Petain, has offered his services and been accepted on the record of past performance. And Mr. Peyrouton is the right man in the right place. It is a known fact that when Leon Blum became the head of the first Popular Front government, he was not very eager to displace reactionary administrators anywhere,

and especially not in the French colonies. But Peyrouton was nevertheless ousted from Tunisia immediately. Not so much because of Blum's liberalism, but simply because the repressive policy Peyrouton had applied against the Arabs was provoking an outbreak.

In later years Peyrouton financed the biggest anti-labor weekly in France, Gringolre. But his big chance came after the coming to power of Petain. Peyrouton was made Minister of the Interior, that is of police. In that post he applied the methods he had formerly employed against the Arabs—this time against French labor militants and liberals in general. Peyrouton started the first concentration camps. He was responsible for the raiding of many union headquarters. He denounced anti-fascist refugees to the Gestapo.

This promising career was suddenly interrupted when Laval returned to power. Peyrouton had made one mistake. He had not recognized how astute a politician Laval was. Peyrouton had been collaborating with the Nazis, resorting to any villainous necessary to gain their favor. But Laval was not the man to play second fiddle to Peyrouton. First Peyrouton seemed to get the upper hand. He was instrumental in the arrest of Laval, but Laval had his comeback. Peyrouton was turned out. But "experts" of his type are needed and now we have another "democratic" expert on the treatment of natives in North Africa.

AMERICAN AMBASSADOR GIVES FRANCO AN ASSIST

The American Ambassador to Spain has just made a speech in which, according to the New York Times, he "hit hard at Axis-inspired rumors that an Allied victory would mean the overturn of the present government in Spain. If the political institutions of Spain undergo any change or modification in future years, he declared emphatically, it will be the work of the Spaniards within Spain—not of the U.S. or the Spanish emigres."

In other words, those who insist that the "Spanish emigres"—that is, the millions of Spanish workers who fought for socialism, or, more simply, for a democratic regime—shall have a say on the future of Spain, are being "Axis-inspired." Franco will be left quite undisturbed. The gallows and the concentration camps will continue to be the symbols of

the Spanish state—if the American Ambassador has his way!

While Spanish and United States capitalists fraternize, the workers of the European countries, oppressed by the Nazis, are beginning to realize their common interest. Here is a piece of news which shows a bit of this solidarity in action:

"Eleven Norwegian boys, ranging in age from fourteen to eighteen years, will be brought to trial in Kristiansand by German authorities. They are charged with having aided deserters from the German army, both officers and men. The boys are being held in jail and are not allowed Norwegian counsel; it has been rumored that punishment will be severe and a storm of public protest has arisen against the treatment of the boys."

Cleveland Workers Answer Boss Attack With Widespread Series of Strikes

SPECIAL TO LABOR ACTION
CLEVELAND—Cleveland labor was frozen to its job several weeks ago. Immediately taking advantage of this, Cleveland bosses cracked down in earnest. Knowing that the workers could not leave their jobs, they immediately started speed-ups, suspended privileges and stopped wage raises altogether.

And Cleveland labor has answered this attack with the most militant and widespread series of strikes the city has had since Pearl Harbor. At present five strikes are in progress.

At the Jones & Loughlin's Otis works here United Steel Workers have struck twice this week for wage increases. The strike has taken the form of "mass absenteeism," that is, the men just stay away from their jobs. At the Hauserman Co., members of the United Furniture Workers are out, accusing the company of "using the federal mediation set-up to stall off negotiations" for wage increases.

A very interesting strike in-

volving members of the United Steel Workers employed at the Triplex Screw Co. is in progress. All of the strikers, who are seeking a wage increase, are girls.

At the Grabler Manufacturing Co. members of the CIO Steel Workers are on strike for wage increases.

At the Fulton Foundry & Machine Co., laborers in an AFL molders union are on strike against the bureaucrats at the head of the union. As the union looks out for the skilled workers only, the laborers have refused to pay their dues and are staying out in protest against efforts to force them to do so.

These strikes are especially significant and indicative of the feeling of workers here, since they are all conducted in spite of the protests of the official union leadership. Unlike such cities as Akron or Detroit, Cleveland has a minority of honest, militant labor leaders. The Stalinists and old-line AFL conservatives hold the official positions. But the rank and file have different ideas.

News and Views from the Labor Front

Shipyard Local 9 Militants Put Pressure on Pollard

SAN PEDRO—The members of Local 9 of the Shipyard Union have recently been informed that the General Executive Board has agreed to permit elections of shop stewards for the Los Angeles yard, in spite of the fact that the autonomy of the local and its right to elect officers is still suspended.

Although Walter Pollard, the national officer's dictator over the local, may claim credit for this partial restoration of democracy, it is a fact that he was moved to act only after considerable pressure was put on him by the shop stewards, especially from the swing shift. As a matter of fact, Pollard was already moving to appoint stewards until opposition arose in the stewards' council and among the militants in the yard.

This demonstrates what LABOR ACTION has said: militant rank and file opposition to Pollard's bureaucratic methods is the road to restoration of a democratic, fighting union.

One fly in the ointment is that the stewards' council will no longer have the right to elect their own grievance committee. All they can do under the new set-up is to make nominations for the grievance committee to the Executive Board, which will then make appointments.

This is a highly bureaucratic and high-handed innovation and as such should be submitted to the membership for final decision. The dem-

ocratic control over the shop stewards and their grievance committee is essential in order to keep the union alive and on its toes. When the stewards can't elect the grievance committee, that committee is removed one step farther from control by the rank and file.

POLLARD CHANGES HEART ON L.A. DISTRIBUTION

LABOR ACTION learns that Pollard has come out in favor of the democratic right of the LABOR ACTION distributors to give out the paper! Our readers will remember that when Pollard first arrived here he made many public threats against LABOR ACTION and its distribution.

It seems that the local was in the act of deciding to donate \$50 to the defense of four alleged Communist Party members arrested in Oklahoma under the state criminal syndicalist law. Pollard was speaking in favor of the contribution—a thing which LABOR ACTION, in spite of its complete opposition to the Stalinists, also favors—when he also announced that he would fight to the last ditch to defend the right of LABOR ACTION to be distributed even though he disagreed with it in its entirety.

Our attitude toward Pollard has been fully expressed in previous issues, in condemnation of his sell-out contract and dictatorial role as

union administrator and WLB representative. As we stated last week, Pollard's appointments of Stalinists to key union posts has dealt the union a real blow. But aside from what one may guess as to the reasons for Pollard's apparent change of heart, we must say, in accordance with our practice of speaking the truth, that Pollard's statement on LABOR ACTION is

Local 719--

(Continued from page 1)

pledge. This pledge is the main source of all the difficulty being experienced by the union. The bosses, guaranteed by this stupid policy that the union will not use its most effective weapon, feel free to take any and all steps against the union. It's like sending an army into battle without ammunition and informing the enemy of this fact in advance. You can imagine how long the army would last in such a battle. The same holds true for the union. The first step in any campaign must be to RESCIND THE NO - STRIKE PLEDGE!

Election of officers for Local 719 will take place in a few weeks. The workers of EMD will then be able to determine what kind of policy they want. To continue the present weak-kneed and ineffective policy put over by Terry Kandall and his Stalinist stooges means suicide for the union. You can't gain anything by answering every company attack with a post card to the President. And this seems to be the only action the Kandall outfit is willing to take. And all this on the basis of some bogus patriotism taken from the pages of the Daily Worker, organ of the Communist Party.

Two slates of officers have been nominated. One slate headed by Kandall and the other headed by Evron McGreer and Bob Wilson. The success of the latter will mean that the members of Local 719 are tired of the Kandall-Stalinist program. McGreer and Wilson are much more susceptible to the pressure of the rank and file and supported the move to rescind the no-strike pledge.

What is still necessary is a clear enunciation of a program by the McGreer-Wilson groups based on a militant policy of fighting the corporation at every turn of the wheel—not after the war, but now, while we still have a union to fight for. The publication of such a policy along with education of the membership to the necessity for this policy, will insure the defeat of Kandall & Co. and the victory of the McGreer-Wilson slate.

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Buy LA and NI in Cleveland:

G&M Newsstand, Superior and 5th Street.

in Detroit at:

Carl's Book Store, Clairmount Boulevard.

in Buffalo:

Main and Huron, next to Gamler's. Main and Mohawk.

in No. Philadelphia:

S.E. Corner—19th and Columbia N.W. Corner—19th and Master. N.E. Corner—20th and Turner.

a good thing, not only for LABOR ACTION itself, but for civil liberties and democratic rights in general.

If Pollard really means what he said, he can show it right now. Having come through with fifty bucks for the Oklahoma communists, we would like to see Mr. Pollard and Local 9 send their protest to the Post Office Department against their totalitarian procedure of holding up LABOR ACTION without charges, explanation or reason.

CALIFORNIA CIO WRITES WICKARD ON FOOD SITUATION

The California State CIO has recently called to the attention of Secretary of Agriculture Wickard the scandalous situation with regard to the black market and the meat, butter and egg shortage. In a strongly worded telegram they ask him to take emergency measures to meet the situation immediately. This should only be a beginning. Only through mass pressure will this protest escape being filed away as usual in the already over-stuffed files of the Washington bureaucrats. When the workers themselves in their millions demand action to provide the very necessities of life, then results will be forthcoming.

Washington has a peculiar way of responding only to what it calls emergencies. And there are emergencies only when the workers in their justifiable anger stand up and shout. Washington responds just like the boss—when you talk of strike, they move and move fast. Therefore the workers must demand the final say over rationing and price control.

As the most powerful single local of the CIO on the West Coast, Local 9 should give the lead and impetus to a movement among the trade unions along these lines.

LABOR'S EYE FIXED ON NLRB HEARING

One of the big events on which all of labor on the West Coast has its eyes fixed is the outcome of the NLRB hearings now being conducted at the instigation of the CIO. The CIO claims that certain yards now organized into the AFL under a closed shop agreement had such an agreement drawn up and signed before there were more than a handful of men in the yard. The CIO is petitioning the NLRB for the right to hold an election in these yards, claiming that these men have been denied the right to have a union of their own choosing. Such an election should be held. We can only hope that the CIO will conduct a vigorous and militant campaign in these yards when and if the decision goes their way, but we are afraid they won't.

It was only a few months ago that the CIO lost a very important election in Buffalo to the AFL because it tried to organize the men

Black Market--

(Continued from page 1)

while, the housewife keeps on paying.

This week, of course, OPA made a big splash with criminal action against the retailers of diseased meat—but everyone knows that next week things will be the same. The black market in meats will get worse as will the black market on other food items, which are already dipping deep into the purse of the housewife. Only organized action and vigilance on the part of the workers' wives against profiteering and price gouging can protect their families from serious food shortages and sky-high prices in the coming months.

V. J. (Detroit)

ILG Stoppage --

(Continued from page 1)

ing. Then no doubt they began putting pressure on their leaders, Dubinsky and Hochman. This is perhaps the "spontaneous" aspect of the situation. They want the leaders to quit horsing around, get results and deliver the goods.

There is something else interesting about this "stoppage" that makes one wonder whether or not Dubinsky's declarations are so brave. Is the stoppage a demand for a wage increase? No, the demand is for the employers to agree to "submit the controversy to arbitration." That is, after four months of stalling by the employers they are now to have months more while a Labor Department conciliator investigates, then reports to Madam Perkins. Then Secretary Perkins must mediate on the matter and decide whether or not to certify the case to the War Labor Board. After running through all this red tape, the WLB may get the case and meditate for a few weeks. The board may then decide to order the employers to submit to arbitration. And by this time the Fourth of July may have arrived.

Can Cut Through Maze

The dress workers of course can cut through this maze. Should the stoppage involve the majority of the workers the WLB may decide to take the case directly and render a decision in about a week. Thousands of workers away from the sewing machines may have more influence on the WLB than all the talk about arbitration. And, after all, these workers are employed by and paid by the dress manufacturers, and not by the WLB. Idle machines don't produce any profits.

Dubinsky says that "real" wages in the industry are the same as in 1933. The average wage is \$32 a week for about seven months in the year. An increase of \$25,000,000 in volume of business last year over 1941 brought the gross income of the industry to the highest point since 1933.

The most interesting observation made by Dubinsky is in connection with the Little Steel wage formula

of the War Labor Board. He said that the 10 per cent increase of August, 1941, had been absorbed by the increase in living costs and any new wage rise would have to be above the Little Steel formula. Dubinsky said that the Little Steel formula "has outlived its usefulness and it is not a proper equalization formula under present conditions."

The fact is, as pointed out previously by LABOR ACTION, the Little Steel formula had outlived its usefulness immediately after it was announced. It was never a formula for increasing real wages. It didn't even bring the wages of the steel workers up to the level necessary to bring the income of the workers abreast of the increase in the cost of living. The recommendations of the WLB panel made this clear. All this awakes is to guarantee that workers don't starve, go naked and live in the parks. And no WLB intervention was needed to guarantee this. As long as the employers are in possession of millions of dollars of government contracts, from which they are getting huge profits, they will see to it that workers get the minimum necessary to keep them alive and in condition to produce.

Dubinsky, like other labor leaders seems to be much in love with the words "readjustment" and "equalization" in connection with demands for more wages. They shy away from such good old-fashioned expressions as "wage increase," "boost in pay" and "a raise." But that is what labor needs and wants. No hifalutin phrases are necessary to express this demand. Labor doesn't want its wages "readjusted." It wants them made bigger. It doesn't want any "equalization." It wants more dollars in the pay envelope every week so that it can buy more food, clothing and the other things necessary for life and happiness.

We don't hear employers talking about the readjustment or equalization of profits. They are for bigger profits and bigger salaries. As a means to this end, they are all for the "readjustment" and "equalization" of wages.

The Readers of Labor Action Take the Floor...

Press Action

Technical Progress And Labor's Future

Dear Editor:
The machine tool industry has started to work on a new development which shows the effect technical progress has on labor.

Several large plants in the country are now at work on a new automatic turret lathe. Previously, the operation of this basic production machine required some skill and training, and a worker could feel that he had a trade when he became a competent operator. These new machines, however, are entirely automatic. The operator needs only to insert the material, start the machine, and remove the finished piece. The job requires about as much skill as digging ditches or picking fruit.

This development is not so important in itself as it is indicative of the trend modern industry follows. Labor has two lessons to learn from developments such as this. First, this new, efficient, productive machine makes workers' control of industry even simpler. Using such machines, and producing for use rather than for profit, it is possible to create a low of goods that would permanently abolish poverty and raise the standard of living to the socialist level.

However, under the present system of producing for profit, this machine will only act to lower wages and increase insecurity. A turret lathe department now consists of skilled operators drawing good wages. Soon, such a department will employ production workers, and a few highly skilled set-up men.

Developments such as this spell the doom of craft unionism. At present, unions of skilled craftsmen can ignore unskilled workers, especially Negroes, because they know that even though the unskilled workers are outside of the union, they cannot act as strikebreakers because they do not have the necessary skills. Such improvements as this new lathe, which anyone can operate, make industrial unionism imperative. A union of the handful of skilled set-up men would be impossible because the company can carefully select company men for the jobs.

Technical progress means two things, then, to the working class. For the present, it means they must organize, and organize all sections of the working class, into industrial unions. For the not-far-distant future, it means working class control of industry and a high standard of living on a socialist scale is possible.

G. D. (Cleveland)

Colonel Is Detroit's Strikebreaker No. 1

Dear Editor:
This week the U.S. Army, in the person of Colonel George E. Strong, chief of plant protection for the Army Air Forces in Detroit, emerged as strikebreaker No. 1 of that area. This gallant officer, for some months engaged in a series of flank maneuvers against Detroit labor militants (some surreptitious firings, none too subtle threats against labor in the press, etc.) has finally come out in a direct attack against the militant leaders of the strike at Bohn Aluminum & Brass Corp.

LABOR ACTION readers will remember that the Bohn workers were sick and tired of the run-around that the WLB had been giving them instead of the pay raise they were entitled to and desperately needed in this city of soaring living costs, and went out on strike. In charged the colonel, roaring like a bull, with the FBI not far behind, to break the strike.

Now that the strike has been settled, Colonel Strong has ordered seven militant strike leaders, one a woman, fired. He has had their names and addresses published in the city press. And although he has piously declared that since these

workers were not found "subversive" they are not being blacklisted, everyone in Detroit over the age of three knows that this is the malarkey. Already one of them, who was working in another war plant, has been fired from his new job.

The bosses and their press have been loud and hysterical in their praise of the brave action of the colonel. Harried and pale because the workers are not taking the bitter dish they have been trying to hand them under the guise of patriotism, and because for three solid months now there has not been a week in Detroit without some strike in a war plant, the bosses look to the action of the colonel as a ray of hope for the future. Reading the Detroit press makes it clear that they see Strong's action against the defenseless strikers and the rather small local as the bravest exploit of the war since Colin Kelly sank the Haruna. Another such battle won and they'll be out to get him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

And well they might—IF by such intimidation Strong could subdue the militant labor movement of this city. But that is not a one man job. So far the UAW leadership has not protested the firings, confining itself to weak protestations that if it had a union shop it could discipline the

membership itself. The boss press has been quick to point out that a closed shop contract in Ford did not prevent a strike of several thousand workers two weeks ago.

The truth is that the temper of rank and file labor is running high here. Stung by the raw deal and run-around the bosses and the WLB

have been giving them, and angered by the disadvantageous freezing of labor, the soaring cost of living and the appearance of the black market here, the rank and file don't want to take any more lying down. And Strong would have to be Superman to change that.



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A RECORD HIGH!

Hats off to Buffalo, which leads again in subscriptions and asks for a bundle order increase besides. All other agents please copy! Chicago and New York have taken the first steps with bundle order increases—but how about the subscriptions? Buffalo craves competition. Let's give it to her!

Here is the record-breaking subscription list, totalling 97, which has been received in the past two-week period:

Buffalo	38
Bronx	13
California	9
Missouri	9
Brooklyn	8
New York City	7
Ohio	5
Detroit	4
Idaho	1
New Jersey	1
Wisconsin	1
Wyoming	1
Total	97

Special thanks this week to those of our readers who have sent in subscriptions for themselves and their friends.

To all LABOR ACTION Agents: We challenge you to break the subscription record established this week!

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

You pay sixty-five cents or sixty-seven cents for a dozen eggs if you are among the fortunate who can afford them at all. The chain stores and super markets, however, are charged forty-four or forty-five cents for those same eggs. In a word, there is a retailer's mark-up of twenty-one to twenty-three cents on a dozen eggs—or around 50 per cent. This is one example of the widespread profiteering that is swelling war profits.

Now, it is not really hard for working class households to do something about war profiteering. HERE IS A VERY SIMPLE PLAN.

Every apartment house has some kind of tenant's organization these days, and every organization has a few active women in it. Suppose some woman pioneer on the block—why not you?—should speak to the active women in each house and convince them of the necessity for organizing a housewives' committee for the block. The next step would be to take the question up at the tenants' meetings to get everybody's support. In a short time you would have your block housewives' committee, composed of a few active women from each house.

What next? For example, you read in the paper about this rober's mark-up on eggs by the A&P and other retailers. The committee meets, decides not to pay 50 per cent above wholesale prices, AND GETS BUSY TO CARRY OUT ITS DECISION.

A few women go to the local OPA and inform them that unless the retail prices of eggs are adjusted downward, the OPA office will be picketed. Other groups of women go to the A&P and the other chain and large retail stores in the neighborhood and demand an immediate mark-down in the price of eggs—or else! Or else what?

Their stores will be picketed and a consumers' boycott will be organized. If the committee's demands are not met, pickets are posted with placards: "WE WON'T PAY SIXTY-FIVE CENTS FOR EGGS WHEN THE A&P PAYS FORTY-FOUR CENTS!" "JOIN US IN A BOYCOTT AGAINST WAR PROFITEERS!"

Will the women join? You bet! Will such action bring results? YOU BET!

P.S.—Since writing the above the pressure of publicity alone has forced down the retail price of eggs. Imagine what a little organized action could do to prices.

Armour & Co., one of the largest meat packing concerns in the country, has had a windfall of profits for 1942—NETTING \$14,802,607 "after taxes and dividend requirements." This huge take means as much as \$20.85 a share on the preferred stock of the company—over and above and in addition to the aforementioned "dividend requirements."

Do the prices at the meat counters make you grind your teeth in rage? Well, never you mind. There is no ill wind that doesn't blow someone some good.

Frieda S. Miller, retiring New York State industrial commissioner, reports that 50,000 women in the state do night work and have a work-week of more than forty-eight hours—labor laws to the contrary notwithstanding. This situation is true for the entire country, with the result that the health and safety of women workers are being undermined and threatened.

The shortage of labor is, of course, given as the excuse for breaking laws which embody decades of struggle against plutocratic interests. However, that excuse cannot be accepted while there are millions of Negro workers kept out of jobs because of boss-bred race prejudice.

Negro workers must get jobs! Is better proof needed than that their poverty as a group is such that infant mortality in 1940 was 68 1/2 per cent greater among Negroes than among whites?

At this point it becomes crystal clear how interrelated are the interests of black and white workers. Together they must tear away the shortage-of-labor camouflage the bosses are using to break down labor standards—while continuing Jim Crow and anti-Semitism.

Women must insist on their rights: the legal protection they are entitled to—equal pay for equal work—increases in wages to meet increases in the cost of living. This is the basis on which women should work—and not merely eke out an inadequate wage by dint of toiling unhealthily hours, ruining their health and endangering their lives by fatigue.

To the shortage-of-labor alibi, let white workers reply: "WHAT ABOUT EMPLOYING OUR NEGRO SISTERS AND BROTHERS!"

While World War I was in progress, the rights-for-women type of public-spirited women were proclaiming loudly that women would have to participate in the peace council. It would require the woman's touch, they said, to make a lasting peace.

History repeats itself in this respect. Again we hear from the distasteful side on the subject of the ennobling influence of women in making peace—and all that.

Of course, readers of this column know very well that it champions not only the rights of women, but of men and of children also—black, yellow and white ones of all ages, sizes and color of hair. The only "rights" it does not shout for are those appropriated by the ruling classes. Furthermore, this column is a staunch advocate of the woman's touch—along the lines here indicated.

It is not sex, age, color or size of nose of a political personage that matters. I don't remember whether women participated in the making of the Versailles Treaty or not. But it would not have made any difference. It is class interests that count—and the program offered to further those interests.

The men and women who will sit at the peace council of World War II will represent the ruling classes of the victor nations. They will put their heads together to preserve and extend the same proper rights and powers that fathered World War I and II and that will sire World War III—unless the war ends with a social overturn that will place the working classes in power.

Then the negotiators—among whom there will naturally be leading women of the working classes—will negotiate a socialist peace that can be made lasting.

Reaction to Churchill!

"The miners employed at Kingshall No. 2 Colliery, Forth, after hearing the report of the delegate who attended the recent conference addressed by Mr. Churchill and General Smuts, carried a resolution without a dissent, declaring that the conference served no useful purpose and condemning the speeches as tending to place the responsibility for the coal shortage on the shoulders of the miners.

"We call upon the Miners' Federation to end immediately the suicidal policy of class collaboration," the resolution continued, "and to launch an immediate nationwide campaign to make clear to the public that the government and the owners are solely responsible for the shortage, and to demand that the coal industry shall immediately be taken under common ownership, without payment of compensation, and placed under control of the workers."—From the British New Leader, December 5.

All Is Not Milk and Honey in British-American Relations

Ambitions Clash: North Africa, India

By EVERETT WESTON

On December 10, 1940—almost to the day a year before Pearl Harbor—Dr. Virgil Jordan, president of the National Industrial Conference Board, spoke before the National Bankers Assn. Both the man and the group are highly respected and we may be certain that what he said is an authoritative statement for the American bourgeoisie.

"Whatever the outcome of the war," he said, "America has embarked upon a career of imperialism, both in world affairs and in every other aspect of her life.... At best England will become a junior partner in a new Anglo-Saxon imperialism, in which... the United States will be the center of gravity. Southward in our hemisphere, and westward in the Pacific, the path of empire takes its way... The scepter passes to the United States."

There, in one short paragraph, is the pivot around which revolves all the curious, and often outwardly puzzling, aspects of American-British relations in recent months.

Dispute in North Africa
North Africa, for example. The British are apparently all but frantic. According to a New York Herald Tribune dispatch from London, "Not only does the disquiet make itself evident in virtually every discussion on the progress of the war and in editorials and special articles in the daily press, but today's issues of all the London weeklies carry leading articles expressing that worry in no uncertain terms."

The London New Statesman and

Nation goes further. The North African situation "threatens," it says, "unless there be plain speaking and better understanding, to poison Anglo-American relations."

The British Minister of Information last week found it necessary to deny a rift. At the same time British broadcasts are saying that Giraud will soon be replaced by de Gaulle.

What is the issue? Has Churchill become so much the liberal that he could not stomach Darlan, that he cannot now stomach Darlan's civil successor, Peyrouton, also but lately of Vichy? Is the difference so great between reactionary Giraud and reactionary de Gaulle (who until very recently was a monarchist, and who has collaborated freely with French fascists)? The whole lot of French diplomats and generals are obviously of one stamp. Their politics are simple, but uninspiring; they are hungry and they are reactionary.

The issue is not so complicated and less ideological. Ever since the last war, and increasingly in recent years, France has been the political pawn of Britain, used to pull hot chestnuts out of continental fires. The League of Nations, set up to maintain Franco-British supremacy, became more and more the tool of Britain alone. But now in Africa the United States is using the sorry remnants of French "democracy" to set up a similar relationship between itself and "liberalized" France-to-be. Not only is Britain left out in the cold, but, what is worse, it has started down the road to reaching the same relationship with the United States, but on a world scale.

The noise you hear is the screeching of brakes—brakes that aren't working. Members in Parliament asked very pointed questions about the enormous development of American airpower in North Africa, and its implications as to post-war British airpower. They got very evasive answers. And for all their noisy support of the "Free" French, when things got hot in North Africa the British no longer permitted de Gaulle to broadcast—at the "request" of the United States.

The Issue in India

If North Africa is puzzling, India is even more so. If we wonder why Churchill should suddenly object to Darlan, we listen open-mouthed to the declarations of Willkie and Wallace and Luce and Luce (female branch) on the subject of the poor Indian. Roosevelt himself has avoided any but highly generalized statements (for which Willkie has attacked him for "our government's wishy-washy attitude toward the problems of India"), but his approval is implicit to everything that Wallace and other high government officials have said on the subject.

Again, what is the issue? Max Lerner wrote a really funny article for one of the liberal weeklies praising Willkie's new-found progressive ideas, but solemnly warning us that we must not forget too quickly his rather unsavory past. Has Willkie become a liberal?

Or consider the now famous Life "Open Letter to the People of England," demanding that Britain make it clear that she was not fighting to preserve the empire. This was

really an unheard-of impertinence which Churchill very quickly and flatly answered with a resounding statement that he had not become Prime Minister in order to preside over the disintegration of the British Empire. What in the wide world was Luce thinking of? Has Luce too become a liberal?

Or, finally, consider the New York Times. The Times dispatches on India have seen fit to print a very large portion of the truth. Not once, which might have been a slip, but repeatedly, it has shown up the alleged Hindu-Muslim friction for the British-manufactured fraud that it is. Not once, but repeatedly, it has described in detail the misery of the Indian masses under British rule. But the Times is the watchword of conservative American capitalism. Surely it too has not become liberal?

Again, the issue is not so complicated, and less ideological. India is a sub-continent of vast wealth and of vast potential wealth (for details, see Judd's excellent "India in Revolt.") But Britain has a closed shop and a check-off and various other devices that no labor union ever dreamed of. To cite just one figure, in 1930 American exports to India were only 17 per cent of British exports. From a British India, America has been able to get only crumbs, but from an "independent" India, ruled by India's pitifully weak native capitalist class, the United States could with reason expect to take the lion's share. It is a state worth being liberal about.

(Continued in next issue)

British Shop Stewards Gain New Strength

By Mike Stevens

The militant shop stewards in England are faced with many important problems. Their ability to solve them will determine to a large extent the course and the future of the working class in England.

Although the organization and traditions of the shop steward movement in England are quite different from the shop stewards and shop committees in the United States, much can nevertheless be learned from their functioning. Many of their problems are identical with those which workers in this country face now or will face tomorrow.

BEGAN OPERATING BEFORE WORLD WAR I

Shop stewards began functioning in the factories of England shortly before the last war. At that time the trade union movement in many industries existed in the most outdated and haphazard form. Workers in the same shop doing identical work often were not members of the same local or the same union; in many cases a worker held membership in a union of another industry in another locality where he had formerly been employed.

The shop stewards were charged with the duty of seeing to it that the union men paid dues to their respective unions. With the growth of industry and the approach of war it became obvious that the daily interests of the workers in a shop could no longer be handled by a large number of unions each representing a handful of workers or by the out-dated all-embracing "geographical" local.

The shop steward movement therefore developed rapidly, taking on more tasks and responsibilities. The shop stewards became the representatives of the organized and unorganized workers in their shops. They conducted negotiations for agreement and settled all grievances as to wages and shop conditions. They fought the rising cost of living, led the workers in rent strikes and in general were the spearhead against the boss offensive. The shop stewards were actually the only organized force, responsible ONLY to the workers and to the workers' needs, that could lead any struggle.

By the time the First World War had ended, the shop steward movement had set up its own national organization and was an important factor in many of the post-war struggles of the British workers. The decline of the militancy of the British labor movement, plus the pressure from the trade union bureaucracy, eventually pushed the shop steward movement back to its minor role of collecting dues and handling small grievances.

MOVEMENT REVIVED IN WORLD WAR II

Immediately after England entered the war in 1939 wages and working conditions were being undermined and destroyed by the bosses under the guise of "patriotism" and "production." The trade union leaders had pledged themselves in the government "for the duration," and were doing everything in their power to prevent any militant action by the workers.

The workers with the experiences of the last war behind them lost no time in undertaking an independent defense of wages, working conditions and the settlement of grievances inside the factory through shop stewards and works committees.

A National Conference of Shop Stewards, held at Birmingham in April, 1940, condemned the York Memorandum (a sort of WLB) as "detrimental to the interests of the workers" and called for settlement of all grievances on the job. The conference adopted a militant program to safeguard the past gains of the labor movement and to wage an aggressive offensive in the day-to-day problems of the workers. A resolution rapped the national trade union leaders whose policy "endangers the very existence of our trade unions."

The conference was attended by many sincere militant representatives of the rank and file of British workmen and by members of the Communist Party, which at that time opposed the war because of the Moscow-Berlin pact. The well organized CP fraction at this conference maneuvered so well that it secured control of the "Shop Stewards National Council."

When Hitler invaded Russia in June, 1941, the Communist Party of Great Britain, like all other Communist Parties throughout the world, changed its policy, became the lackey of the Churchill government and used the Shop Stewards National Council as an agency for speed-up, strike-breaking, and unlimited overtime.

All the militant shop stewards dropped out of the SSNC and the Stalinists remained in complete control of... themselves.

RECOGNIZED LEADERS IN THE SHOP

The militant shop stewards, although fighting against many odds, are the recognized leaders of the workers in the shops—not the union officials, not the Stalinists' phony outfit.

According to Walter Padley, the well informed secretary of the Independent Labor Party's Industrial Committee, the official statistics for 1943 "will reveal the existence of the most extensive industrial upsurge since 1926, the year of the general strike." In almost every industry in England, workers have been settling their problems and grievances by serving strike notices on their bosses and in many cases actually going out on strike.

The militant shop stewards now have the problem of coordinating their work, educating workers in the shops where shop stewards and works committees do not now exist, as to the importance and value of this organizational form. A national shop stewards organization with a class struggle policy is necessary for all this. The national union leaders have already set up district committees to discipline the shop activists. As the struggle deepens the government will take harsher measures toward militants. But the issue will ultimately be settled by the strength which the shop stewards movement can achieve.

Memo to Post Office:

"You are a publisher of a foreign newspaper. You have lived in Japan for years, respected and feared. You have tried to understand the ways of the people among whom you have chosen to live. You insist, however, on publishing news when it comes to you.

"But, 'No,' says the censor. 'You may surely publish news, but you must take your chances in the matter. It is not unlikely that the news you publish in your newspaper may not be to our advantage, and in consequence it will be suppressed.'

"But if that is the case, you plead, 'kindly tell us what kind of news we may not publish.'

"That we cannot do,' admits the censor, 'for we do not know what news will come in for you to publish.' 'Then, you pray, 'will you please tell us what of that news we have already published is objectionable. Point out specifically why you have suppressed our issue.'

"That is also impossible," says the censor, 'because, if we did that, then you might make use of the point in an indirect way and thus expose our desire for secrecy.'

—From "Japan, Real and Imaginary," by Sydney Greenbie.

Grave Danger in Post Office Hearing--

(Continued from page 1)
newspapers, such as Hanson Baldwin's comment on the operations at the Solomon Islands; Pearl Buck's speech in which she said "this war has ceased to be a war for freedom"; a speech by A. Philip Randolph denouncing Jim Crow.

Charges Based on "Effect"
O'Brien charged that the EFFECT of these statements was to discourage enlistment in the armed forces. Challenged by Goldman and Fraenkel that possible effect (which is a matter open to interpretation) does not constitute a violation of the law so long as INTENT and "clear and present danger" cannot be proved according to the doctrine enunciated by Holmes and Brandeis of the Supreme Court, O'Brien made it clear that he didn't give a hang as to the legal rights of the publication, and was less concerned with the truth.

"Once you establish the precedent that the decisive factor is possible effect," argued Goldman, "then the danger is great that all the jails in the country will be filled." Goldman further asked which is the guilty part: the publication that calls attention to Jim Crow, or the persons in government who are responsible for the continuation of Jim Crow?

Mr. Fraenkel in his argument before the board traced the violation of democratic rights during and immediately following the First World War. He argued that the attempt to suppress The Militant is a danger that will have the gravest consequences on democratic rights in this country. Underlying this point, Mr. Fraenkel said:

"This effort to revoke the mailing rights of The Militant constitutes the gravest threat to freedom of the press that has thus far arisen in this war.

"Without the right to criticize there can be no freedom, and that is the sole question involved in this case."

At the conclusion of the hearing, O'Brien and Fraenkel were given until February 1 to introduce briefs containing citations of legal opinions in previous cases of a similar nature. A decision will then be rendered by the Postmaster General.

On the basis of the facts to date the outcome of the hearings is a subject of gravest concern to every lib-

eral and labor periodical in the country. As the attorney for The Militant pointed out, virtually every paper in the country could, on the reasons given, be suppressed.

Both The Militant and LABOR ACTION have for many weeks been subject to Post Office persecution. Each week the papers are held in the Post Office and released only after inspection by the Washington authorities. This violation of freedom of the press has already provoked wide indignation in labor and liberal circles.

We have previously listed the periodicals and organizations which have protested the Post Office action. This week we add the Liberal Press, published by a number of CIO locals in Delaware County, Pa., which in its January 7 issue published a statement by Morris Milgrim, national secretary of the

Trotskyist Leaders Arrested in Belfast

We are informed through lately arrived news that three leaders of the Irish Trotskyist movement (WIL) have just been arrested in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Although full details are lacking, it is known that they are being prosecuted under the same laws which were set up to combat the Irish Republican Army leaders. All three arrested have been blacklisted from industry in Northern Ireland as a consequence of their arrest.

The English and Irish Trotskyist parties are trying to obtain the release of the imprisoned leaders.

Words—And Deeds!

"A delegation of prominent New York Negroes... went to Washington to observe the Senate debate on the (anti-poll-tax) bill. They were at first refused admittance to the Senate gallery, and were finally herded out of a Senate corridor at the point of guns. It was noticed with disillusion that Vice-President Wallace, who had spoken so ringingly of the century of the common man, failed to acknowledge a report of the incident sent to him."—The Nation.

Hunger Looms, Wage Attack Planned--

(Continued from page 1)
—and that's what they must do without wasting time getting going.

For the profit interests move fast. This increase in parity is just the beginning. Mr. Montgomery states: "The lobby wants Congress to change the definition of parity prices. But don't let that fool you. For ten years parity has been a justification for raising prices. Whenever the big farm organizations get their prices near to parity they change the definition and keep on going."

The latest change in the definition of parity will put \$1,500,000,000 more into the pockets of "the farmers." Of this vast sum SIXTY PER CENT will go to twenty-five per cent of all the farmers—to the top-notchers, the wealthiest, including the big farm outfits closely connected with big business and big banking.

However, the poorest half of the farmers—those bitterly in need of more money—will altogether get only THIRTEEN PER CENT of the \$1,500,000,000 parity increase. Another instance of the rich getting richer!

Nor is this the climax of the indecent story of the recent increase in farm parity levels. The high point is that the consumers will pay \$3,500,000,000 more for food this year because of Congress' generosity to the big farm interests.

The reasons why the consumer will pay not only the \$1,500,000,000 due to increased parity but also \$2,000,000,000 more than that, are not mysterious. Normally—under the unjustifiable profit system—every layer of money-makers between the producer and consumer must get theirs. But in war times normal profits are not quite enough. The war profiteers are having their field

day—with the OPA almost outrightly assuring them by its rulings for ever higher prices, that not the ceiling but the sky is the limit.

The forty-three camouflaged dollar-a-year stooges in the Department of Agriculture are not there to protect your interests either, as you well know. The department is going to be handing out lots of money. It will subsidize this and it will subsidize that. Running true to form, the inside men will do their level best to get as much as possible of that money into the right pockets—those already-bulging pockets that will get sixty per cent of the increase in parity, those already-bursting pockets that always get the lion's share of government subsidies.

Neither Congress nor the Department of Agriculture nor the OPA—nor all of them together—can or will prevent the catastrophe Mr. Montgomery describes. They are all drawn irresistibly to the side of the

moneymed interests.

However, you can expect further attacks on wages from any or all these departments. While raising the pay of the dollar-a-year men to give them the cloak of respectability, Mr. Wickard declared—and this is the most positive part of his program: "Some form of wage control will be necessary to narrow the differential between farm and industrial wages."

So get going, little men and women. Fight like hell for decent wages. Organize your committees of workers, of poor farmers and of housewives to solve the food problem. You have a great responsibility. If men, women and children are not to starve right here in the USA, you yourselves have to do something about curbing the greed of the big farm interests—about fixing and keeping fair prices—about honest rationing—about killing the black markets.

WDL's Letter --

(Continued from page 1)

is in the realm of opinion, not fact. But you also know that published facts do show a real case for point 2, and you do know that discrimination against Negroes in all phases of American life is terribly serious.

Two hundred Negro newspapers have been printing the same truth as The Militant on discrimination, and have painted it far more vividly, said it more often, and have reached far more Negroes whose enlistment might be discouraged by such news. Do you intend to recommend that the Postmaster General inaugurate similar proceedings against the Negro press?

If you accept Mr. O'Brien's view that the truth must be sweetness and light about the war and our armed forces, or else can't be published consistently, then you will have to bring proceedings against hundreds of newspapers, and against many writers who, like Pearl Buck, believe that this is not a war for freedom.

Where do you stand on printing that truth? Does a newspaper have that right, or doesn't it?

If you stand for the right to print the truth, you can divert the energy of scores of Department of Justice workers to the problem of prosecuting those who make the truth as discouraging to enlistment as it is. For example, you'd have time to

1. Prosecute those who, in violation of the Selective Service Act,

which states, "in the selection and training of men for the service, there shall be no discrimination on account of race, creed, or color," order discrimination against Negroes.

2. Prosecute those who, in violation of non-discrimination clauses in war contracts, are guilty of refusing employment to qualified workers on account of their race, creed, color, or national origin.

3. Prosecute those employers who rig their costs in war contracts with the government by including huge advertising bills, designed to persuade the people that industrialists are the nation's great patriots, and to gently influence the press against labor.

4. Prosecute people like our Ambassador to Bolivia, Pierre Boal, who used his office to the detriment of Bolivian workers and the United Nations, by pressuring the Bolivian President to keep wages low and conditions bad.

I am personally much disturbed that a man with your liberal background should be the instigator of the present attack on the right to print the truth. I would be deeply grateful to be set right on this matter if I am wrong.

Sincerely yours,
MORRIS MILGRAM,
National Secretary,
Workers Defense League.
January 23, 1943.

Roosevelt-Churchill Meet in Casablanca

What Happened - - And What Didn't Happen

(Continued from page 1)

detail until the next issue of LABOR ACTION, but the two main political problems of the Anglo-American leaders may be briefly outlined as follows:

First is the question of policy toward the fascists in Europe, both the unreconstructed, like the Spaniards and the Italians (and even the Germans), and the recent "converts" to "democracy," like Peyrouton, Nogues and the rest of the gang around Darlan. The indignant declamations of all brands of liberals who argue that the imposition of such notorious fascists as Darlan and Peyrouton upon North Africa is the result of the bad will of this or that individual American official, or of a mistake in judgment of some other individual official, is so much ignorant wind-jamming. It is the result of a fundamental policy of Anglo-American imperialism. Individual fascists like Darlan may be killed or not; a man like Peyrouton may stay or be replaced by another

person identical with him except in name, but no serious change will be made in the system or in the policy.

Two Aspects of the Policy

That policy has two aspects, and they are equally sinister and reactionary.

One reason for favoring the fascist and semi-fascist elements among the French in North Africa is for the purpose of winning away vacillating fascists in other countries now allied with Hitler. By its "Darlanist" policy, Anglo-American imperialism is saying to the latter elements, in effect: "Don't be afraid of reprisals if you quit the Hitler bloc and join with us in the war. We have no intention of wiping you out, or of wiping out your control, or of wiping out your empire—at least not completely. And as proof of our good will and intentions, just see how we are treating the French fascist elements who come over to our side."

That is why American Ambassador Carlton Hayes spoke recently

at Madrid to assure the Spanish fascists that if they sided with the Allies, the Franco regime would be kept intact and no support would be given to the pathetically hopeful Spanish "democratic" politicians in exile who trot obediently at the heel of Anglo-American imperialism. That also explains the support of the Italian fascist, royalist and industrialist gangs with the assurance that they will be kept in power if only they dump Mussolini. We say hardly concealed attempts because elaborate references have been made to them in the American press, time and again.

The second reason for the policy of "Darlanism" by the leaders of the Allies is that the one thing they fear more than anything else in connection with the war, is the revolutionary rising of the working people against their fascist and reactionary rulers. God knows what that can lead to! The Allied leaders have not forgotten the socialist revolutions of

the First World War. This time, all the indications are, they will not be confined to Europe but will spread throughout the world. Well, to assure themselves against such revolutions, or against the success of such revolutions if their outbreak cannot be prevented in the first place, who can be better trusted to wield an iron fist against the rising masses than the "democratically" "reconstructed" fascists, people like Peyrouton, or Franco, or Ciano, or the Prussian Junkers, or their Hungarian fascimiles? Or, for that matter, "democratic" monarchists like de Gaulle?

Anglo-American Relations

Compared to these basic points, the conflict between the de Gaullists and the ex-Vichyites in Africa assumes its proper proportions, that is, its quite minor significance. Just what are the forces of conflict and rivalry between British and American imperialism, as reflected in the struggle between de Gaulle and Giraud-Peyrouton-Nogues & Co, we do not yet know. There have been

enough signs, however, that all is not sweetness and light between the two great "allies."

Just what are the elements of bureaucratic rivalry, conflicts of personalities and prestige between the two groups of French reactionaries, are also difficult to discern behind the veil of censorship and the cloud of dust that is thrown into the eyes of the public. It merits a separate examination, because the conflict is real enough. But it is not vitally or fundamentally important. Only fat-headed liberals and democratic windbags can possibly believe that de Gaulle's Cross of Lorraine was substituted in North Africa for Peyrouton's red-white-and-blue swastika, all will be well and democracy will be preserved. The real problem—precisely from the standpoint of elementary democracy—is not which French imperialist group will continue to rule by pistol and sabre over the millions of African people and without their consent, but how and what should be done to give these millions the democratic right of self-determination!

De Gaulle for North Africa? Peyrouton for North Africa? An American "protectorate" for North Africa? No! North Africa for the people of North Africa! Morocco for the Moors and Algeria for the Algerians! Any other answer to the problem of North Africa is a thoroughly imperialist fraud.

Prediction in war is risky. But we do not hesitate to predict that whatever arrangements are made in North Africa in the next period, especially as a result of the "reluctant handshake" (as the New York Times called it) between de Gaulle and Giraud, nothing serious or fundamental will be changed in that territory—not one single thing.

Stalin Absent

The second big political problem that Casablanca evidently got no closer to solving is the role of Russia. This most dramatic of Allied meetings, this conference which, we are told, set down the strategy of the United Nations for the whole year to come, was simply not attended by Stalin (or by Chiang Kai-shek). Stalin was invited, but the "commander-in-chief" was too busy with current military operations to attend. The explanation is simply astounding.

The two main political leaders of England and America could absent themselves from their capitals for ten days—for the American, it was without precedent—and travel hundreds and in some cases thousands of miles; the chiefs of staffs of their respective armies and navies could do likewise; the active commanders of their fighting forces in Africa could do the same; but Stalin could not take

off enough time for the overnight journey from Moscow to participate in deciding the "strategy of the United Nations" for a whole year! Not only couldn't Stalin take off the time, but neither could Molotov! Neither could one single solitary Russian, either inside Russia or abroad! Stalin's shortage of manpower must be truly terrific! And not only Stalin's, but Chiang Kai-shek's as well....

The truth is, beyond doubt, that Stalin would not come if he could. We do not pretend to know any of the details of behind-the-scenes conflicts and friction that have rubbed the fur of the different allies in different directions. But as the war proceeds, it becomes clear that in both camps, each of the individual participants plays its individual role and promotes its own imperialist interests, which do not always coincide with the interests of its allies. This is not less true of the one camp than it is of the other. Germany is not fighting for the triumph of fascism in general over the world, or of the Axis over the world, but for the triumph of German fascism, over its opponents as well as over its allies. Japan is not fighting for the victory of the Axis so much as it is fighting for the victory of Japanese imperialism, first in the Orient and then, if all goes well, in the rest of the world. Similarly in the opposing camp.

Stalin is no more fighting for the undifferentiated victory of the United Nations than, let us say, British imperialism is. The Stalinist bureaucracy is fighting in this war for the same reasons that any other ruling class is fighting: to maintain its power to rule and exploit, and to extend this power as far as strength and circumstances permit.

While the Germans were pushing headlong through Russia, Stalin lay low, was very modest and most accommodating—all the time keeping his patron-allies at as much distance as the situation permitted. Now that the tide has turned, at least somewhat, in Russia, and the "proportions of dependency" in the Allied camp are slightly altered in Stalin's favor, he feels himself in a position to pursue a more autonomous role in the alliance.

Signs of this have not been lacking. Cautiously, but nonetheless surely, discreetly, but nonetheless deliberately, Stalin has let the impression gain currency abroad that, unlike the other Allies, he is for a "better deal" for China. Similarly he has committed himself even less to the official British policy in India than the United States has done. In Iran, where Russia and England are jointly responsible for the invasion of the country and its

occupation, he has pursued so skillful a policy that popular resentment now seems to be directed much more vehemently against the British than against the Russians, at least so far as the heavily censored reports show. The Russian ruling class is not at all averse to posing as the most beneficent patron of the Asiatic peoples, particularly those under colonial and semi-colonial rule.

This building up of a myth—and Stalinism is expert at myth-building—is not confined to the East. In the West—again cautiously and more or less discreetly—Stalin is proceeding along essentially the same lines, particularly in the Eastern and South-eastern parts of Europe. As against the "official" Serbian forces under Mikhailovich, Stalin fairly openly promotes and favors the insurgent groups that are either under his influence or under his control—again the censorship prevents a more definitive judgment. In Poland, for example, the popular anti-fascist movement is also divided at least two ways—one which looks to London and/or Washington, another which looks to Moscow. There is even an independent Polish radio station under the Kremlin's aegis.

Frying His Own Fish

Add to this the reticence of the Kremlin about ITS war aims, AND the unofficial hints that Stalin will not be satisfied after the war with a return of the status quo ante bellum but will demand "protection" in the form of extensive annexations to the North, the West and the South, and you can understand why his Anglo-American allies feel a very acute political headache.

If Stalin did not attend Casablanca, or send an authoritative representative, it was undoubtedly because he did not want to get, or be maneuvered into a position—especially at this uncertain stage of the war—where he would have to commit himself on future policy, or even on future military strategy, which, in this situation, is closely linked with policy. Stalin has his own fish to fry, but he is not yet ready to produce them, much less to put them on the fire.

As for the absence of a Chinese representative, something of the same may be said. Naturally, the situation and the problems of China are radically different from those of Russia and a different analysis needs to be made of them. It will be made in LABOR ACTION shortly. But enough has been said for the moment to indicate in outline form that what Casablanca did not show and what it did not settle are of far greater importance and interest than what it did show and what it did settle.

RUSSIA:

How Judge Stalin's Role in This War?

By R. Fahan

Many minds have lost their balance and many eyes have acquired an unusual degree of starriness as a result of the recent Russian military victories. People who had clearly seen, or had begun to see, the tyrannical and anti-labor character of the Stalin regime as well as the role which it plays in bolstering the international capitalist status quo, are now allowing themselves to be hypnotized into passive acceptance of the Stalinist dictatorship, because the Russian soldiers fight with ability and heroism.

The sight of men valiantly dying on the frozen plains of Russia, the sight of men who, even in the midst of the most horrible catastrophe of recent history, can fight and die with courage, is extraordinarily moving and refurbishes one's faith in the capacities of the human race. But it proves nothing—absolutely nothing—about the justice or righteousness of the cause for which they fight.

HEROISM—AND THE NATURE OF THE WAR

For, let us remember, it is not the Russian soldiers alone who have displayed heroism and enthusiasm. It is a depressing fact, but a fact nevertheless, that on many occasions the German soldiers have displayed the same qualities. And the Greeks, and the British, and the Americans, and many others.

Yet who would dare say that the countries for which all these soldiers fight have engaged in just and progressive wars? Who would dare say that because the German soldiers—filled with Goebbels' verbal opium and prodded by Himmler's blackjacks and bayonets—have on many occasions fought with both heroism and enthusiasm, that this in any way changes the fact that Hitler fights a reactionary war, which is against the interests of all humanity? Or, again, who would try to condone Britain's imperialist record in India with references to the valor of the British troops fighting in Egypt? Or who could wipe out the memory of the exploitation of the Philippine people by American imperialists with reference to boys at Guadafuagal?

And the same thing is true about Russia. Because the Russian soldiers fight well, does that in any way change the fact that Stalin is one of the bloodiest dictators of modern history, that he is the grave-digger of the Russian Revolution and the aborter of many other revolutions? Does that change the fact that he is the murderer of the Old Bolsheviks, that he is responsible for the GPU and all which those three dreaded letters mean? Does that deny that he has enslaved the Russian workers, that he has deprived them of every possible liberty and democratic right? And does it deny that Stalin has besmirched and blemished the precious name of socialism by the practices of his bestial regime?

WHAT DETERMINES CHARACTER OF WAR

The worker's attitude toward Russia in this war must be determined not by such subjective factors as one's admiration for the courage of the Russian soldiers, but by an examination of the role of Russia in relation to its allies, its war aims, the character of the struggle it conducts. The soldiers may fight because they have been deluded into believing that there is some kind of socialism in Russia, or because they have succumbed to Stalin's chauvinist and nationalist propaganda, or because they see no alternative to supporting their "own" tyrant against the foreign tyrant, or because they simply have no alternative except to fight when the all-powerful state demands it. But the character of Stalin's war does not depend on this.

The character of Stalin's war is really illustrated by the fact that Stalin functions as a partner of the imperialist United Nations, by the fact that, in the words of the December 20 issue of the New York Times: "The slogans with which Stalin is spurring the Russian armies to ever greater efforts today are not the Marxist slogans, urging the proletarians of the world to unite, but slogans about patriotism, liberty and the fatherland." The character of Stalin's war is determined, too, by the events that led up to it: the imperialist-like invasions of Finland, the Baltics and Rumania—and the now all-too-often forgotten pact with Hitler. And the character of Russia's war is indicated by the kind of propaganda which he conducts among German soldiers—propaganda not of socialist revolution, but of nationalist braggadocio.

It is not for nothing that the New York Times of January 12 editorializes that "the Soviet Union is considered to have abandoned the aims of universal revolution which dominated the first years of its existence." These people know whereof they talk.

Stalin fights as an integral part of an imperialist bloc. True, he has his differences with the other members of the bloc. But so, too, do the other

Editorials

Railway Unions And Dr. Carver

Under the title, "A Great American Passes," the labor weekly, "Labor," has the following to say in connection with the death of Dr. Carver: "The career of Dr. George Washington Carver, world-renowned Negro scientist, refutes silly theories about 'master races' and prejudices against the color of a man's skin." "Labor," we want to inform our readers, is owned by "Fifteen Recognized Standard Railway Labor Organizations." These include the conductors and the firemen and enginemen.

Evidently the members of these unions do not agree with the fine sentiments expressed by Brother Keating, the editor of their paper, "Labor." The members of these unions not only believe in the theory of a master race but they carry their belief into practice. They keep Negroes out of their unions. If any are in, they attempt to push them out. They oppose the hiring of Negroes for jobs such as they themselves hold on the railroads. They are firm believers in Jim Crow, segregation and discrimination. They do have "prejudice against the color of a man's skin."

They didn't learn their "master race" theory or their color prejudices from Hitler. They had them before Hitler was born.

members have serious differences among themselves.

We must, however, remember the past of the Stalinist regime. We must see, too, that its present internal character has not changed a whit. Brutal dictatorship, reactionary to the core, anti-labor to the marrow—that is what an objective examination of Stalinist Russia must lead to. And the fact that men die by his regime and its imperialist partners—be it because of an illusion of the mind or the prod of a revolver—cannot change the correctness of this analysis in any way.

WORKERS PARTY PLATFORM

Against Both Imperialist War Camps! For the Victory of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples! For the Victory of the Third Camp of Socialism!

LABOR MUST DEFEND ITSELF!

1. Hands off the right to strike! For the defense of civil rights and all workers' rights! Against any wartime dictatorship measures!
2. \$1.00-an-hour minimum pay! Time and a half for overtime; double time for Sunday and holiday work.
3. Wage increases to meet rising costs. No wage or job freezing! Equal pay for equal work!
4. For a greater share of the increasing national income. For a higher standard of living!
5. No sales tax on consumer goods! No tax on wages! Against forced savings!
6. For control of price fixing and rationing by committees of working class organizations, housewives and farmers' organizations. Freeze rents and consumer goods prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living.
7. No government contract without a union contract! The closed shop in all war industries!
8. Maintain and increase all government social services!
9. SOAK THE RICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!
9. A government levy on capital to cover the cost of the imperialist war. Confiscate all war profits!
10. Nationalize all war industries under workers' control!
11. Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the three percent of the people who own 96 per cent of the national wealth!

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Sparks in the News
By Everett Weston

"Most Miners Vote to Return to Pits—8,000 Rush to Comply with the President's Order"
—New York Times headline.
—LA—

The State Department being diplomatic: "The State Department knows and recognizes that Mr. (Edward J.) Flynn is a person of ability...and that he knows people and knows well how to get along with people." Although the attack on Flynn has been vitriolic, relatively few have even mentioned Roosevelt, who, it would seem, should get even more blame for nominating him. The Democratic National Committee, on the other hand, said that any criticism of the Flynn nomination was a "dastardly, treasonable plot to hamper the Commander in Chief."

We refer these Democrats to the Constitution, which says something about presidential appointments being subject to Senate approval. And, incidentally, Flynn has been nominated both as minister and ambassador, but only the first is up for approval.
—LA—

PM on the murder of Tresca: "Although the police thus were left with no inkling of the assassin's identity, they concluded at once that the slayer was one of the hundreds of violent political enemies—radicals and reactionaries—whom he had acquired through years of headlong

crusading. Tresca...had a genius for making enemies even among those with whom he spent a lifetime working toward common aims. Where most labor leaders incur the enmity only of police and the right wing, he counted his enemies by the scores in the labor and left wing political movements."

That word on the tip of your tongue, which you can't seem to get off, is "Stalinists."
—LA—
"Such acts as the murder of Tresca are alien to everything that the Communist Party stands for. Any person holding views even remotely tolerant of individual acts of terror would be expelled from the party forthwith, as is made mandatory by the constitution of the party."—Robert Minor, in official CP statement.
"I know it, Browder; our line's been changed again."
—LA—

The rejection by the House of Representatives of Stalinist-sympy Vito Marcantonio has an angle that none of the papers mentioned. The committee he was barred from was the Judiciary, headed by Poll-Taxer Hutton W. Summers, from Texas. And among other bills considered by the Judiciary Committee are those on the poll-tax.
"It is understood that the White House has asked Senator Pepper not to reintroduce the anti-poll-tax bill. In any case, the Florida senator has

refused the request of the anti-poll-taxers that he again place his bill before the Senate."—The Call.
—LA—

Profit for the Foote Brothers Gear & Machine Corp. was equivalent to \$4.68, compared with \$3.16 a share for the previous year. This was AFTER not only all taxes but reserves of half a million, partly for conversion back to peacetime production after the war.
—LA—
Distillers Corp.—Seagrams Ltd. has been advertising its patriotism a lot lately. It seems it is now making alcohol for the government—at a price. It has just announced a profit for a recent quarter of \$2.58 a share, compared with \$1.58 for the same quarter the previous year. This is after deductions for taxes, but not counting an estimated \$600,000 to be turned back by the government after the war.
—LA—

Anacosta has again been indicted for fraud. Between the two indictments it was awarded the Army-Navy "E."
—LA—
"The need to add a fifth freedom to those stipulated in the Atlantic Charter—freedom to develop self-governing institutions by peoples seeking their independence"—was pointed out by Emir Abdullah Ibn Hussain of Trans-Jordan, according to the New York Times.

Leave the Date Open - - February 7. 8 P. M.
REVA CRAINE Labor Action Writer
EMANUEL GARRETT Labor Action Editor
WILL SPEAK AT A MEETING ON
Taxes, Prices, Rationing
IRVING PLAZA
15th Street and Irving Place
In New York City