

## Problems Before Convention of Steel Workers --

1. Rescind No-Strike Pledge
2. Build Real Labor Party

By DAVID COOLIDGE

As you assemble in your constitutional convention, all of us are aware of the pressing and extremely important problems that you will face. You will not only face the peculiar problems which you must solve as workers in the giant and basic steel industry, but you will be confronted with great problems that are being faced by the whole working class in the United States. You are aware, of course, because you have been told so often, that these problems arise in part from the fact that the United States is engaged in war.

While the war is the main event and while our answer to the big questions of the day cannot be answered without giving first consideration to the war, it is also a fact that these problems have their roots in the workings of capitalist society. It is necessary that all of us of the working class realize this or we will not get far in seeking the correct solution for the many problems that face us.

### THE UNION AND THE STEEL COMPANIES

Right now, you as steel workers are mainly concerned with your demands for a wage increase and with other demands that have to do with security on your job and a decent standard of living for your families. You are demanding a basic wage increase of seventeen cents an hour; also, a guaranteed minimum annual wage as well as severance pay on a graduated scale, depending on length of employment.

Your international union has done an excellent job in making a careful study of income and expenditures of steel workers' families. Your case was so well organized and presented that the steel manufacturers had no answer and had to ask for time to prepare their case. In your attempt to deal with the steel barons, the only answer you could get from them was "No."

The steel employers, led by the United States Steel Corp., along with the rest of big business, had already decided on and instituted an anti-union drive even before you presented your demands.

Big Steel—and Little Steel, too—would really like to get back to the days of company unions. Undoubtedly the steel manufacturers are preparing for a showdown with your union. They know that you are in a strong bargaining position due to your size and to the fact that steel is the basic and essential industry.

The steel companies, along with other big corporations, are convinced that they can win an anti-union victory today. Fairless, Grace, Weir and Girdler are ready to revert to all the old union-crushing practices so popular in the days of Frick and Gary. They are heartened now because they have reason to believe that they have already scored a preliminary victory.

They have their Smith-Connelly bill, a friendly WLB, a threatening War Manpower Commission, and a President in the White House who has asked Congress to pass a national service act.

### AN INVENTORY OF LABOR'S SITUATION

If this were all, it would be bad enough. But the employers and their government have more. They have a no-strike pledge from labor. The employers and President Roosevelt have also squeezed other concessions from organized labor. While it is true that you were not consulted about the no-strike pledge, it is nevertheless true that you have rather passively accepted the situation. This is a condition which faces you as you assemble for your constitutional convention.

All of the concessions which you have been pushed into making, including the no-strike pledge, have developed into a millstone about the necks of the steel workers and organized labor in general. You were told that your first duty was to win the war, that you should be prepared to make any and all sacrifices for the winning of the war. We were promised that our unions would be unmolested, that collective bargaining would be maintained, that prices would be held in line with wages, that no new crop of millionaires would be born as a result of war profits.

Not one of these promises, made by the government, has been fulfilled. Any confidence which workers placed in promises made to their leaders has been betrayed. It is only wages that have been held down while hours have been increased. The War Labor Board has taken a steadfast and consistent position that if labor gets more money in the pay envelope it must come not from an increase in the basic hourly rate of pay but from putting in longer hours. There is no real collective bargaining today. This time-honored union-management procedure has been transferred from the factory to the WLB and numerous other government agencies, including the President and his assistants. The cost of living has risen 43.5 per cent—74.2 per cent on food alone—and this since January, 1941. Our wages, however, are tied to the Little Steel 15 per cent formula. Even the figure of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which is 50 per cent too low, says that living costs have risen 23.4 per cent since 1941.

President Roosevelt's statement that no new crop of millionaires must be produced through war profits has also been shown to be merely so many meaningless words. The tremendous increase in profits has produced millions in dividends and interest. WHILE IN 1939 THE SHARE OF CORPORATIONS IN THE NATIONAL INCOME WAS 8 PER

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# LABOR ACTION

MAY 1, 1944

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR



ONE CENT

## Greetings From the Workers Party:

# FOR A LABOR PARTY AND A WORKERS GOVERNMENT!

### WORKING MEN AND WORKING WOMEN:

The Second World War is drawing to the end of its fifth year. That will make five long years of death and devastation, five years of reaction, five years of torture and enslavement for tens of millions of people.

Why has all this blood been shed, this destruction wrought, this torment suffered?

Fascism promised to plant a "new order" for the people of Germany and all of Europe wherever its banner was victorious. All it sowed was terror, hunger and slavery. It brought the peoples of Europe—Germany included—no peace, no security, no prosperity, but only the bloody rule of German capitalism and of its servants, the Reichswehr and the Gestapo. Now, fear stalks the minds of the German ruling class as the irrepressible masses of the people prepare to take their revolutionary revenge. The first wave of the inevitable European revolution was powerful enough to put an end to Mussolini's regime in Italy. Tomorrow it will sweep away the rule of Hitler and all his minions, will leave nothing behind them but the millions of corpses they cruelly sacrificed and the lands they laid waste to achieve their imperialist ambitions. The curses of generations to come will follow them for the part they played in hurling the world into the most futile bloodbath of history.

Why did the Allies enter the war? Every passing month makes clearer the real reasons and strips the mask from the false ones.

We were told that we must fight another war, the second in twenty-five years, in order to safeguard democracy, the rights of the common people, the freedom of all nations, by crushing the fascism and reaction represented by Hitler and his allies in the Axis.

An Atlantic Charter was written for the world, in which all were assured of freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, and the right of self-government.

The workers, and the labor movement in particular, were told that it was primarily their war that was being fought, their interests that were being looked after, their rights and future that were being defended.

Now, however, when the Allies feel themselves closer to the day of military victory, all the noble promises are being discarded and even repudiated, both by word and by deed.

The Atlantic Charter does not apply to the British Empire, says its spokesman, Churchill. It does not apply to Asia and the Pacific Ocean, say Churchill and Roosevelt. It does not apply to Eastern and Southern Europe, says Stalin. It does not apply to Germany, say all three of them. It does not even apply, not immediately, at least, to the countries we "liberate," they now add; these countries are to be ruled not by their people but by us and by our armed might, as we are already doing in Italy, as we intend to do in France and elsewhere.

### WORLD WAR III IN THE MAKING

Right in the midst of the Second World War the seeds of the Third World War are being sowed. The imperialists of the world are not more able to put an end to the scourge of war than they are able or willing to put an end to imperialism itself. The rivalries and appetites of the imperialist powers are not reduced but keener than ever before. England fights desperately for continued domination of her hundreds of millions of colonial slaves. Germany fights under Hitler, as she fought under the Kaiser, to replace England and now the United States as master-exploiter of the world. The Allies expect to crush Germany and divide her into spheres of influence, thus contributing, as they did with the Ver-

## A New World Must Be Born!



sailles Treaty, to the outbreak of another World War. Stalin fights to extend the Russian Empire as far as possible. England and the United States aim to replace rapacious Japan as masters of Asia and the Pacific.

Meanwhile, the conflict for world power between the Allies themselves, England and the U. S. A., is not abated but accentuated. It is a conflict over who will be the dominant power in South America; who will be the real controlling force in China; with whom will the British dominions be closer bound—Washington or London; who will dominate the sea lanes and maritime commerce of the world; who will rule the air; who will inherit the Japanese Empire and be mas-

ter of Europe. As in the past, such conflicts for world economic and political power can be settled by peaceful means for a time. As in the past, the point will inevitably be reached when peaceful means no longer suffice and we are once more plunged into war. That is why the Third World War is being prepared before the Second World War has come to an end.

### WHAT OF THE HOME FRONT?

What has happened here at home? Many solemn promises were made to the workers—the workers without whom not a wheel can turn, not a battle can be fought. None of the promises has been kept.

(Continued on page 2)

## Join the Workers Party!

On this May Day the Workers Party invites workers from the factories, mines, mills and fields to join with us in the fight for freedom, justice, plenty, peace and security.

SIGN HERE

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

## What Are YOU Doing About Subs To LABOR ACTION?

By T. R. COBB

### GREETINGS, READERS AND SUBSCRIBERS OF LABOR ACTION!

Through your splendid and sturdy support, effort and encouragement, America's Leading Labor Weekly is now reaching an ever-widening audience. Our subscription list is the largest in our history and getting bigger week by week. New subscribers to the paper do not limit their enthusiasm to themselves, but send in a batch of subs for their friends as well. Readers who do not receive their paper regularly (it is often late in the mails) write us irate notes of complaint. All of this goes to prove that LABOR ACTION has really "arrived"—and is still going places!

But that is no reason to relax, be-

cause expirations have a habit of keeping up with new subs. Every friend of the paper must become a self-appointed LABOR ACTION GO-GETTER. Wherever you happen to be, wherever you happen to go, remember that the voice of the progressive labor movement must be heard by new people and in new places.

Only through thousands of new subscribers can the paper and the ideas it represents become a permanent and powerful force in American life. And only through thousands of new subscribers can we manage to keep the wolf from the door. As you probably know, the paper is run on an enormous yearly deficit and is supported entirely by supplementary contributions by the men and women who toil in factories, mines and mills,

in the business offices and on the farms of America.

It is a paper without "angels," without financial endowment by advertisers. And no disinterested or far-sighted capitalists have ever offered (or ever will) to stake a paper that is devoted to the abolition of the system of capitalist wage slavery, with its insecurity, unemployment, wars and inherent tendency toward fascism.

So it's up to YOU, John and Jane, you American workers who love truth and freedom and fair-play, to keep on the job for LABOR ACTION, to subscribe, to get your friends and fellow workers to subscribe, to contribute your ideas and suggestions and correspondence to the paper, so that it can continue to be something we can all be very proud of.

After the record-breaking month of January, when we received 326 new subscriptions, it seemed that our friends and news agents had shot their bolt for the year. Subs fell away off in February and March, but we are pleased to report that April was a less cruel month than we were led to expect. The records show more than 200 new entries, accredited to the following cities:

New York	41
California	39
Detroit	17
Cleveland	11
Akron	5
Philadelphia	16
Louisville	3
Buffalo	10
Reading	5
Youngstown	5
Chicago	10

Rocky Mount \_\_\_\_\_ 8  
National Office \_\_\_\_\_ 27

Also heard from were Camden, Columbus, Rochester, Flint, Lancaster, New Orleans, Boston, Ithaca, Lackawanna, St. Louis, Seattle, New Haven, Royal Oak and various suburbs of the large cities listed in the table above.

For this issue only we are making A SPECIAL COMBINATION OFFER of LABOR ACTION and that excellent theoretical magazine, The New International, which is a monthly publication. You can have both for six months for only one dollar! This is a saving of forty-five cents. If you were planning to subscribe to either LABOR ACTION or The New International, why not take advantage of this special offer by filling out the sub blank on the right:

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## A Class Party of Labor the Next Step

## The Struggle for Independent Labor Political Action

By Sam Adams

The American working class has the reputation of being one of the most militant in the world. This reputation is not unearned, for the history of labor in this country is replete with events of glorious working class struggle for improvement of its economic position.

But the militancy of American labor has been limited by the fact that its actions revolved primarily around struggles for immediate demands such as working hours, conditions of labor, and wages. It was not until the crisis of 1929, and the subsequent evils of unemployment, that the demands of labor acquired a social importance far beyond those put forward at the turn of the century and following.

There is an important lesson in this fact. The present-day demands of the American working class are not dissimilar from those of an earlier epoch, but these same demands have a new significance today. For example, wages, working hours and conditions of labor continue to be points of dispute between the capitalists and the workers. Why, then, do the demands of the present period have a greater significance than they had forty, fifty and more years ago?

The reasons are not difficult to determine. The economic demands of the workers in a period of the upward growth of American capitalism were easily met, after great resistance, by the bosses because of constantly expanding American industry and production, and the consequent enrichment of the capitalist class. Even though the ruling economic class fought desperately against granting concessions to labor, their eventual capitulation to the workers did not mean any actual surrender of their riches. On the contrary, the economic history of the country shows that the continual expansion of industry enabled big business in this country to grant wage increases, a reduction in working hours and an improvement in working conditions, at the same time increasing their own profits.

Thus, actually, the workers never received a higher share of the increasing total production of industry. The improvements which labor won after desperate struggles declined in relation to the increasing productivity of the individual worker and the working class as a whole. On the side of the capitalists, however, their profits and wealth continually rose, decade after decade.

But we are living in a new epoch of capitalist society, a period of world disintegration and decline, a decay which afflicts the United States in the same way as the older capitalist nations of Europe are affected.

The crisis of the Thirties illustrated the depth of the decline of this period. Almost ten years of New Dealism showed that it was impossible for capitalism to emerge from its crisis and return to a state called "normalcy." It took an abnormal and wealth-destroying phenomenon like the global war to overcome unemployment and to start the wheels of production operating in earnest.

The normalcy of present-day economic prosperity, however, is completely artificial since it is based solely on the requirements of war and of a military machine of huge proportions. What capitalism was unable to do in peacetime, namely, provide employment and sustenance to the mass of people, it does in war by government intervention and direction of economy.

## GOVERNMENT STEPPED IN TO STAY

This is something new for capitalism, new on the scale on which it operates today. In reality, however, this kind of government intervention already began in 1933 and lasted until the war broke out. It is certain now, and it is admitted by the capitalists, their professors and politicians, that even in the post-war period, and even in victory, the best that can be hoped for is the same kind of "normalcy" that existed under the peacetime New Deal.

Economic demands of the workers, therefore, now assume a political importance they did not have before. Every demand made by the workers now becomes the extreme concern of the government and its many agencies. This is due not only to the war; every one will remember that it was true during the New Deal days. You do not merely ask your boss for a raise; your demands are referred to the government and its agencies. Collective bargaining today is not solely a relationship between boss and workers, but between these two and the government.

Whatever the post-war prospects will be, and they are not at all promising for the overwhelming majority of the workers in this country, increasing governmental intervention and interference in the day-to-day life of the people is a certainty. For this very reason, a new stage of political development has come upon the country.

## BUT WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT?

The government, however, is not an abstract thing. It is made up of people, it represents certain ideas, it develops certain practices. The government summarizes and reflects the class politics in this country. It is capitalist politics, dominated by two capitalist political parties which are completely under the control of the big business-monopolistic capitalists. The government is capitalist and serves the fundamental interests of capital.

No matter how impartial these parties pretend to be, it is common knowledge that on those matters which are really important, the big capitalists decide the policies and the candidates.

There is no vital distinction between the Republicans and Democrats. Usually, their differences are merely election fights for power. The fact that one party has some "liberals" in it is not important because it can always be shown that the other party has its share of the same kind of "liberals."

The Republicans have their Wall Street manipulators. But so do the Democrats. The Republicans have Colonel McCormick, Senator Nye, General MacArthur, Governor Bricker, Girdler, Welr and Few. But the Democrats have Dies, Byrd, Rankin, Tydings,

Connally, Stettinius and Wilson. And while the Democrats have a Wallace, the Republicans have a Willkie.

Examine the long history of these two capitalist political parties and it is easy to understand why they have been called "tweedle-dee and tweedledum."

Long years of miseducation, the power of the press, which is big business itself and desperately hates labor, capitalist control of the air and all channels of information, have diverted the attention of the people from the real source of evil. Thus for decades the workers of this country have been voting for political parties dedicated to the cause of capital against labor. Small-time politicians and demagogues have made a living by pretending to represent labor and its interests, only to betray the workers on the morrow of an election.

## LABOR'S POLITICAL BACKWARDNESS

The truth is that the labor movement, which has had such a brilliant history of economic struggles, is politically backward. An additional reason for this has been the extremely reactionary political policies of the officialdoms of the union movements. The American Federation of Labor, for years the only important union movement, had a policy, which Gompers introduced, of "reward your friends and punish your enemies." This merely meant that at election time you voted against a candidate who HAD NOT lived up to his "promises" and for another who WOULD NOT live up to his "promises." The American labor movement carried out this disastrous policy for decades with the net result that, at every important period, labor received one blow after another from the professional politicians acting for their capitalist masters.

The birth of the CIO in a desperate struggle against the most vicious monopolistic mass production industries of American capitalism gave hope that the labor movement would finally turn away from the game of capitalist politics. Shortly after its organization, it formed Labor's Nonpartisan Committee, which promised to embark on the road of independent political action. But this was short-lived.

At other times in the history of this country there have been movements of the same kind and even attempts at the formation of an independent Labor Party to represent the workers on the political field. These never developed into mass labor parties representing the whole working class of the country. But the desires of the workers, first of all, the more advanced elements, have never been entirely squelched. Periodically, the movement for independent labor political action gains ground and makes itself heard.

## A NEW PERIOD IS HERE

We are now entering a new period of labor struggle for its own political party and for genuine independent political action. Thousands of workers are sick to the stomach from the long years of double-dealing and double-crossing which they have received from the capitalist Democratic and Republican Parties. They are begin-

ning to reason: IN MY ECONOMIC STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOSS, I WOULD NEVER SELECT HIM OR HIS CRONIES TO REPRESENT ME. WHY, THEN, SHOULD I VOTE FOR HIS SERVANTS TO REPRESENT ME IN THE POLITICAL FIELD?

Those advanced workers who see this terrible contradiction in labor's conduct understand it only too well. No union would select a corporation president, or any company official, to represent and fight for the union's wage demands. Yet on the political field the union officialdoms advise their members to vote for the same company officials, or their choices, to represent them at the head of the government, in Congress, in State Legislatures, or the judiciary.

What American labor desperately needs is a party of its own, an independent Labor Party, with labor candidates, to fight for power against the capitalist political parties.

Can this really be done?

## YES, BY THE UNION MOVEMENT

We think it is really an easy job, provided the labor unions of this country decide to do it. The workers of this country are the overwhelming majority of the population. The union movement, over thirteen million strong, it is the largest in the world. If it acts immediately for the organization of an independent Labor Party, such a party can be established virtually overnight. It can challenge the power of big business on the political field as well as on the economic. It can throw out of office, in one fell swoop, the Smiths, Coxes, Johnsons, O'Daniels, Martins, Tafts, Hoffmans, Dies, and other representatives of one section or another of big business. It can march into political power!

Would such a party solve everything? No, but it would be a great step forward in the emancipation of all who labor and toil in poverty for the enrichment of a few. That first step has to be taken.

There are signs of a great stirring among the ranks of labor. The labor leaders are finding it more and more difficult to call upon the rank and file to support a gang of rotten professional politicians. They are beginning to talk tongue in cheek.

Many resolutions for independent labor political action have been introduced at union conventions. These were accompanied by still other resolutions for the immediate organization of an independent labor party. In Michigan, the Commonwealth Federation was formed, marking a great step forward. If the beginning made in Michigan should really result in a party of labor, it will have tremendous influence upon the future course of the workers.

Yes, the American workers have a glorious, inspiring and militant tradition of economic struggles. Their political development needs to keep pace with it. Independent labor political action and the erection of an independent Labor Party are absolutely necessary to the future well-being of the labor movement. Without such political action, the labor movement will suffer serious defeats in the coming years. It cannot permit this; it must not permit it.

## For a Labor Party and a Workers' Government --

(Continued from page 1)

Under cover of the war, the power and profits of the monopoly capitalists have reached unparalleled heights; while the rights and standard of living of the workers have been systematically undermined. Capital is more arrogant and confident than it has been for years. It is on the offensive against labor. Labor has not yet even organized a militant defensive on a nation-wide scale.

"Equality of sacrifice" is a myth and a mockery. After ALL taxes are paid, corporation profits are still the highest in history; corporation reserves are the highest in history for they have already provided themselves for the post-war period and provided well. The tax load on the workers and the middle classes is heavier than it has ever been. The worker's share of the national income, to which he has contributed by a higher productivity than the world has ever known, is being steadily reduced. Wages have a meaning only in relation to the total national income and to what the wages can buy. From both standpoints, and they are the only real standpoints, the worker's wage standard is declining. The profiteers profiteer; the millionaires multiply in number, in wealth and in power.

"Equality of sacrifice" means: the big capitalists are guaranteed plants and machinery by the government; the government guarantees them raw materials; the government guarantees them labor, labor that is frozen to the job, labor whose wages are frozen, labor that must not strike, labor that must not talk back to the boss without risking withdrawal of its army deferment; the government guarantees the capitalists their profits—great big profits; the government guarantees them post-war reserves, good post-war foreign markets, a good post-war future.

For the worker it means: a job for the duration, and even that is not absolutely guaranteed; change of job only by permission of the employer; rising taxes on wages; rising cost of living, including the vicious and uncontrolled black market, accompanied by the paralyzing wage-freeze and the long-outlived Little Steel formula; a War Labor Board stacked against labor by the Administration that appointed and maintains it; anti-strike legislation and decrees and now the right to fire any worker who goes on strike; and no guarantees whatsoever of a serious kind about jobs and security after the war.

At home, furthermore, we not only have the most reactionary and anti-labor Congress we have had for years, but an Administration that has moved further and further to the right. One by one, the concessions granted labor during the period of its militant struggles are being wiped out, directly or indirectly. No attention is paid to labor's demands; labor's grievances are ignored or rebuffed. A violent anti-labor agitation has been organized and conducted throughout the land; it is echoed in Congress; it is condoned by the Administration, which adds its own voice in scurrilous attack upon the workers from the lips of the chief of staff.

The blood profiteers are having a Roman holiday. They not only reap enormous profits, but they control all the important offices in charge of war production and management. They are not only organizing a good post-war period for themselves, but preparing a bad post-war period for labor. They understand that the way to have the workers at their mercy after the war is to lower living standards now, during the war, to deprive labor of its rights and its fighting strength now. The campaign of the capitalist class is deliberate, well planned, well organized and ominous. If this is their attitude today, when they need labor so badly for the war, it is not hard to imagine what their attitude will be tomorrow, when war production comes to an end and labor is thrown out on the streets by the millions. They will try to cut us to ribbons.

## LABOR'S URGENT TASKS

This May Day, the historic day of the international working class, first established by the American unions, labor must gird itself for an organized fight for its rights and its interests. The way to prepare to defend those rights and interests in the post-war period is by organizing the fight now.

Labor is the most numerous class in the country. The organized labor movement is bigger in this country than it has ever been anywhere in the world. With the power it has at its disposal, it can enter any battle confident of the outcome.

The labor movement must first rid itself of the influences, policies and kind of leadership that have all but paralyzed it. The labor leaders, Murray and Green alike, enthusiastically seconded by the Communist Party gang, have done all in their power to make the labor movement an obedient cog in the war machine, to make the workers abandon their basic interests, their great cause and purpose. They have "pledged" the labor movement, to a no-strike policy which delivers the workers, bound hand and foot, to the mercies of the employers and the employers' government. So long as the workers cannot fight back, so long as they have been pledged not to strike under any conditions, the employers and their government can proceed against the workers with impunity and without the least worry about being answered with the full strength of labor.

Labor, the labor movement, must regain its independence of action! Labor must strike out on a road of its own, with its own program, with its own leadership. This requires, as a first move, taking back the right to strike, which is only the right of labor to exercise its organized economic strength in its own interests.

Labor must set itself the goal of becoming the spokesman, organizer and leader of the nation. That is the only condition under which a post-war world of peace, freedom, security and abundance for all the peoples is possible.

What must labor do?

FIRST, labor must aim to shift the whole burden of the war upon the shoulders of those who are responsible for it and who are its only PROFITEERS—the big capitalists and the big capitalist corporations. Let them pay for it!

SECOND, labor must aim to raise its standard of living to the new heights which America's tremendous producing capacity has made possible.

THIRD, labor must become the champion of all the little people, whom it can organize into a common front against reaction, against monopoly capital, the corporations and their banks. That means, first of all, the ten per cent of the country's people constituted by the Negroes. These people, brutally exploited, infamously discriminated against, are the natural allies of labor in town and country. Instead of allowing a wedge to be driven between Negro and white worker—or between Jew and Christian—labor must be the cementing force uniting all those who toil. It must lead the fight against the foul system of Jim Crow discrimination and segregation, be it in the North or in the South, in industry or in the armed forces. Labor must stretch out its arm to the poor farmers, too, to combine with them against the trusts, the railroads and the big bankers.

FOURTH, labor must become the militant champion of the rights and interests of the men in the armed services. Right now, a concerted drive is on to poison the minds of the armed forces against labor and the labor movement. Reaction cunningly hopes to use these forces to crush labor after the war. To counteract this plan, and above all because most of the armed forces are workers and poor farmers or their sons, labor must become their spokesman. Labor must demand higher pay for the men and higher al-

## Sitting on the Lid



lotments for their dependents at home. Labor must demand really adequate facilities for the returning soldier and sailor. Above all, and immediately, labor must insist upon full political and democratic rights for the men in the armed services, in contrast to the miserable, hypocritical "Soldiers' Vote Bill" that has just been passed.

FIFTH, labor must aim at the nationalization of the big industries, banks and railroads under workers' control of production, so that the first step is taken in working out planfully the utilization of our great natural resources, our means of production and exchange and our labor power, so that a decent job, a high standard of living, and continuous production are guaranteed to all workers and in the interests of all workers.

SIXTH, American labor must present itself as a friend and a comrade to the exploited and oppressed peoples all over the world, no nation under oppressive rule. Imperialist reaction will surely seek to crush the great revolutions in Europe and Asia that are already growing out of the soil of the war. Imperialism will seek to crush these revolutions or to cheat them of their fruits. In the Italian Revolution, which heralds the greater revolution to come on the continent, we see the shameful situation where Allied imperialism—Washington, London and Moscow—rules like a conqueror and refuses to grant the people their most elementary democratic rights, in flagrant violation of the promises of the Atlantic Charter. Labor must begin its deeds of solidarity with the people of the rest of the world by demanding now that the Allies keep hands off the Italian Revolution and hands off the democratic rights of the Italian people.

## HOW ATTAIN THESE AIMS?

These aims cannot be attained by the labor movement as it is now. Labor must first declare its independence. The first big step needed immediately is the formation by the organized labor movement of an INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY. We know that the conservative labor leaders either hesitate to take this step or, as in most cases, are opposed to it. Labor must no longer allow these leaders to keep it tied to the chariot of capitalist politics, to keep it as voting cattle for capitalist politicians. We know that the tools of the Moscow bureaucracy, the Communist Party, are opposed to independent working class political action. So much the worse for them. They too must be fought mercilessly. They do not want to see American labor acting independently as a class. They want to capture control of the labor movement so that it can be used as a tool operating in the interests of Stalin's imperialist ambitions.

(Continued on page 4)

## Events In Italy and Germany

A true and revealing picture of the goings-on in Southern Italy just comes from a very strange source... from a high AMG officer, who, in a burst of very unusual frankness, has made some very startling disclosures. Let's quote the New York Times of April 15:

"In twenty-four hours, without the Allies' control, the people of at least nine provinces in Italy would 'throw out the Badoglio government.'" Lieut. Col. G. H. McCaffrey told an Allied Control Commission meeting today. He added that in the nine provinces there was a widespread evidence of a revival of fascism. Col. McCaffrey went on to say that the trouble has manifested itself in a "continuous slowdown" as well as the widespread evidence of the revival of fascism... and after singling out a number of members of the Badoglio government, went on to say that local governments were rotten with "grafting and looting." He added: "I cannot blame the Italians for saying that the old fascists are back in control."

Mind you, these are not reports from Trotskyists. This is the impression of a high officer in charge of the military occupation of Italy. Indeed this "crusade for democracy" is bearing rather strange fruits!

The New York Times correspondent in Stockholm on April 12 sent the following dispatch:

"Following earlier reports of organized communist activity in Germany, stories of the first underground communist convention somewhere in Germany have been heard. The convention's aim was to establish a communist trade union central body. This is reported to have been done. Communist 'cells' have been formed in many German industrial centers, it is said. Secrecy is naturally the watchword; and cells are ignorant of the existence of other cells and even individual members often do not know the identity of fellow cell members.

"The German communists are said to be internationalists or, as they would be called in Moscow, Trotskyites. It is believed unlikely that they can obtain Moscow's blessing."

The correspondent puts it very mildly when he says that it is unlikely that this new organization will obtain Moscow's blessing. There is no doubt that Moscow will make all possible efforts to crush any organization of revolutionary, internationalist communists. No greater danger exists for Stalin's dictatorship than a revolutionary Germany. That's why he is now so busy organizing a fifth column of German stooges headed by arch-reactionary Junkers, the grandson of Bismarck, SS officers and any other former worthy pillars of the Third Reich.

Europacus.

# A May Day Tribute to the Glorious Russian Revolution of 1917

## From It We Have Learned to Do Better Next Time

By Reva Craine

On November 7, 1917, the workers and peasants of Russia shook the entire world by overthrowing the capitalist government and establishing the first workers' republic dedicated to the interests of all the downtrodden, oppressed and exploited.

By this act, the heroic Russian working class showed the way out of the hopelessness and devastation wrought by the imperialist war, the way to socialist freedom as the only road for the forward march of humankind. In spite of all that has happened subsequently to this revolution, its initial success has at least established this much: The working class can take power and establish its own rule; the working class can organize and run the country in the

ruling class. Millions of peasants, dragged from their land, inadequately armed, hungry and underclothed, were dying in a war that made no sense to them. What interests had they in the annexation of Turkey, Persia or Galicia, when their fields were unsown and untilled, and their people back home were starving! At the front, they thought not of killing, but of getting back home.

On the home front, the farms went untended. In the cities, speculators and black marketeers grew fat while the people waited and starved on the breadlines. Food riots were put down by armed force. As the war-weary people starved and froze, the dance of the profiteers grew more frenzied. They feared nothing worse than an

by, and one coalition replaced another, it became increasingly evident that the new provisional government was incapable of meeting the demands of the Russian people. The democratic republic headed by Kerensky found itself between the horns of a dilemma: it did not wish to break with and overthrow the capitalist and land-owning classes. At the same time, in order to remain in power, it had to give the people what they wanted. But to do this meant doing precisely what it wished to avoid, namely, a break with the old ruling classes. For to give land to the peasants, it had to confiscate the big landed estates, or at the very least, not to interfere with the peasant seizures of these estates. Instead, the provisional government sent troops into the rebellious areas where the peasants themselves were carrying out the revolution as they understood it.

To give bread to the people would have meant destroying the black market and organizing production. Kerensky's government did not wish to interfere with the profiteering of the capitalist class. And the most important demand of all—peace—meant a break with imperial Russia's war aims and with its imperialist allies. The provisional government was more concerned with preserving the war investments than with the loss of human lives. It restored the death penalty for soldiers who left the front and answered the cry for peace with preparations for a new offensive in the war.

Every political party during the days of the provisional government promised to fulfill the demands of the people, but the promise was always made in the future, tomorrow, later, after the war. From the very start of the revolution, the workers had established their soviets, where they discussed their problems and decided on their actions.

### ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS!

These soviets were simply councils to which workers' delegates were elected from the factories. They were directly responsible to those who elected them and were subject to recall if they failed to carry out their mandates. The soldiers elected their soviets, too; and the poor peasants theirs.

Inside the soviets one party alone offered a solution to this dilemma and it was a simple one. The Bolshevik Party stated that the interests of the masses should have first consideration, and that their demands must be acted upon immediately. The Bolsheviks explained again and again that if the workers and peasants wanted to obtain their ends, they would have to take the government into their own hands and operate it themselves. The Bolsheviks said: The soviets are the most representative body in the country. Let these soviets become the government. ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS!

It was a matter of months before the overwhelming majority of the workers understood and supported this idea. On November 7, 1917, the soviets did take power and established the first workers' republic. Hardly a shot was fired in defense of the old regime. It simply fell apart at the slightest shove.

The very first act of the new government broke the back of the imperialist war machine. Its declaration called upon the warring peoples and their governments to cease hostilities, to open immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace without annexations and indemnities. The Russian example inspired the workers throughout the length and breadth of Europe to revolt against their governments and the war.

### BACKWARDNESS OF RUSSIA IN 1917

The leaders of the Russian Revolution, the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and Trotsky, did not promise to the people that a socialist society would be established on the very morrow of the overturn. They were fully aware of the backwardness of Russian economy, inherited from czarism, to which had been added the devastation of three years of war, and later three more years of civil war, foreign intervention and blockade. The country was bankrupt; whatever industry had not been destroyed, was paralyzed; the land was laid waste; communications and transportation disrupted; famine stalked the land.

But if the Bolsheviks knew that socialism could not be established on such a foundation, were they not wrong in taking power?

In the first place, in order to achieve even the immediate needs of the people—peace, bread, land to the peasants—it was necessary that the workers and peasants take the power. Experience had shown that there was no other force in the country capable of accomplishing even this.

Secondly, having taken power, the Bolsheviks considered this but the first step in a series of workers' revolutions throughout Europe and the world. Without the success of these, the Russians did not expect the workers' state to survive for any length of time. Thus they wrote and spoke in the early days.

But while waiting for these revolutions in the West, the new regime had to settle down to the task of reconstruction of the country. It was only after three years of civil war and intervention that the Russian people could turn to this job. In the meantime, several workers' revolutions had come in the West; but they had gone down to defeat, derailed from their purpose by compromise, betrayed or outnumbered by superior enemy forces and drowned in blood. The Bolsheviks in Russia proceeded with the reorganization of the country, still convinced that salvation lay in the success of the international proletarian revolution.

In spite of the heroic efforts of the workers in many countries to come to the assistance of their Russian brothers and comrades, the first workers' republic remained isolated. While it was strong enough to resist the armed assaults of the hostile capitalist governments, this isolation began to choke the revolution from the inside.

### NON-REVOLUTIONARY INFLUENCES AT WORK

Many changes had occurred during the years of the civil war. In the first instance, war communism, as this period is called, brought about the abrogation of some of the democratic rights which had been established by the revolution. Again, many of the best Bolshevik fighters were killed in the effort to defend the Soviet Republic. The party, now renamed the Communist Party of Russia, was beginning to be infested with all kinds of careerists, office seekers who, now that the revolution had succeeded, were eager to attach themselves to the new regime. And finally in 1924, the wisest and most able of the Bolshevik leaders, Lenin, died. Inside the party a struggle commenced over who was to replace him, a struggle between the conservative wing and the Bolshevik wing.

As early as 1923, Trotsky, co-leader of the revolution with Lenin, sounded the alarm against the non-revolutionary influences which were penetrating the Communist Party. Trotsky opened the fight against the developing bureaucracy and for the restoration of democratic control of the

party and the country, with his pamphlet, "The New Course."

The failure of the revolutions in the other European countries, however, strengthened the influence of the conservative wing, personified by Stalin. Russia, they believed, could no longer hope for any help from the workers on the outside. It must rely solely upon its own strength. "Socialism in a single country" became the battlecry of the Stalinists.

In saying this, however, they were in reality negating socialism, for socialism is an international system. The revolution which would make socialism possible had occurred in one country, but it could not succeed in achieving its socialist goals unless similar revolutions were successful in at least some of the leading and more advanced countries. Why?

Socialism is a system which is based upon plenty for all. Its aim is to raise the standard of living of all humankind far higher than that reached in the most advanced capitalist country. It means, therefore, the utilization of the most modern and advanced means and methods of production. It means the most scientific utilization of all the natural resources of the entire world. It means the closest cooperation of the peoples of the entire world.

Socialism cannot be based on scarcity and want, for these breed inequality, rivalry, class divisions. Socialism seeks to eliminate these forever from the face of the earth.

Russia, left to her own resources, could not and did not produce sufficiently to satisfy even the basic needs of all the people. Those in office, therefore, found it possible to utilize their positions in order to guarantee for themselves and their families some of the good things that were denied to the rest of the population. Therein lay the basis for the development of the inequalities which exist in Russia today and which are in direct violation of the aims of the revolution.

### ASCENDANCY OF THE BUREAUCRACY

The Trotskyist wing of the party was defeated. The bureaucracy against which Trotsky had warned the party, triumphed by destroying the democracy which had existed inside the Bolshevik Party, by destroying the democracy inside the workers' organizations, their unions and the soviets themselves. The bureaucracy resorted to arrests, frame-ups, murders—legal and illegal. The Moscow Trials, the frame-ups by which the leading members of the old Bolshevik Party were killed off, were only the crudest example of what occurred in Russia during the years when the bureaucracy was intrenching itself and killing off what remained of the glorious Russian revolution.

Today, the Russian Revolution and the workers' government which it established, are dead. A new revolution in Russia is on the order of the day. Even the most casual observer cannot fail to see the difference between the Russia of Lenin and Trotsky and the Russia of Stalin and his henchmen.

The 1917 revolution established freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free trade unions, free and universal elections, free and universal education. Today these no longer exist.

The 1917 revolution established the practice of paying workers' wages to all government officials, even the highest. Workers were to be trained in how to run the government. Today the privileged bureaucracy, the new ruling class, lives off the exploitation of the working class and peasants. The inequalities between the rulers and the ruled are greater

today than they were under the Czar.

The revolution gave freedom, even the right to secede, to all the small national minorities. It was opposed to forceful annexation. Today the Great Russian bureaucracy has re-established the "prison of the peoples." Stalin is seeking in the present war to annex as many small countries to his empire as he can.

The revolution abolished secret diplomacy and published the secret treaties for all the world to see. Today Stalin conspires with the imperialist powers for a division of the booty of war.

The revolution established a gov-

### NEW SOCIAL SYSTEMS DEVELOP SLOWLY

The capitalist system came into being only after a number of revolutions and half-revolutions. The period of its birth lasted for decades. The change from the feudal system to capitalism was not as drastic as will be the change from capitalism to socialism, for the latter implies not the change of one system of exploitation for another, but the elimination of all exploitation and class rule.

The attempt of the Russian workers was but the first. Their workers' state was the first to be established and naturally it was full of imperfections. The Russian workers gave



TROTSKY



LENIN

interests of all the people; the working class, and the working class alone, can and will open the door to the new socialist society of peace, plenty, freedom and security.

The Russian Revolution did not occur at the instigation of a handful of conspirators who wished merely to replace the old rulers. It grew out of the deepest needs and aspirations of the Russian people, who were sick and tired of being pushed around—and who longed for a chance to govern themselves. The success of the revolution depended upon the capable and courageous leadership supplied by the Bolshevik Party, which showed the masses how to achieve what they yearned for.

### HUMAN SUFFERING BROUGHT REVOLUTION

In 1917—the third year of the First World War—Russia, one of the weakest and most backward of its participants, was under a heavy strain. Its people were paying dearly for the accomplishment of the war aims of

early peace, which would put an end to their blood-sucking. In the palaces, the Czar and his camarilla enjoyed their tea parties and costly banquets. Outside, the people mumbled about the hardships and suffering, the lack of food and the cold.

The longing for peace was in the hearts of all the people—the cry for bread on everyone's lips! The peasant soldiers wanted to come home. As the war went on, the resentment toward it mounted until the masses went from grumbling to direct action.

On February 23, 1917, International Women's Day, the Petrograd workers went out on strike; and demonstrating on the streets, demanded bread, peace and an end to the czarist autocracy. This was the beginning of the revolution. The Czar abdicated and made way for a provisional government which sought to establish "order."

### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT A FAILURE

As the weeks and months rolled

all they could in their effort to bring about a socialist world, and were defeated because their class brothers in the rest of the world were unable to aid them sufficiently.

Thanks to the efforts of the Russian workers, thanks to the Russian Bolsheviks, we are wiser today, better prepared to meet the problems that the transition to socialism involves. We know from their experience what pitfalls to avoid and how to proceed. We gain confidence from their initial success. Tomorrow, the working class throughout the world will be following the example of Russia of 1917. Tomorrow, however, we will do it better.

### India in Revolt

By Henry Judd

25 Cents Postpaid

WORKERS PARTY

114 West 14th Street

New York 11, N. Y.

# The New International--A Magazine of Revolutionary Marxism

By Henry Coleman

To workers, students, "old-timers" in the left-wing labor movement, to new recruits, active unionists and inactive "intellectuals," the name of The New International has come to stand for serious and honest discussion of the main practical issues and theoretical problems facing the world labor movement. No other publication in the United States has done so much to keep the ideas of revolutionary socialism from being buried in the vast confusion that has overwhelmed the international socialist movement during the last few years. Now, when the working class movement throughout the world is once more stirring, The New International will continue to play its role, and a more important one, than ever before.

The year 1944 marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of the magazine. With the exception of one year, The New International has appeared uninterrupted. Other socialist and near-socialist publications have made their appearance. Some have aroused considerable interest; but their disappearance after one, or two, or a half-dozen issues has seldom caused any comment. Meanwhile, The New International has done a quiet and thorough job of educating a whole new generation of socialists. During these difficult and confusing years, "a whole new generation" does not, perhaps, amount to much in numbers—but it amounts to a great deal in terms of the future of the socialist and labor movements.

The first years of The New International were notable for the wide variety of contributions from all parts of the world. The internationalism of the magazine has been a jealously guarded quality right up to the present. The best minds among the revolutionary socialists, led by Leon Trotsky, made valuable contributions—and in the case of Trotsky, the brilliance and profundity of his political analyses, as they appeared in the first volumes of The New International, have never been equalled.

During the past year, the magazine has maintained its reputation for consistent and vigorous exposition of the viewpoint of socialist internationalism and revolutionary Marxism, combined with free discussion by all tendencies within the movement.

### IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE PAST YEAR

In January and February, 1943, an original contribution of great importance to socialist thought was made with the publication of the Workers Party resolution on the National Question in Europe and Asia. This was followed by a long and interesting discussion of the problem, with various viewpoints represented, which included discussion articles by J. R. Johnson, Albert Gates and others, continuing into the first issues of 1944.

Different aspects of the National Question were studied in Karl Minter's informative series, "Whither Zionism? Whither Jewry?" in the first months of 1943; in Pierre Bellasi's "A New Stage for World Labor (May and June, 1943); in Harry Young's "The Struggle in Yugoslavia" (December, 1943). Max Shachtman discussed the position of the Socialist Workers Party on the National Question in an excellent article in March, 1943, and in correspondence published in the September, 1943, issue.

W. F. Carlton on the West Indies (June, 1943), Reva Craine on Bolivia (July, 1943), Miriam Gould on "Lessons of the Spanish Commune" (May, 1943) and Clara Werth on the German Revolution (April and May, 1943) carry on the internationalist tradition of the magazine.

### CAREFUL ANALYSIS OF RUSSIA

What is happening in Russia and Stalin's maneuvers in the war have been more carefully analyzed in The New International than in any other publication. In the Archives section of the April, 1943, issue, Max Shachtman makes some penetrating comments on the "Workers' State" theory in an introduction to an article by Trotsky; Shachtman's "Notes on Russia in the War" (October, 1943) continues the discussion, followed by the same writer's "Stalin's Aims in Europe" (November, 1943), "The Meaning of the Fight Over Poland" (January, 1944), and his brilliant "It Is Time to Understand—the European Revolution and Stalinist Russia" (March,

1944). The same writer's "The Mistakes of the Bolsheviks (November, 1943) is also of interest; and a highly informative series of newly-translated selections from Anton Ciliga entitled "From Inside Stalin's Prisons—the Political Life of the Left Opposition," which began in the January, 1944, issue, should not be missed by anyone interested in the present situation in Stalinist Russia and its background.

International questions of a more general nature are discussed in R. F.'s "The Struggle for Air Supremacy" (April, 1943), Alfred Freeman's "Appeasement in Theory and Practice" in the same issue, Ernest Lund's "Invasion of Europe and the 'Long War'" (September, 1943), "France and England in Lebanon" (November, 1943) and Paul Temple's "What Are the Prospects for Socialism" (June and July, 1943), to mention only a few.

### MANY LABOR ISSUES

Economic problems are treated in various articles and reviews, including Albert Gates' "Unemployment: A Post-War Problem" (May, 1943), and Walter Weiss on "What Is Incentive Pay?" (June, 1943).

American political developments were given extensive treatment during the past year, with Roosevelt, the congressional elections, the War Labor Board, the National Service Act, the fight in the American Labor Party and other topics discussed editorially in almost every issue.

Events in the American trade union movement were given especially prominent place in the magazine, beginning with the editorials on the momentous strikes in the mine fields in the May and June, 1943, issues. Then came Walter Weiss' excellent and carefully documented analysis of "The Auto Union in the War" (September, 1943), and Max Shachtman's first-hand account of "The Auto Workers' Convention" (October, 1943), which in several respects set a new high for political reporting of a trade union event.

David Coolidge on "The CIO-AFL Conventions" (November, 1943) maintained this standard.

Closely allied with the discussion of the union movement is the race problem in America, above all the question of the Negro, which received treatment in "The Negro and the Pogroms," by W. F. Carlton (July, 1943), J. R. Johnson's "Negroes in the Civil War" (December, 1943), and Alfred Freeman's "Psychology of Jim Crowism" (February, 1944).

### OTHER OUTSTANDING FEATURES

In the "Archives of the Revolution" section, The New International has featured selections by Marx, Lenin, Luxemburg, Mehring and Trotsky, either hitherto unpublished in English or not readily available. Book reviews have appeared in many issues, of which the most notable is R. Fahan's detailed and closely reasoned study of Burnham's "The Machiavellians" (December, 1943, January and February, 1944), a series which received much favorable comment.

Finally, the most important political event of the past year, the fall of Mussolini and the developing situation in Italy, was discussed by Max Shachtman in his "Problems of the Italian Revolt" (September, 1943), followed by a selection from Trotsky on "The Revolution in Italy" (January, 1944).

Special attention should be called to a new series of articles by Paul Temple on "Technocracy: Totalitarian Fantasy," which began in the March, 1944, issue.

Under the editorial direction first of Albert Gates and now of Max Shachtman, The New International has, in the past months, maintained and increased its reputation as the outstanding review of socialist thought. It has a secure place in the socialist movement on this May Day as on many past May Days. It deserves the support of the readers of LABOR ACTION in far greater measure than it has so far received.

## A MAY DAY REVIEW OF LABOR AND ITS PROBLEMS

## Labor in 1886 and in 1944

By DAVID COOLIDGE

When in 1884 the small and weak Federation of Trades and Labor Unions passed the famous resolution calling for a nationwide demonstration for the eight-hour day, it gave the mightiest impulsion to the labor movement that it had received up to that time in the United States. The resolution read: "Resolved by the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada that eight hours shall constitute a legal day's work after May 1, 1886, and that we recommend to labor organizations throughout this jurisdiction that they so direct their laws to conform to this resolution by the time named."

## DOWN TOOLS MAY 1, 1886

This call for mass action, for the workers to lay down their tools on May 1, 1886, and demonstrate in the streets, was issued in the midst of a small depression and right at the time when capitalist big business was organizing with all its might to wreck a young but vigorous trade union movement. The New York Sun said in an editorial: "Five men in the country control the interests of 500,000 workmen and can at any moment take the means of livelihood from 2,500,000 souls... They can stay the nimble touch of almost every telegraph operator, can shut up most of the mills and factories, and disable the railroads. They can issue an edict against any manufactured goods so as to make their subjects cease buying them and the tradesmen stop selling them... they can array labor against capital."

The opposition and scheming of the capitalist ruling class did not scare or frighten the unions. They had grievances and they were determined to fight for their just demands. The call of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions caught on. Great enthusiasm was engendered for the May 1st demonstration and strike. This was true not only among the skilled workers, but among the unskilled, who worked the longest hours.

The demand for the eight-hour day became the battlecry of all the forces of labor, and their ranks moved inexorably toward the first great working class political demonstration ever held in the United States.

That is what the struggle for the eight-hour day was: a political struggle, a struggle of class against class, a struggle that would inevitably involve the federal and state governments on the side of capitalist law and order and against the demands of the workers.

In reply to the call, the workers poured into the streets on May 1, 1886, and instituted the first May Day. There were thousands of strikers and demonstrators from all the big cities. Many thousands of workers won the eight-hour day and many more thousands had their hours of labor reduced.

When we speak of the eight-hour struggle and the celebration of May Day, it is fitting that we recall the Haymarket frame-up and the martyrdom of Parsons, Engel, Spies and Fischer. We have inscribed their names on our working class banner. We observe May Day not only to celebrate the victories of the past, but also as a memorial to our brothers, sisters and comrades who gave their lives to make those victories possible.

THIS WAS WHAT THE LABOR MOVEMENT DID IN 1886, FIFTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO, BEFORE IT WAS WELL ORGANIZED AND BEFORE IT NUMBERED THE MILLIONS IT DOES TODAY.

Out of the eight-hour movement and the May Day demonstrations the AFL was developed and found itself at the head of the labor movement in the United States. Through long years of con-

lict and numerous crises—often meeting the forces of organized capitalism head-on—the movement grew and extended its influence.

## PROGRESS THROUGH STRUGGLE

All through the decades following the first May Day, organized labor learned through experience that it had to fight; that it had to strike and mass its thousands on the picket line. Quite often the leaders of labor were against the strike. They would listen to the siren voice of the capitalist enemy, capitulate before his threat of force or take to their heels when the capitalist government thundered from Washington. It was the pressure of the plain workers that lifted the movement to ever new heights and greater power and strength.

The labor movement today with its millions is the heir of the struggles carried on during the years since the first May Day. We are the beneficiaries of the great militant strikes of the past half century: the militant railway strikers of the seventies, the bloody struggles of the miners and steel workers, of the garment workers, and all the other conflicts that brought the gains to labor that we enjoy today.

It was these militant and often bloody struggles that brought what freedom the working class has today. It was through determined resistance to the capitalist ruling class that we gained the right to organize. Workers went to jail in the course of the struggle for the establishment of the unions and collective bargaining. This right was not granted freely by the capitalist employers nor was it granted and protected by any "friendly" government.

A story has been going around the past ten years, fostered by trade union leaders, that the Roosevelt government, with its section 7A of the NLRA, gave the workers the right to organize "into unions of their own choosing." This is a capitalist lie, a New Deal lie. We won that right, along with every other right we possess, on a thousand picket lines over the past 125 years.

## THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

This is the brief story of our past. But what of today? What about the future? The labor movement cannot live wholly by its past. That is what some of our labor leaders of today would have us believe. They talk about the glorious past of the labor movement, and they are correct. They also talk about the future of the trade unions after the war. They tell us the story of their past militancy and what they will do in the future, "AFTER WE HAVE WON THIS WAR."

R. J. Thomas proclaimed loudly in a UAW convention that he had called more strikes before Pearl Harbor than any other international president. He promised that after the war is over he will repeat that performance if the occasion arises. Phil Murray is proud of his record in the United Mine Workers' struggles. The same can be said for any number of labor leaders. Even Sam Gompers once violated a court injunction.

Unfortunately, neither the capitalist class nor its government are awed or deterred, even in their most timid moments, by the PAST militancy of the labor leaders. They know that this militancy never interfered seriously with capitalism nor with the accumulation of vast wealth by the capitalist class. The working class today, therefore, cannot live or make progress merely by contemplating its past militancy or by listening to the somewhat exaggerated role that the leaders claim for themselves.

We have to take stock of our labor movement today and the role played by the leadership right now. Waiting until after the war will not do. The capitalists do not wait until after the war is over. Where their interests, power, profits and dividends are in-

volved they make no distinction between before the war, during the war and after the war. The war to them is an episode—an important episode, to be sure—in the struggle for profits and the perpetuation of capitalism and a capitalist government.

## LABOR SINCE LAST MAY

The struggles that have been forced on the labor movement since last May Day should make this clear. This period was notable because we witnessed open attempts of the ruling class to guarantee its rule and profits by demolishing the unions as bargaining agents for labor with power to enforce any demands made on the employers.

Even before the death of the New Deal had been announced by its midwife, Roosevelt, the ruling class had brought this experiment in "capitalism for the millions" into the burial ground that big business had been preparing for several years.

The big capitalists succeeded in this by taking over the New Deal in a furious assault. The labor leaders, especially those of the CIO, had looked to the New Deal as the second great Magna Carta; the "Great Charter" of labor. They called on the New Deal government to protect the interests of labor, to defend the working class against the attacks of the big employers. When the war came, these leaders of labor, counting on the friendship of Roosevelt and "progressive" congressmen, virtually delivered the labor movement to Roosevelt and government boards appointed by Roosevelt. While the ranks of labor were not consulted, it was assumed that Murray and Green would be able to deliver.

The capitalist employers, however, had reason to be skeptical about this wedding between Roosevelt and the top leaders of the labor movement. They remembered the great mass struggles of the past and they knew that labor cannot so easily be brought under control. They especially feared the CIO unions—that had not reached the "age of discretion." They had not become "responsible" labor bodies.

United States capitalism and the capitalist class were engaging in their second great imperialist venture. Capitalism at home must be made safe from attack by the workers. The employers moved in and took over the New Deal. If Roosevelt wanted to be a victorious war lord and war chieftain, then he must listen to the commands of the men of property. If he wanted appropriations and the agreement of the men of big business, then they must be accorded seats of control. THIS IS WHAT THE CAPITALISTS AND THEIR PRESS MEAN BY "LISTENING TO CONGRESS" AND BRINGING "PRACTICAL BUSINESS MEN INTO THE GOVERNMENT."

Roosevelt submitted to the demands of the corporations, and not to the demands of labor. He didn't have to obey the demands of labor. He had already very cunningly stripped labor of part of its power with the aid of the leaders of labor. He had their promise that the trade unions would not strike for the period of the war. The capitalists would go right on piling up their profits but the workers must consent to wage stabilization, job freezing, high living costs, the sixty-hour week, the Little Steel formula, the Smith-Connelly Act and a national service act. They must submit to these inequities because they had no way to break through this capitalist-New Deal barricade. THEY HAD GIVEN UP THE RIGHT TO STRIKE!

## THE RANKS OF LABOR FIGHT BACK

With all this drive of the employers and the government, labor, however, refused to be pushed to its knees. The workers fought back. Faced by increasing threats to their already low standard of living, deserted by a cowardly leadership and faced with the anni-

hilation of their unions, thousands of workers in numerous industries took to the picket lines.

Inspired by the indomitable courage and union discipline of the miners, a real upsurge of labor and a new birth of militancy took place in 1943. This was true not only of the CIO but of the AFL unions and the railway unions. The threat of further uprising was so ominous that the big bureaucrats of the labor movement began to bestir themselves against the Little Steel formula and for definite increases in wages and other demands that were being pressed on them by an aroused and betrayed membership.

The CIO convention did not endorse Roosevelt for re-election to a fourth term. The Communist Party's delegates at the convention were, of course, ready for a blanket endorsement of Roosevelt, as was Hillman, but Murray knew that Roosevelt had betrayed every confidence that labor had placed in him. Murray could not, therefore, so easily shove this bitter pill down the throats of the CIO rank and file.

The attack of the employers and the government has been exposed, but it has not been halted. The imperialist war goes on, the capitalist employers want increased profits out of their war, the government at Washington wants the bureaucratic power and prestige which it gets from doing the will of its capitalist overlords. The drive against labor will continue. The WLB will not yield, Byrnes and Vinson will not yield. Stimson, Knox, Land and Roosevelt will press for their national service act. The employers will conspire and scheme for lower wages and longer hours. The drive will continue for piecework wages. Congress will continue to be obedient to the demands of Wall Street, the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. There will be no reduction in workers' taxes. There may be an increase. Government control of prices will continue to be the playing of the food producers, processors and manufacturers, as it has been up to now. THAT IS, THESE EVILS, THESE ATTACKS ON LABOR WILL CONTINUE UNLESS WE OURSELVES DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

Reaffirmation of the no-strike pledge is not the answer for labor to give. Support to Roosevelt or Dewey is no answer for labor to give. Labor members on the WLB and other government boards is "quack medicine."

The miners gave the answer last year. And so did the rubber workers. And so did thousands of workers in many industries. The steel workers made a beginning in December but were halted by their leaders.

## THE STRUGGLE MUST DEEPEN

The voice of these workers was not loud enough, not insistent enough, not determined enough. What was done was only a mild gesture. It didn't stop Roosevelt, nor Congress, nor the employers. It didn't put sufficient heat under the labor leaders: the Murrys, Greens and Thomases. We haven't put enough pressure on them yet. They cling to their no-strike pledge like drowning men to a small bit of board. They hang onto a few crumbs from the Roosevelt table as though there were not bread enough to go around.

What labor did since the last May Day was only a small sample of what we can do. The rising tide of dissatisfaction can swell into a mighty torrent. But we must take the no-strike halter from our necks. We must get away from the capitalist parties and into our own Independent Labor Party.

We must return to the spirit of '86, which gave birth to our militant labor movement. We must carry on this year and the years to come in the spirit of militancy and aggressiveness that won for us what measure of freedom we have today. These victories were not gained with no-strike pledges!

## Strength in Unity



## For a Labor Party and a Workers Government -- His Walks?

(Continued from page 2)

The formation of an INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY can be postponed only to the increasing peril of the American workers and the American labor movement. Such a party must be formed and formed immediately. It must adopt a fighting program. It must challenge the other parties, the parties of capitalism, in the name of labor and with the aim of a workers' government.

In Michigan, many of the unions have taken a step in this direction by formation of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation. Much still needs to be done in Michigan before the workers have the kind of party they must have in order to fight for their interests on the political field. But a step has been taken along the right road.

In the CIO a Political Action Committee has been formed. The idea of organizing the labor movement for united political action is absolutely correct, and urgently necessary. All that the leaders of the Political Action Committee have in mind, however, is to prevent the formation of a Labor Party and to corral working class votes for a fourth term for Roosevelt. Again we ask: What treatment can labor expect from Roosevelt or any other capitalist politician if he knows that no matter what he does, the support of labor is guaranteed in advance, is in his vest pocket? Labor can command respect from others, have confidence in itself, and win its battles ONLY if it acts unitedly on the political front FOR ITSELF, with a party of its own and a program of its own.

## LABOR PARTY MUST BE BUILT

The Political Action Committee proposes to call a national convention of labor unions this year to consider policy and activity. Undoubtedly the unions will be widely represented at this convention. Every union conscious of the need of the hour should therefore adopt resolutions in favor of independent working class political action, that is, in favor of the immediate formation of a militant Labor Party, and send its delegations to the PAC convention with strict instructions to speak, fight and vote there for a Labor Party.

A Labor Party worthy of the name is one that aims frankly and boldly at setting up a labor government, a government of, for and by the workers. A workers' government would be a tremendous step toward crushing the reactionary power of monopoly capital and establishing the power of the working class. Under the power of the working class, the masses would proceed to establish the new order of socialism by taking over the means of production and exchange and organizing them exclusively in the interests and for the welfare of the people.

The governments of the capitalists have brought the people unemployment, doles, exploitation, national hatreds and imperialist wars; underproduction when people needed food, clothing and shelter, and production for war when people needed and yearned for peace and security. High time that labor took its rightful place at the head of society. High time labor launched the conscious, organized fight to set up a workers' government.

## WP SPEAKS TO THE MILITANTS

These are the aims the Workers Party urges the American

working class to adopt, the actions it urges them to take. The Workers Party is an organization of revolutionary socialism, of socialist internationalism. We are grouped together on the basis of the great traditions and program of the international socialist movement. Our aim is to inspire the working class to the conscious, effective struggle to overturn the outlived, rotten system of capitalism in order to replace it with the revolutionary rule of the workers which will reorganize society on a socialist basis, free of class exploitation, oppression and inequality.

To the militant workers, aware of the need of an organized revolutionary socialist movement that works as an integral part of the labor movement, and seeks to unite its immediate interests with its historic interests, the Workers Party issues the call: Join our ranks! United in the great, world-wide struggle for socialist freedom!

In a deep sense, the leadership of the world has fallen to the United States. The United States can become master of the world under imperialist rule, despoiling it, exploiting it, wracking it with crises and recurrent wars. The United States can become leader of a world that is united in brotherhood and solidarity, in peace, freedom and prosperity. But only if the leader of the United States is the working class.

A tremendous historic responsibility rests upon our shoulders. A breath-taking opportunity lies right before us. Let all of us in the labor movement decide this May Day to seize this opportunity firmly.

ON TO A LABOR PARTY—TO THE DECLARATION OF POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE AMERICAN WORKING CLASS!

ON TO A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT—TO FREEDOM, PEACE, SECURITY AND ABUNDANCE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE!

ON TO A WORKERS' WORLD—ON TO SOCIALISM!  
NATIONAL COMMITTEE, WORKERS PARTY,  
MAX SHACHTMAN, National Secretary.

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SPEAKER:

ALBERT GATES

Editor, Labor Action

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 8:00 P. M.

at

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## The Battle For Union Democracy in Ship Local 9

**SAN PEDRO**—In the largest CIO local on the West Coast—Local 9 of the Shipyard Workers' Union—the one and a half year old fight of the membership for local democracy is nearing a victorious end.

Late in 1942, the charter of this local was lifted by John Green and the national officers of the union, and the notorious Walter Pollard was installed as dictator when it appeared likely that progressives were going to be elected by the membership as their new leadership.

It is to the everlasting credit of the CIO workers that the regime of the malodorous Pollard has been a record of increasing resentment and struggle by the rank and file against his bureaucratic stranglehold on the union. Sabotaged though it was by the Stalinists, conservatives, pessimists and Pollard stooges, the fight for local democracy never quieted down and now has forced the General Executive Board to grant new elections.

It is high time, for on the eve of these elections the union finds itself faced with problems that would try even the most experienced leadership. This is the legacy of the year and a half of dictatorship by Pollard in cooperation with the Stalinist group.

### A Familiar Pattern at LA Ship

Most pressing is the situation at LA Ship, largest of the yards in the harbor organized by Local 9. Five months ago that yard was seized by the Navy and turned over to Todd Shipyard for operation. While the previous management had followed the policy of "cooperating" with the union administrator in chiseling on the men and weakening the union contract, Todd, backed by the Navy, has virtually abrogated the contract, especially the clause that requires membership in Local 9 of all production employees.

The shipyard workers at LA Ship, once the solid core of the local, now find themselves with a contract that is not honored, a steward system that operates only by the grace of the corporation, and with new hires and old-timers alike openly told they need not join the union. Add to that the infiltration into the yard of AFL men through the wide use of subcontractors, and it is easy to recognize a familiar pattern of union-busting.

It must be remembered that less than two years ago all hiring in this yard was done through the union, and an aggressive and militant shop stewards organization guarded the men's rights.

Another familiar aspect of union-busting appeared on the scene recently with a flare-up of race hatred in the repair division of LA Ship. A regrettable but not uncommon instance of short tempers resulted in death. But because the man who

used his fist was a Negro and the man who hit the deck was white, the unfortunate incident was used in an attempt to whip up a lynch spirit against all Negroes in the yard.

### Fanning Race Hatred

Instigated by a handful of Negro-baiters and participated in by representatives of management, a non-union meeting was held on company property and time, and demands made for a complete Jim Crow yard, with hiring of Negroes on a discriminatory quota basis. A committee was elected to present these demands to the management—outside of union channels, of course.

Despite the fact that such discriminatory activity violated the sworn oath of every member of Local 9 who participated in it, and that every step taken was in direct violation of every tenet of good unionism, not a single ringleader has been brought up on charges nor even publicly reprimanded. And it has been rumored that at least one of the inciters stands high with the present administration of the local.

### The Ten-Hour Day

Another problem that faces the union in the immediate future is the ever-recurring ten-hour day. For weeks the daily press has been full of propaganda by the War Manpower Commission that the solution to all the ills of the harbor shipyards is the institution of two ten-hour shifts in the place of the present three-shift day in effect in all yards except Bethlehem.

The position of the men is clear—the ten-hour day has been voted down every time it comes up. But with the Navy not recognizing the union contract, which calls for any shift change to be negotiated, the workers at LA Ship are likely to be confronted some day with an order to work the longer shift. The union must be prepared for such an eventuality.

### The Bethlehem Yard

In Bethlehem, the next largest yard under Local 9 jurisdiction, the union's position is far from satisfactory. Despite weaknesses in the contract, the very fact that Bethlehem signed is a victory, but only if followed up by a vigorous enforcement of all provisions favorable to the men. The do-nothing policy of the administration has led to a feeling of apathy among the men, making it difficult to sign up a considerable section of the workers.

Add to the above such long-standing grievances as the 11.6 per cent differential for repair work, paid everywhere on the West Coast except in the Los Angeles harbor area, the miserably inadequate eating arrangements in all the yards, and the still-soaring cost of living, and it is plain to see the immediate tasks that lie before any elected leadership.

### Elected Leadership

There is little chance of an honest election resulting in less than a complete repudiation of Pollard's reign. Not only has his dictatorial arrogance earned the contempt and hatred of the majority of the workers, but the fruit of his union policy is crystal clear. A continuous line of retreat and defeat marks the result of his practice of collaboration and cooperation with management. At the end of his administration the union's position is weakened, the membership apathetic and even antagonistic, and his staff helpless before the offensive of the Todd management.

In preparation for the elections, even his staunchest supporters, the followers of the Communist Party, are breaking with him. The thieves are falling out. Bill Blumh, most prominent of the Stalinists in the LA Yard, even engaged in fistfights with Pollard and his right-hand man, Shapiro. Besides a broken nose for Pollard, the result was that Blumh and two fellow Stalinists, Lopez and Evans, were fired by the yard.

But it would be a serious mistake to confuse personal animosities and maneuvers for power with honest differences in policy. Pollard has his record for the past eighteen months; so does the gang that follows the Communist Party line. They are the ones who call for even greater submission to management. They were Pollard's allies, especially at the time of the national convention, when they opposed election of delegates. They are the instigators of the notorious "Committee of One Hundred," under which it was planned to substitute a dictatorship of five for Pollard's dictatorship. Blumh has been the hatchet man for some of Pollard's dirtiest deals.

No unionist who seriously views the present and coming struggles of Local 9 can look to this treacherous and opportunist clique for leadership. Ever before the advent of Pollard, they began the path of retreat. Giving up the union hiring hall, permitting the staggered week, voting for poor contracts—that is part of their record.

The job that lies ahead of Local 9 is fundamentally the same that is before the whole trade union movement. Many of the problems of the membership of Local 9 cannot be settled on a local scale. But their solution cannot begin until unions like Local 9 turn their back on the road of retreat and seriously begin the fight to protect their working conditions and living standards.

To clear the path for that struggle, the membership of Local 9 should demand the following:

- Revoke the no-strike pledge.
- Break the "Little Steel" formula and raise wages to meet the cost of living.
- Take labor off the War Labor Board.
- Build an Independent Labor Party.

## A MAY DAY REVIEW OF LABOR AND ITS PROBLEMS

# Tasks of the Rubber Workers

By BILL FORD

**AKRON, Apr. 21**—One of the gravest problems which besets the organized rubber workers today is that of wholesale piecework rate-slashing by the companies. This lies just below the surface of all the current and future stoppages of work in the industry, no matter what hullabaloo is raised by management to conceal this fact.

Even the United Rubber Workers International Executive Board has finally screwed up sufficient courage to emit a feeble whine and "plea" that some governmental agency investigate chiseling on wage rates. This board, which is completely saturated with the attitude and outlook of Dictator Sherman H. Dalrymple, international URWA president, took ten minutes off the other day from its "more important" work of breaking strikes and wrecking unions, to say a few words on this question—which is all-important for the rank-and-file gum miner.

The board noted that the companies are cutting rates in preparation for the post-war competitive period which is bound to come when the government no longer will be buying practically everything that is manufactured. How true! The board characteristically failed, however, to give even so much as a hint that the WORKERS THEMSELVES can and must take THEIR OWN independent action against the companies. As a matter of fact, it pointed with pride to the Board's policy of throwing out of the union, and consequently out of his job, every worker who follows his correct union instinct in violation of the no-strike pledge.

Lo and behold, the bitterly anti-labor Akron Beacon Journal, which these days is functioning practically as the house organ of the URWA top bureaucracy, came out editorially the next day far to the "left" of these union pie-card artists. It said: "We do not have much faith that the 'government investigation' sought by the union could provide a prompt and decisive answer against the wage chiseling!"

So low is the vaunted "industrial statesmanship" of the Dalrymple-Burns-Buckmaster-Kremlin clique at the top of the URWA, that its proposals can be dismissed with an abrupt sentence even by the capitalist press! The rank and file in the rubber shops has long before dismissed ALL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES as any means of redressing his just grievances.

### UNION DEMOCRACY THE KEY

Basically, that is why today the whole labor movement in Akron, whether consciously or not, is putting up such a tremendously successful fight to restore democracy within the URWA against its dictatorial leadership. It correctly knows that democratic procedure is absolutely vital to the self-preservation of the union movement. It understands that only through democratic discussion and decision can the present disastrous policy of Dalrymple & Co. be overturned and a new policy, corresponding to the genuine interests of the workers, be worked out.

On the basis of the absolute victory of democratic unionism, then, and ONLY then, is it REALISTIC to project further plans for the consolidation and advancement of the rubber workers' gains, and the tackling of the basic problems presented within the industry.

Aside from the immediate and always present threat of piecework wage cuts, the old problem of decentralization of the industry to lower standard, non-union communities continues to haunt the men in the shops. In the early days of the URWA-CIO's husky development, the union stopped or followed in the trail of the corporation's decentralizing moves. Today it is increasingly clear to more and more workers that the corporations' hope is so to hound the union while the war is on, by means of assistance to Dictator Dalrymple and by means of assistance from the employer-controlled Roosevelt government, that the URWA at the end of the war will be only a hollow and empty shell.

### RUBBER BARONS HAVE PLANS

Then, the four major, monopolist corporations figure they can "peacefully" renew their old fight among themselves, not having to worry about labor's demands for resumption of the six-hour day with eight-hour pay, nor about breakdown of the rigid regional wage differentials, nor about seniority rights of militant unionists, nor equal pay for women, nor non-discrimination in hiring, nor threats of underpaid office workers being organized, and the like.

There is every reason to believe that, along with their class brothers in the rest of American industry, the rubber barons have had their rapacious appetites whetted by the blood profits of wartime, and that they are carefully salting away tidy sums to at-

## Issues Before Steel Workers' Convention --

(Continued from page 1)  
CENT, IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 1943 IT WAS 13 PER CENT. LABOR'S SHARE IN 1939 WAS 65 PER CENT, BUT ONLY 59 PER CENT IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 1943.

### NO-STRIKE PLEDGE MUST GO

There is no need to go any further with facts and figures. We in our families have been through the experience of attempting to make ends meet within the limitations of the Little Steel formula. We know that it can't be done. The main question before your convention, therefore, is what to do about it. A demand has already been made by your union and other unions for the abolition of the Little Steel formula. But the WLB and the government pay no attention to our demands. LABOR ACTION knows why and we believe that you do, too. THE EMPLOYERS AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE THAT NO-STRIKE PLEDGE.

That means that organized labor can only beg. It can't fight. In order to fight and get results, labor must be free. It must be free to use the only weapon we have, our numbers and our organized strength. We have the numbers but we are shackled by the no-strike pledge.

It is claimed that the no-strike pledge was given as a patriotic gesture; to demonstrate that the working class was in full support of the war. While LABOR ACTION and

the Workers Party do not support the imperialist war, we can say to those workers who do support the war that even they must realize by now that it is only labor which has made any sacrifice whatsoever. Furthermore, does any worker believe that a war which produces billions in profits for one side and want and misery for the other side, is a war for democracy? This is the real situation today and big business and the government show no inclination to change things. THIS MEANS THAT IF THERE IS TO BE ANY IMPROVEMENT SUCH IMPROVEMENT WILL HAVE TO COME FROM THE PRESSURE OF THE WORKING CLASS.

This is the brutal fact which the steel workers face in their convention. They are faced with the necessity, the urgent necessity, to rescind their no-strike pledge. This will require courage, understanding and determination. The overwhelming majority of the workers are against the no-strike pledge and have always been against it. The only people who have been for the no-strike pledge are the leaders of the labor movement, the Communist Party, the employers, and the government.

If you take back your no-strike pledge, you will demonstrate, not irresponsibility, as will be charged, but genuine working class responsibility and loyalty. Then your union will mean something and you will be

tempt to enforce upon labor a thorough-going dictatorship of their own making, based on the open violence formerly exercised by the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. over their Gadsden, Ala., employees. Far from the rosy post-war dreams envisaged by the Dalrymple regime for the workers following this period of "sacrificing everything to first win the war," the solidarity and militancy of the URWA ranks are being tested every day nowadays in a thousand and one different places and ways.

No one knows this fact better than the men in the shop, who bear the brunt of the corporations' deliberate knifing of their conditions, and of the almost blunt refusal to go through even the pretenses of collective bargaining. Spontaneous, isolated or sporadic department sit-downs occur daily as an elementary mechanism of defense. To these there is but one reply from those heroic "statesmen" of labor, Dalrymple and gang: "They sometimes get out of patience and go on strike. We have no alternative but to take disciplinary action."

What to do about all this, thousands are wondering. LABOR ACTION has this to reply, based on its knowledge of conditions in the rubber industry and the URWA, plus its knowledge of the national and international situation of labor in the face of capitalist reaction:

### WHAT LABOR MUST DO

First of all, adherence to the no-strike pledge is bringing catastrophe. There can be no compromise here. The necessity to rescind it is absolute.

Secondly, it must be clearly recognized that once the no-strike pledge is rescinded, the Roosevelt Administration will attempt to legislate further and more drastic straight-packet laws against labor that today are being held in readiness. Knowing this, labor has no alternative but to throw its full weight immediately—today—into the effort to get genuine independent labor political action and to beat back the onslaughts of reaction.

Thirdly, the demoralizing and disgusting practice of supporting Republican or Democratic politicians and attempting to pass that off as "genuine independent labor political action" is a futile farce. This farce is passed down into the ranks of the URWA by Dictator Dalrymple and Thomas F. Burns for the exact purpose of preventing the development of healthy labor political democracy, in the same manner that these birds are stifling healthy labor union democracy.

Instead of "going along with CIO policy" on this question, progressives must change that policy in the same way as they know it is necessary to abandon the no-strike pledge. A beginning can and should still be made this year locally, which would have the result at once of rousing the whole union movement out of its political disinterestedness and cynicism. Labor's real and urgent political needs can be fulfilled only through an INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY.

The problems of the rubber workers are not insoluble. Their solution lies in further extension and deepening of the present liberty-loving union-consciousness of those who toil in the shops; into an aggressive and confident political class-consciousness. By joining hands with a re-invigorated labor movement on this basis, the profiteers can be driven from their seats of power.

## Break the Chain!



## World Labor Conference

By MIKE STEVENS

On June 5, the World Labor Conference will open in London. The conference is being called by the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress, as directed by the last convention of the congress.

Although the conference will be a far cry from a "world" conference, nevertheless it is a good idea. It is high time that the trade unions from the various countries got together to discuss their problems, and arrived at decisions for the benefit of the working class.

This conference is coming together in the fifth year of the Second World War and twenty-two years after the first triumph of fascism. The working class has had its institutions destroyed and its basic rights and civil liberties destroyed in many countries. It has had its homes shattered and its youth massacred in the war, and has seen sections of its class and whole populations wiped out. Capitalism stands exposed today before the entire world as responsible for Mussolini's march to Rome, Hitler's rise to power—and as the decaying system that by its very nature must continue to breed fascism and wars.

But from the proposed agenda of the coming conference as sent out by Sir Walter Citrine, secretary of the TUC, the trade union leaders have learned very little from the world-shaking events of the past twenty-two years.

The four-point agenda is: (1) The furtherance of the Allied war effort; (2) the attitude of the trade unions toward the anticipated peace settlement; (3) representation of the trade unions at the peace conference, and at the preparatory commissions or conferences for relief, rehabilitation and post-war reconstruction; (4) problems of post-war reconstruction of the international trade union movement.

In addition to the trade unions in the Allied countries, the trade unions in neutral countries have been invited to attend the conference, but will attend only during the second week, when the fourth point and the last half of the third point on the agenda are discussed. It has been arranged thus, so that these delegates will not "embarrass their respective

governments." Exiled trade union leaders from Axis and Axis-held countries will sit in only as fraternal delegates.

### CONFERENCE TIED TO CAPITALIST GOVERNMENTS

The proposed agenda, as well as the special status status of the trade union representatives from the neutral countries, reveal what this conference considers its main job—namely, to work out the most effective way it can to tie the working class in its respective countries to the war machine.

If the delegates to this labor conference, or to any other, were to carry on any work that would be of any benefit to the working class, they would first have to declare their independence from their own governments. Then and then only could they begin to discuss the problems of the world working class with some hope of alleviating its suffering.

They would advocate and support the prosecution of the war against reaction at home, and fight to put an end to the imperialist war. They would raise their voices against imperialism and against annexations—and for the self-determination of all peoples under imperialist rule. It is a crime for self-determination of those under Hitler and to shut their eyes to the colonies held by the Allies.

### WHAT ABOUT RUSSIA?

The Russian "trade unions" have been invited and their officials will attend. Representatives of the Russian workers at a labor gathering would be a great thing. But the real representatives of the Russian workers are in jail or have been murdered, and the trade unions have been liquidated as organs of the workers. The present-day "unions" are just speed-up organizations. The workers have no rights of any kind, no voice or vote, no conventions, no right to organize, or to strike. All the officials are appointed and removed at will by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

This conference would really be accomplishing something if it demanded the right of Russian workers to organize and strike. But it won't. The conference will probably go

through the monstrous deception of calling for a free trade union movement in Germany—but not in Russia. What's the difference? Why not demand the same for Russia? BECAUSE CITRINE AND MURRAY AND THE OTHER TRADE UNION LEADERS ARE TIED TO THEIR COUNTRY'S WAR MACHINES AND RUSSIA IS ON THE SAME SIDE IN THIS WAR.

The representatives of the Stalinist unions will be present at the conference to help crush any possibility of action contrary to the bureaucracy's expansionist policy. Lombardo Toledano, the Stalinist leader of the Confederation of Latin American Workers (CTAL) has been making trips constantly throughout all of Latin America to make sure that the unions in those countries have full representation and that all the delegates think the "right" way.

### POSITION OF AFL

The American Federation of Labor has refused to participate in the conference on the ground that the Russian "unions" will be represented, and that these delegates do not represent "free, legitimate trade unions." The AFL uses this fact to hide its real reason for not attending. The fact that Russia will be represented is one reason, but a minor one, why the AFL objects to going. It is true that free trade unions do not exist in Russia, but the AFL acts from its traditional reactionary policy against the Soviet Union from the days of Lenin and Trotsky. WHEN TRADE UNIONS REALLY DID EXIST THERE. But the main reason why the AFL is not going is because the CIO will also be there. The AFL still considers the CIO a "dual" and not a "rival" organization.

To be present at an international conference with the CIO would mean that the AFL recognizes the existence of two federations of labor in the United States. After setting such a precedent it would be quite difficult for the AFL to prevent the CIO from having equal status on all other international bodies.

In conclusion, it is clear that while international action by labor is a crying need today, neither the agenda of the coming conference nor the motives of the leaders meet the need.

ment, with its millions of militant and loyal members, can have a party of its own and we can have it this year. We can organize our own national labor party, based on the trade unions. That party would be OUR party. We can put up our own candidates... members of our unions and of our party. We can vote for them—and for them alone.

THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL ACTION

There is another aspect of the CIO program which will probably come up in your convention. That is the CIO political action campaign. Your Political Action Committee is preparing to enter the coming November election with a political platform. Since this is to be political action by a large organized section of the working class, one has the right to assume that you are thinking of independent working class political action. THIS IS A STEP WHICH IS LONG OVERDUE!

At the last CIO convention there was no resolution calling for the reelection of Mr. Roosevelt. Since that convention, however, many CIO unions have come out with endorsements of President Roosevelt for reelection. This, of course, is not independent working class political action. This is tying the workers to the Democratic Party—the party of Howard Smith, Bilbo and Martin Dies. It would be no different, to be sure, if workers' organizations endorsed the Republican Party.

Independent working class political action can only mean a break with the Democratic and Republican parties. The organized labor move-

ment, with its millions of militant and loyal members, can have a party of its own and we can have it this year. We can organize our own national labor party, based on the trade unions. That party would be OUR party. We can put up our own candidates... members of our unions and of our party. We can vote for them—and for them alone.

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

It seems clear, therefore, that the two most important questions to come before your convention are: the rescinding of the no-strike pledge and the beginning of action for the organization of a genuine Labor Party.

LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party are deeply interested in your convention because we are a part of the working class and active participants in the struggles of organized labor. We make no apologies, therefore, for holding this discussion with you. We are steel workers, aircraft workers, shipyard workers and toilers in numerous other industries. When we discuss these problems with you, therefore, we are discussing our own problems.

We greet the constitutional convention of the United Steel Workers of America and hope that your deliberations will result in many concrete gains not only for the toilers in the steel industry but for the whole working class in America.

# The Present Stage of the Italian Revolution

## An Analysis of Current Developments

By Max Shachtman

The decision of the "Six Parties" to enter a new Badoglio government with King Victor Emmanuel still on the throne marks a new stage in the development of the revolution in Italy.

When the revolution first broke out in Italy, the masses who came out into the streets by the hundreds of thousands gave ample evidence of their long-suppressed desire to put an end to fascism, to all it stood for, and to the war which it had imposed upon them.

This display of popular hatred, which drove the Blackshirts from the streets, was overwhelming enough to topple the Mussolini regime. It proved to the capitalist class and the monarchy that Mussolini did not retain enough support of any kind to keep the masses of the people in check any longer. To save themselves, they hastily abandoned their old savior, Mussolini himself, and all his more discredited henchmen.

A new figure was needed who could perform the task of preserving the old order. The ruling class and the monarchy picked Badoglio, in the hope that even though he might not be able to win the support of the masses, he could maintain "order" by the control over the remnants of the army which they expected would come to him from his previous military position. In addition, they felt, what he lacked in popular authority would be made up by the support he would receive from the Anglo-American forces. With the mantle of friendship for the "great democrats" of Washington and London draped around Badoglio, they thought that this butcher of the Albanian and Ethiopian peoples, who was Mussolini's military tool in maintaining fascism in Italy for years, might pass as a democrat and appease the discontent of the people. The bread hand-outs of AMG would help, too.

The ruling class reckoned without its host—the masses of the people. LABOR ACTION pointed out at the very beginning of the revolution that Badoglio was only a man of an hour, that his apparent triumph represented only the first stage of the struggle, and that this stage would not last long. The passing of the Badoglio regime, at least of the Badoglio regime as it was at first constituted, bears out this prediction.

Why did it pass?

### A PHANTOM RULER

Badoglio and his master, the King, failed to obtain even as much social support, or even tolerance, as Mussolini had before the crisis broke out. The military forces he expected to command, and base himself upon, disappeared like water in sand. What was not retained by Mussolini's gang in the North and incorporated into the Axis divisions, simply went home, fed up completely with the war and leaping at the first opportunity to withdraw from it. The famous "army" that Badoglio and Victor Emmanuel were going to contribute to the great Allied "war for democracy," in which they blandly made themselves at home, simply failed to materialize.

The masses of the people did not rally to the support of the new regime, either. They did not do it in the South, which is weak in-

dustrially and backward politically, and they certainly did not do it in the North, the industrial heart of the country and its most advanced section politically. The masses of the people had not made their superb and successful effort to fling Mussolini into the discard only to accept in its place Mussolini's general, Mussolini's King, and a mob of discredited fascist politicians and gunmen who set themselves up as the new government in every southern locality. They did not overturn Mussolini with the idea of "really getting into the war," but of getting out of it. They got neither the freedom, the peace, the republic, nor the end to starvation for which they yearned and still yearn.

The Anglo-American imperialists would have preferred to have Badoglio remain in power just as he was. Wherever possible and efficacious, they want just such a "strong man," that is, a hard-boiled reactionary who does not yield to the aspirations for freedom of the "mob." Darlan was no accident; Badoglio was no accident.

But Badoglio's regime proved inefficacious even from the standpoint of Washington and London. And that for two reasons. First, it showed itself incapable of winning even the passive support of the people in the South, in "liberated" Italy, because it could give them nothing except a slightly modified version of what they had in the old days. Second, it could not win the support of the people in the German-occupied North. The North is decisive in Italy, as indicated. The military progress of the Allies in Italy depends in considerable measure upon the "cooperation," so to speak, of the rebellious workers of the North. At the same time, the further North the Allies move, the more difficult the problem of dealing with the Italian population would become. The workers of the North could not be sold the idea of a Badoglio regime for even five minutes.

### A LITTLE FACE-LIFTING

Hence the Allies, Moscow of course included, began a campaign to lift the face of the Badoglio regime, to give it a more popular aspect, to make it more acceptable to the people, both in the South and in the North. Here, as in nine-tenths of the cases which involve Allied political moves in Europe, they were dominated above all by fear of revolution. The campaign involved putting as much pressure as needed on Badoglio and Victor Emmanuel to accept a government reorganization that would include the "democratic" parties of the Committee, or Junta, of the "Six Parties"; and putting similar pressure on these parties, especially on the party of Count Sforza and the Socialist Party, to enter a Badoglio government without insisting upon the abolition of the monarchy or even the abdication of Victor Emmanuel.

The Allies were forced into this policy by the considerations mentioned above. The Badoglio government had to be "democratized" without running the risk of anything so upsetting as the overturn of the monarchy, in order to win the support of the masses without really giving them what they want and need. The government had to be "democratized" in order to trick the masses out of fighting for democratic rights and powers.

The "Six Parties," which are mostly bureaucratic committees without real organizational strength or following, were reluctant to be pushed into this compromise. This was especially the case of the most important of them, the Sforza party, and the Socialist Party, which does have some support among the people. Their reluctance was not due, despite their lofty declarations, to any noble principles. They are showing this by their present action. It was due to fear of compromising themselves too badly—and so early in the fight—in the eyes of the people. They know the bitterness the people feel toward the monarchy; they know the hatred of the people toward Badoglio and the black gang of cut-throats supporting him. They were compelled, from the very beginning, to make the most highfalutin and indignant denunciations on the monarch and his Premier. They swore the most solemn oaths that they would never enter a government of so discredited a scoundrel as Badoglio, that they would take no part in a government that did not first receive the abdication of Mussolini's co-criminal, the King.

Never? Well, hardly ever! When the pressure grew, these fake democrats collapsed like a jack-knife. They burned all their solemn oaths, they threw all their grandiose principles down the drain, hoped against hope that everybody would forget their heroic speeches and articles and posturings, and went with hat in hand to visit the detestable Marshal in order to bargain with him about the jobs they would get in his new cabinet, formed with the blessings of the High Seats of Democracy, Washington, London and, last but not least, Moscow.

### THE STALINIST ROLE

The filthy, and perfectly characteristic, role of the Stalin regime is especially noteworthy. The professional perjurers and bootlickers who edit the Stalinist press throughout the world had been shouting at the top of their bought-and-paid-for lung-power against the Badoglio regime for months. They clamored that it was reactionary; that it was hardly a hair's-breadth different from Mussolini's; that it represented nobody but a cabal of despots and criminals. They denounced and pleaded with Washington and London to cut loose from Badoglio.

Then, for his own good reasons, including the aim of breaking through the "freeze-out" policy practiced by AMG against Moscow in Italy, Stalin granted diplomatic recognition to the government that was reactionary and represented only a handful of despots and criminals. The Stalinist editors and press thereupon made one of their typical turnabout-faces, without so much as the flicker of an eyelash. They know what side their bread is buttered on.

The recognition of the Badoglio regime by Moscow was, however, only the first step. Stalin wants influence in Italy. He wants position in Italy. His imperialist aims do not stop at the shores of the Mediterranean, but extend to the sea itself. Besides, he must always be on the spot to prevent any socialist revolution or revolutionary movement from rising to any strength—the beginning of the socialist victory in Europe means the end of the Stalinist tyranny in Russia.

To Naples, therefore, came one of the most despicable characters in the foreign machine of Moscow, Palmiro Togliatti, alias Ercoli. Ercoli was for years one of the most unscrupulous tools of Stalin in the Communist International. This cold-blooded, cynical, corrupt flunkey stood by applauding while the best militants in the Italian communist movement—the genuine communist movement, not the present-day caricature of it—were driven from the party, or were sent to prison, or even executed. He cheered with the mob of bureaucrats when the flower of the Russian Revolution was framed up in Russia and executed in the cellars of the GPU. He was just the man for Stalin's job in Italy.

His job in Italy was, first, to force the "Six Parties" to enter the Badoglio regime to give it a more palatable appearance. With Stalinist pressure, on one side and Allied pressure on the other, the rest of the Six Parties capitulated.

It is of the highest interest to learn that the job demanded by the Stalinists in the new cabinet is the Ministry of the Interior. They may not get it, but that is what they want first. The Minister of the Interior in Italy is in charge of . . . POLICE AND PRISONS. That is what the Stalinists want to control. That is how they have trained themselves and their representatives to deal with all dissenters—by police and prisons. Success in this field would mean that Stalin has sunk an entering wedge deep into Italy—the wedge of the GPU, this time a GPU clothed with the official authority and powers of the Italian state.

But acting officially through the police of the government, or unofficially and in the dark, the knife of Stalinism is directed against the independence of the people, against their democratic and socialist strivings, against all those who represent these strivings to any serious degree—be it our comrades, the revolutionary Trotskyists of Italy, or the socialists who are not ready to take orders and a stipend from Moscow, or even ordinary democrats and liberals who will not do Stalin's dirty work. It is in the Stalinists that the Italian revolution will find its most sinister enemy, its most potent menace.

The first stage of the revolution in Italy could only give way to the present stage, the second. But the second is no more durable than the first. It must, in turn, give way to a new stage.

### A NEW STAGE TO COME

The very circumstances in which the new Badoglio regime—the "democratized" Badoglio regime—is coming into office clearly indicate that it can give the people little, if anything, more than did its predecessor. Will these "democratic" governors now try to recruit and mobilize the Italian people for a

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"more active" part in the war? But that is precisely what the harried masses, ruined by the war, do not want. Will it give them food, which is a burning question for the starving masses now? It is more than doubtful. The profiteers will continue their shameless profiteering, the masses will continue on the brink of exhaustion.

The profiteers, capitalists and princes will not be crushed by a gang of cowards, who dared not even break completely with a zero like Badoglio—much less with that other master of food, AMG. Will it give them a republic? What the masses want NOW, these "democrats" will probably continue to promise them . . . in the future. Will it give them democratic rights, the genuine right of free press, free speech, free assembly, the right to vote for a government of their own, a National Constituent Assembly which will decide the government of Italy? Yes. . . . When? Tomorrow, always tomorrow, and never today. "After the war," they say. But the people want these rights now, and promises made by those who have already condemned themselves by their cynical violation of solemn promises, are not a substitute.

The events leading up to the second stage of the Italian revolution that has just opened, emphasize what we, and we are glad to note: our Italian comrades whose first proclamation was printed recently, have said from the beginning. The people of Italy cannot expect to get their liberation from foreign imperialism, and they cannot expect it from the Stalinists, the Sforza-Croce "democrats" or the right-wing socialists. The winning of their freedom is their own job, and it can be achieved only in the course of an independent struggle.

Real freedom, peace, security, abundance—these are not to be won short of the victory of socialism throughout Europe. The old Europe, the Europe of capitalism, can bring the people only what it has brought them, suffering, war, exploitation, despotism, national hatreds, poverty, weakness. There is not a single country of Europe that can solve its problem by itself. The problem of each of the countries is the problem of all of Europe, to be solved unitedly, by the free nations and peoples of Europe, organized in a Socialist United States of Europe. There is no other road but leads to despair and ruin.

This does not mean that each country of Europe must wait until all the others are ready for revolution. One can start; the others will follow. For various reasons, it is Italy that has started. If it continues, the purifying fire will light in other lands.

### STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

In Italy, the developments have already showed the tremendous revolutionary significance and power, both from the standpoint of the masses of the people, and from the standpoint of revolutionary socialism, of the struggle for democratic rights. So far as the fascists are concerned, it is all clear. But especially so far as the "democratic" imperialists are concerned, and the totalitarian Stalinists, and the capitalist liberals and right-wing socialists as well—they all fear the exercise of democratic rights by the people. They want to do everything from above, without the masses "interfering," in the hope that this is an easier way to keep the masses in check.

All of them are afraid of what the masses will say about them if they have the unrestricted right of free speech. They fear what the masses will say and plan in their halls and do in the streets if they have the right of assembly. They fear what the masses will organize if they have the right to organize. If the strength of the masses were unleashed, they would not hesitate for a moment to step right into industry and the machinery of distribution and, disregarding the profit interests of capital, see to it that there is food for the people and food equitably shared. This is especially what the capitalist politicians fear. They fear the power of an independent and untrammelled press at the service of the masses.

They are afraid of elections, for then they must submit themselves to the suffrage and judgment of the masses, especially masses of people who are in a revolutionary frame of mind, who demand deeds and not only words, who demand that promises be taken off paper and carried out in life. They are therefore also afraid of calling for a National Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal suffrage to decide the government of Italy. They prefer to do that in the dark of the moon, by bureaucratic arrangements with Anglo-American imperialism, with Moscow, with the monarchists and the bankers—all behind the back of the people.

Our Italian comrades, who are concentrat-

ing their efforts under the most difficult circumstances to build up a truly revolutionary socialist party, a party of the Fourth International, rightly point out to the workers of Italy that they must set themselves the goal of a Socialist United States of Europe.

At the same time, they call upon the workers to fight now for the democratic rights we have outlined above. They call not only for the right of free speech, free press and assembly, and the right to organize, but the right to vote and the convocation of a National Constituent Assembly. In this call, our Italian comrades once more show that the revolutionary socialists do not merely talk about democracy and democratic rights, but are the most consistent and fearless fighters for it. They show that the fight for democracy for the masses of the people lies along the road of the fight for socialism and is best conducted under the leadership of revolutionary socialists.

Our comrades are not deceiving themselves, however, or the workers to whom they speak. They do not ask the workers to look to AMG for the realization of their legitimate demands. They do not tell them to expect it of the King, the bankers, the industrialists, the "ex-fascists" like Badoglio, or even from Sforza and his ilk. To the contrary, in their very first public pronouncement, our Italian comrades warned the workers against such illusions. Their warning has already been more than amply justified, and the recent decision of the "Six Parties" serves to underscore it.

Our Italian comrades tell the workers that they must organize and fight for these rights, that they themselves must acquire these rights, including the calling of a National Constituent Assembly. To organize themselves most democratically and most effectively, the workers, soldiers and peasants of Italy, say our comrades, must organize their own councils. It is in such organization that the future of the Italian revolution is assured.

From our standpoint, the course recommended by our Italian comrades is not only thoroughly wise and correct, but corresponds perfectly to the needs and interests of the people of Italy.

### MEANING TO AMERICAN LABOR

Are the events in Italy, its future, of concern only to the people of that country? No, to the people, especially to the workers, of the United States as well. We have a stake in the development of the revolution in Italy. For if it is defeated, that is a direct blow at us here, and reaction will know how to deliver it. If it is victorious, it is a victory for us, because labor will be as encouraged and emboldened as the capitalists will be upset and demoralized.

We have our duty to perform. It is a downright shame that our labor movement has kept silent while Anglo-American authorities are maintained as conquerors over the Italian people, while these "liberators" continue to deny the Italian people the most elementary democratic rights. We must raise our voice in protest against this disgraceful state of affairs and demand: "HANDS OFF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE AND THEIR RIGHTS! HANDS OFF THE ITALIAN REVOLUTION!"

There is much we can do, of a most concrete kind, for our Italian brothers. Labor must not be remiss in its duty. The freedom of a people is involved.

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# Fourth Anniversary of the Workers Party

## A Record True to the Interests of Labor and to the Cause of Socialism

By Albert Gates

The First of May, 1944, is not only labor's holiday, it is also the fourth anniversary of the Workers Party of the United States and of LABOR ACTION. At a time when the political movement of the workers of the world is in a disorganized and beaten state as a result of betrayals arising from within the broad labor movement and the victories of fascism and reaction, the Workers Party and LABOR ACTION are truly beacon lights of hope for the American as well as the international working class and all exploited peoples.

There is little argument about the miserable state of capitalist society the world over. The war portrays in the sharpest form the utter decay of this social order which is incapable of existing under conditions of peace, or of supplying the necessities of life for all the people.

Thus, international capitalism is a spectacle of riches piled up on one side in the hands of the monopolistic capitalist classes of the powerful nations, and immense poverty for the overwhelming majority of the peoples in all countries of Europe and America, and the many millions of colonial subjects of imperialism.

In the United States there is an apparent picture of prosperity for all the classes. But this is purely superficial. Actually, in the midst of the war economy and the absence of unemployment, the same picture of immense wealth, war profits and well-being is found on one side in the hands of the American capitalists, while the overwhelming majority of the workers and exploited await the post-war period with dread. One does not need to wait for the post-war period, however, to assess the position of the working people. They barely make ends meet during the very course of the war.

The war itself, in addition to barring the incalculable sickness of capitalism as a system of wars and poverty, forces the main burdens of production and prosecution of the conflict upon the shoulders of the workers and the millions of poor. Poor conditions of labor, speed-up, deterioration of living conditions, and the general decline of the living standards of the people are merely the concrete manifestations of the terrible exploitation of the masses.

The end of the war will demonstrate that while the capitalist classes of the world, especially in this country, have piled up enormous reserves for the leaner days, the workers of the world, and in this country too, will have little to turn to but the specter of unemployment, relief, gigantic WPA's, and the like.

The Workers Party has endeavored to explain these things to American labor, to educate it to understand its lot under capitalism and to win it to socialism as the only hope of freedom and security for all of mankind. Real social security and plenty for all will come with the abolition of the capitalist system of exploitation, the operation of industry by a workers' state and the production of the needs of life for use rather than for profit.

The Workers Party is dedicated to this cause of transforming the social order of capitalism into a new order for the betterment of the whole human race, i.e., socialism.

The test of our kind of a party is different from that applied to the big capitalist parties. They are measured solely by their wealth, the lies they tell, and the promises they give. The Workers Party, as an organization representing the best interests of labor and all who toil and are poor, can be measured only by the manner in which it represents these interests.

Size alone is pretty unimportant in relation to principle. And the Workers Party prides itself because in the four years of its independent existence it has conducted itself in an exemplary way, defending the interests of labor and carrying on the struggle against the capitalist system for a new and better society.

### BACKGROUND OF THE WORKERS PARTY

The Workers Party arose in the course of a sharp internal struggle in the Socialist Workers Party (Cannonites). That was four years ago. The issue which separate us from that organization was on the attitude to be taken on Russia's invasion of Finland and Poland, and subsequently, what position should be taken on Russia's role in the imperialist war.

We contended that the first Russian invasion of Finland was an act which violated the principles of socialist internationalism and therefore was calculated to do the workers of the world the greatest harm. The Stalinist invasion of Finland, and the subsequent division of Poland in alliance with Hitler Germany, did not advance the interests of the workers of Russia, nor of the workers in the invaded countries, but merely strengthened the bureaucratic Stalinist regime at home, and increased "the power, territories and revenue" of that regime.

We could not agree either with Trotsky or the majority of the leadership of the SWP in their condemnation of the invasions and the contradictory support they gave, in turn, to the invaders. To justify this untenable position, they asserted that Russia remained a workers' state, although a degenerated one; and in these conflicts, the workers of the world must support this "degenerated" state. Although not all of us were yet clear on the characterization to give the Russian state, we were certain that the position taken by Trotsky and the Cannonites on the concrete questions, was wrong.

It was obvious, however, that the old party needed a thorough discussion and re-evaluation of its Russian position. It was also possible to avert a split, but this latter was contingent upon a free discussion of the disputes in the party. Such a free discussion and re-evaluation of the Russian question was manifestly impossible in a party bureaucratically governed under the leadership of Cannon and his faction.

Our demands for a guaranteed free and democratic discussion and defense of minority rights (as a matter of fact, the relationship of forces was extremely close; with the youth organization we had a majority) were not met. Even the suggestion of Trotsky that our demand for a paper be granted, thus insuring our democratic rights, was refused. The split was then inevitable, since the majority leadership regarded the discussion of vital political questions as a luxury. They still persist in this bureaucratic attitude.

Had a split been averted at that precise moment, February, 1940, it undoubtedly would have occurred later. The entry of the United States into the war and the invasion of Russia by Hitler were turning points in the international situation and on both questions the Cannonites responded in characteristic fashion. The Socialist Workers Party was virtually the only party in the movement for a new, Fourth International, which remained officially silent on America's participation in the war. On Russia's new role in the

war, it adhered to a worn-out formula: "Defense of the Soviet Union."

With our departure, all discussion in their ranks ceased. They observed Russian developments with the ideas of a decade ago. With the most important bases of their position shattered by the impact of events, they continued to justify their position by declaring Stalin's Russia to be a "degenerated workers' state," to falsely separate the Stalinist regime from the Red Army, and to read into the world situation, facts which weren't there.

### CLARITY THROUGH DISCUSSION

Our party continued to discuss the Russian question in the best traditions of a democratic workers' movement—and not only the Russian question, but all other problems of intense interest to the labor movement. Thus, we fortified our views on Finland and Poland by our conclusions on the character of the Russian state, namely, that it was not a workers' state, but a new type of state, never before seen in history. Though arising out of a workers' revolution, it had become a bureaucratic collectivist state, in which the working class was actually enslaved, its organizations destroyed and one in which the bureaucracy held complete sway over the destinies of the people.

With this clarity on a most important question for the workers of the world, we have been able to understand the developments of the war and Russia's role in it and have found it no different in any essential way from that of the other powers.

In the same fundamental way, our party discussed and analyzed the meaning of America's entry into the war. We believed and we said that the character of the war did not change; it remained a capitalist-imperialist war over territory, markets, raw materials and profit. Every new stage in the war has merely confirmed what we stated publicly.

### THE WP IN THE WAR CRISIS

The responsibilities of the Workers Party in this crucial period of world history was clear to us. First and foremost was to tell the workers the truth! And this we have done. At home our course was clear:

To defend the basic interests of the masses, to help them in their fight against the profiteers, to assert their economic and political rights and to fight for them, to oppose placing the main burdens of the war upon the shoulders of the people and placing them where they belong—on the shoulders of America's bloated, profiteering monopolistic capitalist class.

In the four years of our existence we have carried on the battle for wage increases, for an improvement of the economic conditions of the workers and the people as a whole, for the democratic rights of the masses. Moreover, we have pointed out to labor the grave

dangers which confront it in the post-war period; the dangers of unemployment, hunger and widespread poverty. We have defended all the struggles of the workers in their fights for their rights NOW.

The Workers Party and LABOR ACTION have demonstrated the completely fraudulent character of price control, where the only thing really controlled has been the wages of all who labor.

We have demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that the President's so-called seven-point program has in reality been a one-point program of wage-freezing.

Long before the official labor movement began its attack on the Little Steel formula and the WLB, we had already warned against these sinister things and called for the abolition of the formula and the need for labor's representatives to get off a board stacked against labor.

We have advocated an improvement of the living standards of the masses against the concerted Administration-big business drive to destroy the hard-won gains of labor.

Together with large sections of the union movement, we have advocated the rescinding of the no-strike pledge as a means of freeing labor from the stranglehold of a one-sided promise which has given big business the signal to begin a nation-wide offensive against unionism and the economic position of labor.

The Workers Party and LABOR ACTION carried on a magnificent campaign against all (NAM, union officials and the Communist Party) who sought to reintroduce the speed-up and piecework system through the none-too-attractive title of incentive pay.

### DRAWING THE POLITICAL CONCLUSION

But most important of all, the Workers Party and LABOR ACTION, while recognizing the absolute importance of this program, have shown how all of this leads to an unavoidable conclusion for American labor, i.e., a political conclusion. All of these economic demands and struggles have to be fortified against big business on the political field. Here is where the great power of the capitalists is to be found. They have their political parties in the form of the Republicans and Democrats. Only labor is without a big political party of its own which would represent it and fight for its interests.

What labor needs to supplement its economic struggles is independent labor political action. What labor needs now is an independent Labor Party. It has the manpower for it. It has the funds; it has the capacity for the job. It needs only the will, the understanding and the determination to go forward. Such a party would not only shatter the political monopoly of big business and the capitalists in general, but it would give the American workers a party of their own to fight for their demands and make a bid for political power.

This, then, is part of the history and program of the Workers Party and of the paper, LABOR ACTION. We have not stood on the side calmly to observe the passage of events and the struggles of American labor with the cry: "Now is not the time to do anything; now is the time to preserve ourselves. When the workers get moving we will not stand in their way" (as some contemporaries have done).

The Workers Party stands side by side with the workers in the day-to-day fight for life itself. Ours is a party of, for and by labor. Just as sure as the sun will rise, we will, by virtue of our principles, our program and our activities, become the socialist party of the American masses, the party of the future!

# LABOR ACTION--The Paper Every Worker Should Read

By GERTRUDE SHAW

Just four years ago the first issue of LABOR ACTION came out.

It was dedicated to the interest of the working people.

Today tens of thousands of agricultural and industrial workers who read LABOR ACTION know that it speaks for them.

We hope that tens of thousands more working people will become readers of LABOR ACTION for this same reason, namely, because it never pulls its punches against the enemies of labor; never shuts an eye to the mistakes of labor; never ceases to clarify the economic and political needs of the working people; is untiring in explaining the course of action that will lead to the triumph of the useful and exploited members of society over the useless and exploiting.

As we mark another year of our progress in this task we have set ourselves, we wish to review LABOR ACTION'S performance for the past year.

### WE BACKED THE STRIKING WORKERS

A year ago the miners' struggle was the biggest thing in the labor movement. Issue after issue of LABOR ACTION was devoted to supporting this crucial fight and to pointing out that the miners were fighting a battle for the whole of labor. LABOR ACTION cut the ground from under the pay-triots who sought to discredit the miners, by exposing the huge war profits of the capitalists as against the hard existence of the miners plodding along on the edge of actual want.

To the false argument of the capitalist class that the miners were sabotaging the soldiers, we replied that miners and the sons of miners, workers and the sons of workers, form the great majority of the drafted army, and that it is up to the workers at home to protect the labor front from collapse before the onslaughts of the capitalists using the "war emergency" as their excuse.

Every strike of workers against grievances in the plants, to end stalling by the corporations and the government, to get better wages and conditions, to reaffirm their right to strike, has had whole-hearted support in the pages of LABOR ACTION. It has showed that the so-called "wildcat" and "unauthorized" strikes were "wild" only in the sense that the workers have been made wild with resentment against the way they are getting it in the neck. It has shown that the strikes are "unauthorized" only because, labor leaders saw fit to make to

the government a no-strike pledge NOT authorized by the rank and file.

### UNION PROBLEMS DISCUSSED IN L. A.

In the past year there have been several most important union conventions: that of the CIO, of the AFL, of the UAW, and others. Concerned with the continued development of militant and progressive unionism, the pages of this paper carried many articles both before and after the conventions. Before the conventions, we sought to give such guidance as we are capable of, to rank and file delegates who earnestly wished to solve union problems. After the conventions, LABOR ACTION pointed up the hits and the misses, hoping that next time there will be more hits and fewer misses.

We have reason to believe that the campaign carried on by LABOR ACTION against incentive pay—that fancy name for the return to piecework, sweat-shop labor, pushed mainly by the capitalists and the Stalinists—had its influence on the unions which so definitely rejected it. On other major issues, LABOR ACTION'S voice has been heard. Our insistence today on the restoration of real collective bargaining and the right to strike—as against the no-strike pledge and the WLB run-around—is being accepted as plain common sense by larger and larger numbers of workers.

### WE HANDLED JIM CROW, ANTI-SEMITISM, FASCISM

The past year has seen an alarming outbreak of Jim Crow terrorism, commonly known as "race riots." LABOR ACTION has not called these evidences of the underhand work of KKK and the American fascist gangs, "race riots," because the implication of the latter is that the Negro was responsible for these instigated outbreaks. Neither does LABOR ACTION—as do so many of the Negro and white liberal papers—caution the Negro to be patient, to be satisfied with a dry bone, to go hat in hand begging for another dry bone on the steps of the White House. LABOR ACTION demands for the Negro every right, every necessity, every luxury that human be-

ings are today entitled to, and furthermore points the way to get these things.

It is significant that in Detroit, at the height of the so-called riots, Negro and white workers continued their tasks side by side on the production line; that in neighborhoods where Negro and white workers live together in peace, they continued in peace throughout the disturbance. LABOR ACTION has been proved correct in its view that in solidarity between Negro and white worker lies progress for both. Negro progress and labor progress are two sides of the same coin, and the place to cash it in is through the labor unions.

In the past year the emboldening of the fascist forces in this country, manifested both in more open anti-Semitism and in a distinctly fascist anti-labor development, has also been of paramount concern to LABOR ACTION.

The assorted crack-pots and the more dangerous Charles Coughlins and Gerald Smiths have received their due in these columns. But the interest of the working people require more than just an exposure of the fascists.

LABOR ACTION explains the reasons for fascism itself. It hammers in the point that fascism is only another stage of capitalism; that fascism is the ruthless iron-heel dictatorship resorted to by the ruling class to save itself against a working class whose needs the rulers cannot supply. Fascist suppression, in a word, is the ultimate answer of the capitalists to the demands of the working people.

Therefore, the Jews, the Negroes and the whole of labor are warned by LABOR ACTION against relying on the capitalist government or on any agencies of capitalism for protection against fascist attacks. Protection lies in

the organization of neighborhood and union guards—from labor's own ranks—to combat racial attacks as well as attacks on unions. The interests of the working people require that these truths be stated. LABOR ACTION has been stating them over and over again.

### WE TALK TURKEY ON THE WAR

The great black cloud overhanging humanity is, of course, the war, now in its fifth year. LABOR ACTION tirelessly teaches that the war is an imperialist war for the division of the earth—just as the last war was. Nothing has changed, except that a more brutal form of capitalism in Germany has given the capitalist democracies a chance to pretend that the war is one against fascism. LABOR ACTION

(Continued on page 8)

## Labor's Struggles Reflected in the Pages of LA

## War and the Working Class

## Meet Mrs. Neame -- Working Woman

By Susan Green

Who is Mrs. Neame? Drew Middleton, New York Times correspondent from London, gave many details of her life, her family, her activities, her outlook, in a recent article he wrote for his paper under the heading: "Why the British Are Wonderful: Meet Plain, Stalwart Mrs. Neame."

Mrs. Neame, wrote Mr. Middleton, "is the sort of person American correspondents have in mind when, in discussing air attacks on London, they say that the British are wonderful."

You want to know more about Mrs. Neame? She is a British working woman. She has lost her husband and two sons in the war. Two of her remaining four children are fighting and may have the same fate as their brothers. Mrs. Neame walks two miles to work at four o'clock each morning, to clean buildings near St. James' Palace. She cleans her house and takes care of her dead son's baby daughter, having naturally never known what it means to have a maid.

She gives time to the fire service station near her home, putting out incendiaries when they fall. When the sirens blow, she packs up and trudges along to the public shelter; and when the "all-clear" sounds, she drags herself home again. She lives in the London slums, which have been pounded relentlessly by the German Luftwaffe. She has been bombed out of her flat, and has seen human beings buried under rubble. "Mrs. Neame could tell you something about sacrifice," said Mr. Middleton.

## A PAT ON THE BACK

This write-up of Mrs. Neame is as neat a bit of capitalist-class propaganda as can be found anywhere—by way of a pat on the back.

It is not necessary for the capitalist press to inform the world about the wonderful human qualities inherent in the masses. Of course they have loyalty and bravery, endurance and self-sacrifice, imagination, sympathy and generosity. Believe it or

not, the working people have had these virtues before they were "discovered" by those literary geniuses who are giving glib and unqualified approval to the imperialist war.

But it is pathetic—not wonderful; it is a great waste of the human spirit—not wonderful; that such qualities should be detoured into a holocaust imposed on the world by the laws of capitalist imperialism and out of which civilization itself may not come alive.

What is wonderful, for example, about "British boys being burned to death in airplanes while they are roaring to death the population down below," as radio reporter Edward Murrow recently described the bombing of Germany?

Those British boys and their American pals are brave, loyal, enduring, self-sacrificing—unquestionably! But there are in the German towns and cities they are drenching in liquid fire, many German editions of Mrs. Neame—yes, German working women as "stalwart" as this British working woman. Also, the German boys who come over to make rubble out of the London slums are brave, loyal, enduring, self-sacrificing.

The common people in both warring camps share these human traits. Of this there can be no doubt. But here is the tragedy: ALL THESE PEOPLE ARE EQUALLY DUPED!

The German people have been stuffed with Hitler's propaganda that they are fighting to redress the wrongs of the Versailles Treaty and to build a new, glorious world order. The British and American people have it dinned into their ears that this is a war to defeat the fascist aggressors and to bring a new world of peace. And the masses of no country—as a whole—really understand what so many millions of people of all nationalities all over the world are dying for, and why this most agonizing of all wars is being fought.

For sad it is but true, the masses of all countries are merely the meek tools of their imperialist masters. The German people are going through hell so that their ruling class may

ACQUIRE a world empire into which to spread their power and from which to glean profits. The British people are fighting so that the British imperialists may KEEP the colonial empire from which flow their power and their profits. Whereas the American people are unwittingly backing the plans of American capitalists who aim for world ASCENDANCY over all other powers.

That is why the Mrs. Neames all over the world are by no means wonderful. How can people who permit themselves to be used as the tools of their ruling classes be anything but pitiful?

## "I'D THINK IT WAS A PITY"

Do you want to know more about Mrs. Neame? She has no great hate for the Germans, as Mr. Middleton reports, and she does not want to see them all killed. "They have their families and homes, too," she says. "If it wasn't that they'd do that and more to us, I'd think it was a pity. Even now I sometimes feel sorry for them."

Mrs. Neame's words strike a true note! The working people of the world undoubtedly have sympathy for each other's sufferings. But here, in Mrs. Neame's words, you have, above all, the reflection of the propaganda used by the ruling classes in both Germany and the Allied countries. The propaganda is to the effect that each country must continue to spread death and destruction over the other—TO PREVENT THE OTHER FROM DOING THE SAME TO IT!

But this is a vicious and endless circle in which humanity is caught. It must be broken. It can be broken. And only in one way. The working people of all countries must join in allegiance to each other, realizing their common interests against all the ruling classes of the world.

While the masses of stricken Europe wander from place to place, homeless, in rags, starving, the rich managed to get most of their money and some of their other wealth into safer quarters abroad. DESTITUTION IS THE LOT OF ONLY THE POOR IN WAR.

## WONDERFUL FOR CAPITALISTS

Yes, for the ruling classes this unenlightened conduct on the part of working people is wonderful—but maddeningly foolish from the point of view of working class interests and indeed from the point of view of simple justice.

For why should the "frail" be "brave" and the "underfed" be "enduring" in a cause which is not their own? Those for whom this war is being fought are neither frail nor underfed. The capitalist classes of all countries are getting rich out of the war!

The war profits of the American capitalist class top all the rest, but they are not the only ones by any means. Business is very good for the British industrial owners and overlords. It is good for the same class in Germany. Even in occupied France, industrialists who are playing ball with the Germans are getting theirs. In Russia, while the people are bled white to support the war, the class of bureaucratic rulers becomes more powerful.

Be it in America, England, Russia, Germany or Japan, the contrast between the war sufferings of the poor and the ease and profiteering of the rich is disgustingly apparent. Just as was the case in London during the blitz, when the rich had their luxurious shelters all ready while the working people had brimstone hailed on them from the sky, so in German towns and cities, and in all war-bombed places, the rich have real protection while the masses are provided with unsafe makeshifts.

In France, in Italy, in Greece, in every country where disease and starvation plague the poor and their children, the rich are amply supplied through the black markets—where money is no consideration.

While the masses of stricken Europe wander from place to place, homeless, in rags, starving, the rich managed to get most of their money and some of their other wealth into safer quarters abroad. DESTITUTION IS THE LOT OF ONLY THE POOR IN WAR.

What is wonderful about the "frail"

and the "underfed" being "brave" and "enduring" such injustice? What else can be the answer but this: "It is wonderful for the ruling classes that the Mrs. Neames still are that way."

## WHAT CIVILIZATION?

Mr. Middleton's admiration for Mrs. Neame is indeed boundless. She is wonderful "also because although civilization has offered her so little and her children only a bit more, she is willing to go on fighting for it."

It is not "civilization" as such that has offered her so little. The word must be qualified. It is CAPITALIST civilization that keeps her "frail" and "underfed," and bombs her out of house and home; that robbed her of husband and two sons, and may rain destruction from the sky upon her little grandchild.

The Mrs. Neames do not yet know that civilization, FREED FROM THE POISONOUS HOLD OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS, can offer them everything human beings want in life—plus peace for the enjoyment of the things of life. But they will learn!

In fact, the learning process is going on at a rapid pace—not only in Britain but all over the world.

From the standard of working class interests, British labor is doing truly remarkable things. Tens of thousands of British miners struck against the SO LITTLE that British capitalism offers them, while taking for itself SO MUCH. Workers in other war industries have done the same. Even after the government announced new penalties for "fomenting" strikes, the bus drivers of London and gas house workers struck, understanding very well that it is not "brave" to "endure" for the sake of capitalist profits.

In America the rank and file of labor is thoroughly dissatisfied to "endure" wage stabilization while profits are very much unstabilized. They decidedly do not like the arrangement whereby the government and big business cooperate so that the workers get "so little." The miners' strike, the threatened rail strike, the many "unauthorized" strikes, the

## It Can Be Done



widespread wage demands, are ample evidence.

As far away as China and Japan the realization grows in the minds of the most backward and most propagandized workers and peasants that the war is used as a pretext to grind them down. Peasants and workers' strikes in the Far East attest to the awakening of the masses.

But the most revolutionary thought and action comes from the working people in those parts of the world where capitalist civilization has collapsed most completely. From the workers of France, through their underground organizations, comes the demand for a socialist reorganization of society. The most advanced workers there will undoubtedly fight against the return of the capitalist masters and their capitalist governments—yes, against the return of the CAPITALIST civilization which threw them into the depths of degradation and misery.

In Italy the working class indicates in action its opposition to the restoration of CAPITALIST civilization. The Italian masses have been ground down by fascist tyranny, deci-

mated by hunger; they are still under the German heel in the North, and in the South under the suppressive "guidance" of the Allied military government—but they know what they want. They don't want that kind of "civilization" that has given them and Mrs. Neame "so little." They want the real civilization of a socialist society.

## WORLD WORKERS, UNITE!

Around the world, the working people are in motion—and all in the same direction. Some in one way, some in another; some more, others less; the workers of the world are fed up with their capitalist masters. When those great human qualities of loyalty, bravery, endurance, self-sacrifice, imagination, sympathy, generosity which the Mrs. Neames and all working people possess in abundance, are employed in the cause of finally ousting those capitalist masters, that will be truly wonderful!

For then the workers of the world will unite, to put into a dishonored grave the capitalist system on whose head lie all the crimes being today inflicted upon humanity.

## What the Case of the Eighteen Means to the Labor Movement

## Novelist James T. Farrell Appeals For Support For Victims of Gag Act

James T. Farrell, noted novelist, who is chairman of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, discussed on Radio Station WEVD on April 15 the case of the eighteen Trotskyists and leaders of the Minneapolis Truck-drivers Union, Local 544-CIO, who are now serving federal prison sentences under the Smith "Gag" Act which makes the expression of opinion alone a crime, in an address entitled "Free Speech and Labor's Rights." Excerpts from the speech follow:

"Practically all sections of the labor and liberal movement in this country have expressed alarm over the mounting tide of reaction. Today this threat is not distant; it is immediate. And inevitably, the major purpose of reaction is that of destroying the independence of the labor movement, and thereby of being free to forge new chains for the workers. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to abrogate civil liberties, and most especially the precious right of freedom of speech.

## Freedom of Speech Abrogated

"Freedom of speech and freedom of labor are integral. That is why the fascist dictatorships of Europe, when they achieved power, immediately crushed the labor unions and imposed rigid censorship. And in the last few years there have been a

whole series of attacks both on the labor movement and on the Bill of Rights. Congress, largely under the inspiration of poll-tax legislators, has passed the vicious Smith "Gag" Act and the Smith-Connelly anti-strike bill. The Smith "Gag" Act, a peacetime sedition law, is in flagrant contradiction with that provision of the Bill of Rights which state unconditionally that Congress shall pass no law abridging freedom of speech. According to this law, freedom of speech has not merely been temporarily suspended in the name of an emergency; it has, in essence, been abrogated. As a result of this law, it is possible for American citizens to be convicted and jailed, merely for the expression of opinion. In fact, this has happened as we will see in a few moments.

"The passage of this act was opposed by both the AFL and the CIO. Speaking against it, Representative Geyer of California declared: 'This bill is an attempt to put an end to real democracy. It is an attempt to break the labor movement.' Representative Martin of Colorado said: 'It is enough to make Thomas Jefferson turn over in his grave. It is without precedent in the history of labor legislation. It is an invention of intolerance contrary to every principle of democracy.' After it was passed, the American Civil Liberties Union pleaded with President Roosevelt to

veto it, charging that it violated the Bill of Rights.

"Unfortunately for the cause of free speech, the prediction of the American Civil Liberties Union was fulfilled. As a result of a trade union conflict between Minneapolis trade unionists, who were also members of the Socialist Workers Party, and Daniel J. Tobin, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the Minneapolis labor case has become an item in the history of free speech and of the American trade union movement. The Minneapolis leaders opposed Daniel J. Tobin's attempt to impose his authority over their local. Then, after a democratic and almost unanimous vote of nearly 4,000 members of their local, they disaffiliated from the AFL and joined the CIO. Daniel J. Tobin made representations to President. These were not ignored, for the New York Times of June 14, 1941, tells us that Stephen Early, secretary of President Roosevelt, told the press: 'When I advised the President of Tobin's representations this morning, he asked me immediately to have the government departments and agencies interested in this matter notified.'

"Significantly enough, the government department which seemed most interested in this matter was the one which is described by the word—

Justice! Shortly after Mr. Early made this statement, agents of the Department of Justice raided the headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party and also of the newly formed Motor Transport & Allied Workers Industrial Union, Local 544-CIO.

## What Constitutes "Conspiracy"

"The government indicted twenty-nine persons, charging them with a conspiracy to commit acts to overthrow the government, and with the expression of opinion for the same purposes. The first of these charges was based upon an antiquated Civil War law, directed against supporters of the slave owners' rebellion. The second was based on the Smith 'Gag' Act. Concerning the political motivation of this prosecution, the American Civil Liberties Union has stated: 'It seems reasonable to conclude that the government interjected itself into an inter-union controversy in order to promote the interests of the one side which supported the administration's foreign and domestic policies.'

"In the government prosecution of this case, one of its attorneys, Victor A. Anderson, argued that in order to gain a conviction it was not necessary to prove that the defendants had committed overt acts; mere expression of opinion was enough. Thereby, this case was raised to the level

of becoming an important constitutional trial concerning freedom of speech. In passing, one of the proofs presented by the prosecution was 'The Communist Manifesto,' written in 1848 by Karl Marx.

"The jury threw the first charge out of court and convicted eighteen of the defendants on the second count. The conviction was sustained in the Circuit Court and then carried to the U. S. Supreme Court. The U. S. Supreme Court three times refused even to hear the appeal on this case, despite the fact that it was the first one which tested the constitutionality of the Smith Act. With this action of the highest court in the land, the case is just about closed as far as the government is concerned. As a final action, evidence in the case, such as the seized literature written by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, was burned.

"However, for the labor and liberal movements, this case cannot be closed.

## The History of Fascism

"The history of fascism teaches us that the first attacks made by reaction are against the labor movement, and usually against its extreme left wing. This has happened in the Minneapolis Case. Further, the force of law and the police power has now been substituted for the use of reason, persuasion, argument, in the

case of those who defend the historic ideas of Marxian socialism. It should be clear that this kind of an attack against socialist ideas, this jailing of socialist leaders, can only help pave the way that makes it so much the easier for fascism. This kind of governmental action further has the effect of making men fearful, of helping further to spread that paralysis of will, of morale, of intellect which is already much too apparent in the present period of history.

"When the penalty of open thinking is a cell in jail, fewer men will dare to think. Under such conditions, political argument is made more and more the province of those who are unprincipled, who are dishonest and unscrupulous. For such men have no need to try and tell the truth; they have no need to state what is their real conviction. They can, thereby, evade all such laws as these. But those whose political actions are principled cannot take this course. They must either be silent, or risk punishment. This is one of the most significant ways in which laws such as the Smith Act, and prosecutions such as the Minneapolis Case, destroy the very moral fiber of men.

"The eighteen defendants in this case refused to sacrifice—their views and convictions, even at the price of

their freedom. If those of us who are outside of prisons do not continue our struggle in their defense it is not at all impossible that they will have company in their confinement.

"In the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Abraham Lincoln, remarked: 'The fight must go on. The cause of civil liberty, must not be surrendered at the end of one or even one hundred defeats.' Tonight I wish to reaffirm this sentiment. The Minneapolis Case has become the major focus in the fight for civil liberties in America.

"The Civil Rights Defense Committee, authorized representative of the eighteen Minneapolis victims, is now conducting a campaign to appeal to the President for pardon. It is asking the entire labor and liberal movement to support it in this campaign by signing its petitions for a pardon and by writing directly to President Roosevelt, asking that this pardon be granted. The defense of the Minneapolis victims is, in itself, an attack on the Smith 'Gag' Act. And this law remains hanging over the head of labor like the pendulum over the head of the victim in Edgar Allan Poe's story, 'The defense of labor's rights, the defense of free speech, the defense of all of us against the danger of fascism, require that this pendulum be put into a museum.'

## LABOR ACTION -- The Paper Every Worker Should Read --

(Continued from page 7)

exposes this trickery. As evidence, we held up to view first the machinations between the Allied "democrats" and the French fascists in Algiers; and now, with Badoglio and Mussolini's tribe in Italy.

Nor does LABOR ACTION—like the soft-as-silk liberals—feel that Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin are just making a mistake—the poor things are so busy waging a war, don't you know! No, their policy of collaborating with fascists is deliberate; it is what they choose; it is the choice between fascists and the revolutionary masses. LABOR ACTION wants all workers to understand this. The most progressive thing in the world today is the action of the masses—as best shown in Italy—in the direction of throwing out the old powers and establishing workers' governments. LABOR ACTION wants all workers to know that the United Nations' statesmen bolster fascism in Italy against the workers.

On the home front, LABOR ACTION draws aside the curtain of hypocrisy behind which

the capitalist war profiteers are hiding. The merchants of death who make billions out of war materials and are not too particular about delivering perfect goods—regardless of the toll in unnecessary deaths this means—get front-page "honors" at the hands of LABOR ACTION. The enormous war profits of big business, the unheard-of high salaries of industrialists, the system of dollar-a-year control by big business of government supply agencies and other government functions—all get their due in LABOR ACTION. The connection between high prices, the black market and the capitalist system of private profit are made clear week after week. And LABOR ACTION doesn't pull any punches.

It doesn't hem and haw, and say, "Well, these are the bad capitalists—the monopolists, the cartelists," as do the only-go-so-far liberals. LABOR ACTION tells the workers that this is no exception but the rule; that this is capitalism, which is today monopoly capitalism—without any ifs, ands or buts. LABOR ACTION can do this because it believes that

if civilization is to continue, the workers will have to shove capitalism out of their way. But the liberals throw capitalism out of the window, only to let it in the door—while the Stalinists clasp the barbarous profit system to their bosoms.

There are indeed few papers in the country that have handled the war abroad and at home directly from the viewpoint of the working people, and not allowed war propaganda to becloud the facts.

## ALL OUT FOR INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION BY LABOR

The most recent and the greatest task which LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party have undertaken thus far is their campaign for an independent Labor Party, to be based on the unions and to be organized to wage political warfare against capitalist politics. This is indeed the crux of labor's struggle—for through a class party lies labor's road to power.

While labor leaders and the despicable Stalinists hold onto Roosevelt's political coattails,

LABOR ACTION sees that the rank and file has learned from first-hand experience about the "friendliness" of this "friend of labor." A stabilization policy that freezes wages and places into profits a dose of yeast for rising—a labor draft law that will make industrial chattels of workers—these are some of FDR's "friendly" offerings to labor.

Liberals and their like make a distinction between the "reactionary Congress" and the President—if the President only had a liberal Congress! But LABOR ACTION knows and presents to its readers a few facts on this score. The President is not only playing political basketball with the reactionaries, he is actually giving them a few baskets by default. The poll-taxers are in the political party of which the President is the leader—and what does he do about it? These and similar facts tell the story.

LABOR ACTION raises the slogan: "On to working class power through an independent class party of labor." It tells labor to find its political legs—to take its hand out of the mis-

leading hand of the capitalist politicians in the Republican and Democratic Parties.

This, in general review, is a picture of the pages of LABOR ACTION from May Day, 1943, to May Day, 1944. It has lived up to its dedication—TO SERVE THE CLASS INTERESTS OF LABOR—TO FURTHER THE PROGRESS AND THE FINAL EMANCIPATION FROM CAPITALISM OF ALL THE WORKING PEOPLE.

We hope that in the year to come, tens of thousands more workers will become faithful readers and supporters of the paper, realizing that in it they will find the true facts, the realistic interpretation of facts from the point of view of what is good for the working people, and also guidance to progressive action. But also we hope that more working people will come to realize that LABOR ACTION is a forum where the problems, mistakes and victories of the working people can be discussed freely and fairly—THUS TO LEARN FASTER AND TO STEP FORWARD WITH FIRMER STEPS.