The Reds Say--

By JIM ALLEN

Many of us still remember well the days before the United States entered the World War, with all the flag waving and stories of Hun atrocities, and everything else reckoned to fool a nation into a blood bath. Don't it look similar now, tho, with all the stories about Bolshevik brutality, and how the Russian reds are taking away the American farmers' dollars (has he any to take away?) by "dumping", and the "Bolshevik menace" glaring over the newspapers like the "Hun menace" did 13 years ago. You might just as well chew your chew, fellow-workers, and think it over.

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Before I'd get into a fight, I'd like to know what it's all about, and then maybe I'd shoot in a different direction. This guy Matthew Woll, who ain't no friend of mine or yours, has been talking so long about convict labor in the Soviet Union that he got his friend Andy Mellon, in the treasury department to issue a ruling against importation of convict made goods, meaning goods from the Soviet. Fish fished up some willing stories about brutal treatment of convicts in Russia. That set the press howling. I've seen some Soviet prisons—and let me set you straight—I'd much rather live in one of those than work in one of Andy Mellon's steel mills as a free man. You get work in a shop under the same conditions as any good union man outside of prison, with union wages, and you can even get a two-week's vacation from prison to go and visit your family or work on the farm if you ain't one of those Ramsin guys plotting to escort whisker Briand into the country at the head of an army.

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And then you just get to wondering. Look at the chain gangs over here building roads, and cutting trees and breaking stones and not getting paid anything for it, and getting shot and beaten into the bargain. You don't hear Woll refusing to ride in his limousine over convict-made state highways, do you? Nor do you hear Mellon raising a row about admitting Huey Long of Louisiana to the Senate because he had his campaign posters made by prison labor? Nor does Hoover refuse to eat his rice pudding because the rice came from convict-worked plantations? And talking about forced labor, you don't catch the secretary of the navy refusing steel shipments for the new warships from the U. S. Steel Corporation because it was produced in mill towns where deputies with long guns watch over you. Not by a long shot!

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The long and short of it is that over here there is forced starvation under forced work and in the Soviet Union the worker is freer than anywhere else in the world. Over here there is forced idleness for 9,000,000 workers, while over in the Soviet Union the workers are setting up their industries so fast that there ain't enough workers to go around. Over here the bosses are scared skinny that the workers will get wise to themselves and do things in the Russian way, so they would like to see that Russian way wiped out with Andy Mellon's and Morgan's steel shells. That's what Woll and that A. F. of L. crew would like to see, too, and that's why there's all this lying. Let me set you wise to something else. I've seen that Red Army, and the workers and the farmers of the Soviet and they would rather die fighting than see a single landlord back on the farm or a single boss back in the factory. And they are depending upon you, too.