

THE WAR ON THE WORKERS - - - - - By JAY LOVESTONE

Congress will soon be called upon to appropriate scores of millions of dollars to increase the military and naval fighting forces.

There is no doubt that the appeals of Secretary of War Weeks and Secretary of the Navy Denby will meet with a generous response. World conditions are too unsettled, and domestic conditions are too unstable to warrant a reduction in Uncle Sam's military and naval expenditures.

To the workingmen and poor farmers there is not a more vital question than that of militarism. Militarism is a special, violent, mechanical barrier to the achievement of working class freedom. In recent years the capitalists have been making giant strides in militarizing America. Our owning class has been making tremendous progress in building up gigantic military machines to fight for its interests at home and abroad. The responsible navy and war departments have repeatedly and frankly declared that our navy and army are great industrial assets.

The National Guard

The cost of national defense has more than doubled in the last decade. Likewise, the total number of individuals under training has more than doubled.

One of the most important units in the national military machine is the National Guard. According to the last report of the Secretary of War, this military body now has a total strength of 160,598 men divided amongst the various states and Porto Rico.

Recently the big employers have begun to pay considerable attention to the National Guard. State Legislatures are increasing the appropriations for these units. The reason for this growing interest and expenditure of funds in behalf of the various state militias is obvious. The National Guard has been used by the capitalists against the workers more than any other division of the national military organization.

It is interesting to note that the ratio of increase in the National Guard is almost directly proportional to the intensity of working class unrest in the country. During the fiscal year 1921 when the country was on the eve of a great strike wave and the bosses were preparing the open shop drive, the National Guard increased 102 per cent in its aggregate strength according to the Chief of the Militia Bureau. In 1922 in the midst of the terrific class struggles involving over a million workers, the National Guard gained 40 per cent in strength. In 1923 with strikes and industrial unrest somewhat abated, the employers and their state and federal governments paid less attention to the National Guard and the rate of increase fell to a point of practical insignificance.

The War On the Workers

That the capitalists have turned the various state military bodies into safe investments is proved by an examination of the most recent history of the National Guard. An analysis of the latest Annual Report of the Chief of the Militia Bureau brings to light startling evidence establishing beyond a doubt that the National Guard is more and more being used by the bosses to wage relentless war on the workers. In his report for 1923, the Chief of the Militia Bureau put the case of the employing class bluntly in these words: "The National Guard, it may be safely assumed, has the loyal support throughout the country of the conservative citizen."

The story of the National Guard movements in the last year reads like the dispatches from the front sent by the best of war correspondents. When one goes thru the last report of National Guard activities he recalls the stirring reports of Sir Philip Gibbs from the French and Flanders fronts. Cavalry squadrons, infantry battalions, medical detachments, tank corps, headquarter troops, service detachments, field artillery corps, machine gun companies, coast artillery divisions, howitzer and train divisions, and anti-air craft artillery—all of these have been turned into action in the last fiscal year against the workers who were struggling against unspeakable working and living conditions.

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1923, the National Guard organizations of twenty-seven states were called upon to render emergency duties and help the civil authorities maintain law and order. If any one still has any doubts left as to law and order under capitalism being anything else than largely a matter of keeping the workers in subjection

and perpetuating the present system of employing class exploitation and oppression, then let him examine the last report of the Chief of the Militia Bureau: Of the 27 states whose National Guards were in action from June 30, 1922 to June 30, 1923, 21 called upon their militias to render service to the bosses in the great national textile, mine, and railway strikes of 1922. In only six states was the National Guard called into action for any other but strike duties during this period. Massachusetts, Maryland, Louisiana, Minnesota, Oregon and Montana, employed their state militias to render such public services as fighting forest fires and guarding prisoners during trials. All the other states employed their troops to break strikes and to war on the workers.

The Textile Strike

In the textile strike, the small state of codfish aristocrats, Rhode Island, had companies of coast artillery, squadrons of cavalry, machine-gun divisions, and field artillery corps thrown into action against the striking workers. These military forces did incalculable damage to the textile workers. All in all the various subdivisions of the Rhode Island National Guard were on strike duty for a period of 330 days or almost a year.

The Coal Strike

When the bituminous and anthracite miners struck in 1922 the late President Harding called upon the governors of the coal mining states to unfurl the flag at the tipples. Eight of these states covering an area of 531,355 square miles—a territory almost equivalent to the present size of England, France, Italy and Germany combined,—responded and rushed their troops into the coal fields to smash the strike. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah were the states in which troops were employed in the interests of the coal operators against the miners.

In Pennsylvania sundry cavalry divisions served to break the mine strike at various points for a period of 280 days. A machine-gun squadron was in strike service 70 days. A motor-transport company saw strike action 35 days. Thus the Keystone state miners faced highly armed military divisions on various sections of their strike front for a total period of 385 days, or about 13 months of service.

Ohio, the late President's own state, vied with Pennsylvania in military strike breaking. Cavalry squadrons were in action 47 days. Infantry divisions served on various strike sectors 109 days. Motor transport companies were in the strike zone to harass the miners for 49 days. An ambulance company saw service 21 days; a wagon company 4 days. The total period, in which the state military forces were on the firing line against the coal strikers, was 230 days.

Indiana had on active duty in its coal fields various infantry divisions serving 65 days; a signal company 18 days, and a motor transport company 18 days. For 101 days these forces rendered strikebreaking duties.

Kentucky was the banner strike-breaking state in many respects. Numerous machine-gun companies were rushed against the strikers and served 308 days. Field artillery corps were on the strike scene 113 days. Infantry companies were hurled against the coal diggers and remained in service 151 days. Kentucky State troops saw action in this strike front for a total period of 572 days, or over a year and a half.

In Illinois the class war was most bitter. Here the battle of Herrin was fought. Infantry divisions were at the strike front 265 days; cavalry squadrons 73 days; anti-air craft artillery corps 7 days; howitzer companies 12 days; field artillery battalions 7 days. All in all the National Guard divisions of Illinois were used against the coal miners for practically a year—364 days.

Colorado, the home of Rockefeller industrial democracy and the scene of the Ludlow massacre was also very much on the strikebreaking map during the miners' struggle. For 86 days infantry divisions were in action. A tank company saw service 28 days; a field artillery division faced the strikers 27 days; a howitzer company 13 days; the Quartermaster's detachment was on strikebreaking duty 31 days. Cavalry divisions pursued their anti-strike duties for 28 days. For a period of 213 days, the Colorado state troops were serving as strikebreakers for the capitalist class.

In New Mexico the striking miners faced a detachment of cavalry for 67 days. At Gallup the 157th Engineers Corps was in action against the strikers for the same period. A division of field artillery was in the war against the workers and brought the total period of military action on this front up to 201 days.

At different points in Utah, batteries of field artillery and a troop of cavalry served against the miners for a total period of 228 days.

The Railroad Strike

When the Railway Shop Craftsmen went on strike in 1922, the full military powers of at least a dozen states were thrown in against them. Alabama, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming mobilized their National Guards against the railway workers. How far flung the battle line was on this sector of the class war front can be seen when one compares the total area of this group of states with the area of some of the countries which participated in the great World War. The twelve states cover an area of 1,053,995 square miles, or a little more than the combined area of England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Norway, Denmark, Lithuania and Estonia.

In Alabama infantry divisions served 548 days against the railway workers; cavalry forces 180 days, motor transport companies 2 days; and machine-gun divisions 110 days. All in all the military forces in this state were in action for a total period of 840 days, or more than two years.

In Arkansas there were mobilized a machine-gun company and an anti-air craft artillery battery against the railway workers for one day.

In California, the entire national guard was mobilized in July 1922 and held in readiness for all emergencies in connection with the railway strike. In this military force there were represented a strength of 2119 infantry men, 359 field artillery men, 200 cavalry men, 172 officers, and other military detachments totaling 3437 men.

In Georgia infantry forces were marshalled against the workers for 30 days.

The Idaho National Guard mobilized infantry companies for 7 days.

The Kansas National Guard marshalled infantry forces against the railroad workers for 753 days. Cavalry squadrons were lined up against the strikers for a total period of 515 days at various points on the strike front. The total period during which the military forces of the state were employed by the railway corporations against the rail workingmen in this state was 1283 days.

In Missouri, companies of infantry men were thrown in against the strikers and served for a total period of 613 days. Batteries of anti-air craft artillery were in action 48 days in various parts of the state. Field artillery corps saw service 85 days. A howitzer company faced the strikers two days. A machine-gun company was in action 54 days. All together the various subdivisions of the Missouri National Guard saw strike-breaking service for 802 days.

In New Hampshire, anti-air craft artillery forces were on strike duty for 39 days and a field artillery battery for 57 days, or a total of 96 days.

The North Carolina National Guard pitted infantry divisions against the railway strikers for 93 days; cavalry forces 26 days, and a battery of field artillery 5 days. Thus for a period of about three months, 124 days, the North Carolina military forces were fighting the strikers.

In Oklahoma, a company of infantry men and a howitzer division together serves 34 days against the shop craft strikers.

In Texas, 146 days of strikebreaking service were rendered by the infantry men. A company of howitzer men saw 92 days of action. For 238 days these two subdivisions of the Texas National Guard were in action against the railway strikers.

The Wyoming National Guard dispatched a cavalry squadron to serve on the strikebreaking front against the workers for five days.

The Great Struggle

The above figures give only a most incomplete picture of the gigantic struggles fought by the workers in this country. In our estimates of the armed forces used against the workingmen we have entirely omitted the Federal army units and the armed gangmen employed by the numerous detective agencies serving the capitalist class.

But a summary of the extent to which the National Guard alone was employed by the various State governments against the workers, convicts, beyond the flimsiest shade of a reasonable doubt, the government of being a strikebreaking agency in the hands of the employing class. The National Guard today is one of the most powerful weapons in the hands of the capitalists in their war on the workers.

In the coal strike, the National Guard served in various states at different points in the strike zone, a total period of 2,294 days—or a period of 6 years and 3 months.

In the Railway Strike, the various sub-divisions of the National Guard was mobilized and in action against the workers for a period of 3461 days—or the equivalent of 9 years and about 6 months.

In the Textile Strike, the various units of the National Guard fought the workingmen for a total period of 330 days or almost a year.

During the Textile, Coal and Railway strikes of 1922 the National Guard forces were mobilized and in action against the workingmen in 21 states covering a total area of 1,586,598 square miles. The magnitude of this great front of the American class struggle compares with many a battle front in the last great war. The present combined areas of 19 European countries among which are included England, France, Germany, Spain, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Italy, the Scandinavian, the Baltic and the Balkan countries, is smaller than the area of the 21 states in which the National Guard was sent against striking workingmen. More than that; the National Guard served at the different points in the strike zones of these States, a total period of 6,098 days or the equivalent of a period of warfare of over 16 and a half years.

(The cost of this war on the workers in the United States and the casualties suffered by the workers in this struggle will be dealt with in subsequent articles.)

Good News!

By SCOTT NEARING

The most appropriate greeting that I can send to the readers of "THE DAILY WORKER" is contained in this little table of figures showing the economic revival in Russia:

Year	Production in million gold roubles	Per cent of pre-war
1919-20	511	14.6
1920-21	527	15.1
1921-22	754	21.3
1922-23	1,127	32.0

("Russian Information and Review," Dec. 1, 1923, p. 346)

These figures indicate that within the past three years the industrial production of Russia has more than doubled, that each year has shown an improvement, and that the improvement of the last year has been the greatest of all.

Here is another item: On November 25, 1923, the chervonetz (the new Russian currency) was quoted in London at 21s 1d, which is the exact par value of ten pre-war roubles. This means that the Soviet authorities can make their contracts in England (and elsewhere) with a currency that is at par with the standard currency of Europe.

Unlike the countries of central Europe, Russia seems to be making economic headway. Workers and farmers can handle their own economic affairs when they turn their minds to the task.

For Recognition of Soviet Russia!

Russian Branch, Workers Party of Wilkesbarre, Pa., sends its heartiest greetings to the most effective member of the Party—**THE DAILY WORKER.**