

# READING LABOR ADVOCATE

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF ALL THE WORKERS

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## Interest Payments Soar While Wages Stop

### REFLECTIONS

By the Editor

THE SOCIALIST PARTY is a political organization with democratic ideals. Nevertheless, even a Socialist editor may be excused for believing that there are approximately a hundred million reasons in these United States for a dictatorship. Those reasons, of course, are that many people, mostly workers, who lack the political and economic wisdom to do something for themselves and who are always waiting for somebody to do something for them.

WHILE I VIEW with alarm the possibilities involved in the plan to give extraordinary and unconstitutional authority to the next President of these United States, nevertheless, I am willing to admit that there will be ample justification for him if he decides to use those powers for the purpose of more securely enslaving the people who voted for Capitalism last November.

The issue then was clearly drawn: Shall the powers of government be administered in the interest of the owners or for the benefit of workers? That was what the great American public decided. And all but the less-than-a-million who voted for Thomas and Maurer decided in favor of the owners.

IN THE LIGHT of the election returns, the only way Franklin D. Roosevelt can truly carry out the expressed will of the majority of people is to do whatever may be necessary to make Capitalism work.

Of course, anything that he may attempt to do that is more than likely to be a failure. The recent closing of more than 500 Michigan banks is just another evidence of the inability of the Capitalist system to function. More profits are likely to arise as times go on.

BUT THE PEOPLE are waiting—and, for the most part, trusting. People are that way. They trusted Woodrow Wilson when he "kept us out of war." They trusted Herbert Hoover and were soothed by the promise that prosperity would be discovered as soon as a "certain corner" was reached. And they are likely to be just as gullible when and if Franklin D. Roosevelt deprives them of their few remaining liberties in order to perfect an economic set-up which will be satisfactory to the very small number of people who dominate the economy of this nation.

BUT DON'T DESPAIR! It just so happens that the salvation of the Capitalist system cannot be accomplished without greatly elevating the living standards of the masses. The dictatorship which forces people to accept bread and potato standards in this highly developed industrial nation is bound to cut the ground from under the feet of the owning class. The men and women who are taking insufficient food vouchers today were once potential customers for the big corporations—and aren't anymore.

Submerged millions will not buy from the combines which have their capital invested in the manufacture of electric refrigerators, radios and motor cars. They will not eat up the surpluses which farmers produce nor wear the clothing which is made from the wool of western ranches. And so, while we are likely to face a period in which civil rights will be denied to many of us, the fact remains that we are either going to live.

**SOCIALIST  
Radio Program  
EVERY SUNDAY**

at 12:15 P. M. over

361.4M WEEU 830K

Feb. 19—Darlington Hoopes  
Feb. 26—J. Henry Stump

TELL YOUR FRIENDS

### OWNERS' ACTUAL CLEAN-UP TOPPED ALL RECORDS IN STARVATION YEAR OF '32

Government Figures Reveal How Capitalism's Parasites  
"Got Theirs" While Production and Wages Were  
Cut—No Effort Was Made to Halt Profit-takers as  
Schools, Cities and Hungry People Were Urged to  
Economize

NEW YORK (FP).—America's interest bill in 1932 was the highest in the nation's history. Production had fallen about a half since 1929, trade was off, wages had dropped some 60 per cent, all income was down a half, schools were closing for lack of funds, millions were hungry, building had almost stopped—but more was paid in interest than in any prosperity year of our history. The coupon-clippers were getting theirs.

This statement is not based on any statistical juggling of prices—it is based on the amount paid in dollars, as computed by the Journal of Commerce and published by the U. S. Department of Commerce in the Survey of Current Business.

The figures are not complete, of course, but since they are taken from the same sources year after year they indicate the situation. The totals should not be taken however as the full measure of the interest burden of the country's farmers and workers. (Continued on Page Four)

### URGES 30-HOUR WEEK FOR WOMEN

Lilith Wilson Presents Bill For  
General 5-Day 6-Hour Week  
For Female Workers

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Under the terms of the Women's Hours Act introduced in the Pennsylvania Legislature this week by Rep. Lilith Wilson, Reading Socialist, hours for women in industry would be limited to the 30-hour week, six-hour day and five-day week now sought nationally for all labor. A general five-day week and six-hour day for all workers in Pennsylvania industry, sponsored by Rep. Wilson some weeks ago, has been securely pickled in a subcommittee of the House Labor committee composed exclusively of representatives owning allegiance to the Grundy Pennsylvania-Manufacturers' Association.

Workers' Votes Needed  
Only a real workers' revolution at  
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### HOOPES AGAIN MOVES TO PERMIT JOBLESS TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES

Socialist's Employment District Bill Aims to Free Workers  
From Domination of Private Industry

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Representative Darlington Hoopes has introduced a new Employment Service District bill, similar to a measure proposed in the session of 1931, which proposes to set up a county system for production of their own food, clothing and shelter by the unemployed. Under the new Hoopes bill, voters in all counties in the State would vote this fall on the setting up of a County Employment Service District in their section. If a majority vote were cast for the proposition the county commissioners of the particular county would present a petition to the court of common pleas and the court would be compelled to decree the creation of the district, the court appointing a board of managers of five members to serve until the municipal election of 1935. The boards of the new districts would have the right of eminent domain, tax levy and bond issue to cover the cost of acquisition and construction of works. The first duty of the districts would be to direct their attention to the supplying of essentials for human existence such as food, fuel, dwellings and utility services. Workers for the industries of the County Employment Service District would have to be selected from those at present unable to find employment in capitalist-administered industry. Wages, hours, and working conditions generally would in all cases be set by boards of mediation composed of two persons selected by the board of managers, two by the organized employees and a chairman chosen by the other four. Wages however, would have to be paid by the boards in cash and in no case could be less than the rate prevailing previously in the district. Similar legislation is now pending in both House and Senate of the Wisconsin legislature at Madison, having been introduced by Socialist members of that body. The Wisconsin bills were drawn on the model of the first Employment Service District bill introduced in the Pennsylvania.

### HOOPES DEMANDS CENT POLL TAX TO AID JOBLESS

Socialist's Bill Seeks to Return  
Ballot to Workers Disfranchised  
as Result of Poverty

URGED BY STATE PARTY  
Newer States Do Not Disbar  
Workers From Polls—Pennsylvania  
and South Most Drastic

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Rep. Darlington Hoopes, as Socialist spokesman in the Pennsylvania House, has introduced a bill to return the right to a vote to the unemployed of the State through a uniform 1c per year poll tax.

In the last election, while the vote throughout the nation rose by several million, in Pennsylvania it fell by the hundreds of thousands over that cast in 1928. This was overwhelmingly due to the Pennsylvania law which makes voting conditional on payment of taxes and denies the ballot to those who cannot show the receipt indicating that they are property owners. The owning class have thoughtfully placed this provision in the constitution and

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### HE'S GONE



I. JOE HORNSTEIN

The "Reading Times," which believes in full and open publicity (!), very briefly told the world, this week, that "Big I" Joe Hornstein is no longer the business manager of that "guardian of public safety" Editor Abe Hurwitz, who played Hornstein's game by razing the Socialist administration during the four years beginning 1928, didn't see fit to explain why this high and mighty anti-Socialist left the service.

While all advocates of public improvements will rejoice at Hornstein's passing, neither the "Times" nor Editor Hurwitz can escape the odium which has been attached to the "Times" by Hornstein's gangster-like tactics. His arrogance, in dealing with a traffic violation, his enterprise in the beer gas industry and, above all, his abject surrender and self-abasement when driven into a corner and revealed as a liar by Attorney M. B. Hoffman will be remembered for a long time.

Hornstein was of little value as a friend, as an enemy, he played a useful part. The net result of his four years of hostility to the Socialists of Reading was a growth in the Socialist vote and waning circulation and advertising accounts for the "Times."

### UNEMPLOYED ACT FOR STATE BODY

Taxpayers' League Delegates  
Attend Conference in Harrisburg — To Organize at  
Later Meeting

Plans for a statewide organization of the unemployed of Pennsylvania were set in motion Monday when 50 delegates, representing leagues of jobless workers from four farflung sections of the State met in the Socialist Party headquarters in Harrisburg.

Reading delegates to the conference were Lincoln Steigerwald, chairman; Jack Schaeffer, secretary; Eric Kruse, Harry Alexander, Clarence Garman, Jack Krauss, Irvin Weber, Henry Kuhl, Clarence Calk and Laverne Burkhardt, all members of the Taxpayers' Protective League.

Credentialed delegates also were present from the Unemployed Workers' League.

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### JUDGE MAYS WILL SPEAK TO UNEMPLOYED TODAY

When the Taxpayers' Protective League holds its public meeting in City Hall auditorium this afternoon, the guest speaker will be Judge H. Robert Mays. The meeting will be open for discussion and forum rules will prevail at the close of Judge Mays' address.

Starr Here Monday

On Monday at 2 p. m., Mark Starr, former member of the British Labor Party and now an instructor at Brookwood Labor College, will address the league in Labor Lyceum.

### BAZAAR FRIDAY AND SATURDAY FEB. 17th and 18th Last 2 Nights of Big Socialist Event

MASQUERADE TONIGHT  
(FRIDAY)

Prizes Awarded to Groups and Individuals

SPECIAL: Don't Miss the Big Auction Sale on Saturday  
Night at Close of Bazaar

Free Dancing Every Night  
MUSIC BY SOCIALIST ORCHESTRA

ST. CASIMIR HALL  
Bingaman and Orange Streets

Door Prizes

Admission, 10 Cents

### TO TELL JUDGE OF MANAGEMENT AT FUEL PLANT

Van Horn, Ex-Foreman, Says  
He Will Vindicate His Actions  
in Interview With  
Schaeffer

### SAYS COSTS ARE GROWING

Declares Sedan Was Charged  
To Relief Treasury With  
Knowledge and Approval of  
Symontowne

How much does a cord of wood cost when prepared and delivered by the Unemployment Work Relief organization? Does Russ Symontowne's \$350-per-month salary, plus the supervision of the paid workers at Fourth and Buttonwood and in the wood-cutting areas, plus bookkeepers, plus truck hire, plus everything else result in a cost to the taxpayers of Berks County which is lower than the cost of cord wood ought to be? Or is the county paying 5 cents per hour to men merely to keep them busy and

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### FREIHOFFER BAKERS GIVEN 24% WAGE REDUCTION

If you hear of a reduction in the price of Freihofer's baked goods don't get the idea that the firm is sacrificing its profits. The sacrifice is all on the part of the workers employed at the bakery.

Freihofer's bakers had their wages cut 7 1/2 to 8 cents per hour about two weeks ago. The reason given by their bosses was that a reduction was necessary to meet business conditions.

Prior to the cut, the average wage was about 35 cents per hour. By working 12 to 13 hours a shift the Freihofer bakers will still be able to earn more than is doled out to the jobless on food vouchers.

Approximately 35 men employed in the bakery are affected by the cut. Local bakers are not organized.

### WORKERS BARRED SUNDAYS FROM CITY AUDITORIUM

Resolution Adopted by Fusionists Over Socialist Protest  
Viewed as Gag by Unionists

### FINAL MEETING ON SUNDAY

Rauschenbush, Phillips, Maurer  
To Address Public Under  
Security League Auspices.  
March 5 In Doubt

Acting against the vigorous protests of Socialist Councilmen Hooverter and George, Reading's Fusion administration, by a vote of 3 to 2, took action to limit the use of the City Hall auditorium in such a manner that labor groups, whose best time for gatherings and discussions is on Sundays, will be barred from the auditorium on that day.

Becoming effective "immediately," the language of the resolution closed the doors of the hall to local unionists who had already secured permission to use the hall on February 19

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### AGED CITY WORKER OUSTED BY FUSION INHUMANITY

The story in the newspapers said he resigned, and technically speaking, that is how the matter appears on the city's records. But Henry E. Drexel, who worked for the city of Reading for the past 30 years, declares he was "forced out" by the Fusionists.

For the past 27 years Drexel was a watchman and caretaker at the Buttonwood Street Reservoir. Prior to that he served three years on the police force under Mayor Shanahan. He is now 71 years old, but looks and acts younger. And he is out of a job as a result of what he describes as "inhuman treatment" on the part of the city officials.

"On February 1 the city boarded up the watchman's house at the reservoir."

### What Reading Folks Are Talking About

#### WHO WILL BE HELPED?

Now that the county officials have cut the salaries of their office staffs, we invite the workers—both underpaid and jobless—to watch for the beneficial results that will follow.

It might be a good idea for all and sundry to keep personal accounts for a year and then write essays on the subject "How Much Further the County Cuts Have Put Me."

As for this writer, he again brazenly predicts and puts it on the record that the workers as a whole will be a lot worse off a year from now than they are today—unless those who benefit most by tax reductions are forced to make greater sacrifices for the benefit of the great mass of people.

With home ownership becoming the portion of fewer and fewer people, the only persons to be benefited by public salaries are the people who soon will own everything which can be taxed. As for employed workers, lower public salaries will simply be a good excuse for further cuts in industry, and lower taxes will mean nothing to those who can't pay any taxes at all.

Especially the unemployed have cause to be worried about the county's "sincere" efforts at economy. What the jobless need is not more economy but more spending. In that connection we commend City Solicitor Speicher for his statement that one of the reasons for the depression is the lack of spending. However, the only people who can spend are those who have the purchasing power. Taxation, properly applied, will make those who can do so disgorge some of their money for the benefit of the public and the merchants with whom the public deals.

This economy business is becoming quite a racket since the mortgage sales have begun to increase. And it is just too bad that many workers are falling for this brand of bunk just as readily as they always have done for all others.

#### THANK GOD FOR SMITH

Probably Councilman Smith did not mean to be funny when he said in council: "When organizations are given the use of the auditorium without charge . . . they should have some respect for the persons making it possible for them to use the auditorium."

What Schmitt probably had in mind was the epithet of "muddle-heads" which Jim Maurer applied to the Fusion councilmen. Moreover, as he spoke, he doubtless meant that his fellow Fusionists are the very persons who are making it possible for anybody to use the municipal auditorium.

There's a thousand laughs in that situation. In the first place, Smith and all the rest of the city's hirelings are not making it possible for anybody to do anything. Quite the contrary; the Fusionists have reduced payrolls and put more city workers on the "do-nothing" lists than any former administration. If we waited for Smith and the rest of the salaried group to make it possible for anybody to use anything we'd be waiting a mighty long time. If Schmitt hadn't been so mad at Maurer he'd have stopped to think

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#### WHILE AT THE BAZAAR

When you attend the Bazaar you can renew your subscription to the Advocate at the literature stand.

If you can afford and desire to assist the radio fund you can make your contribution at the same place.

Ticket sellers can settle for Bazaar tickets at the literature stand.

Socialist literature can be obtained here from Comrade Ralph Bigony, who is in charge of the stand.