

G. B. Strike Ends Quickly as AFL Support Fizzles

Knifed in the back by forces within the labor movement, the Goldblatt department store workers in Chicago, took a major set-back in their recent one-day strike in the ten department stores of the big retail concern. The heads of the AFL Teamsters Union in Washington and Chicago, instead of showing real class solidarity with the white collar workers who faced discharge, intimidation and all kinds of terror, used the lame excuse that there was too much "heat" on to pull out from under the strike. The leaders of the two striking Unions, Local 291 of the AFL Building Service International, and Local 1515 of the Retail Clerks International, AFL were thus left high and dry.

The one-day strike had its inception in the year-old organization campaign of Local 291 at Goldblatt's. After four or five months, Local 1515 entered the drive and the two Unions fought each other viciously. While this battle continued the Company made hay. It fired dozens of employees for union activity and it put the skids under any National Labor Relations Board action by playing on the jurisdictional dispute.

POSTPONE STRIKE

Local 291, in desperation, finally decided to strike in a last attempt to defend its Union on State Street — the Chicago department store center. On the eve of the strike, however, a pact was arrived at between the two contending groups.

The strike was postponed one day at the request of the Chicago Federation of Labor, which attempted to get the Goldblatt company to agree to a Labor Board election. This effort at mediation, however, failed.

On March 27th the AFL Joint Department Store Committee (composed of representatives of both Unions) made hundreds of telephone calls to its members informing them of the strike. The whole machinery was in order. At 2 A. M. however — 2½ hours before it was to begin — the AFL Teamsters informed the strike committee that it wanted the strike called off for 48 hours, while it attempted to mediate. Some members of the top strike committee at first opposed this request, but when Local 1515 leaders refused to participate without Teamster support it became evident that the strike would be too disorganized, since Local 1515 people were covering the warehouses and 6 of the stores.

The efforts of the Teamsters to mediate, however, likewise ended in failure. The Company continued to stall. On Monday March 31st, therefore, the strike began as scheduled. In most of the stores hundreds of workers stayed home. Accurate registration of the strikers was impossible but somewhere between 800 to 1400 workers refused to cross the picket line. This figure was far beyond the best expectations of the strike committee in view of the fact that only a handful of workers ever came to meetings. They had been too terrorized by the company.

TRUCK DRIVERS STAY OUT

The AFL trucks refused to go through the picket line and at the main Goldblatt warehouse 140 trucks were immobilized completely. The drivers just sat around and refused to go past the picket line. Everything looked fine. At 3 P. M. however the top strike committee was called in by the leaders of the Teamsters and Chicago Federation of Labor and given a document already signed by Goldblatt's. This document stated that the company wouldn't discriminate against anyone for Union activity.

two leaflets viciously attacking the Unions and disputing the claim of victory. Both leaflets hurt.

NO SOLIDARITY

The Goldblatt strike was sabotaged because the Labor bigshots refused to give these workers any real help. They claimed that there was too much political pressure from Washington and elsewhere, that the anti-labor bills were pending, etc. Actually, however, they played into the hands of reaction by permitting the Company to rattle the sword. The Teamster leaders themselves and their Unions will eventually suffer as a result of this refusal to solidarize themselves with the Goldblatt workers.

Unfortunately the G. B. employees and their Unions were never able to build up rank and file participation in the Union. Only a bakers' dozen ever came to meetings. They paid the price for this in the strike. They were not able to make their pressure felt. Without any rank and file movement they were easily betrayed. The Goldblatt strike proved again that workers can depend only on themselves. These department store employees will never win so long as they depend on bigshots like Dan Tobin to help them. A progressive force of rank and file elements within the G. B. stores will have to lead the way. Then, and only then, will support by other labor organizations be fruitful and sustained.

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than other union painters. Other R.R. workers receive 30c and 60c below the scale of craft unions in industrial fields. And they don't get time and a half until after 6 days — 48 hours. The railroad workers for years have been going downhill in their wage levels because of the restrictions of the Railway Labor Act and the phoney leadership of the Railroad Brotherhoods and AFL craft groups. Each craft leadership fights and frequently scabs on the other.

The miners' case is a good example of how the machinery of government works only to safeguard the profits of the coal barons. It took the government only a few days to put a \$3½ million fine on the U.M.W. and to break its strike. But the government has done nothing substantial for years to protect the lives of the men against the terrible hazards in the coal mines. The government has federal mine inspectors and the states have district inspectors, but only after 111 men in Centralia paid with their lives did these tools of the capitalists find 518 mines unsafe. They would not have discovered even one unsafe mine if the mine workers themselves hadn't forced the government's hand by quitting the pits. In due time, of course, all the mines will be declared "safe" and the slaughter will continue.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

1. Capitalism can not be reformed. The profit system can only bring more misery, war and depression.
2. We are therefore opposed to all reformist parties, including the Labor Party, which strive merely to patch up the present capitalist system.
3. We are for independent working class action on all fronts, starting from strike action at the point of production and leading up to the revolutionary destruction of capitalism.
4. We are for full equality for all oppressed minorities, for the right of self-determination for all colonies.
5. Defend the Soviet Union. Reestablish a Marxian Party, Soviets, Trade Unions and Armed Workers Militias to accomplish the Political Revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Extend the October Revolution throughout the world.
6. For a Revolutionary Marxian Party in the United States and a New Fourth Communist International on a world scale.
7. For the establishment of workers control of production for use under a workers council government.

Yes, the life of the workers is cheap to the capitalist state. Profit and the dollar sign are the banner of that state. What can be said about the coal barons is true of the rail barons. They own both the government and the labor lieutenants in the ranks of the Unions.

There are 21 separate Unions in the rail industry. The rail barons therefore have an easy job. They can divide and rule, pit one group against another. They are helped along by the labor fakers who take the worker's mind off militant action within the shops and tell them to concentrate on "love letters" to Washington. The Crosser bill isn't very important in the last analysis; it deals with the question of retirement. Even these needs, however, can be satisfied only by mass action, not by letters to Washington. What the railroad workers want is, in addition to retirement benefits and more important, some decent wages while they work. Railroad painters earn as much as 80c an hour LESS

Only a Government of Workers Councils Can Bring Peace and Security

May Day Manifesto

May Day 1947 will be celebrated throughout Europe with giant demonstrations and parades of the proletariat. Here in the United States however the glorious holiday of the working class will go by relatively unnoticed. In Europe and Asia hunger and privation is driving the oppressed masses to open rebellion. Class-consciousness is therefore pronounced and widespread. In its march to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism the European proletariat is temporarily checked by the demagogic of reformism — Stalinism and Social-Democracy. But the pressure of the masses is so great that even the reformists must pay lip-service to the struggle for socialism.

Here in the United States we are still living off the lush war years and the titanic victory of American Imperialism. The world colossus stands at the pinnacle of its power. Its billions are being siphoned into the bloodstream of world economy to prop up the tottering world structure. Four billions to Britain, billions to France and Italy. Proposed loans to Greece and Turkey. Hundreds of millions to China.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION

And with these billions goes the counter-revolutionary military might of Wall Street. American bayonets stand between the German and Japanese proletariat and their aspirations for freedom and bread. American armaments are helping to snuff out the revolutionary desires of the people of Java, Indo-China, and innumerable others. The hand of Wall Street is omnipresent. It supports reaction the world over — in some places open reaction, in other places reaction with a sugar coating. American money and power stands behind the militarist dictatorships in Greece, Turkey and elsewhere. American money and power helps impose the bourgeois-democratic frauds in Italy, France and elsewhere. Wall Street knows quite well how to use a so-called "democratic" government to un-

(Turn to Page 2)

Anti-Labor Drive Centers on Phone Workers

April 18, 1947. — Despite overwhelming odds, 340,000 members of the National Federation of Telephone workers, continue their strike against the biggest corporation in America, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. It is quite obvious that Tel and Tel is fronting for the whole capitalist class in its drive to smash labor unions.

The telephone workers are considered vulnerable because only 340,000 are covered by the independent federation, headed by Joseph Beirne, out of a total of 630,000 workers. Furthermore even those out on strike are not holding their ranks too effectively. Quite a few are scabbing. Wall Street knows that this is a labor weak spot just as was last year's strike

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Truman's Double Talk on Wages and Prices

2—He will take the political credit for cutting prices.

WINS BOTH WAYS

Truman's subordinates are letting it get around that unless business cooperates with the President's policy we may face an immediate depression. They are voicing it about that we must take a small "recession" now in order to avoid a big depression. Truman's stock, therefore, is bound to remain high either way. If prices go down — as down they must — he will take the credit for something that was inevitable. If business balks at his "plan" he will lay the future troubles of the country on their shoulders.

To Labor the Truman "policy" is being dressed up to say: "see, I'm trying to protect your living standards by forcing prices down". Actually this plan is aimed at keeping WAGES down. It is an ideal formula for big business to fight any appreciable wage increase. The President, you see, is trying to cut prices; you don't need any raises since your money will be worth more.

The Truman government has achieved considerable stability and dexterity in its political relationships. It is showing that it is just as capable in its demagogic in many respects as was the preceding administration under Roosevelt. The working class cannot permit itself the luxury of being lulled to sleep by this nonsense.

The maxim of the Wall Street government hasn't really changed one iota — it reads in large letters: "keep cutting living standards in order to pay for the last war and prepare for future wars".

PITY THE POOR RICH !

A compilation of 840 companies by the National City Bank of New York shows that they made 37% more profits in 1946 than in 1945. Even a greater increase in profits for 1947 was expected. In fact, the Department of Commerce estimates that 1947's first quarter net profits for U. S. industry were at the rate of \$15 billion, 25% over 1946.

MAY DAY MANIFESTO

(Continued from Page 1)

determine and canalize the revolutionary will of the oppressed. It knows, too, however, how to use open reaction.

The might of American Imperialism today is the might of world counter-revolution. Humanity can not be liberated until the power of the Wall Street state regime is totally destroyed and the banner of a Red America flies over Washington! Bourgeois-democratic America is the spearhead of the coming new fascist reaction. It is paving the way for it internally and externally. It is preparing to shackle the world with an open dictatorship — including the world that now pays homage to the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union. For, along with the struggle against the oppressed elsewhere, the United States is preparing to settle accounts with the degenerated workers State in Russia. Today the struggle takes on the form of diplomatic jockeying, power politics and all kinds of help to enemies of socialism. Tomorrow this covert struggle will take on open forms.

UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations today is merely an instrument in this world struggle, an instrument of American domination over the world, an instrument for unifying the struggle of Wall Street against the Soviet Union and the world's oppressed. The Stalinist participation in this League of Bandits is another shameful betrayal of the proletariat. It helps to further break down the revolutionary will of the working class. It sows illusions about "peace under capitalism". It is part and parcel of the treacherous position of Stalinism for maintaining the world status quo. Despite its "militant" words Stalinism has again capitulated to the demand of world capitalism and supports the present class relations in all sections of the world. Stalinist parties everywhere openly defend private property, openly participate in capitalist governments, openly betray the masses they supposedly represent. Stalinism has changed places, following the second war, with social-democracy. Only Stalinism is a much more vicious and dangerous enemy than even the Parties of Scheidemann and Nioke. Basing itself on the October property relations it misuses the prestige of the great proletarian revolution of 1917 to fight revolution in 1947.

Objectively Stalinism — which purports to fight American capitalism — is actually one of its major props. Its "fights" are all safe and sane, within the confines of capitalist "law and order". It fights over tactics, capitulates on major principles.

The great problem of our times is — as in Lenin's day — the question of capitalist democracy. Support of "left" capitalist governments and parties today is the dividing line between opportunism and Marxism. We reject the left support given to capitalism by world Trotskyism and by other centrist organizations. We reject left-popular frontism (Stalinist-Socialist governments), Labor Partyism, and support of capitalist "Workers and Farmers Governments".

INDEPENDENT ACTION

The road to freedom and liberation, the road to peace and plenty, is one of independent working class action. No truck with capitalist third parties; no truck with reformism, either "partial" support or "complete" support. Momentarily the American colossus has held up the time-table of proletarian revolution. A depression, however, is impending here in the United States. The "recession" freely predicted

by American economists will eventually take on the form of a full-fledged crisis and depression. America's counter-revolutionary role will then be seriously impaired. That crisis for capitalism will be our — the working class — opportunity. In that crisis capitalism will attempt to lure us away from our struggles by a concerted drive for war against the Soviet Union. The shadows of that future war already are cast in advance, the shadow of outlawing the Stalinists, of anti-labor legislation, of wage cutting, of unemployment.

Humanity has already paid in oceans of blood for the failure of the working class to absorb the lessons of 1914-19. The leadership

HENRY FORD — APOSTLE OF HATE and GREED

Henry Ford is dead. The newspapers and his paid sycophants are now singing weird tales about this \$2 billion tycoon and his spendings on "charity". We are told about "Ford Foundation, Inc.", about how he "trained youth", about the "gifts" he gave and the museums he established. Everything is done to gloss over the fact that Henry Ford was merely another capitalist brigand, who made his fortune out of the sweat of Ford workers' brows.

Ford was known for his anti-labor gangsters, private detectives and an involved system of spying on labor that has never been equalled. He was known for the murder of four unemployed workers in 1942 by Harry Bennett's hooligans, for the brutal beating of Frankenstein and Reuther in 1937. He was known for his policies of dividing one worker against another, for his importation of poverty-stricken and ill-informed workers from the South to scrub on attempts to unionize his factory. He was known above all for the brutal speed-up and the fact that his was the last big auto empire to sign with the CIO Union.

HATE-MONGER

Ford was a notorious anti-Semite. His Dearborn paper, in its early days, openly preached the doctrine of hate. Millions of dollars of Ford money went to bolster such native fascists as Gerald L. K. Smith, Father Coughlin, and Dr. Frank Buchman. Ford was a supporter of fascism abroad, too. His monetary help to Adolph Hitler began in the 1920's. Hitler kept a special picture of his benefactor at his headquarters. Ford factories in Cologne and other German cities were undamaged by Allied bombing. They continued to produce — and profit — throughout the war. They equipped the German Fascist Armies.

Ford's death marks the end of one of the most brutal representatives of the American capitalist class. His death, however, solves nothing for the working class. The Henry Fords die but the capitalist system and other Henry Fords remain. When they die the prostitute press tries to dress them up in the clothing of benefactors and philanthropists. It deliberately glosses over the brutalities, murders and anti-labor histories of these people.

The working class will not forget Henry Ford. He is a symbol to them of speed-up and slavery, a symbol of the most excruciating form of exploitation, a symbol of a decadent society. It will remember Henry Ford and vow to end the system that can give rise to such people.

of the oppressed aided the oppressors in the second war and continues to aid the debauched system of capitalist brigandage. A new leadership is obviously necessary. The debacles of the second war will become the debacles of the third war unless a new Party of Marxism is forged in the coming period, unless a vanguard of the class appears with the lessons of 1917 and 1945 clearly understood, unless a program of anti-capitalism, pro-communism is proclaimed throughout the world.

MARXIAN PARTY

Once again, still again, the Party of Marxism, the New Fourth Communist International is the crying need of our times. To its organization the Revolutionary Workers League, U. S. dedicates itself anew on this May Day 1947.

FOR THE WORLD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

FOR FREEDOM FOR ALL COLONIAL PEOPLES INCLUDING THOSE IN PUERTO RICO, VIRGIN ISLANDS, THE PACIFIC BASES AND OTHER AMERICAN POSSESSIONS.

END JIM-CROW, ANTI-SEMITISM AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION.

FOR A NEW MARXIAN PARTY IN THE U. S.

DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION DESPITE AND AGAINST STALINISM.

FIGHT FASCISM BY FIGHTING CAPITALISM.

FOR A WORKER'S COUNCIL GOVERNMENT.

PHONE STRIKE

(Continued from Page 1) to \$500 for each day of strike. Union officials correctly called this fascist measure. As we go to press three union leaders are out on bail awaiting trial for this horrible "crime" of fighting for higher wages.

Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach is preparing the groundwork for an all-out strike-breaking effort by the government. With some slight modifications of the company plan, he proposed that both the Union and management agree to arbitration. The press reported that both parties turned this proposal down. But Walter Gifford speaking at a stockholder's meeting Wednesday, stated that they "approve his proposal on a general basis", but only want a few modifications. Wall Street wants to back into its OWN proposal gracefully and continue the fiction that the government is impartial.

There can be no doubt that the government will try to ram the company proposal of arbitration down the throats of the strikers. This is the classic formula of strike-breaking, since everyone knows that the phone workers will be swindled by so-called "impartial" arbitrators.

NO LABOR UNITY

One of the most unfortunate features of the phone strike is the apathy of the rest of the labor movement. Phil Murray, speaking for the CIO, poured forth a few platonic words of sympathy and solidarity with the strikers. The AFL big shots haven't even done that much. The labor lieutenants of capitalism have refused to come to the aid of the strikers. They continue to permit work in various other Tel and Tel subsidiaries, and in the telegraph offices — which is scooping up on the strike. Instead of making this an all-out battle for the labor unions, as capital is making it for the employing class, the misleaders of labor are permitting the strategy of "divide and rule" to be effective.

The phone strike must not be ended until the poorly paid phone workers win a complete victory. Otherwise millions of others will go down to defeat. The phone strike can be the beginning of a master blow against reaction if it is spread. It will be a major defeat if it is kept isolated.

Spread the strike, shut down Western Union and the special services of the newspapers.

The Truman Doctrine and Fascism

pieces of the same cloth. One is not possible without the other.

World fascism is on the march again after the most devastating war in all history for the alleged purpose of — destroying fascism. It cannot be stopped by a "write-a-letter-to-your-Congressman" campaign or the electoral victory of a Labor Party (no matter how "independent" it is) nor by any of the forms of popular frontism or reformism which after all leave the capitalist class as the ruling class through the preservation of the Capitalist property relations otherwise referred to (falsely) as "free enterprise". Escape from fascism is possible only on the Leninist program of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the socialist reorganization of society. This is the fundamental fact that must be made clear to the American and international working class.

Fascism is the inevitable result of the ripening of the contradictions inherent in the very nature of Capitalism; to counterpose "democracy" to fascism is like counterposing the female viper to her young. For "democracy" too is one of the forms of capitalist class rule — the "velvet glove" form that conceals for a time the mailed fist of the capitalist class dictatorship underneath. Fascism is the open naked dictatorship of capitalism without its "democratic" and parliamentary trappings. Without the revolutionary intervention of the working class, fascism will follow on the heels of impending capitalist crises like night follows day. Capitalist "democracy" is the mother of fascism. Only proletarian revolution can prevent fascism. Such must be our answer to Truman and his masters and their plans for the fascification of world labor.

MURDER IN CENTRALIA

The Capitalist class and their newspaper henchmen will have to cook up a bigger anti-red witch-hunt than Hitler to erase from the minds of America's workers the tragedy of the Centralia miners. However it would be well to remember that despite the sensational articles flooding the papers, which would give the impression that explosions are unique in the annals of the industry. Such explosions, injuries, hazards are part of the hum drum life of the miners. In 1942, 1,440 miners were killed and 70,500 injured. Former Secretary of Interior, Ickes, in taking over custodianship of the mines for the U. S. Gov't said, "Since Pearl Harbor, more men have been killed and injured in the coal mines of the U. S. than have been by all branches of the armed forces. The cause of many mine explosions should certainly be no mystery. Any textbook on organic chemistry provides the information that methane (CH₄) is a product of the decomposition of organic matter (coal) in the mines. Methane is inflammable, odorless and tasteless—and deadly. With the increased use of electrical equipment (which isn't inspected over-zealously) has grown the increased hazard of explosions. Sparks given off from overhead trolley or overhead cutting bars often set off explosions which blow the miners into charred bits.

Mr. Eugene McAuliffe, president of the Union Pacific Coal Company as if in anticipation of the Centralia disaster said in 1941: "Time after time the industry gets a fresh black eye out of a mine explosion, with all the gruesome details played up in the newspapers. Do these tragedies bring about better ventilation, rock dusting, water on cutter bars, sprinkling dust at the source and on roadways and the other proved preventives we know about? Such unfortunately is not the case; we clean up the mine, pay the workmen's compensation and get back on production". This is the callous but frank admission of one of the coal barons that the intermittent disasters in which miners are killed (murdered would be more accurate) are merely episodes which temporarily interrupt the profits of the coal operators.

The lessons of Centralia are plain for those who wish to see. The capitalists and their Gov. Greens, Scanlans, Medills, Krugs and John L. Lewis have a hearty contempt for the working class. After all we workers are just a bunch of dumb hunkies to be exploited in peace and used as cannon fodder in war. The Senate investigating committee will undoubtedly white-

wash the whole business. There may be a little fake moral indignation but things will go on pretty much the same unless the miners enforce the safety regulations themselves. There are plenty of safety regulations, but the miners will have to impress their safety needs at the picket lines and thru demonstrations at the homes of the Krugs, Scanlans, Medills, etc. Unless the miners put up a militant fight for adequate lighting, ventilation, rock dusting, cooling of cutting bars, use of permissible materials and explosives, all the safety legislation in the world will remain only on the books. But as long as there is a profit system which coins capital out of our blood, sweat and tears, death and destruction will be the lot of the working class. Truly the Centralia miners were murdered by capitalism's mad lust for profit making.

CORRECTION

The opening sentence of the article "Ruth Fischer, Stoolpigeon", in a recent issue of the FIGHTING WORKER can be interpreted to mean that anyone with a false position on the character of the Soviet Union must inevitably degenerate into a stoolpigeon. The ambiguity of the sentence is unfortunate since, of course, the Revolutionary Workers League has no such position.

In the case of Ruth Fischer her lopsided attitude to Russia and Stalinism has led logically to this role of informer. In other cases such behavior is not inevitable.

RWL CONVENTION

The 9th Convention of the Revolutionary Workers League was held in Chicago over the weekend of March 29th and 30th. Delegates from a number of cities went over the record of our last year's activity and laid plans for the future. Documents of the convention will be published in future issues of INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

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