

## Reuther-Stalinists Play Factional Football with Unity Issue

Unification of all farm equipment workers into one group has become a great political football in the violently factional internal politics of the C.I.O. auto workers union. At present 45,000 farm implement workers are organized in a separate C.I.O. affiliate under Stalinist leadership, and many thousands more are organized into the UAW-C.I.O. About a year ago the C.I.O. top officialdom ordered the smaller group to enter the large auto organization.

The UAW-C.I.O., however, is in an unending factional fight between the Reuther forces (with Socialist and Trotskyite support), on the one hand, and the R. J. Thomas, Addes, Stalinist group on the other. Walter Reuther, the UAW President, lives as a minority force in the International Executive Board, which is controlled by the opposition 14 to 8.

In most of the union's local bodies, therefore, separate Reuther and separate Addes-Thomast Stalinist slates were run for office in the February and March elections. Indications are that Reuther made some slight progress. One of the straws in the wind is the fact that the Reuther group won complete control of the Michigan State C.I.O. convention two weeks ago.

### FACTIONAL FOOTBALL

In order to offset this slight edge the Stalinist machine in both the AW and FE is mechanically applying the order to merge in such a way that the present FE machine will remain intact, and will in fact grow, while the 450 votes these forces will have at the next UAW convention will turn the tide against Reuther. The FE is to be a separate department within the UAW-C.I.O. All of the present farm implement locals within the UAW, most of whom fought viciously against FE because of its no-strike pledge during the war, democracy and many other factors. Furthermore the present FE forces should not be used as a football in the factional affairs of the UAW-C.I.O. If they are to come in as an autonomous group within the UAW, they shouldn't come in merely as a maneuver to help one side against another.

### TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE

The Reuther caucus is fighting to checkmate any merger on the present basis and it has a fairly good chance of stopping it. No doubt many good and serious militants support Reuther as the lesser of two evils. But unfortunately Reuther has played no independent and certainly no militant role at all. He subordinates himself completely to the class collaboration policies of Philip Murray. Both this year and last year Reuther's "leadership" has consisted merely in saying "me too" to the sell-out "victories" established by the head of the C.I.O.

### 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.

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## Taft Bill Casts Its Shadow In Advance

The strike of the workers at the Pipe Machinery Co. in Cleveland is a small dress rehearsal for the more open attack which will receive legal sanction under the Taft-Hartley bill. The workers affiliated to the IAM (A. F. of L.) had a union shop agreement with the boss up till last November. At that time the union asked to reopen the agreement under terms of the contract and presented new wage proposals. The company refused to make a counter proposal. The U. S. Conciliation Service stepped in to head off a strike, but the boss refused to budge.

In February the union was still attempting to reach a settlement. But the Cleveland press began running stories on how Congress was preparing to grind an axe for labor's head.

On February 13, the union requested that 49 men take two hours off for union business. The company offered no objection. The next day the returning workers found they were locked out and that the 49 were fired. The workers then turned the lockout into a strike. In an effort to undermine the union the company organized a company union. A back-to-work movement was attempted but only 10 scabs responded to the bosses' call for a normal working force. At this point the company called in the Cleveland Cossacks (mounted policemen) to break the picket line. The Cossacks rode roughshod through the picket line, firing tear gas at the workers. Several were hurt, several were treated for eye burns. To add insult to injury, the Pipe Machinery Co. called the courts in to help break the strike. The courts requested that the number of pickets be reduced.

### VETO NOT THE ANSWER

It is then clear that the NAM and Chamber of Commerce did not wait for Congress to take repressive measures against labor. As a matter of fact anti-labor laws are not the first step in the fight to repress labor and preserve capitalism's swollen profits. Such laws are in truth legal recognition of many of the vicious tactics which the capitalist class has used traditionally against the workers.

The reformists have done much to confuse the issues by boiling down the struggle to a question of vetoing the Taft-Hartley bill. The problem goes beyond that. The capitalist class has never regarded the strike weapon as legitimate, nor have they regarded it as instrument, the mass picket line, with unconcern. Twenty-five years ago an Illinois judge said: "There is no such thing as peaceful picketing". The good capitalist judge did not hesitate to say what most capitalists believe, i. e., a strike is an industrial battle, a conflict between workers and bosses. The strategy which the boss uses is possible because his ownership of the mines, mills, banks, and factories permits him to control the Courts, Congress, Supreme Court, police, army, and navy. All of which capitalism unhesitatingly uses against workers strikes and rebellions.

The rank and file is living patiently through the factional dealings. Sooner or later, however, it must and will say "a plague on both your houses" and establish a progressive group based on class struggle policies, against both class-collaboration outfits.

## Nothing but the Label Is Changed In India

Granting Commonwealth status to India is merely a method for getting rid of a hot potato as far as British Imperialism is concerned. The Labor Party stooges of The City have no more intention of giving up the gem of the Empire than did Churchill. But with real wages now only 40% to 80% what they were in 1939 and with the greatest strike wave in fifty years taking place during the last 12 months, Britain can't possibly get enough soldiers into India to maintain "law and order".

Consequently the British Lion is doing precisely what American capitalism has been doing for generations — it is setting up a semi-puppet regime in India composed of native capitalists who will continue oppressing the workers in the name of a "free" India. The real rulers, however, will remain in the hands of the British financiers and their satellites such as Birla.

The newspapers in America are underplaying the pre-revolutionary situation that exists in India. The strife between Hindu and Moslem is deliberately fomented by the imperialists to take the steam out of the struggles of the Indian workers. The more intense the religious struggle becomes the less the workers will be concerned about fighting their imperialist masters. The Indian masses, as in the past, are being pitted against one another on a narrow nationalistic and religious basis—Hinduistan, Pakistan, Rajistan. In India, as in Palestine, Britain uses the same policy of "divide and rule". In this she has the support of the capitalists of the colonies as well.

### STRIKES QUADRUPLE

The depth of the crisis in India is indicated by the fact that in the first nine months of 1946 there were 1,466 strikes, involving 1,737,462.

In 1940 there were only one-quarter as much industrial strikes. These figures do not take into account the innumerable strikes in other areas of India not under central government control, such as the states of the princes, nor some of the protest strikes that took place in this period.

Wages vary from the princely sum of \$12 a month for steel workers, to \$3.33 a month for miners, and progressively less for others. Hopes of these workers that the popularly elected governments recently instituted would lower prices has proved an illusion. Prices are still going up. The only answer of the new stooges of capitalism, like the old, is to ban strikes, compulsory arbitration and other measures so well known both in Britain and the U. S. Bills are being presented which would practically annul the right to strike, and the extension of the war time defense act bans strikes for 6 months, while notice is given.

Fifteen hundred workers on strike on the South Indian Railway were arrested by the new "free" governments. Twelve workers were killed while peacefully picketing at the Stanes Mills in Coimbatore. The police are as brutal today as yesterday.

### FOR A SOCIALIST INDIA

Economic conditions too are no better. Three hundred thousand people literally live on the streets in Bombay. They can not even afford the miserable rooms that so many whole families are living in. But profits continue to rise. Fifteen leading cotton mills in the same city showed a boost in profits from \$2,700,000 in 1940 to \$39,1680,000 in 1944. And they're still going up.

What's wrong with India is the profit system. The colonial system of Britain is a by-product of this evil. It should be eliminated, of course.

(Continued on Page 2)

# THE FIGHTING WORKER

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## GOAL OF TAFT BILL Open Shop, No Raises, No Unions

The war-time alliance between the labor-fakers and the employers received a rude shock when Congress passed the Taft-Hartley bill over President Truman's veto. During the war the capitalists were willing to keep the labor skates in some kind of power, provided the union movement as such was kept in harness. To that end they agreed with Green-Murray and the Stalinist stooges to a "no-strike" pledge in return for maintaining union membership.

Thus, instead of a policy of struggle which would have netted billions in raises and have helped organize the whole working class, instead of only 30% of it, the conservative leaders of the trade union movement made a deal which they thought would be maintained in the post-war period.

Capitalism, however, is getting ready for the post-war slump. It intends to lower wage rates to pre-war levels and below as soon as the pool of unemployed becomes large enough. The new "labor" act gives them all the weapons needed.

Originally the National Labor Relations Act was palmed off as a great boon to organized labor. The FIGHTING WORKER pointed out at the time that the act was merely a legal recognition of what the workers had already gained in the course of hundreds of militant strikes at the time and that it was an attempt to channelize union activity into legal hearings and court battles. It was all part of the Roosevelt plan for tying the working class to the capitalistic war chariot.

### RWL PROVEN CORRECT

Experience has proven that the Revolutionary Workers League was correct in its analysis. While the workers fought on picket lines and used the sitdown strike the Labor Board's rulings were liberal. As soon as strike action waned, and particularly after the sitdown tactic was given up, the Board rulings became more and more hostile to labor. The only value of the Labor Board was in cases where a strike was defeated. In rare instances it was possible to use the Board as a retreat instrument to gain some compromises and reinstatement of strikers.

The day after the bill went through over 100,000 miners went out on strike. If the number of these workers is built to millions it will make the Wall Street prostitutes hesitate long before they try to implement the bill with harsh interpretations.

### PROGRESSIVES SHOULD UNITE

Truman's veto should fool no one. Truman merely reacted more sensitively to the pressure of the working class than Taft and Company. But it must be remembered that when the railroad workers and the coal workers went on strike in 1945 Truman openly proposed drafting them and even more vicious anti-labor legislation than the present.

In the last analysis the workers can neither place any reliance on capitalistic politicians nor on their present class-collaboration leadership to help them out of the present difficulty. It is only because of the treacherous alliance of the labor

(Continued on Page 2)

## Letter By Railroad Worker

DEAR EDITOR:

Negotiations have again started between the 17 non-operating rail unions and the railroad companies for a 20c raise. The four operating rail unions are asking for 14 rule changes which were unsuccessfully demanded in last year's strike.

George Leighty, who has led the talks with the companies for the 17 non-operating unions stated that a 38 cent-an-hour wage increase would be more equitable. But in view of the unsuccessful telephone union settlement in which the workers returned after a one month strike with only a few cents an hour increase the union leadership of the rail workers is evidently satisfied to compromise the workers' demands before the wage negotiations have even begun.

Of course the railroad companies, as is to be expected, proclaim that they are unable to pay such increases. Wages form the principal part of their operating costs they claim, and the labor bill is now so high that they are only able to make a profit of less than 3%. This claim is highly ludicrous in view of the fact that through THEIR Government in Washington they have only recently received increases in freight rates and passenger fares. In fact the Chesapeake and Ohio Lines has stressed the point in advertisements throughout the country that the increase in passenger receipts will pay for the cost of the new trains in less than 4 years. The freight rate increase will add greatly to the financial power of the rail companies and they are demanding a new increase. Furthermore, the government in Washington has just passed a law exempting the railroads from the anti-trust laws, and allowing them to unite in whatever way they choose to strengthen their position and increase profits.

As soon as the rank-and-file railroad worker learns that the company, and the Government, are a unified enemy against all workers, he will be able to wage a successful struggle for his economic needs. As part of this understanding the workers must learn that the present trade union leadership with its present policy of compromising the workers demands to the needs of the company and the law of its stooge, the government, will win them nothing.

A RAILROAD WORKER

## ONLY LABEL CHANGED IN INDIA

(Continued from Page 1)

But eliminating one vice without getting to the root of the evil will in reality solve nothing. True independence for India is possible only with the overthrow of the capitalist regime. Not only must Britain be driven out in FACT, rather than just juridically, but the capitalist system AS SUCH must be destroyed if the Indian people are to continue to live. Right now millions are fearful of famine, lay-offs, and death. That fear can never be eliminated while capitalism exists.

Only a socialist order — without British, American or native Indian capitalists — can solve the Indian problems.

JOHN DEWEY

## "A MARXIAN CRITIQUE"

By SID OKUN

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## Goldblatt Workers Learn Right to Organize is a Fiction

Much to do has been made about the legal right of labor to organize. Actually that right is a fiction not only now, after the Taft Bill, but even under the previous Wagner Act. The overwhelming majority of those workers who are not in Unions have failed to join because they are afraid of being fired. Despite the Wagner Act the experience of all employees is that they have no protection except their own strength.

The case of the employees of Goldblatt Bros. in Chicago is probably one of the best examples in recent years of how the "legal" rights are completely nullified. During an 8 month organizational drive by Building Service Local 291 AFL, a few dozen members were fired for belonging to the Union. Most of them were so fearful it would be a blot on their record, that they refused to even permit the Union to file cases with the National Labor Relations Board. Of the 11 cases that were filed, the Board — after about a year of litigation — finally decided only one in the Union's favor. In the others it was claimed that there wasn't "adequate" proof, although the Company's violent anti-Union behavior is well-known.

After an abortive strike in March, when the AFL Teamster leaders refused to continue support of the store workers' picket line, the Company sent around a petition throughout its ten stores. Workers were instructed by their supervisors to either sign or get out. The petition stated that they do not wish to belong to the Union and that if they previously had signed application cards they hereby revoke same.

### "YELLOW DOG" PETITION

The reign of terror was so great that in the main Goldblatt store only 42 out of approximately 1,000 failed to sign the petition.

although the Union has approximately 700 members there. Those forty-two are now being weeded down at the rate of five or six each week. A Company supervisor openly admitted to one of the discharged men that he was being fired for refusing to sign the petition.

Some of the discharges will no doubt be taken up before the Board, but nothing will come of it. In each case the Company arms itself with some excuse which will cover itself legally. In one instance it claims that the job itself has been done away with because of some reorganization; in the meantime, however, dozens of new workers are being hired for the same general type of work. In another case the Company claims that there has been a slight infraction of some rule. And so on. Even if the cases are won before the Labor Board the Company is merely assessed the difference between what the employee earned at another job and what he might have earned if he had continued at Goldblatt's. In most cases that would be nothing or only a few dollars. In the meantime, however, the discharges have their desired effect. They make the workers fearful of joining.

No legal hocus-pocus can guarantee for the working class what it can not gain by independent class action. The real strength of labor still lies in its ability to hinder plant operations by its picket lines. Failure of the Goldblatt workers to win their strike means they will suffer the same forms of intimidation and discrimination for years to come, until either the organizational effort ends or until the Company makes some kind of deal with an unscrupulous labor leader for a weak contract and for a Union that will, for all practical purposes, be run by the Company. The Wagner Act will gain for the workers nothing but discharges and humiliation — and no protection worthy of the name.

## OLD TAR IN CHICAGO'S NEW BARRELS

The great metropolis of the midwest, Chicago, is now living in a "new era". With the new Mayor, Martin Kennelly, has come a new broom. Clerks at City Hall are now expected to come in at 9 A. M. and to work. Three hundred "surplus" laborers have been laid off at a saving of a million dollars. Plans are in the hopper for fixing roads, building houses, and everything else.

In an effort to show that there will be no cheap politics in his administration Kennelly is appointing businessmen to key posts. Investment bankers, heads of packinghouse companies and the like head the school board and the civil service board. Other business cronies of the good mayor, himself a packinghouse capitalist, will certainly be appointed to other jobs.

Many people are suffering from the illusion that all this is an improvement over the old Kelly graft-ridden political machine. They seem to think that big business will do more for the common man than the porkchoppers in the political machines.

Actually Kennelly is trying to put some efficiency into the city government for a number of purposes — cut down taxes, build popular support, strengthen the present business firms (by better roads, less taxes, etc.) and attract others. The main questions of the day will come up later, the questions affecting Kennelly's

relations with workers — home relief, police activity in strikes. LOW COST housing (everybody is for housing, of course, but at what price?) and other class problems.

All's not gold that glitters; and businessman Kennelly may shine like a friend of the people, but life will prove that he hasn't stepped out of his class one bit; he's still the exclusive friend of the rich.

### GOAL OF TAFT BILL

(Continued from Page 1)

bankers and the cheap Wall Street politicians that the Taft bill was passed. Murray and Green refused to call the masses to strike action to fight the measure. Instead they depended on their "friends." One of William Green's friends is Congressman Hartley, a co-author of the bill, who was endorsed for the Congressman's post in the last election by Green.

After the last war the rank and file of the labor movement reacted to the open-shop campaign by organizing rank and file left wing groups in dozens of unions. Only a similar drive today to wean the workers away from both bourgeois politicians and bourgeois-minded labor leaders, will bring any results.

## The Marshall Plan to "Save Europe"

the higher productive levels, it is hoped will stave off Revolution at least for a few years.

### U. S. "RECESSION"

Saving Europe from Revolution, and for the almighty dollar, is now to take on a more planned form, rather than the old hit and miss aid that the United States has been giving in the form of UNRRA credits, and lately the world monetary bank. Secretary of State Marshall has presented a comprehensive plan for the "rehabilitation" of Europe which will call for expenditures of \$6 billions a year by the Wall Street government in return for political hegemony within Western Europe at least.

Despite all the Lend-Lease and other aid of recent years Europe just can't seem to get on its feet. Food is short and hungry workers cannot produce adequately. Without sufficient government help the old plants destroyed during the war are not being replaced in quick enough time. The world bank can't help out much because its charter provides that it can't make any loans except for specific projects, and then it must have enough security so that it can be pretty sure that it will get the money back. The dollar credits given by the U. S. to Italy, France, England and other countries were only stopgaps and were used up for quick relief measures and other short-term prospects.

### "UNITED STATES OF EUROPE"

The Marshall plan, on the other hand, hopes to establish a longer period of stability. The nations of Europe would be expected to form a virtual "United States of Europe". If a customs union is not established, at least the nations are expected to eliminate trade barriers, thus making it possible to produce more cheaply and to buy materials and finished goods at the point where they are most economically — and cheaply — produced. In return the United States will set up a dollar pool and will give what is euphemistically called "technical assistance", but what is in reality some measure of both economic and political control over the nation.

Nationals would be permitted to borrow good American dollars from the pool. In return they would deposit with the United States the equivalent in their own currencies, which wouldn't be used for a specified number of years — if at all. Thus the nations of Europe would be able to purchase American machinery and equipment now, in return for a doubtful promise to pay back in raw materials later.

The European countries would also have to introduce a sort of enlarged planning board which would allocate materials and plan increased production, very much as the War Production Board did in wartime.

On the face of it this scheme seems as if America is building up its competitors. Actually Uncle Sam recognizes that unless it rebuilds the European economy to a tolerable point there won't be any capitalist system at all. If the system of capitalist scarcity is to exist at all it can only do so on the basis of a "planned scarcity", where at least some of the bugs in capitalist anarchy can be taken out.

The plan will introduce a long-term political control by the United States of the fate of Western Europe at least. American dollars, "technical advisors", and constant political policing will make of this section of the world exactly what Latin America is today — a vast American-controlled sphere of influence. It will serve to consolidate this area as a jumping off spot for the inevitable military conflict with the Soviet Union. Above all, the stability introduced and

the higher productive levels, it is hoped will stave off Revolution at least for a few years.

### U. S. "RECESSION"

Unfortunately the plan has a few "bugs" itself. The first and foremost, of course, is the fact that the evils of overproduction are already gnawing at American economy itself. Should a sustained recession develop here it will make America's position that much more difficult and will bring the rest of the Capitalist house down regardless of the Marshall plan. Secondly, the plan will create an increase in the debt not only of the United States but of the European countries as well. Even though French francs, or Italian Lira, are "frozen" in credit funds, they nevertheless form part of a book-keeping debt which will make devaluation of currency inevitable sooner or later. Such devaluation is impossible under capitalism without lowering the living standards of the masses, a step which would defeat the "class peace" of the Marshall plan, based on a moderate increase from the abyssal present living standards in Europe.

Like Hitler's aski mark system this plan offers a temporary shot in the arm to European capitalism. But precisely as Europe begins to recover it will find itself beset with an even greater stock of overproduction evils. New plants, new rationalization, new production techniques under capitalism bring with them an increased need for new markets to take up the gap between higher productivity and the small share of production that labor receives in wages. With the profit system in force the Marshall plan of rehabilitation can only lead, in the long run, to a greater worldwide depression and a more violent clash between the powers for world markets.

### CAPITALISTIC CONTRADICTIONS

America itself is already showing that it can not live up to its own laws. It has promulgated the theory of "free trade for the post-war world." Because of its superior production facilities the U. S. can undersell most competitor countries in most things. But in such commodities as wool, for instance, U. S. production is hopelessly behind Australian. As a result Congress has decided to place restrictions on Australian wool and to grant a subsidy to the American producers. Australia may very well be hurtled into a depression by such a policy. Certainly she will have to set up barriers against U. S. exports. Thus the "free trade" system must inevitably break down.

The U. S. simply is in an inescapable contradiction. It not only has a surplus of exports of finished goods over imports, but of capital exports and of raw material exports as well. Since Wall Street is not in business for its health, it can only hope to balance things by exporting capital abroad. Most of that capital will never be returned to the U. S. government; the U. S. worker will have to pay for it in the form of decreased living standards and taxes. That capital which is invested in other countries will, as the world market shrinks (as shrink it must) compete with American capital at home. The unpaid loans abroad on the other hand must mount until it creates a devaluation crisis at home. The continued yearly increase in income from 1940 to the present has staved off this inevitable debacle, since good business each year provides extraordinarily high government

## How NOT to Fight The Taft Bill

The same stupidity and narrowness on the part of the labor skates in the AFL and CIO which made possible passage of the Taft bill, is now being manifested in the "fight" against it.

Both William Green and Philip Murray brag that despite the demand by an overwhelming majority of the rank and file for a general strike until the law is repealed they have turned thumbs down. Dan Tobin head of the AFL Teamsters, stated what those who advocate a general protest strike are "enemies of organized labor . . . We resent the law but the working people of this union are not revolutionists.

The misleaders of labor are going to put up a "vigorous" fight . . . in the courts. With high priced lawyers they will challenge every phase of the law. So what? At the end of the whole deal the Unions will be minus four or five million members, the law will still be in effect, the courts will uphold just about all of its vicious aspects, and Mr. Tobin will still be talking about how we are not revolutionists.

We will now increasingly hear about "political action" as the answer. But wasn't Mr. Hartley, co-author of the bill, elected with the support of William Green? Weren't dozens of other Congressmen and Senators elected with "labor's" support? It is precisely because there is little action at the point of production that made it possible for the bill to pass in the first place. Third Parties, or PAC, will avail nothing. The answer to reaction can only be through independent working class action where it hurts the pocketbook of capitalism, not its conscience. Capitalism has no conscience; it never will react to votes, postcards, or telegrams. The only language it understands is the universal language of the dollar. Threaten to take that dollar away entirely and the Washington politicos will stop and ponder. Everything else rolls off like water off a duck's back.

### The FIGHTING WORKER

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income. Once business sloughs off and government income sloughs off, the contradictions of "our" capitalism here at home will be felt not only in American living standards, but abroad as well.