

An Answer To The Daily Worker On Our Military Policy--Page 6

Increase Wages To Meet Prices

An Editorial

If you bought clothes for yourself lately, did you notice how much more they cost than a year ago? Your wife, like most home-keepers, has already discovered that food prices have gone up and keep rising. During the first two weeks in April pork-chop prices rose 3 percent; eggs, 4 percent; lard, 7.8 percent; bacon, butter, coffee, sugar and other foodstuffs also cost more. *This is only the beginning of the price every wage worker will have to pay for this robber's war.*

According to the government index, basic commodity prices have gone up 38% since the war began, and economists predict much greater rises. Such price inflation involves a proportionate wage cut for the worker. Although pay checks may remain nominally the same, they can buy less goods owing to increased prices. This inflation, which reduces purchasing power, is one indirect method of capitalist wage cutting.

The new tax program Congress is framing can only result in boosting commodity prices still higher and in further diminishing the real income of the workers. There will be new or increased levies on cigarettes, liquor, gasoline, matches, and other articles of ordinary consumption. In one way or another, most of the other taxes will be incorporated in the prices of commodities and be paid for in the end by the mass of consumers. 73% of all taxes consist of just such hidden taxes!

In the past few months, some unions have managed to obtain wage increases. Few, if any, have won the 38% increase needed to keep wages in step with commodity prices. The vast majority have received little or no increases. Yet the bosses and their press howl to heaven about the tiny rise in wage rates, while they say very little about this 38% rise in prices.

The Roosevelt administration talks about preventing inflation and "freezing" price levels. How absurd is Leon Henderson's gesture forbidding any lifting of steel prices (which have been fixed for years by the steel monopolists themselves far above ordinary competitive prices!) No capitalist government can control the general level of prices. Washington has thus far been unable to do so, and its future efforts will be no more successful.

Even Hitler's totalitarian regime has been unable to avoid inflation. The reason for this lies in the very nature of capitalist production for profit. No manufacturer or businessman is willing to subordinate his personal profit to the general good. Under boom conditions, the greed of each individual capitalist, and the competition between them, always add up to higher prices. Moreover, the Roosevelt regime is so eager to win the good-will of the industrialists that it not only refrains from cracking down on profiteering but relaxes all restrictions upon them.

While the Roosevelt government caters to the profiteers on the one hand, it is anxious to prevent the mass of people from accumulating too much purchasing power on the other. If wages are not kept down, if commodity prices remain too low, if taxes are kept at a minimum, people will be able to buy more goods for personal consumption. Their demands for consumer's goods will conflict with plans for military production.

As the *N. Y. Times* points out: "Public buying of civilian goods would then be competing with government buying of defense material . . . Many more people will want to buy automobiles. But the production of automobiles uses up steel, aluminum and other materials vital to public defense . . . That would mean higher costs for defense."

In order to keep down the costs of war, the government aims to take away from the working masses a great part of any increased purchasing power resulting from the war-boom. Taxation, freezing of wages, forced saving, etc. are so many means for accomplishing this end.

At the outset of the war, Washington's slogan was "Business as usual." Nowadays administration officials sing a different tune. Not so long ago, the American people, unlike the Germans, French and English, were promised both guns and butter. Now they are told they must be content with more guns and less butter. Very soon, they will be ordered to give up all their butter to grease bigger batteries of guns. Capitalism cannot clothe, feed, arm, equip and transport millions of fighting men and also afford decent food, clothing and shelter for its citizens.

Why must the workers suffer from the helplessness of the capitalist class to manage our economy efficiently? Why should they bear all the burdens of the war? *The standard of living of the working masses must be maintained!* If, as Roosevelt falsely claims, this is not an imperialist war for the sake of capitalist profit, but a crusade for the defense of popular rights and liberties, then the least this government can do is to take care of the vital needs of its producers, even if this involves taxing the plutocrats out of existence.

The workers, however, will wait until doomsday if they rely upon Roosevelt to correct this situation for them. Organized labor has to do this job for itself. What is the most practical means of coping with inevitable inflation? Let the trade unions insist that every contract contain a provision for a re-adjustment of wages in line with the rising price level. Let wages rise with every rise in the price level.

To protect unorganized workers, changes should be made in Wage-Hours Laws, providing for minimum rates and specifying that these minimums be adjusted in accordance with rising prices.

For a Rising Scale of Wages to Equalize the Rising Level of Prices! This demand should be placed at the top of every trade union agenda today.

THE MILITANT

Formerly the SOCIALIST' APPEAL

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

VOL. V—No. 18

NEW YORK, N. Y. SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1941

267

FIVE (5) CENTS

FDR MASKS CONVOY PLANS

Mine Owners Yield To Miners

28-day Strike of 400,000 Soft-coal men Ends; Workers' Terms Accepted

BULLETIN

The Southern soft coal mine operators yielded Tuesday to the demand of the striking United Mine Workers (CIO) members that the Southern mines be reopened under an agreement to make all wage increases granted in subsequent negotiations retroactive to the time of the start of operations, thus ending the 28-day strike of 400,000 bituminous miners.

Over 65 per cent of the miners, from the Northern Appalachian region, will return to work under a contract providing \$1 a day pay raise and a week's paid vacation.

Southern bituminous mine operators, undoubtedly backed by Southern industrialists and the bloc of poll-tax Democrats in Congress, have balked all efforts to settle the strike of 400,000 United Mine Workers (CIO) members which has tied up all soft-coal production in the Appalachian regions since April 2.

The Northern operators, who control over 65 per cent of soft coal production, had agreed after one week of the strike to grant the union's demands for a \$1 a day general wage increase and paid vacations. Signing of the Northern contract has been held up due to the unwillingness of the Northern operators to reopen their mines so long as the Southern operators hold out for a wage differential which would give them a material advantage in competition with the Northern operators.

MAIN DANGER

There is increasing danger that the miners may be caught in a

scissors between the refusal of the Southern operators to accept their wage demands and the refusal of the Northern operators to sign a contract under competitive disadvantages.

While Roosevelt at the time of this writing has given no hint of what his next move may be, the position which the miners must take is clear. Under no circumstances should they back down from their original demands.

SPURN RETROACTIVE PAY AGREEMENT

After demanding the intervention of the National Mediation Board, the Southern operators last Sunday turned down the Board's proposal to reopen the mines upon condition that all wage increases granted in subsequent negotiations be made retroactive to the time of reopening. Both the union and the Northern operators have agreed to such an arrangement, originally proposed by Roosevelt on April 21.

Meanwhile, Southern Democrats in Congress have been yelping about the strike holding up "national defense" and are making a concerted effort to club the miners back to work under a no-contract arrangement which would leave the workers powerless to force the Southern operators into line.

The Northern operators, whose refusal to meet the miners' reasonable demands prior to the walk-out helped precipitate the strike, and who turned down the miners' original proposal to continue operations under a retroactive pay agreement, are showing little concern for "national

JAMES P. CANNON
National Secretary SWP

Speaks This Week
CHICAGO — DETROIT
BUFFALO

See Page 3 for Full Details

Seek Subway-goers Support



Members of the New York City local of the Transport Workers Union (CIO) launch their campaign to retain the closed-shop contract for 27,000 workers on the city-owned subway systems by putting out millions of union leaflets to subway goers to win their support.

GM Strike Postponed For Gov't Mediation

Reuther-Thomas UAW Leadership Retreats Under Company And Government Pressure Despite 85% Strike Vote

DETROIT, Michigan, April 27.—The immediate possibility of a strike in the 78 General Motors plants organized by the UAW-CIO was sidetracked Saturday, April 26, when the union and the company agreed to continued operation of the plants until hearings by the National Mediation Board Friday May 2.

The company has already indicated in its statements that it is ready to grant small wage increases, but has taken a very

tough position on all other main demands of the union. Wage increases will be retroactive to April 28.

85% VOTE FOR STRIKE

The UAW-CIO local unions,

from coast to coast in GM, have taken strike votes and voted overwhelmingly for strike authorization if it becomes necessary to back up their demands with action. The turnout of votes was exceptionally large, and the majority vote for strike was probably about 85% nationally. It is significant that in Flint the largest strike vote of all times was turned out last week.

Negotiations between the corporation and the UAW-CIO had been conducted for 7 weeks, without results, when the dispute was turned over to the National Mediation Board, on the very verge of strike action which was set for Monday, April 28.

As negotiations came to a head, the International Executive Board was forced by circumstances to take a very militant stand, at least in its public statements. Reuther and Thomas made several speeches and public statements proving the absolute logic, justice and necessity of the union's demands. Strike votes were called for, and it looked as though the International was prepared for action.

REASONS FOR REUTHER'S MILITANCY

The militancy of the Reuther-Thomas leadership, in its speeches and in some of its actions, was the result of a combination of

Sea Patrol Prelude To Full Convoys

FDR Weighing Final Move Into Sphere Of Hostilities

When President Roosevelt last week announced the new U.S. "sea patrol" he pulled out the next to the last prop still holding up that frail structure of U.S. policy "short of war."

The new patrol will send U.S. warships 1,000 miles out into either ocean to warn "peaceful shipping" (i.e. the British) of the presence of enemy craft.

From this to the remaining steps of actual convoy and inevitable clashes with Nazi U-boats and raiders, the distance is now reduced almost to the vanishing point.

For it was quite clear that the sea patrol idea was advanced by the President as a final, careful stage in his preparation for dropping the present status of the U. S. as a non-belligerent ally of Britain and substituting for it the full status of an active belligerent in the war.

What does Roosevelt think a Nazi sea raider or a far-ranging bomber is to do when it is sighted by patrolling U. S. craft? How long will it be before action is taken to prevent these patrols from reporting back to the British?

But it may not even come to that. During the past week the full weight of the Administration has been thrown into a campaign designed to win the masses of the American people over to acceptance of the convoy idea. And last week also, for the first time, responsible spokesmen admitted in effect that convoys by U. S. warships might take us full blast into open hostilities.

In an obviously deliberate attempt to test public reaction, Roosevelt had his Navy Secretary, Frank Knox, get up last week and say these warning words:

"Having gone thus far, we can only go on. Hitler cannot allow our war supplies and food to reach England. He will be defeated if they do. We cannot allow our goods to be sunk in the Atlantic. We shall be beaten if they do. We must make good our promise to aid Britain."

Then Secretary of State Hull, in another speech, rolled out some more of the propaganda artillery. In carefully chosen words, he declared that the U. S. would have to go into the war well before the enemy gets across the hemisphere boundaries. He said:

"Some among us, doubtless with best intentions, still contend that our country need not resist until the armed forces of an invader shall have crossed the boundary line of this hemisphere . . . This is an utterly shortsighted and dangerous point of view."

The next day Roosevelt came out with his sea patrol announcement, which can be described as a "policy short of convoys." And convoys, it is tacitly understood, are no longer "short of war." Roosevelt denied, in the face of all clear evidence, that convoys were being considered. The sea patrol was the step decided upon instead at this particular time, when the Gallup polls still show

(Continued on Page 3)

WORKERS' FORUM

Write to us—tell us what's going on in your part of the labor movement—what are the workers thinking about?—tell us what the bosses are up to—and the G-men and the local cops—and the Stalinists—send us that story the capitalist press didn't print and that story they buried or distorted—our pages are open to you. Letters must carry name and address, but indicate if you do not want your name printed.

Negro Soldiers Offer Armed Resistance To Nat'l Guard Attack

EDITOR:

I have a piece of interesting news from Fort Jackson. On April 20 we were bowling at Twin Lakes which is now part of the military reservation. One of the alley boys asked us whether we had seen the M. P.'s (Military Police) hurrying by, armed with riot guns. The boy stated that there was a riot at the fort, but knew no more about it.

The next morning we heard all sorts of rumors about clashes between colored and white troops.

This was confirmed when the newspapers had to give the incident publicity in the form of a statement from the commanding officer. I am enclosing a news item and editorial from the *Columbia Record* of April 22.

This is the straight story as I was able to gather it from reliable eye-witness sources.

A few Negro soldiers were swimming in a pond on the reservation which is devoted to their exclusive use (one form of segregation practiced in the army of "democracy.") Some white CCC boys, who were in camp near the fort, began to use this pond and seized and ducked one of the Negro soldiers and almost drowned him. A fight immediately ensued.

The other Negro soldiers, being greatly outnumbered, sent for aid and truck-loads of colored soldiers shortly arrived on the scene. The fracas became very hot, but was finally broken up through intervention of a commanding officer.

When the officer's back was turned, the white CCC boys hurled rocks at the Negro soldiers and the fight began all over again.

NATIONAL GUARD GOES INTO ACTION

A regiment of white Georgia National Guardsmen had heard of

Roebling Strikers Fight Off Police Assault

Picket Line Holds Against Hoses And Clubs

TRENTON, N. J., April 27.—A fighting picket line of thousands of workers has defeated the attempts of the bosses and local police to smash by violence the strike of 6,000 members of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (CIO) employed at the plants of the Roebling Steel and Wire Company here and in Roebling, New Jersey.

With the aid of hundreds of union brothers from Trenton, the Roebling workers last Tuesday rallied their ranks, after company police had smashed a thin picket line by turning four high pressure fire hoses on the pickets, and forced the sheriff of Burlington County to disarm his deputies and take them out of town.

PLANTS SHUT DOWN, STRIKE IS SOLID

Both plants are shut down completely, a back-to-work movement organized by the Company in Roebling has been broken, and the strike is more solid than at any time since its beginning on April 25.

Union leaders went to Washington after Tuesday's battle to meet with the National Mediation Board representatives.

The attempt to smash the strike in Roebling by violence came after the company succeeded in running scabs into the plant. The company took advantage of a small picket line to make this attempt.

Thinking the strike broken, the company police made their unprovoked assault on the handful of pickets Tuesday morning. The SWOC leadership was hesitant at first and failed to rally the strikers.

WORKERS JOIN IN DEFENSE EFFORT

A Roebling striker called the Trenton strikers by phone just when the Trenton workers were in a mass meeting. The message of the attack electrified the packed meeting. The Trenton workers had been demanding action, and this was the chance. They immediately adjourned their meeting, jumped into their cars, and rushed to Roebling, ten miles away.

The **MILITANT** hails the spirit of resistance of these Negro soldiers from Fort Jackson. This spirit, and this spirit alone, will put an end to the vile system of discrimination in the North as well as in the South.—Ed.

VINSON ANTI-LABOR MEASURE BLOCKED BY UNION PRESSURE

The combined opposition of organized labor, including the CIO AFL and Railroad Brotherhoods, last week slowed up the Congressional drive to rush through the anti-strike, open shop Vinson Bill.

Efforts of a powerful bloc of Southern Democratic and reactionary Northern congressmen to speed the bill to quick passage were blocked when demands of organized labor, with CIO President Philip Murray taking the lead forced the House Rules Committee to postpone action on the bill pending an open hearing.

Plans of the bill's sponsors had been to jam the bill hastily through the Rules Committee and on to the floor of Congress by last Friday. They had predicted it would be passed within two days of its admission to the floor of the House.

The bill had been hastily approved by the House Naval Affairs Committee after a farcical two-day "hearing" and sent to the Rules Committee. Vinson, Georgia poltaxer who is chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, authored the bill.

VINSON VIOLATES HOUSE PROCEDURE

Under questioning before the Rules Committee last Wednesday, Vinson made the reluctant confession that his group had deliberately violated established House procedure in "trespassing" on the jurisdiction of the Labor and Judiciary Committees by routing his bill around these committees and into the Naval Affairs Committee where Vinson felt he would get more "cooperation."

The Administration squeezed the last drop of possible "usefulness" out of the threat of this bill to organized labor when it permitted "informed quarters" to make public the opinion that action on the bill depended upon the outcome of the soft coal strike.

Other articles in this month's issue are: "The Permanent Revolution," by Jack Weber; a thesis by the Executive Committee of the Fourth International on the workers' tasks in China's struggle for independence; an editorial on the Soviet-Japanese pact; and an article by Vladimir Ilyin, on the economic crisis in the Soviet Union.

Subscribe to the *Fourth International*!

Textile Workers Meet



Scene at the second biennial convention of the Textile Workers Union (CIO) held last week in New York City. The delegates were informed that the union now represents some 260,000 workers in over 1,000 firms.

Rieve Covers Hillman's Strikebreaking Role

Textile Union Convention

A War Rally

The Second Biennial Convention of the Textile Workers Union of America (CIO), held last week in New York City, had more the earmarks of a pro-war, patriotic rally than a labor convention.

Reflecting the policies pursued by Sidney Hillman, the union's retiring president, the time of the convention was devoted in great part to arousing the war spirit, boosting the Roosevelt administration, and playing down labor militancy in favor of collaboration with the government and the employers.

The convention was organized in characteristic Hillman fashion. All committees were picked in advance by the Executive Council. Invited speakers included boss politicians, such as the President of the Council of Greater New York, who spoke in place of Mayor La Guardia, who was too busy to appear because of activities working to bust the Transport Workers Union.

Delegates had no opportunity to read the resolutions before they came to the floor. The Executive Council members had the opportunity to push through all resolutions, even of the most reactionary kind, because they had speeches all prepared, and the delegates had no chance to prepare adequate statements on any controversial issue.

Chief reactionary resolution passed was one barring from union posts all Nazis, Communists and other subversive elements. This will be used chiefly against union militants who attempt to expose the policies of the Hillmanized officials.

RIEVE FOR SLOW-DOWN ON STRIKES

Emile Rieve, the new union head, in his convention speech, gave support to dependence upon mediation and other employer-government devices for stalling militant labor actions. While urging labor to oppose all anti-labor

Tear Gas For "Defense"

Not all the national income is being spent upon shells destined for what Churchill calls, "the malignant Hun." A good share of it goes into what is known as "defense of the home front" (i.e., suppression of the workers).

This week we read a press release from the Duncan Chemical Company announcing enthusiastically the perfecting of a tear-gas machine gun. The advantages of the new gun are obvious. "The gun discharges Duncanite, a highly effective, invisible tear gas which is capable of instantly overpowering a man at distances up to 50 feet," the release reads. Ah, an invisible gas! The picket captain can be knocked out without anyone knowing who pressed the trigger. Buck Rogers couldn't do better than that.

The release continues, "One discharge incapacitates a man for 30 minutes." Here's progress. No more ten or 15 minute knockouts. "The gun is only 10 inches long," the description read, "and fits conveniently into the pocket, auto glove compartment or desk drawer. It is constructed of beautifully finished, forged steel and operates by a simple turn of its stainless steel nozzle. In the hands of the inexperienced the Duncan gun is safe but effective." There is a selling point. Goon squads are sometimes hastily organized and the thugs aren't always familiar with the cumbersome and complicated tear gas guns now in use. But here is a gun that is effective "in the hands of the inexperienced." We can see a smile of satisfaction spread over the face of Henry Ford.

Oh yes, we almost forgot. This descriptive leaflet was entitled "Tear Gas for Defense." And though there is no talk here of the "malignant Hun," this is part of the American defense effort. The bosses know what they are defending... and against whom.

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legislation, such as the Vinson bill, he put great stress upon the use of "restraint" by labor.

He declared that labor should avoid all "needless" strikes, without indicating what strikes of labor had been "needless," and then took a page from the employers' guide-book by pointing to "subversive elements" who cause strikes.

Rieve attacked Knudsen for his recent anti-labor actions and utterances, but completely side-stepped any mention of Sidney Hillman, his own union colleague, who has been working hand-in-glove with Knudsen. Rieve gave a complete cover-up to Hillman's Judas acts against labor as a member of the OPM.

Rieve lauded time and again the policy of union leaders accepting appointive posts on government agencies, despite the fact that all recent events have proved that union leaders in such posts are

nothing but captives of employer-dominated government boards.

He tried to justify his stand on this question by asserting falsely that the government is leaning more and more toward labor for help and advice.

It would be incorrect, however, to judge the rank and file of Textile workers by the words and actions of the leadership at this convention. The fact that the convention report revealed that the union has grown to over 260,000 members indicates the militant character of the textile workers.

Harlem Branch Plans Opening

The Harlem branch of the Socialist Workers Party will open its headquarters in the center of Harlem at 72 West 125th Street, Saturday night, May 10, with a bang-up housewarming.

During the past weeks the headquarters have been renovated and decorated in preparation for the opening.

Dancing, refreshments, and a raffle will feature the evening's entertainment. First

prize in the raffle is a \$5 bill.

Second and third prizes are

combined subscriptions to

THE MILITANT and THE

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

In 1928, convinced that Stalin's

policies were leading to a betray-

al of the world working-class,

Comrade Cannon joined with Trotsky to

carry on the struggle for the

principles of Socialism and the

emancipation of the proletariat.

Subway Workers Open Drive To Gain N. Y. Public Support

TWU Distributes Million Leaflets; Explains Stand to Subway Riders

The campaign of the Transport Workers Union (CIO) to retain its closed shop contracts on the city-owned New York subways began in earnest this past week. Refusing to back down under the union-busting threats of Mayor La Guardia, who is trying to smash the organization of 27,000 subway workers at the termination of the contracts this June 30, the union is making a direct appeal for support to the millions of worker-subway users.

The union statement then points out how the workers have sought to get their rights through peaceful negotiations.

"Patiently we petitioned the Board of Transportation for redress of our grievances. President Philip A. Murray, of the CIO, appealed to the Mayor for redress of our grievances. But to no avail."

After showing how the union has been denied even negotiations with the city, the statement appeals to the New York millions to begin a campaign of letters to La Guardia demanding that he meet with the union committee to negotiate a union contract.

"Through the union we achieved freedom. Freedom from an inhuman seven-day work week, from the twelve-hour day, from the yellow dog company union contract.

"Through the union we won a six-day week (although most people today work only 5 days). We won wage improvements. We won vacations with pay, a union medical plan and other benefits.

"What we won were the things that working people strive for everywhere. We had to strive hard to raise our standard of living."

During the next few weeks twelve street corner rallies will be held in various sections of the city, to be climaxed by a huge public gathering at Madison Square Garden.

This heightened union activity has forced the Board of Transportation to take several hasty steps to cover up its strikebreaking plans and to attempt to win back its rapidly waning support from those sections of the public which its lying propaganda was able to influence.

BOARD GIVES "CRUMBS"

The Board last week announced its intentions of equalizing pay rates on the various subway lines. The union has been hammering away at the unequal hourly rates paid for the same type of work. Women ticket agents have been particularly discriminated against, being paid as low as 39 cents an hour. However, the Board has not made clear whether this equalization will apply to the women workers.

Union officials have characterized this as merely another "crumb" in the desperate efforts of the Board to stave off a subway strike and deny the union its closed shop contract, higher wages and other major improvements.



MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS

Largest of the May Day bundles were ordered by New York, Chicago, Boston, St. Paul, Philadelphia and Buffalo. We look forward to next week's news of how these branches organized special May Day activity with THE MILITANT. Write in your experiences, comrades!

6-PAGER CONTINUES TO DRAW COMPLIMENTS

SAN PEDRO, Calif.—Comrade G. writes: "The new 6-page is very good and getting better all the time. Those two extra pages sure make a world of difference!"

BACK BILLS, BACK BILLS...

There's a season for increasing subscriptions, there's a season for increasing bundle orders... but sooner or later the season arrives when the branches just have to check over their finances and get busy increasing their remittances to this office.

Our Michigan comrades, in this regard must be called to particular account. We know that money is scarce and money troubles plentiful. But comrades,

Join the Socialist Workers Party

Sparrows Point, Bethlehem Steel Company Town, Is Beginning To Yield To Unionizing Drive

What Life Is Like Now In One of the Last Strongholds Of Bethlehem's Company Unionism

At the end of a winding road twelve miles from Baltimore stands a toll bridge leading to the huge property of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation known as Sparrows Point, Maryland.

On the other side of the bridge loom the gigantic steel mills of the largest section of Eugene Grace's metallic empire. Between the colossal steel structures of the various plant units there remain glinting waters and the remnants of majestic forests, an impressive picture of machine-age beauty imposed on a background of nature. Reflected in the waters of these neighboring creeks are the most modern steel edifices, in which over 25,000 workers today toil to produce the basic product of industrialism.

Within the center of this giant plant lies the little company town, Sparrows Point. Here in hundreds of dismal, ramshackle company-owned board houses live thousands of workers, whose labor makes Bethlehem Steel the second largest steel producer in America.

A SEETHING VOLCANO
This village seems peaceful on the surface. But it is a seething volcano within. It encloses the bitter lives of thousands of men and women who have stored within their breasts the accumulated hatred of decades of exploitation in Eugene Grace's infamous "American Way."

Every inch of Sparrows Point is owned by the corporation, every house, every store, every blade of grass.

In one isolated section of town, separated by several blocks of vacant lots from the rest of the houses, live the families of Negro workers. These stand out by reason of their unspeakable dilapidation, conspicuous even in the midst of general squalor. Further in the town are the dwellings of the whites, only a slight degree better than those of the segregated Negro workers.

Even the miserable wages paid the Sparrows Point workers are taken back from them by the company through exorbitant rents. In addition the company can intimidate and enslave the workers with the threat of eviction without a moment's notice.

THE COMPANY STORE
Not merely the worker's shelter but his food, clothing and other necessities of life are entirely in the hands of the company. The one and only trade center, situated across the street from the Blast Furnace entrance, is the scandalous company store. Here the workers are compelled to buy and pay any price the company exacts. And these prices are kept so high that the worker's wages cannot pay for the most meager necessities.

The company is glad to "remedy" this condition — not by increasing wages and reducing prices, of course — but by extending "credit." The workers' debts are systematically deducted from their pay checks — another "convenience" provided by the company. In this fashion, hundreds of workers end up the week or month with no pay checks at all. They simply get a statement that their debts to the company store have consumed their entire earnings. Thus these workers are reduced to literal slavery, with no money of their own, chained by debt to the company, unable to escape except at the risk of immediate starvation.

In case of strikes, the company can starve out the strikers by cutting off their credit at the company store. This extortion device was used in the recent strike at the Sparrows Point shipyard.

MAINTAINING "LAW AND ORDER"
No detail of control over the workers of Sparrows Point is overlooked by Eugene Grace, including the preservation of "law and order." In the very center of the community, at the corner of 4th and D Streets, stands the small but impressive court and police station. The police, supervised by company men, have powers which would make any big city cop green with envy. There is no real distinction between plant and town police. Any worker who "misbehaves" in the plant, is not merely escorted from the plant by the plant police, but is arrested and thrown in the town jail. This police power is restricted to use against workers, and not against foremen or company officials. A company magistrate then gives the arrested worker a "trial."

Employed at the Sparrows Point plant are 20,000 steel workers and

rapidly to an end, even at its wildest spot, Sparrows Point.

Even before the recent strike victories in Bethlehem, Johnstown and Lackawanna, the Sparrows Point workers were beginning to make rapid headway with their union and press the company back. They established three new union offices and a functioning organization machinery within the plants. Union activity and militancy rose at unprecedented speed. Successful stoppages have taken place, and more are certain to follow.

The fortress of Bethlehem Steel has already been breached at three major points. The workers of Sparrows Point are preparing to shatter it altogether. What the workers of Bethlehem, Johnstown and Lackawanna have been able to do, the Sparrows Point workers know they can do as well.

Nothing will stop them when they strike — and that strike is coming, unless the company yields in advance — for they will fight with a spirit of vengeance which decades of suffering have graven in their hearts.

General Motors Strike Postponed

(Continued from page 1)
Thomas leadership at the UAW convention in July.

Reuther and Thomas, driven both by rank and file pressure, and by their own factional needs, were forced to meet the GM corporation's stubborn refusal to grant contract improvements with the threat of a strike. They had to get some gains, both to meet insistent rank and file demands, and to make a record for their group.

REUTHER BOWS BEFORE OPM

On the other hand, Reuther showed from the first days of the strike threat, that he was most of all knuckling down to the Government apparatus, the OPM of Hillman-Knudsen, when he announced that no war production work in GM would be struck. This was tantamount to giving up the strike weapon in war orders work, without the affected workers themselves having a thing to say about it.

Union militants realize that this formula sets a bad precedent; it reveals that the UAW leadership has given ground on the issue of "defense" strikes, and demonstrates it is ready to capitulate on that issue. Reuther's stand has disoriented and confused many GM workers, and has aroused the resentment of the advanced sections of the local unions, who themselves do not feel inclined to give any guarantees that they will not strike if necessary for decent wages and working conditions in arms plants, on work from which the corporation makes just as great if not greater profits than elsewhere.

As in the Ford negotiations, the International Leadership of the UAW has publicly whittled away its demands, in this case even before a strike.

The original demands as drawn up at the GM conference in Detroit included among its major points the demand for a ten cent blanket wage increase, a union shop, a shop steward system, a 60

day seniority clause instead of the current 6-month clause for new employees, \$25 a week pay for drafted workers and the 80 hour convention with pay instead of the current 40 hour clause.

REUTHER CUTS DEMANDS

In his public address in Flint April 20th, Reuther cut out of his report of the negotiations all mention of the 60-day seniority demand, and of the demand for \$25 weekly pay for draftees. The delegates to the GM conference who had drawn them up were not told what happened to these demands.

Reuther placed his main stress on the demands for: 1, the wage increase; 2, increased powers for the umpire; 3, the union shop; 4, the question of a changed hospitalization plan to give members more protection.

That is to say, on April 20 Reuther gave notice that he had given up some of the major demands, without the authorization of the General Motors locals, or the delegates to the GM conference, who, according to the decision reached at the February conference, were to be consulted on the question of negotiations before any final decisions were made.

The publicly announced list of demands were important enough however, in spite of the omissions, to inspire the tremendous strike vote.

After the strike vote, the same process of whittling away the demands went on.

GM MILITANTS ON THE ALERT

Thus the stake for which the union is preparing its fight has been reduced by the Reuther-Thomas negotiators, who, under governmental pressure, have retreated day by day.

In the statement issued Saturday April 26, agreeing to arbitrate the dispute with the National Mediation Board, the UAW Executive Board gave out a new statement of its demands. This statement demanded the ten cent wage increase as before, and also flatly demanded an increase in the powers of the umpire (a safe demand since it is one the corporation should have no qualms in granting). However, on the union shop issue the demand was stated in ambiguous terms which leaves room for some kind of compromise formula. The statement reads:

"Our record of responsibility in our relations with the corporation and the overwhelming support of our union, entitle it to a greater degree of union recognition."

Instead of asking for the shop steward system, as before, this statement says, "We propose to strengthen, handle and eliminate of grievances in the plants where they originate."

Should a strike ensue, it would no doubt be a 100% solid strike. The workers in GM are well-organized. They are also experienced and ready.

In any case, the whole course of the GM negotiations has shown to the thinking militants in the local unions that they must demand more of a voice in such negotiations. They must also build up a new leadership from the ranks that can resist the pressures of this period and go forward to achieve new gains. These can be won, provided the leadership is courageous and truly representative of the membership and its wishes.

Nevertheless, the GM workers have indicated that they feel they are entitled to substantial increases all along the line, both in wages and in union rights in the plant. Many militants in local unions are preparing to fight against any kind of agreement which does not include their necessary demands and needs, as drawn up in contract form at the February 8th Conference.

If some kind of compromise agreement emerges from the May 2nd arbitration with the National Mediation Board, it will have to be good to satisfy the rank and file. It is not yet clear what will happen. Unless the corporation comes a long way in meeting the workers' demands, the workers will be forced to strike despite the cowardly tactics of Reuther-Thom.

Washington knows that Japan is watching narrowly, waiting for the U. S. Navy to become engaged in the Atlantic, before plunging ahead in the South Pacific. Washington has to consider a war strategy that girdles the globe and to keep in mind that its present naval forces do not allow so wide a distribution if major action is in view.

But that is just the point. Let no one be deluded that there is still the possibility of any choice about U. S. entry into the imperialist conflict as an active belligerent. The only thing that really remains to be determined in the high councils of those who rule our destiny is the when and the how.

The big bosses of America are speaking out their will in public. John D. Rockefeller, Thomas Lamont of the House of Morgan,

Picket Against Jim Crow In Arms Shops

New York's gold coast looked startled last Saturday at the sight of a picket line around Rockefeller Center — and a black and white picket line at that! Placards proclaimed slogans such as, "Bullets Draw No Color Line; Bullet-Makers Do," "Down with Jim Crow," "A Real Democracy Draws No Color Line." The demonstration was part of a nationwide protest sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People against property belonging to the house of Rockefeller. But twice the picket line marched right down this street. "Hey, you can't do that!" yelled the police. They made no attempt, however, to use physical violence against the pickets, contenting themselves with trying to turn the colored members of the demonstration against the white pickets by arguing that the whites were "communists" who would lead the Negroes to no good end.

The pickets were amused at the attempts of one thick-necked cop to convince them that Rockefeller was their friend. "Aren't you people ashamed of yourselves, — acting this way toward Rockefeller who has always helped the Negro people?" The scornful reaction of the pickets implied how well they understood that Rockefeller is not friend of theirs.

Tallulah Bankhead, noted stage and screen actress, remarked while passing the line, "I'm all for you; keep up the fight." Miss Bankhead's father was the notorious labor-hating senator from Georgia. Apparently labor-hating is not hereditary even in a southern Bourbon family.

Next Jack Altman, one of the former leaders of the Socialist Party, entered the plaza. Upon seeing the placards and the picket in support of this contention.

Patrol Last Step Short Of War'

(Continued from page 1)
Wendell Willkie of Wall Street... and all their echoes in the dovecotes of the liberal pacifists and preachers... are demanding conveys now, action now, war now.

The demand has become so immediate, so urgent, that even the pacifists of the Socialist Party skeleton... Reinhold Niebuhr and Jack Altman and Company... have hopped on the bandwagon openly favoring war... now. We shall deal with these latter more fully in our next issue... but we know from long experience that when these last rodents scurry from the foundering ship of peace, the war has truly come close.

The question... the only question now is: how best to prepare ourselves in this war situation, how best to train and organize ourselves for the battles that are to come, not the battles of the bosses for their profits, but the battles of the workers for the socialist reconstruction of the world. For our part, we demand military training under control of the trade unions and special training of workers as officers. This is the road toward preparation for the real fight against Fascism, at home and abroad. What Roosevelt and the rest offer us is blood and sweat for imperialist pelf. What we declare now is: blood is to be shed. Let us make certain it is shed in the cause of building a better world, a socialist world.

Negro Labor Group To Celebrate Victory In Winning Bus Jobs

To celebrate its victory over the Fifth Avenue Bus Company and the New York Omnibus Corporation, the United Negro Bus Association of Harlem is organizing a victory parade and mass rally on Saturday, May 3. The Harlem branch of the Socialist Workers Party, along with other organizations in Harlem, will participate in the parade and meeting.

The parade is scheduled to form at 1 p. m. at the Abyssinian Baptist Church at 132 West 138 St. It will then proceed along the main avenues and streets of Harlem to Dorrence Brooks Square,

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"The Union Suits Us"



Conventions went by the board when these members of the International Ladies Garment Workers (AFL) picketed in their underwear at the strike-bound Appalachian Mills in Knoxville, Tennessee. This new idea in picketing and the prominent banners, "I lost my pants at the Appalachian Mills," helped bring a speedy union victory.

JAMES P. CANNON

National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

Speaks This Week In

CHICAGO -- DETROIT -- BUFFALO

CHICAGO

Sunday, May 4
2:30 P.M.

Ashland Auditorium Room 237
Van Buren & Ashland Ave.

Subject:
Strikes and National Defense

DETROIT

Tuesday, May 6
8:00 P.M.

Garage Workers Hall
3965 Woodward Ave. (Second Floor)

Subject:
Strikes and National Defense

BUFFALO

Thursday, May 8
8:00 P.M.

East Side Social Center
571 Clinton Street

Subject:
The War Aims of the Government

British "Democracy" In India---An Eyewitness Report

An Uncensored, Exclusive Story Of War Conditions

For many months, British imperialism has imposed an almost impenetrable censorship over all news from India. Occasionally some brief dispatch from India appears in the American press, with the obvious imprint of the official British propaganda ministry. "All's well," cries the British government. "The Indian peoples are giving loyal support to the Empire's war efforts."

American foreign news commentators, such as Ludwig Lore of the NEW YORK POST, have been supplying the American people with "interpretive" analyses of what goes on in India behind the black veil of British censorship. Their analyses show a striking conformity with British government press releases, whose "optimism" grows as their "facts" shrink.

What is the truth about India? The MILITANT herewith presents the first eye-witness account to appear in the American labor press of what has been happening since the war in the greatest colony of the British Empire, where over 350,000,000 human beings are preparing to cast off the British Imperial bondage which they have suffered for three centuries.

The giver of the interview is a young American sailor who has just returned after a five months voyage to the Far East on an American freighter delivering supplies to the Burma Road at Rangoon. He spent a month visiting the principal cities and ports in India.

He observed India with a fresh and clear eye, with class-conscious understanding. This sympathy combined with a friendly and agreeable personality enabled him to meet many Indian natives—workers, students, soldiers—and to penetrate their reticence toward all foreigners, particularly those whom they have reason to suspect might be friendly toward the British rulers.

No one observer in a month can hope to catch more than the minutest segment of India. Bearing this in mind, the reader will nevertheless appreciate his account as an authentic clue to the present mood of the Indian masses.

By ART PREIS
"If I were to give one general impression about my experiences in India, I would say: 'This is the horrors of war, without the war.' This thought persisted in my mind wherever I went in Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta. It was like looking at some scene of war refugees, starving, homeless, diseased. Only there has been no war. No bombed buildings, no wreckage, no burnt homes. It's just, how shall I explain it—as if some terrible war had passed over the country sparing everything but the people themselves."

"IF WE ONLY HAD ARMS..."
At a further point in his narrative, the young sailor supported his impression about the widespread desire among the people of India for a British defeat by recalling that on different occasions he had heard the wish expressed among groups of workers, "If we only had arms..."

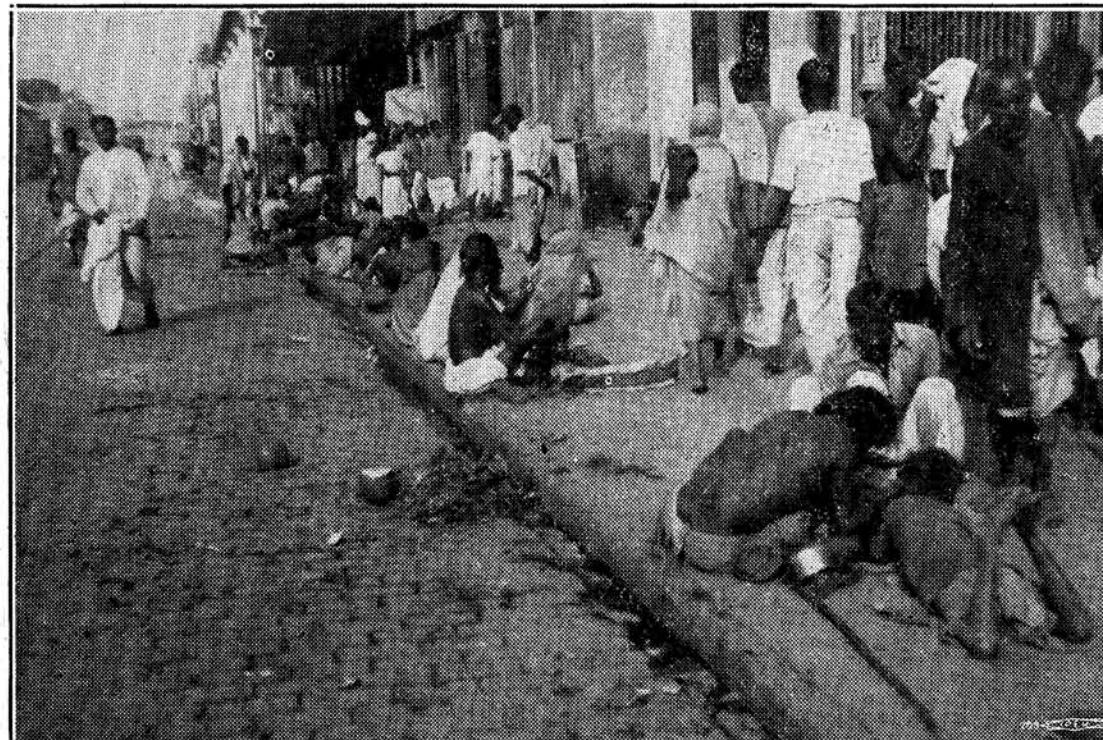
"When I heard a worker say this in Karachi, our first stop in India, I thought it might be just an isolated sentiment. But I heard it in Bombay and again in Calcutta. And always the same words, 'If we only had arms...' A weakened British army and arms for themselves. That's what many of them seem to be thinking about—and planning about."

The speaker then told of meeting a group of workers in Bombay whose complete confidence he managed to secure. A leader of these workers in greatest secrecy drew for him a rough map of the surrounding section of the country, marking the points of British troop concentrations and arms stores. "He burned it up again on the spot. I never saw such longing in any man's face that nothing could be worse than as when he said to me, 'If we square. Ten and 15 persons sleep."

NATIVES ANTI-BRITISH BUT NOT PRO-HITLER

"It's not that they're pro-Hitler, or anything like that. When I asked one friendly native soldier if they weren't afraid of what would happen to them under Hitler, he just slowly swung his arms out and said softly, but with such bitterness, 'Look at us . . .' It was all he could say, 'Look at us . . .' What he meant was that nothing could be worse than as when he said to me, 'If we

Street Scene In India



This is a street scene in a town in India. Diseased and starving men, women and children line the sidewalk, begging from passers-by. This picture, which is sold to tourists, falls far short of conveying the actual conditions of filth and misery in which three centuries of British imperialist rule have steeped the people of India.

only had arms... If we only had arms..."

The interview with the young seaman had started in the customary fashion, with the reporter asking questions about the trip—the ship, the cargo, the length of time at sea, the ports where they stopped, how long the sailors had leave at each port, etc.

He had shipped on a large freighter out of New York last November. It was his first trip to the Far East. They were at sea for 31 days before docking at Capetown, Union of South Africa. After only 12 hours ashore, they continued their trip around the Cape of Good Hope. They ploughed through the Indian Ocean for another 22 days, hitting Karachi, India, for their next stop.

CONDITIONS IN KARACHI

"Karachi was quite a shock to me. It was only after I saw Bombay and Calcutta that I realized that Karachi was quite a decent place by comparison.

"The first thing I noticed when we docked was the condition of the native longshoremen who came aboard the ship. They seemed so thin and scrawny that I wondered how they could lift the heavy loads they had to carry. They wore nothing but loin cloths—no shoes. I guess they have tough feet, but I couldn't imagine an American longshoreman working around lumber and heavy steel cargo without heavy shoes and clothing for protection."

"We had two days ashore. I've seen some of the foulest East Side slums and been down around the Negro quarters in Baltimore and Washington. But the worst in America couldn't equal this. The natives live in tiny shacks, some of rotted wood, others just weeds. Whole families—and several families live in a shack about ten feet square. Ten and 15 persons sleep,

together on the ground in one shack. Here I got my first smell of India—that mixture of dirt, dung, crowded bodies and rotted flesh, diseased or dead. And the beggars! But that was nothing in Karachi! Wait until I tell you about Bombay and Calcutta.

"I was taken through one area of a few square blocks in Karachi which I was told housed more people than the rest of the city. After one trip through that particular area, I was convinced that this was true.

"But remember that conditions in Karachi are far better than in the rest of India. It's a comparatively new city being built up as a port. Many British officials have built palatial homes on the city outskirts."

BOMBAY CROWDED WITH BEGGARS

"At this point, he seemed so anxious to tell about Bombay and Calcutta, the two chief cities of India, that the reporter switched the questions over to his experiences in these two ports.

"Bombay was our next stop. Bombay! That's where you'll see a real example of the true conditions in India. The first thing that hit me were the large troops of beggars everywhere. They reminded me of human beings out of a nightmare. They were in every condition of disease and disfigurement. Many seemed to be in the last stages of starvation, dying on their feet. Many bore the open sores of terrible contagious diseases, small pox and, especially, leprosy. You could see their bodies rotting away.

"The British government does nothing to help them. Human life is the cheapest thing in India. I shall never forget the feeling of horror I had the first time a pitiful leprosy beggar came up begging for an anna (2 cents American) and touched me with his hand.

WORKERS RECEPTIVE TO REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS

"Another piece of luck I had was to get in with a group of workers employed at a big printing plant in Bombay. After we talked for a while, and they became assured of my sympathy for them and their fight against British imperialism, they eagerly asked me all sorts of questions about the American workers. I told them some of the things I knew about the labor and radical movements in America. When I mentioned, among other groups, the Trotskyites, they shot questions at me through a couple of workers who spoke English and acted as interpreters. It turned out that they were extremely receptive to revolutionary ideas, and, in fact, volunteered the information that they themselves were preparing for a revolutionary situation in India which they were certain was going to come soon.

"It was during this conversation that I again heard the question which I first heard in Karachi, 'How soon do you think the British will be defeated?' They hastened to assure me that this implied no sympathy with Hitler, but 'we are unarmed . . .' and they felt that a decisive military defeat for Britain would accelerate their own struggle for freedom.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENTS THRIVE

"It was at this point that the speaker used the expression, 'like refugees in a war zone—but worse.' He broke in with an observation summing up his entire impression.

"I've tried to do some reading. I've read some of Trotsky's writings. I remember he once wrote about fascism being an attempt to organize the misery of the people. Well, I got the feeling that the British in India can't do even this. The poverty just spills

An American Seaman Tells Sights Of Recent Trip

dence and don't want any part of the British rulers' war.

"The printing plant workers were particularly pleased when I explained what I knew of the Trotskyist international outlook. When I mentioned the fact that I believed that if a workers revolution developed in America the American workers would do everything possible to aid their Indian brothers, their faces lighted up. They were so glad to hear about support for themselves in other countries. They are so isolated from the outside world, that they have felt all alone in their struggles. They did not even know up to then that an international revolutionary movement existed. After this, they displayed an almost touching effort to show their appreciation of my news by offering me little services, bringing me coffee, a chair, posting a look-out for the 'dicks' who infest the sections around plants and spy on every little grouping of workers.

"They did know a little about the Stalinists, but said the Stalinists were mainly among the students and had very little connections with the workers and the general masses. They also informed me that strikes were continuously breaking out among the various sections of the workers in Bombay, and that these strikes were bitterly fought and suppressed with much bloodshed.

"I had the luck to meet a British dock official who came aboard our ship in Bombay. I managed to get him to open up to me a little, although I had to be very cautious in asking him any questions. American sailors are watched very closely. The British know how well organized and how militant the American seamen are. He told me that just recently—that would be about three months ago now—there had been virtual civil war in town north of Bombay, "uncontrollable riots" he called it. British Militia, which are mainly English troops—they don't trust native soldiers for jobs like this—took four days to suppress the revolt using all the modern paraphernalia of war, including artillery. He said there were only 40,000 people involved.

"It immediately occurred to me what a job it would be for the British to suppress a revolution of 350,000,000 people, if it took four days for trained troops with machine guns and artillery to subdue 40,000 practically unarmed people. Incidentally, all news of this was suppressed within India itself. It's hard to say how many similar incidents have occurred that we cannot learn about.

LIFE IN CALCUTTA

"Another piece of luck I had was to get in with a group of workers employed at a big printing plant in Calcutta. After we talked for a while, and they became assured of my sympathy for them and their fight against British imperialism, they eagerly asked me all sorts of questions about the American workers. I told them some of the things I knew about the labor and radical movements in America. When I mentioned, among other groups, the Trotskyites, they shot questions at me through a couple of workers who spoke English and acted as interpreters. It turned out that they were extremely receptive to revolutionary ideas, and, in fact, volunteered the information that they themselves were preparing for a revolutionary situation in India which they were certain was going to come soon.

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"And then I noticed that it wasn't merely the beggars who were begging. The longshoremen who came aboard the boat also were furiously begging the American seamen for a cigarette or a spare anna. The longshoremen, mind you, are among the BETTER PAID workers of India!

"It wasn't lack of self-respect that drove these workers to beg even while they were working. I soon found that out. They had to work as long as 16 hours a day at inhuman physical labor for a few annas. Among these longshoremen I met educated men, white collar workers, college students. Their food was enough to make you heave up. All it was—or looked like—was a mixture of wormy rice and dirt.

"A crust of bread, I found out,

begged for an anna. A British officer approached and without warning slammed the old fellow across the knee-caps with a heavy club. From the crack, I am sure the knee-caps were fractured. The old beggar staggered away. At a little distance, he stopped and muttered something in Hindustani at the cop. For me, the expression of hatred on that old beggar's face was the symbol of all the faces in India.

"I noticed that the native passers-by were looking on. Their faces bore the same look as the beggar's.

"That is the way the British police treat the natives everywhere. Aristocrats in big cars drive through the swarming streets, never slackening pace. If some poor soul is knocked down and injured, that's his tough luck. And besides, he knows better than to complain to the police. The British rob the natives right and left. In a shop, a British official will name his price for an article. The shop-keeper will give it to him even if he loses money on the sale. He does not dare to argue. One of our boys got run in for being drunk, and later told us about what he saw at the police court. The arrested natives were openly kicked about and clubbed in the court room."

UNIVERSAL POVERTY AND FILTH

What else about living conditions?

"Well, as an example, the closer you get to the town center, the more people you see lying in the gutters. Tens of thousands of men, women and children have no homes but the streets. There are no sidewalks in many sections, just mud and filth, including animal and human dung. At times the streets are so packed with sleeping humans that a car cannot pass without running over them.

"Without an adequate water supply, no cleaning materials, the British being too cheap to provide even a semblance of municipal sanitation, the dirt and dust almost blinds and chokes you on certain streets. In the market places the food is handled with hands covered with filth. Food will pass through 20 different hands before it is finally bought. Cleanliness is secondary when poverty is so acute that the masses will shop around in a dozen places to get the best bargain for an anna."

MEETS LONGSHOREMEN

On one occasion, during his stay in Calcutta, he had the opportunity to speak to a group of 12 to 15 longshoremen on board the ship. This was while there was an absence of officers about. He discovered a couple of the workers who could understand English, and translated for the rest.

"After I had won their confidence, I asked them what they thought about unions. 'Very good,' I was told. They wanted to know about American unions, because their wages were so miserable compared to that of the lowest paid American seamen. When I described something of the American labor movement, they crowded around with eager attention. One of those who spoke English expressed the keen desire of the rest.

"I just scratched the surface. But what I saw on the streets of Calcutta with my own eyes was sufficient to make me understand why the Indian people don't jump every time the British yell, 'Hitler!' I saw the way the police—mainly British—customarily treat the natives.

"I remember one incident particularly. A group of us sailors were walking along a main street through the market place. A miserable old beggar came up and

(Continued on Page 5)

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The Negro Struggle
By ALBERT PARKER

Hillman Writes A Letter

After many months of receiving complaints from Negro and labor organizations about the Jim Crow bars that keep Negroes from getting jobs in the vital industries, Sidney Hillman, labor front for the Office of Production Management, finally has written a letter. In this letter, sent to all manufacturers receiving contracts from the government, Hillman follows his usual practice of subordinating every other consideration to that of "national defense."

He is not interested in Jim Crowism in plants financed and in many cases built by the government because of the effect it has on the Negro people, who are largely confined to menial jobs as a result, but because of the effect it will have on the war plans of the capitalist government he is serving.

First he points out that current reports "indicate skilled labor shortage in a number of fields vital to defense production." This situation has been aggravated because "in many localities, qualified and available Negro workers are either being restricted to unskilled jobs, or barred from defense employment entirely." Then he goes on with his complaint:

"Such practices are extremely wasteful of our human resources and prevent a total effort for national defense. They result in unnecessary migration of labor, in high rates of labor turnover, and they increase our present and future housing needs and social problems for defense workers."

Then follows his suggestions for correcting this situation: "All holders of defense contracts are urged to examine their employment and training policies at once to determine whether or not these policies make ample provision for the full utilization of Negro workers. Every available source of labor capable of producing defense materials must be tapped in the present emergency."

What the Letter Means

Two things stand out in this letter.

First, Hillman is interested in Negroes being employed only because he doesn't want the war plans of the government disrupted. Second, his letter is not going to change the present situation at all.

It should be noted that the letter does not emphasize the need for hiring Negroes where there is no shortage of labor. This can be interpreted to mean, that employers should take them where they can't get anyone else. The employers do just that anyhow. The most rabid Negro-hating employer will hire Negroes when he can't get anyone else, because his main interest is in making profit; and to make it, he needs workers, regardless of their race or color.

Hillman wants the employers to determine whether their policies make ample provision for the full utilization of Negro workers. Very well, an employer will say, I will examine my policies and see whether they make provision for, etc.

Even assuming that Hillman really wants Negroes to get jobs, and that his letter is not just a face-saving device, what does it amount to? Little more than nothing. Because the letter does not provide a single hint of a measure to do something about those plants that refuse to "examine" their policies, and worse yet, refuse to hire Negro labor as long as they can get other workers.

An employer can toss the letter into the wastebasket, as probably most of them have done, and Hillman does not propose to do anything about it.

And so, because of the weakness of the letter and its lack of threat to take action against the employers who disregard it, we can confidently predict that nothing will come of it, any more than came of the no-discrimination statement issued several months ago by Knudsen, Hillman's partner. Not a Negro will get a job as the result of it.

The OPM Could Take Action

As the *Chicago Defender* put it, "His letter has all the earmarks of a theatrical stunt intended only for the gallery."

It is intended to draw away from the OPM criticism about its failure to do anything about the situation, while it continues to do nothing.

This does not mean that the OPM is powerless in the situation and is only trying to cover up its helplessness. Far from it.

Along with the President, the OPM has the power to veto any proposal of the War or Navy Department for expanding or building facilities for expediting production. Appropriation acts carrying funds for new facilities, according to Undersecretary of War Patterson, give them that authority.

This means that the OPM, by simply using its veto power, could at the very least, refuse contracts to Jim Crow companies asking for funds to add to their building and equipment.

The fact that they don't use this power, but resort instead to weak and meaningless letters, is only additional proof that they don't want to do anything about the industrial Jim Crow bars against Negroes.

Negroes have to recognize this and to realize that they can expect no help from this direction until they are organized and strong enough to force it from them.

Help Publish Our Pamphlets

The two pamphlets we have prepared on the struggle of the Negroes to get equal rights in the army and jobs in the war industries are still awaiting publication. The only hitch is the money necessary. We urge readers who would like to see their publication to send a contribution, no matter how large or how small to us, c/o Albert Parker, 116 University Pl., New York, N. Y.

The Nationalist Revolt In Syria Cannot Be Smeared With The Nazi Brush

Majority of People In Fight Against Starvation Rule of the French Army

By RUTH JEFFREY

For the past month Nationalist uprisings have turned Syria into a powder-keg of the Near East, and the N. Y. Times admitted on March 11, 1941 that "only a miracle has prevented a revolution from taking place." Yet the past two or three weeks have found the capitalist press minimizing the continued trouble in Syria—dismissing it as Nazi-inspired propaganda activity.

What is really going on in Syria? The *MILITANT* sent a reporter to obtain information from well-informed Syrian sources in New York City.

NATIONALISM STRONG

The interviewed Syrians were quick to destroy any illusion regarding German strength in their native country. "The powerful Nationalist movement in Syria—Al-Katib-al-Watanyat—is itself responsible for the nation-wide uprisings," they stated categorically. "Ninety percent of the Syrian people are actively involved in the movement for national independence, and have never accepted peacefully their country's role as a mandate of France."

A land with few resources, Syria's strategic importance as outlet of the oil pipe-lines between Palestine and Iraq, and as a corridor to Turkey, has kept her an unwilling slave of world imperialism. Following World War I, this small Mediterranean nation was a bone tossed to France, while England gathered in all the surrounding Arab world of the Near East. The subsequent history of Syria as a mandate of bankrupt French imperialism has been for its 3,000,000 Arab population an unreleved tale of nation-wide starvation and nation-wide revolt.

"For two years," the Syrians

explained, "between 1925 and 1927, Syria, under the leadership of such men as Shukri Gavatli, carried on a bitter armed revolution against the French, which ceased only with a peace treaty signed by the government of France, providing for complete Syrian independence by 1937. This promise of independence, blandly broken by France has embittered a hundred-fold all but the Maronite ten percent who inhabit Lebanon, and who constitute there a Catholic majority loyal to the French."

FRANCE STARVED SYRIA

Recent wide-spread revolts of a poverty-stricken population whose gold has been drained by desperate France were featured on front pages throughout the world on March 27th. (See accompanying map.) France's answer to Syria, which rejected the worthless paper money France issued to her, was to send the smouldering mandate a new High Commissioner. His first acts in office were to drain the country of its bread supply for shipment to France, and the starving population has continued to revolt.

Would the country prefer the rule of Germany, as recent news reports seem to indicate? "Emphatically 'No!'" our informants replied. "First and foremost Syria demands her independence. But if 90% of our people are opposed to French rule, 100% would be opposed to Nazi rule. The Arab peoples are sick of oppression and will not forget that Adolf Hitler, butcher of the Jews lists the Arabs even below the Jews in his sacred book, 'Mein Kampf'."

Do enlightened Syrians believe that it will be possible under present world conditions for Syria to obtain her independence? "For myself, I have few illusions," our

Where Revolt Flares



(1) Where French troops clashed with native demonstrators on March 27th, in widespread Nationalist uprisings in the principle Syrian cities of Aleppo, Homs, Damascus and Beirut.

principle informant stated. "Syria is far from self-sufficient economically. She even has to import her matches!" he said with a smile.

HOW FRANCE RULED

The reporter from *The MILITANT* explained this point of view: that revolutionary Marxists believe only socialism can bring the Arab peoples the answer to their problem of independence. I questioned them regarding the existence of a socialist movement in Syria.

Just as the British government has followed a policy of inciting Moslems and Hindus against each other in India, and Jews and Arabs against each other in Palestine, so the French rulers have persistently attempted to create division on religious lines in Syria on the theory of "divide and rule."

While the bulk of the Syrian population is Moslem, there are a minority of Christians who compose a majority in one small sector, The Lebanon.

This latter small territory was set up as a separate Republic of Lebanon in September, 1920, for the purpose of fostering this religious division and keeping the entire native population embroiled against each other.

The Syrian nationalists have never voluntarily accepted

the greatest hope for the future victory of Socialism in the semi-colonial lands of the Near East.

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In an effort to appease the popular discontent, the French permitted an election in December, 1936, and Hashem El Atassi was elected president of the State of Syria. El Atassi and his Cabinet resigned in July, 1939, in protest against the violation of the promises of the French government, made in 1936, to grant complete national independence.

Gabriel Puaux, the French High Commissioner, then dictatorially suspended the Constitution, appointed a puppet board of directors and ruled the mandated area by complete decree.

Twenty-one years of French domination over the lives of the Syrian people have brought only direct exploitation and continuous violence against them. But the day appears not far off when the Syrian people are going to break the bonds of their enslavement along with all the colonial peoples of Asia and Africa.

French rule over their country.

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP

The French government engineered a "treaty of friendship" between a few native tools and it self on November 20, 1933. But the Nationalists, who represented the overwhelming portion of the native population, refused to accept this worthless piece of paper.

As an answer to the Nationalist demands for complete independence, the French High Commissioner dictatorially suspended the Syrian Parliament in November, 1934. He attempted to govern by absolute decree through a puppet Premier, Sheikh Taj.

Six weeks of violent riots and protracted strikes ensued in early 1936, and Sheikh Taj was forced to resign.

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In an effort to appease the popular discontent, the French permitted an election in December, 1936, and Hashem El Atassi was elected president of the State of Syria. El Atassi and his Cabinet resigned in July, 1939, in protest against the violation of the promises of the French government, made in 1936, to grant complete national independence.

Forgotten was all Hitler's tommyrot about women staying at home. Women young and old flocked into the factories. Today there are seven million in factories and offices, not counting those giving forced labor on the farms. A million workers were taken from the farms between 1932 and 1937. This actually resulted in a decline in agricultural output in the latter year. Even handcraftsmen were forced into the factories. As the fascist press felicitously put it: "The handcraftsman must be forcibly led to his happiness."

"Controlling" Wages And Prices

The wage schemes of monopoly capitalism soon struck a snag in the war economy. Such an economy (in the United States, England, or Germany) demands reduced investments in new capital, the depletion of existing capital in order to supply the vast funds needed by the government from savings and capitalist surplus, and also reduced personal consumption. Carried too far, personal consumption comes into conflict with war's demand for increased production. However, when labor productivity declined under the terrible strain in Germany, the bosses were forced to raise wages, especially in the speeded-up war industries. Then the competition for labor, especially skilled labor, nullified all the laws and agreements. Wages had to be bid up to secure labor—and to prevent slowdowns!

Nazi price control is no different from that of England or of the United States, except that here it is starting later. The boards set up for "planning" and for price control are the same as here. Here Stettinius, Knudsen and Henderson sit with the generals. There Krupp, Schroeder and their confederates not only sit with the generals but have themselves been given the glittering uniforms of generals and named "leaders" of their own monopolist enterprises. Prices are set in the usual manner in which monopoly capitalism sets prices. It would require more than this column to quote the complaints and exposures in the Nazi press itself regarding the methods of price evasion, rendered easy by the private control of production and distribution.

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British 'Democracy' In India

Further Details of the Exclusive Story of War Conditions Among the Workers in British-Ruled India

(Continued from Page 4)

India workers to attain to some of the conditions of the American sailors. They look up to the American workers with much respect.

They then told me something of the workers organizations in India. Organization among certain groups of workers, including the longshoremen, is illegal. Nevertheless, the workers maintain an illegal organization. The longshoremen have a tradition of militancy in struggle, and are particularly suppressed by the British authorities, lest their struggles give an impulse to other workers.

OPPOSED TO WAR

"Among the jute and textile workers, there are legal unions, or rather semi-legal unions. Strikes are always breaking out. In Calcutta, as in Bombay, I was able to note in the British papers a hint of the continuous struggles taking place, despite the fact, as the longshoremen informed me, that strikes were very difficult to conduct at this time. All strikes are immediately physically suppressed. The strikers are shot down without mercy. Thousands are thrown into jail, from which they are lucky ever to come out alive. The British authorities impose 10 to 20 years at hard labor just for striking."

"A few lines at the bottom of a Calcutta newspaper will tell that so many and so many were killed in a strike yesterday. One day I read in such a brief and casual item of over 100 workers being killed. But the papers never mentioned anything about unions or give details."

"When I told the longshoremen that the time would come when the American workers would be able to help them in their struggle, they became very excited and enthusiastic. They stated that they were very anxious to get the aid of the American sailors and hoped that we would bring back to the American workers word of their conditions and struggles."

"They were all bitterly opposed to the war and to aiding the British."

ish government's war efforts. I found this same sentiment everywhere I went, incidentally. All the enthusiasm for the war was in the controlled press. But nowhere else. The papers were carrying big ads for recruits to the army, but I heard that the results were very meager. Among all types of native peoples whom I met, from many different stations of life, I got the same response on my questions about the war. They didn't want any part of it. I wouldn't want to be a British official in India when the natives start demonstrating in earnest their 'loyalty' to the government.

"They then told me something of the workers organizations in India. Organization among certain groups of workers, including the longshoremen, is illegal. Nevertheless, the workers maintain an illegal organization. The longshoremen have a tradition of militancy in struggle, and are particularly suppressed by the British authorities, lest their struggles give an impulse to other workers.

OPPOSED TO WAR

"From these same longshoremen I heard some significant political remarks. They seemed to think that there was a tremendous leftward tendency taking place in India. They stated flatly that only force would drive the British out. I asked about Ghandi. They declared that he was losing much support among his followers. They said he was getting rich in the pay of the British. I cannot tell how widespread this idea is, but other workers I spoke to had the same viewpoint."

"In reference to Ghandi and the native capitalists he represents, who have aided the British in maintaining their rule, one of the longshoremen said, 'You American workers have only one club to dodge. We have two.' By that he meant the native and foreign exploiters combined."

FEELINGS OF BRITISH SEAMEN

He recalled an interesting meeting with some British seamen of a captured French freighter.

"They had been having a pretty tough time of it. They asked us for hand-outs and spare cigarettes. I saw them pick up our discarded cigarette butts. They have been receiving as little as \$20 a month pay. Although many of them are married, they get scarcely any news from home, and some of them have been away from their homes for three and four years. They have to send every penny of their pittance home, and have nothing for themselves."

"These British seamen told us

that there have been strikes on a number of British boats. In at least one instance, the government sent out a battleship which took over an entire ship. The leaders or 'trouble-makers' were shot. Other seamen were given 10 year prison sentences at hard labor.

"They were eager to trade ideas with us. They wanted to know all about the war bonuses which the American union seamen are getting for travelling in the war zone. They were astounded to learn that we were getting three times as much regular pay as they. They wanted to see Hitler defeated, but they expressed quite bitter hatred for their own capitalists. They mentioned the huge profits the British corporations were making out of the war sacrifices of the common people. They were particularly angry about the taxes, and spoke of the 101 different taxes on food, etc..."

TROTSKYISM IN INDIA

Did he come across any evidence of an international revolutionary sentiment in India?

"My impression was that there was no centralized or leading revolutionary organization at present in India. But there was a general revolutionary sentiment which would enable such an organization to grow very quickly."

"I did manage to meet several professed Trotskyists, but under circumstances which do not permit me to disclose any details. Suffice to say, there are Fourth Internationalists in India."

"I did notice, both in Bombay and Calcutta, that Trotsky's works, particularly his 'History of the Russian Revolution' were widely displayed in the book shops. I went into one Calcutta book shop and asked the dealer if he had any other Trotsky works beside the 'History.' He showed me a couple of others. Then he said that he had heard that Trotsky's last book, on Stalin, was coming out soon, and that he had received many inquiries about it. While he was telling me this, several others in the store

gathered around us and began asking when 'the Stalin' book would be available."

ATTITUDE TOWARD INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

What had he been able to learn about the Indian National Congress?

"The Congress now represents the small group of native bourgeoisie almost exclusively. And these feel more in a blind alley than during the last war. All their old privileges are being taken away, because the British no longer have any confidence in the native bourgeoisie's leader's ability to stem the tide of revolt. I did not come across any signs of enthusiasm for this group. Their only sign of protest at the treatment they are now being given by the British rulers is to resign from the National Congress. But they are a miserable lot. Even when they resign, they take pains to make it clear to the masses that their actions are not to be misunderstood as suggestions for mass revolt. No one has confidence in the British promises any longer. In fact

THE MILITANT

VOL. V—No. 18 Saturday, May, 3, 1941

Published Weekly by
THE MILITANT PUBLISHING ASS'N
at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.
Telephone: Algonquin 4-8547

Editorial Board:
FELIX MORROW ALBERT GOLDMAN
Business Manager:
LYDIA BEIDEL

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months.
Foreign: \$2.00 per year, \$1.50 for six months. Bunde
orders: 3 cents per copy in the United States; 4 cents
per copy in all foreign countries. Single copies: 5 cents.

"Entered as second class matter February 13, 1941
at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of
March 3, 1879."

PROGRAM FOR TODAY'S FIGHT

1. No union fig-leaves for government strikebreaking. Demand that trade union officials resign from all posts in the government, including the OPM and the National Mediation Board.

2. Organize the picket lines for all-out militant defense against the thuggery of company hoodlums and government cops.

3. Organize Union Defense Guards to protect the picket lines and union halls against 'law and order committees,' and all other anti-labor bands.

4. Call an immediate halt to all acts of hostility between the AFL and CIO which serve the bosses' strikebreaking.

5. Demand the unification of the AFL and CIO on the basis of preserving and extending the industrial form of organization.

6. Independent working class political action. Build an Independent Labor Party.

7. Expropriate the war industries and operate them under workers' control.

8. For a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living.

Still More Hypocrisy

Only the appropriate "incident" is being awaited before this nation will be plunged into full military participation in the war.

The Roosevelt administration is making certain that the "incident" will come and soon.

Defeat of the British in the Balkans has given the administration the favorable atmosphere it has sought in which to launch its next big step to war: naval convoys for boats carrying war supplies to America's imperialist war ally, Great Britain.

No one could misunderstand last week's statement of Frank Knox that "ways must be found" to get goods to Britain safely, or the companion statement of Cordell Hull that "such aid must reach its destination in the shortest of time and in maximum quantity."

Stripped of all diplomatic phraseology, this means naval convoys. This means a preparation for the immediate "incident" which spells war.

And yet, despite the fact that everyone is fully aware that this is the deliberate plan of the administration, Roosevelt must still play the game of subterfuge and hypocrisy, the game which he has pursued with each succeeding stage of the developments of his war program.

Roosevelt does not come out for convoys. He assiduously avoids the phrase. He merely declares that he is extending the already existing "naval patrols" into wider areas and, wherever necessary, into the seven seas.

No one can possibly be fooled by this tricky device. "Naval patrols" will become full-fledged convoys with the same easy transition whereby Roosevelt's "short-of-war" campaign pledge became "risk-of-war."

In the very manner of his devious methods, one detects the character of the war to which Roosevelt is committed. It is a war for sordid ends and material purposes. It is a war in which the true aims of the war-mongers may not be stated. It is a war of imperialism, a war in which American capitalism is pitted against Axis capitalism for the right to exploit the earth.

If Roosevelt seems to hesitate to state things by their right names, to call convoys, convoys, and not "naval patrols"; that is merely essential caution in putting over an undertaking behind the backs of the people and against their will.

This nation is going to war just as quickly as Roosevelt can shove, drag or club it into doing so.

And this war will not be halted until the American masses, together with the oppressed of all nations, put an end to the system of capitalist imperialism from which this war has sprung.

Australian Dilemma

The Australian Labor Party is in a spot. It has the last thing in the world it really wants—a majority in Parliament.

For a party adhering to a program of "gradual" acquisition of power by labor through parliamentary means, this is *theoretically* the very height of their hopes—even though it does come through the death of a government member, wiping out a previous slim government majority.

But does the Labor Party leadership want to take the responsibility of power? Not on your life. Like its counterpart in England, the Labor Party "leaders" have no program of their own to offer the workers. They provide only a pair of overalls for the bourgeois rulers to parade in. In the present critical war situation, they are content to dance while the imperialist Neroes fiddle.

But a real way out of the crisis? A road forward for Australian workers? Don't ask the Australian Labor Party bosses about that... they'll be too busy figuring out a way not to take power.

A Pact Of 'Liberation'

We see by the *Daily Worker* of April 24th that the Chinese Communist Party hailed the Soviet-Japanese pact as a "definite contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation against the Japanese invaders."

We can only ask: If Stalin stops sending arms to the Chinese people, will the pact still be a "definite contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation against the Japanese invaders"? And if 250,000 Japanese soldiers now stationed on the border between Manchukuo and the Soviet Union are released by the treaty for military operations against the Chinese armies, will the pact still be a "definite contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation against the Japanese invaders?"

Meaningless Decision

The millions of poverty-stricken Negroes slaving away on the farms in the south and in the factories in the north will find very little cause for rejoicing at the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States which asserts that Negroes traveling on first-class railroad tickets from state to state must be furnished with pullman accommodations.

The decision does not do away with the Jim-Crowism on railroads. The railroads still have the right to separate white from black. It simply provides that if a Negro purchases a pullman ticket, he must be given pullman accommodations.

For Arthur W. Mitchell, Negro Democratic Congressman from Chicago, and the handful of Negroes who can afford to ride pullman, the decision can be considered somewhat of a victory, even though they still must ride apart from the "superior" whites.

But for the Negro masses, the "victory" is absolutely meaningless. The majority of the Negro masses haven't the fare to ride in coaches, let alone in pullmans. For them there will be no real victory until their standard of living will enable them to ride in pullmans and until all forms of discriminations will be destroyed. And this can be achieved not by a Supreme Court decision, but by the united efforts of Negro and white workers.

Oil On War Flames

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. is pouring a little Standard Oil on the flames of war. In a letter to the *N. Y. Times* the billionaire urged Roosevelt to convoy arms and war materials (oil included, no doubt) to Britain's door.

"We of the Americas should stand by the British Empire to the limit and at any cost." America's foremost "philanthropist" can easily afford to give away a few more million lives and billions of dollars—belonging to others!

Rockefeller also demanded that all labor disputes and stoppages be barred for the duration of the war and that the government proceed to get rid of "Red" and "fifth-column" instigators of the recent strikes. The businessmen and Congressmen who have been howling the same are only echoes of their master's voice."

Well, Roosevelt has conceived intervention in the war, J. P. Morgan and Thomas Lamont have blessed it, and now Rockefeller has baptized it. It seems to be all over but the shooting, boys!

Byrnes Appointment

The *New York Times*, April 30, reported that Roosevelt, in a White House interview, indicated that he is preparing to appoint Jim-Crow Senator James F. Byrnes, poll-tax Democrat from South Carolina, to the Supreme Court vacancy.

The *Times* indirectly quotes the President as saying that when he finally names his choice "he hoped the people of South Carolina would not be disappointed."

A large proportion of the people of South Carolina are going to be more than "disappointed." They will be downright enraged. They are the Negro workers and share-croppers against whom Byrnes has a two-decade record of vicious Negro-baiting and anti-Negro legislative actions.

How To Train Workers To Fight Fascism?

'Daily Worker' Attacks Our Military Policy But Offers

No Alternative Program; Stalinist Pacifism Disarms Workers

American workers in ever-increasing numbers are beginning seriously to consider and to discuss the military policy advocated by the Socialist Workers Party as part of a genuine struggle against imperialist war, and the threat of Fascism.

This is what the Stalinists are really opposing. This is what they attack without daring to quote directly in their editorial. Why?

LIFE AND DEATH

The question of military training is a life-and-death question for the workers, not only in America but in the whole world. So far as military training itself is concerned, the workers have no choice. They are not free to choose whether or not to accept military training, no more than any worker is free to choose whether or not to work for his livelihood. Workers must go into the Army just as they must seek jobs in factories, — so long as capitalism continues to exist. The very same forces in society that turn men into slaves in factories in peace-time, — this same capitalism transforms workers into slaves of the military machine in war-time.

This is denied only by those who do not understand that war is today an integral part of life under capitalism.

IN WAR AS IN PEACE

The class conflicts which are tearing our society apart manifest themselves in time of war just as they do in peace-time, with this difference, that the military aspect penetrates every sphere of social activity. Modern wars are totalitarian, independently of whether they are led by Hitler or Churchill or Roosevelt; because modern wars are waged not by isolated armies but by entire nations. Even women and children become cogs in the war machine.

WHAT WE SAID

After presenting our military policy, our May Day Manifesto states:

"Yes, we want the workers to become expert in all the military arts. We don't want the bourgeois officer caste to have life-and-death control over the men, any more than we want the boss to have that right in the factories. If the workers must fight, then they shall fight under the leadership of men whom they can trust — their own fellow workers, chosen by them as their officers."

AN OLD TRICK

Out of this paragraph, the *Daily Worker* has extracted the phrase: "If the workers must fight, then they shall fight under the leadership of men whom they can trust." And this phrase they pretend proves once and for all that the Trotskyists are supporters of the imperialist war; that the Trotskyists disseminate the lie that this war is a war of democracy against Fascism (i. e. the policy which the Stalinists themselves advanced during the days of the Peoples' Front); that the Trotskyists are the allies of London-Wall Street and the British Labor Party, and the Lovestoneites and Norman-Thomases, etc., etc. (Hitler and the Mikado are not included in the list, because they are, after all, the allies of Stalin); and last but not least, that the Trotskyists are a "gang of spies and wreckers."

AID CAPITALISM

To refuse military training, to represent military training in itself as of no concern to the workers or harmful to their interests actually constitutes an unwillingness to prepare the workers for the essential tasks confronting them in this period of stark militarism, thus leaving them defenseless in the hands of the capitalist class.

Trained and led by the officer-caste of the bosses the workers have no choice except to participate in imperialist wars, for imperialist aims.

WORKERS HAVE CHOICE

But the American workers do have and can make a choice when it comes to such questions as *military training by whom? military training under whose control? military training for what?*

If the millions of workers organized in the CIO, the AFL and the Railway Brotherhoods demand military training under trade union control, no power on earth could deny their will. Yes, in the present conditions this demand is not only desirable but

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Where We Stand

By Albert Goldman

It is interesting and instructive to see what connection the various groupings in this country make between the war and fascism. In their propaganda with reference to the war, how do they utilize the fact that Germany is in the hands of the Nazis?

While we deny that this war is a struggle of democracy against fascism, it is impossible to deny that Germany is in the grip of fascism. Fascism therefore enters as an important factor in the sense that various groups utilize or fail to utilize it in their attitude and propaganda in relation to the war.

Two political tendencies either ignore the existence of fascism entirely or relegate it to a place of secondary importance. They do not attempt to furnish an answer to the problem agitating the minds of the workers: How to defeat fascism in Germany and therefore prevent it from conquering this country? An analysis of the attitude of the group that has shoved Lindbergh to the front as its spokesman and the attitude of the Stalinist leadership shows that these two groups are almost alike in so far as they give no clue to the solution of the problem mentioned above.

Lindbergh And Stalinists Have No Answer On Fight Against Fascism

The Stalinist press is exceedingly anxious at present to distinguish itself from Lindbergh. In the early days of the war there was a distinct tendency on the part of the Stalinist leadership to make advances to Lindbergh, but the decisive German victories in Europe and the consequent shift of policy on the part of Stalin brought the flirtation of the Stalinists with Lindbergh to a halt. Lindbergh's fascist leanings and connections was also an important factor in the Stalinist turn away from him. They ran the risk of losing too many of their supporters by making an alliance with Lindbergh and his friends.

In the speech Lindbergh delivered in New York on April 23, he did not say a word about fascism. He confined himself to what he termed the practical question as to whether or not the United States, by helping England, can prevent a German victory. Whether he is competent to deal with this question and whether he is correct in replying to it in the negative are immaterial. The important point is that he ignored completely the question of fascism. By ignoring it he says in effect that so far as he is concerned, he has absolutely nothing against it.

Let it not be understood that Lindbergh and his group of fascist admirers are fifth-columnists in the sense that they would like to deliver this country into the clutches of Hitler. Such fifth columnists can exist only in a small country that has to subject itself to one or the other of the imperialist camps. No important figures in this country, no matter how great an admirer of Hitler he may be, would for one moment consent to having Hitler dominate the United States. The group behind Lindbergh wants American capitalism to play not only an independent but a dominant role in world affairs.

While Lindbergh stated that he would consider the defeat of the British Empire a tragedy, he did so from the point of view of one who realizes that the existence of the British Empire is an excellent thing for the continued existence of the supremacy of imperialism. There is also no doubt that his group would gladly pick up a few of the most important pieces of a defeated British Empire. From the same general point of view the group behind Lindbergh would consider a defeat of Hitler a tragedy. That might lead to some very serious consequences to the stability of the capitalist system. The ideal for Lindbergh is a negotiated peace where the three powerful capitalist ruling classes of the United States, of England and of Germany would work harmoniously to exploit the rest of the world—naturally with American capitalism getting the lion's share. This is the program and the hope of all the appeasers.

If no negotiated peace is possible then Lindbergh obviously prefers a German victory. He does not say specifically but no other conclusion is possible. His preference is not motivated by pro-Germanism but by pro-fascism. A victory of Hitler means that the "wave of the future" comes that much closer to this country. Not in the sense that Hitler will conquer this country but because the idea of fascism will gain tremendous support.

The Stalinist Attitude Toward Fascism

If Lindbergh's silence about fascism indicates that he would like to see that system introduced into this country, the Stalinist silence with reference to the same problem indicates that they have no program for fighting fascism effectively. I do not mean to say that the Stalinist press is silent about fascism in general. I mean that the Stalinist leadership, in its attitude and propaganda with reference to the war, does not attempt to show what the workers should do in order to defeat fascism.

Incontrovertible proof of that statement exists in the program of the American Peace Mobilization, which must be considered the official program of the Stalinists. This program does not say a word about the problem of fascism and the war.

Again a warning is necessary. We do not claim that the ignoring of the problem by the Stalinist leadership indicates that it has the same attitude as Lindbergh and his group. Surely the vast majority of Communist party members and sympathizers are bitter foes of fascism. But, so far as the Stalinist leaders are concerned, they are Stalinists first and foremost, that is, they fight for Stalin and no more. Everything else is secondary.

The Stalinist leadership ignores the problem because it has no answer to it. An effective answer can be made only by those who, like ourselves, see in the taking of power by the working class the only road to destroy fascism everywhere. Only the revolutionary camp can give such an answer: The Stalinist leadership, tied as it is to Stalin's foreign policy, can give no answer to this all-important problem. That is why the Stalinist leadership, like Lindbergh's group, say nothing about it.