

# Labor Must Act To Free The 18 Gag Law Victims

By The Editors

When Roosevelt and Biddle in July 1941 indicted the Minneapolis Truckdrivers Local 544-CIO and Trotskyist leaders under the Smith "Gag" Act, many labor leaders preferred to view this as an exceptional and isolated case. They treated the Minneapolis trial as a private conflict between the defendants and government which did not affect them or the rest of the labor movement. Their chief concern was to uphold Roosevelt's reputation as a "friend of labor" and guardian of civil liberties.

Events since the trial have cut the ground from under such illusions and have served to demonstrate the far-reaching significance of the Minneapolis prosecutions and convictions. In wielding the Smith Act club against the Trotskyists, the government launched the initial attack of an all-out offensive by Big Business and its political agents to smash the entire union movement and destroy the democratic rights of the American people.

The Minneapolis prosecutions and convictions were deliberately conceived and carried through as an essential part of that offensive. In planning their campaign for undermining the unions and enslaving the workers, the capitalist rulers of America sought to forge powerful legal weapons with which to strike down organized labor. The Smith "Gag" Law, passed by Congress and signed by Roosevelt, was the first of such weapons. That law, strengthened by the precedent established through the imprisonment of the 18, now serves as a cornerstone in the structure of repressive legislation erected in the past three years to deprive labor of its rights and liberties and safeguard the wealth and privileges of America's Sixty Families.

**Big Business and the government, emboldened by the effectiveness of their new reactionary legal weapon, have since added other deadly ones to their arsenal. The Smith "Gag" Law has been supplemented by the Smith-Connally anti-strike law. And now as a climax Roosevelt has demanded a forced labor law.**

It is true that these repressive laws are designed primarily for use against labor militants who dare to stand up and defend the interests of the workers. But the anti-labor offensive is mounting to such pitch that no labor leader, however servile, can consider himself immune from the fury of the reactionary forces. Attorney-General Biddle has given prompt proof of this by his use of the Smith "Gag" Act and the imprisonment of the 18 as a precedent in the deportation proceedings against the CIO Longshoremen's Union leader, Harry Bridges, one of the most grovelling supporters of Roosevelt.

**Thus it has become clear that the fight to free the 18 Trotskyists and to repeal the Smith "Gag" Act is an inseparable part of labor's struggle against the present Roosevelt-Wall Street anti-labor drive.**

Just as the Smith "Gag" Act was the forerunner of a host of repressive anti-labor laws, so the imprisoned Trotskyists and Local 544-CIO leaders are only the first of many other militants who will be framed up and jailed unless the labor movement puts up a determined fight to free the 18. An aroused labor movement, fully aware of the danger to its own existence contained in this violation of democratic rights, can compel Roosevelt to release the Smith "Gag" Act's first victims. The fight to liberate the 18 is thus a primary task and duty of organized labor in its struggle for self-preservation.

## LOCAL CRDC BRANCHES ACTIVE IN CAMPAIGN TO FREE THE 18

The Civil Rights Defense Committee reports progress in its national campaign to win the release of the eighteen class-war prisoners in the Minneapolis Labor case. In the past few weeks the New York Committee has secured over 1000 signatures from workers throughout the city on petitions urging President Roosevelt to grant unconditional pardon to the Minneapolis prisoners. Similar petitions are now being circulated by local CRDC branches among trade unions and progressive groups all over the country.

The New York Local of the Civil Rights Defense Committee presented a Music Hall at Carnegie Chamber Music Hall on February 26. An overflow audience responded with enthusiasm to excellent performances by a violinist, pianist, and Spanish dancer. Swelled by contributions from local unions, the proceeds of the affair totaled well over \$300.

### SAN FRANCISCO

In San Francisco an assemblage of members and friends of the local Civil Rights Defense Committee attended a performance of "Trial by Fury", musical satire of the Minneapolis Labor trial, presented on February 20. A cash collection of \$119 was forwarded for the Minneapolis Prisoners' Pardon and Relief Fund, and a number of pledges for the period of the imprison-

ment of the eighteen were made by CRDC supporters. The audience sent President Roosevelt a telegram urging unconditional pardon for the 18 victims of the Smith "Gag" Act, calling their conviction a violation of the Bill of Rights that "challenges every supporter of civil liberties."

The National Office of the Civil Rights Defense Committee this week moved into new quarters in the same building at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York. Three volunteer Field Representatives have been added to the staff. "This expansion is necessary," stated Evelyn Anderson, Acting Secretary, "because of the intensification of our national campaign to mobilize all liberal and labor forces behind our fight to free the 18 and to secure the repeal of the Smith 'Gag' Act."

Among the prominent union leaders who have protested the frameup and imprisonment of the 18 are Tucker P. Smith, Executive Director of the Detroit Joint Board, URWSEA-CIO; William Schaffer, President of Cramp Shipyard Local 42, IUMSWA-CIO; Thomas DeLorenzo, President of Brewster Local 366, UAW-CIO; Louis Nelson, Manager-Secretary of Local 155, ILGWU, and Irving Abramson, President of the New Jersey State CIO Council.

The Civil Rights Defense Committee is greatly in need of funds to carry out its work as well as to aid the 18 prisoners and their families. All contributions should be sent to James T. Farrell, Chairman, Civil Rights Defense Fund, at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

RETRACTIVE HOAX

These facts are well known to Philip Murray, head of the CIO and leader of the United Steel Workers of America. Because of his complete political subservience to the Roosevelt regime, Murray has become party to an outrageous hoax upon the members of his union. The steel workers have been led to believe that they are protected against a prolonged delay in the settlement of their wage demands because they were

under its jurisdiction. Referring back this fundamental question, the full board may find that it has no authority to consider some issues of this case at all, in which event it will have to ask the President what to do next, resulting in a stalemate all around."

### WLB RUNAROUND

The whole record of the WLB, especially since the wage dispute of the coal miners, confirms the opinion that the BEST that can

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# THE MILITANT

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## Baruch Plan Devised To Pave Way For A Wall Street Grab Of Billions

### CIO Publishes Its First Edition of Servicemen's News

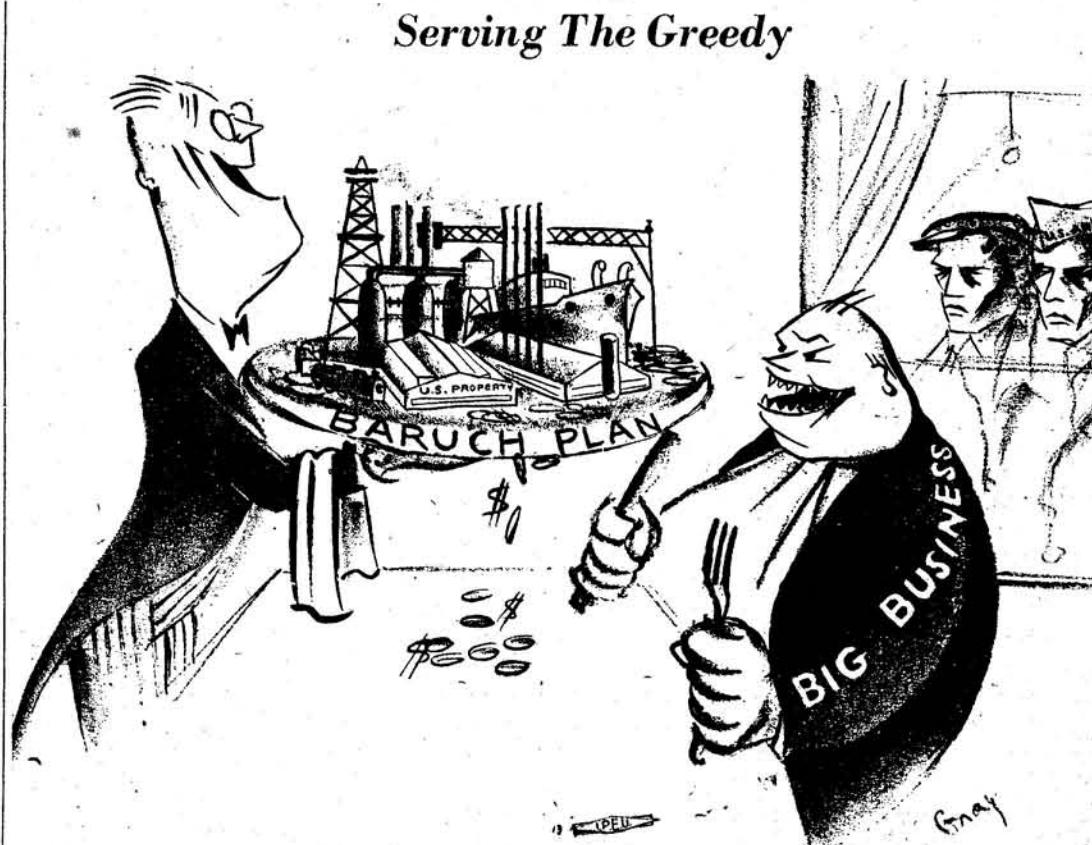
The first number of the Servicemen's Edition of the CIO News was published last week. The publication of a miniature overseas edition by the CIO is a step in the right direction. The organized labor movement in this country has over 2,000,000 members in the armed services. These union men and women have the right to know what labor is doing to safeguard their interests at home. Equally important is the need to provide them with an antidote to the poisonous propaganda disseminated by the capitalist press. The next step is to see that the Servicemen's Edition is available for distribution at all the post exchanges and other avenues of distribution provided by the Army and Navy.

### LIMIT DISTRIBUTION

So far the Army and Navy have made their facilities available only to a limited number of capitalist papers, such as the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun. The Army has indicated that the right to distribute miniature overseas editions of American newspapers through Army post exchanges may be made available to other newspapers "provided there was a sufficient demand from the troops." The Servicemen's Edition of the CIO News has been denied these facilities and must now be sent by first class mail addressed to individuals in the armed forces. By the use of this primitive method only a very limited number of servicemen will get to read the CIO paper.

The CIO claims over 1,000,000 members in the armed forces. There are probably as many and

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## WLB Squabble Over Procedure Exposes Real Nature Of Board

By C. Thomas

The steel wage dispute, referred to the War Labor Board after negotiations with the employers bogged down, has precipitated a major squabble among members of the board. This dissension has further served to expose the real function of the WLB as an instrument to enforce Roosevelt's wage freeze.

The United Steel Workers, CIO, are demanding an increase of 17 cents per hour. Under Roosevelt's Executive Order No. 9328, the so-called "hold the line" order, the WLB was instructed to limit wage increases to the Little Steel formula. As any wage increase granted in the armed forces. By the use of this primitive method only a very limited number of servicemen will get to read the CIO paper.

The AFL members petitioned the board on Feb. 9 to ask Roosevelt to modify the Little Steel formula in line with the actual increase in the cost of living. The petition to "ask Roosevelt" to abandon his wage freezing Executive Order was rejected by the board. The union's wage demands were then referred to a six-man panel which was instructed to hold hearings on "procedure." The conflict now raging is over what "procedure" the six-man panel will adopt.

The AFL representatives contend that if the panel recommends taking testimony on a change in the administration's "wage stabilization policy" it could not be done on the basis of the wage demands of one union or one group of employers. Under such circumstances, they insist, the panel must invite the testimony of all unions and employers' associations interested in the question of a change in the "wage stabilization" policy. The AFL and CIO members on the WLB were presented by a labor reporter for the New York Times, Feb. 24:

"The AFL members favor the direct approach to the President as the most practicable one, since the hearings before the steel panel or any other machinery setup may take weeks and a decision delayed for months.

**CIO POLICY**

"The CIO members of the board feel that the steel wage case, started four months ago, should be the criterion on which the wage stabilization policy should be changed."

The employer members on the board take the position that the panel must recommend that the board has no authority to hear arguments in favor of abandoning the Little Steel formula. They insist that any change in wage policy is up to Congress and that the WLB should carry out its "duty" by promptly rejecting the wage demands of the steel workers as a violation of Roosevelt's wage policy.

The attitude of the members of the WLB supposedly representing the "public" is that the steel panel, in line with instructions, will segregate the data obtained in the hearings into two parts. One part will deal with adjustments that fall within the Little Steel formula and the other with testimony bearing on the abandonment of the formula. "The public members may then take the position," says the Times reporter, "that it is for the President to make the settlement."

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## Government Schemes To Give New Plants To Corporations

Huge Profits Guaranteed in Reconversion; But Jobs Not Assured to Workers, Veterans

By Art Preis

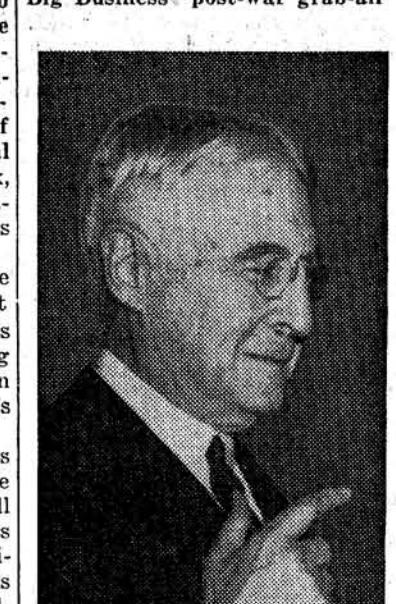
Wall Street's conspiracy to make a grand-slam profits-steal on all war contracts terminations and swindle the American people out of government-owned plants and equipment worth tens of billions has been endorsed and set in motion by Roosevelt through the administration-sponsored Baruch-Hancock plan for "post-war adjustment."

Heralded by the entire Big Business press as capitalism's "Blueprint for Post-War Prosperity," this scheme for industrial "demobilization and re-

### Big Business Men Chosen to Direct Reconversion Plan

Wall Street could scarcely have picked more dependable men to serve its interests in drafting and executing its "plan for post-war adjustments" than Bernard M. Baruch, William L. Clayton and Brig. Gen. Frank T. Hines.

Baruch, chief author of the Big Business "post-war grab-all"



BERNARD BARUCH

plan, is included in the official list of "America's Sixty Families", with a private fortune estimated at around \$40,000,000.

His fortune was garnered through slick stock market manipulations, particularly in copper stocks. He got his start in the brokerage business with the aid of James Keene, confidential broker for J. P. Morgan and Company. He made his first big money through assisting the

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## Proposed URW Wage Revision Falls Far Short Of Increase In Cost Of Living

By Joe Andrews

AKRON, Feb. 27.—The officials of the United Rubber Workers of America, CIO, after a general wage conference, have demanded an industry-wide general wage increase of 12 cents an hour. This 12-cent an hour demand represents a surrender of the CIO principle that wages must meet the rising cost of living. Although it sounds like a sizeable increase, as a matter of fact it lags far behind the climb in living costs.

Last year the WLB set up a rubber panel to recommend a decision on URW wage demands. The panel found that, according to the Little Steel formula, the rubber workers were entitled to an 8-cent general wage increase.

**WLB ACTION**

But in the rubber case the WLB did not abide even by the Little Steel wage-freeze formula. It granted a three-cent an hour increase, thus provoking the May strike of 50,000 rubber workers in Akron, which ended without any change in the WLB decision. The rubber workers remained there-

fore 5 percent behind the rise in living costs, even measured by the fraudulent Little Steel formula.

The CIO-AFL survey recently submitted to Roosevelt announced that living costs have risen 43.5 percent since January 1, 1941. To meet that rise in the cost of living the rubber workers are entitled to over 40 cents an hour. Even by the estimates of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics which have been exposed as fraudulent by both AFL and CIO, the rubber workers would be entitled to a

only protection against constantly rising living costs.

The 12-cent demand represents a voluntary acceptance by the URW heads of a cut in real wages. Even if the rubber union should win the 12-cent general increase, this would mean that rubber workers since January 1, 1941 have increased their wages about 15%. That would still be 28% below the cost of living rise estimated by AFL and CIO statistics.

By this capitulation to the employers' propaganda that the workers' standard of living must fall while war-profits are skyrocketing, the URW leaders have admittedly given up the fight to keep wages on a par with rising prices. This is a cowardly surrender of the repeated principle of the CIO that wages should rise as living costs go up. It is the direct result of the failure of the CIO leadership to fight for an automatic escalator clause in all wage agreements—the

Meanwhile the rubber corporations have more than doubled their profits since the beginning of the war. Only a resolute struggle for the automatic rising scale of wages to meet soaring living costs can protect the rubber workers from steady reductions in their living standards.

# The Class Struggle Of The Workers In Japan

By Miriam Carter

Recently published news reports, based on statements made by Japanese prisoners in China, have torn away some of the secrecy surrounding conditions within Japan and exposed the falseness of official propaganda about the "national unity" of the Japanese masses behind the Mikado's regime. These reports also reveal the deeply rooted antagonism between the workers, peasants and small producers of Japan and the giant corporations, Mitsui, Mitsubishi, etc.

How these family supertrusts dominate Japanese economic and political life is described in graphic detail by Li Fu-Jen, noted Trotskyist authority on Far Eastern affairs, in the first article of his series on Japan published in the February 1944 issue of *Fourth International*.

## War-Weary Masses

Direct corroboration of mass unrest was given by Pfc. Masuomarus Yamada, 23, a prisoner of war and former coal miner in Japan. "There is no high morale in my unit," he said. "We are all tired of the war. The people and the soldiers of Japan want peace. My friends in the mines work harder since the war, and what the war has done for me you can see yourself." (PM, Feb. 6).

Private Tomi Kiji, 24, a former power plant worker, likewise a prisoner of war, stated: "The cost of living is very high in Tokyo. Everybody is disgusted with the war. The rice ration is now very small, but one person can still get along on it. But with the clothing it is different. The ration isn't nearly enough. Because so many workers have been taken in the army those still in the factories have to work harder and harder all the time. The workers want the war to end so that they can get a little freedom back."

The unbearable subjugation of the Japanese workers, together with the precipitous preparation for war, resulted in a series

of large scale strikes in 1941, reports Israel Epstein, Chungking correspondent of the Allied Labor Press, in the CIO News.

"These strikes . . . began with economic demands but quickly acquired a political anti-war character." In April, 1941, in Kobe, 100,000 workers went on sitdown strike, raising the slogans of "Shorter hours and raise wages," "Voluntary night shift," and "2.70 go of rice as promised." (Three and four go is the normal ration. The workers had been given 15 to 20 percent less than the 2.70 go promised them.)

"Groups of workers marched around the factory grounds singing, 'Why should we be such fools as to work?' Almost from the beginning anti-war slogans were also heard. At first the police tried to take the usual measures. But since all the big factories in Kobe were involved in the movement these did not suffice." Soldiers were ordered into the industrial district. There were clashes between them and the workers. The strike was smashed." Four of the leaders were shot, 24 deported and never heard of again.

Participants say that the strike failed not only because of the brutal suppression, but also because there was not sufficient contact between workers in the different plants. But although the Kobe strike was crushed, the movement continued."

A strike of 20,000 workers in a Mitsubishi airplane factory in Nagoya brought several concessions, then brutal arrests. In the Kokura plant of the War Ministry Ordnance, employing 60,000 workers, 3,000 workers who manufactured barrels for artillery struck for shorter hours and better conditions in Sept., 1941. Many of the demands were granted, including no reprisals against the strikers.

In October 1941, 20,000 workers in Tsurumi, where most of the heavy industry is concentrated, struck. The salaried employees joined the workers in this strike.

Again the workers were met with severe repressions.

Epstein describes the intense oppression of the Japanese workers which led to these outbreaks.

## Wage-Freeze Ordered

In 1939, with the intensified preparations for war by the Japanese government, a ceiling was clapped on wages, and the freezing of workers to their jobs was instituted. In the mining areas a "domiciliary system" was introduced. "Workers with their families were moved to live within the mine enclosures which were fenced around with barbed wire. In upcountry mines the enclosures were guarded by armed men in crow's nests. . . . The 'domiciliary system' was quickly dubbed the 'prison system' by the Japanese miners themselves."

Labor conscription for all those between the ages of 15 and 70 was introduced in March, 1942. By the end of 1942 women, children and foreign slave labor formed 91-96 percent of the total labor force. In the steel center, Yahata, known as the Japanese "Detroit," where a high percentage of skilled labor is concentrated, only 13 percent of the workers are men.

## Forced Labor

"The conscription method is the same as for the army except that draft notices are printed on white cards instead of red. 'White card service' is a word of horror to Japanese workers. It means they are moved from place to place without reference to their family situations and must work for pay fixed at a daily maximum of 40c. for men and 25c. for women. . . . One result of the 'white card service' has been a wave of strikes.

The 16 hour work day and the assignment of inexperienced workers to complicated jobs have produced a terribly high rate of accidents and sickness. A prisoner of war who worked in one of Mitsubishi's

electrical factories (with 2000 workers) told how he himself has seen 50 accidents happen in one day, including 7 deaths and 13 serious injuries. . . . Besides their 16 hours workers had to carry two night shifts a week. No day of rest is allowed. The militarists have a slogan 'we must change Saturday, Sunday and Monday to Saturday, Monday and Monday' . . .

"Since 1939 money wages have remained static or have decreased, while the cost of living has risen three to four times. In the case of conscript labor there has been an actual money decrease of from 50 to 70 percent. In spite of Japan's conquests the workers are eating less than they ever did. The monthly ration of rice for factory workers is nominally about 70 percent of the allowance for soldiers . . . and Japanese soldiers are notoriously able to exist on less than those of any modern state."

## Monopoly Grab

The small scale manufacturers, artisans and merchants, who numerically form the major strata of the Japanese population, have fared no better than the workers in wartime Japan.

By Pearl Harbor "all economy was already geared to war, and shortage in the supply of both raw materials and power were putting small industries out of business wholesale. . . . Then the great trusts, Mitsubishi and Mitsubishi, came into the field. . . . Both began to buy up the bankrupt factories right and left at rockbottom prices. They became convinced that the military adventures . . . created a never-to-be-repeated opportunity for increasing their already powerful thralldom on Japanese industry."

In order to grease the way for Mitsubishi and Mitsubishi in their power-grabbing orgy the 83rd session of the Japanese Diet passed the "Law Regulating the Application of Capital" which forces the bankrupt small business men to accept shares as payment for their property in lieu of cash. The "Ad-

justment of Enterprises Law" followed, which gave the government power to take over the factories and distribute them to heavy industry — further increasing the domination of the Mitsubishi and Mitsubishi interests over Japanese life.

## Death Penalty

The continued mass unrest and resentment of the Japanese workers at the unbearable exploitation foisted on them led Premier Hideki Tojo to "decree the death penalty, without trial or other legal procedure, for any person attempting to change the government's policy or plan during wartime." A little later at a conference of prefectural governors in Tokyo in a speech broadcast to the entire nation, he declared that Japan faced a "very serious current situation" adding this very revealing admonition: "If one of you should detect any dissatisfaction or unsettled feeling within your (the governor's) jurisdiction you should take immediate concrete steps for the complete removal of these elements." (Fourth International, Feb. 1944, "Japan Faces the Abyss" by Li-Fu-Jen)

The Japanese masses, thus cruelly exploited to a barbaric degree, have shown that they can struggle against their oppressors. By their heroic strike struggles in 1941 they upset any plans the Japanese government may have had to attack the Soviet Union. It is the opinion of such prominent anti-fascist Japanese as Wataru Kaji that the strikes of 1941 led many of Japan's leaders to believe that an attack on the USSR—involving . . . Soviet political warfare—could not be contemplated until order within the country was completely and securely.

With the outbreak of the war with the United States, however, the strike struggles came to an end. Taking advantage of the predatory ambitions of Wall Street in the Far East and the racial hatred fomented

against the Japanese people, the Japanese imperialist rulers demagogically appeal to the Japanese masses, "follow us or the white Yankee imperialists will subjugate us all." Statements made by such official spokesmen as the former U. S. ambassador to Japan, Joseph C. Grew, describing the emperor as being opposed to the war, and Shinto (emperor worship) as "an asset, not a liability" dishearten the Japanese masses who are so brutally enslaved by the emperor and his government and serve to hold them back from rebellious action.

"The people are always thinking of stopping the war—and achieving a peace that will not bring victory but freedom, food and relief from the crushing burden. It is because they see no such peace and no such way out that the new wave of strikes in factories, mines and other rural areas has not taken on anything like the proportions of a revolutionary wave." (PM, Feb. 6.)

## Unity A Myth

From these reports it is evident that "national unity" is as much of a myth in Japan as it is in other imperialist countries engaged in this war. In reality the war profiteering ruling class tries to pile all the burdens and costs of their war upon the masses who suffer terribly from soaring prices, overwork, undernourishment, and forced labor. When the workers resist, they find that the severest repressions are meted out to them.

The Japanese workers have already displayed a desire and determination to fight back against their capitalist oppressors and to find the revolutionary way out of the bloody mess into which these militarist bandits have dragged them. It is this fear of socialist revolution and its consequences for capitalism which leads U. S. State Department authorities to exalt and whitewash the Mikado.

## TRADE UNION NOTES

By Joseph Keller

In the message accompanying his veto of the new tax bill, Roosevelt carefully refrained from criticizing one feature which had Congress particularly hopped up in the bill's favor. That is the amendment-rider requiring trade unions to file with the government detailed reports of their incomes and financial status.

This is the first dangerous wedge provided by federal law to pry open the internal records of the unions for hostile scrutiny by the corporations and their government agents.

Having successfully rammed through this measure against the feeble opposition led by the union bureaucracy, an emboldened reactionary Congress, hell-bent to haggle and destroy the labor movement, can now be expected to push for the enactment of more vicious legislation of this type.

\* \* \*

Over 400 AFL locals have openly proclaimed their defiance of Alabama's Bradford Law which requires union locals of more than 25 members to file with the state government a full statement of incomes and finances.

With but few exceptions, however, the CIO and United Mine Workers locals, whose combined membership is considerably less than the AFL's 125,000, have elected to comply. When the deadline for filing arrived last Monday, only a selected few of the CIO and UMW locals held out, for the purpose of establishing test cases.

The AFL locals have notified the State Department of Labor of their intention to disregard the Bradford Law, which their leaders termed a "labor-baiting law designed to destroy the labor law in Alabama."

Emmett Brooks, state labor department director, threatened non-complying unions with enforcement of a provision in the law prohibiting them from collecting dues and banning existing check-off systems, and punishing violations with fines up to \$1,000 and hard labor prison sentences of up to one year.

W. O. Hare, AFL state secretary, answered this threat by declaring "it would be worth a couple of years in jail to win out in this fight."

A federal court panel recently upheld as constitutional the compulsory financial reports section of the Bradford Law. Another section of the law not reviewed, includes a ban on closed shop contracts.

\* \* \*

"Vinson Got 25 Percent Salary Hike While Denying Railroaders 8-Cent Hourly Raise," is the headline over an article in the Feb. 15 United Mine Workers Journal. This article deserves quotation in full:

"While Stabilization Director Fred M. Vinson bitterly fought a microscopic 8-cent-an-hour increase for railroad workers on the ground that it was inflation-

## Baruch Plan Aimed To Pave Way For Wall Street Grab Of Billions

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ments. These will be subject to no later review except in the case of a presumption of fraud." The emphasis in this section of the report is on words like "quick," "speed," and "prompt," undoubtedly on the theory that Wall Street's hand must be quicker than the people's eye.

The second of the key provisions involves the speedy "disposal" of so-called "surplus" government property to the private corporations. The use of the term "surplus" is intended to convey the idea that this property is a lot of useless junk and that the corporations in "taking it off" the government's hands will be doing an act of charity. Included in these "surpluses" are about twenty billions worth of the newest and most up-to-date plants and equipment.

### BACK TO HOOVER

The real purposes of the Baruch-Hancock plan are contained in the following proviso: "No Government operation of surplus war plants in competition with private industry." Its solution to the "problem" of demobilization—and its attendant mass unemployment—is to be the creation of an "atmosphere in which private initiative and resourcefulness can again take hold." In short, this Wall Street-Roosevelt scheme involves nothing less than a return to an era of "Hoovervilles."

Weeks before they released their complete report, Baruch and Hancock gave the big corporations full reassurance regarding contracts terminations through a preliminary report, termed a "Uniform Article for the Termination of War Supply Contracts."

OWM Director Byrnes on Jan. 8 ordered this to be put into effect immediately. He also made public a letter from Baruch and Hancock containing the assurance "that manufacturers will benefit from having this termination article in their contracts."

### GUARANTEED PROFIT

Indeed they will! This article

provides "for swifter and more equitable settlement" of war contracts upon their termination for any cause and regardless of their stage of completion. The corporations are insured against all "risks" of loss. In fact they are to receive prompt payment in full and without question, including a guaranteed profit based on a "not too rigid" scale. They are assured "an aggregate profit in all cases to a maximum of 6 percent and . . . to a maximum of 2 percent on unprocessed inventories which have civilian consumer uses. All these the Baruch-Hancock plan proposes to the monopoly corporations for a song.

### GRAB PLANTS

This "surplus" represents some 2,600 giant plants built at a government expense of an estimated \$20,000,000,000. They include almost all the nation's synthetic-rubber and high-octane-gas plants,

92 percent of the magnesium works, 90 percent of the aircraft industry, over 50 percent of the aluminum and 10 percent of the steel producing facilities, a vast fleet of merchant ships, machine tools of every description, oil pipelines, billions worth of finished supplies which have civilian consumer uses. All these the Baruch-Hancock plan proposes to the monopoly corporations for a song.

### CORPORATION AGENTS

In his task he is required "to make effective use of Industry Advisory Committees," which are to receive "strengthening."

Baruch and Hancock propose in effect that the corporation agents running the government's "disposal" machinery sit down with the corporation agents on the Industry Advisory Committees and together work out a mutually-satisfactory divvy of the colossal

The scheme sets up a Surplus Property Administrator within the OWM, appointed by the OWM Director. This administrator will have "full authority for handling every aspect of surplus disposal." He would be assisted by a Surplus Property Policy Board, composed of representatives of the various government contracting agencies, but he as Chairman would retain "full and final authority."

The job of this Surplus Property Administrator would be to "liquidate government holdings" with the object of "taking the Government out of business" and to "sell as much as he can as early as he can." He is to be, naturally, a man of "proven executive ability and business sagacity."

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We believe that all of our agents will be interested in the procedure followed by our Los Angeles agent each week upon receipt of The Militant:

"It may interest you to know that at our weekly staff meetings (the staff is composed of all committee members and department heads who work full time) we have adopted the procedure of hearing a report on the latest issue of *The Militant* and discussing the report with an eye to two questions: (1) In the light of a political estimate of the contents of the paper to determine our distribution plan, and (2) to assign comrades to write articles on various topics, West Coast and otherwise. There are two assignments right now, the Sleepy Lagoon case and the Municipal Power and Light strike. You should have articles on both questions, particularly the strike, by next Tuesday's deadline."

The following letters pay tribute to the February 5 issue of *The Militant*:

Boston — "I was very much impressed by the article in *The Militant* of February 5 entitled 'Why The Steel Workers Are Becoming Restless and Angry.' I have known of the struggle of the workers, being a worker for many years, and although I had an idea what mass production workers had to put up with I had no idea that the workers in the steel mills had to put up with such intolerable conditions. All I can say is keep up the good work in attempting to enlighten the workers as to the only road they can take to emancipate themselves from such inhuman conditions, namely through the struggle for socialism."

Chicago: "The last issue of *The Militant* is another exceptionally good one for trade union distribution. Hope we can do it justice by getting it well placed in the right quarters."

## Big Business Representatives To Direct Reconversion Plan

(Continued from page 1)

manipulation of Amalgamated Copper for the National City Bank—Kuhn, Loeb and Company interests. He then became confidential broker for the Guggenheims, controllers of the Anaconda Copper Trust.

Baruch became a big contributor to the Democratic Party, and in the course of the past 30 years has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to aid the campaigns of the Democratic presidential candidates. He contributed a total of \$60,000, highest single offering, to Roosevelt's 1932 campaign fund.

During the last war, he was the Wall Street choice for head of the War Industries Board, in which capacity Baruch did so well for the big corporations that he was directly cited after the war by the Graham Senate Investigation Committee as being the individual chiefly responsible for what has been termed "an unparalleled panorama of graft, corruption, extortion, knavery and incompetence, if not treason."

The man selected by Roosevelt to have full authority under the Baruch-Hancock plan for "disposal of surplus property" is a multi-millionaire cotton merchant, the biggest in the world. William L. Clayton is principal stockholder in the Anderson, Clayton Securities Corp., holding company for innumerable cotton

compress and warehouse subsidiaries, with scores of offices in leading American cities and throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and South America.

His firm of Anderson, Clayton

is a

breaking and lynch agency for

the banks and rich corporation

farmers against the agricultural

workers. His firm in 1942 fought

bitterly the establishment of a

30 cents-an-hour minimum wage

**The Negro Struggle**

By Charles Jackson

**The Army Marches On**

The Army marches on and by its side, matching step for step, marches old Jim Crow who strives to crush the Negro soldier in our separate Negro Army under an oppressive burden of mistreatment at the hands of both Army officers and civilians, of intolerable transportation conditions and of inequalities in the ordinary facilities of army life. A few of the latest steps in this march are discussed below.

**JIM CROW ABROAD**

Negroes must also wake up to the serious world-wide consequences of this policy and take militant action now. This policy is at present being carried east and west and the slander of racial inferiority spreads with every new invasion front. In England, according to the *New York Times*, a new British war order was issued forbidding members of the ATS, the English "WACS", from speaking to Negro American soldiers except in the presence of white persons. This was obviously at the request of the prejudiced American Officers Staff.

Also in combat areas Negro troops are almost invariably branded as inferiors by the type of duty to which they are assigned. According to a recent issue of *Time Magazine*, "the high command has trouble finding combat jobs for them. There is no lack of work to be done by Negroes as labor and engineering troops — the Army's dirty work." Simple, isn't it? That statement explains everything — yes, EVERYTHING.

For example, it explains why the 184th Field Artillery was split January 1943 into two battalions: the 930th and the 931st. Then August 16, 1943 after two years training, they were transferred to "service units" — the kind of service you serve up with a pick and shovel. It also explains why the 795th Tank Destroyer battalion whose specialized training at Camp Hood, Texas has been featured in government "educational" films shown to all-Negro theatre audiences has recently been split up and the personnel transferred to quartermaster and engineering corps.

The Negro press recently carried an article from an advanced Pacific base by Fletcher P. Martin, war correspondent, in which he said: "The crack 24th Infantry Regiment, fully equipped and prepared for any eventuality, is performing service duty at docks and supply dumps. . . Twenty-five months have passed since this outfit embarked from California for the South Pacific." We also must thank the statement in *Time Magazine* for the complete explanation of the disposal of this Negro infantry regiment.

All of us with relatives or friends in the Army who have written home or been back on furlough are well acquainted with the type of facts enumerated above — and with some portraying even worse conditions. The question now on all our lips is what can we here at home do in a practical way that will really carry us on toward the goal of putting an end to such home-grown atrocities that invariably accompany Jimcrownism in the Army or elsewhere? Next week we will discuss the only course of action that can logically do for they could buy a meal.

In the rush that accompanies the "war effort" the curtain was forgotten but they were not too rushed to forget the Jim Crow State law just because there were hungry soldiers waiting. The Army is not only giving silent sanction to segregation in those that job.

**PIONEER PARAGRAPHS**

**PROLETARIAN DISCIPLINE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT**

"For us the party must be a combat organization which leads a determined struggle for power. The Bolshevik party which leads the struggle for power needs not only internal democracy. It also requires an imperious centralism and an iron discipline in action. It requires a proletarian composition conforming to its proletarian program. The Bolshevik party cannot be led by dilettantes whose real interests and real lives are in another and alien world. It requires an active professional leadership, composed of individuals democratically selected and democratically controlled, who devote their entire lives to the party, and who find in the party and in its multifaceted activities in a proletarian environment, complete personal satisfaction."

"For the proletarian revolutionist the party is the concentrated expression of his life purpose, and he is bound to it for life and death. He preaches and practices party patriotism, because he knows that his socialist ideal cannot be realized without the party. In his eyes the crime of crimes is disloyalty or irresponsibility toward the party. The proletarian revolutionist is proud of his party. He defends it before the world on all occasions."

(From "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party" pages 14-15, by James P. Cannon. Published 1943 by Pioneer Publishers, 302 pages, cloth \$2, paper \$1.50; order from Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Pl., N. Y. 3, N. Y.)

# Why All Labor Must Support Our Fight To Free The 18

The following article written by its Chairman and reprinted by permission of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, is the foreword to a new pamphlet on the 18 prisoners in the Minneapolis Labor Case, being published by the CRDC. Copies of this 32-page pamphlet can be obtained at 10 cents each from the CRDC National Office, 160 Fifth Ave., New York 10, New York.)

By JAMES T. FARRELL, NOTED NOVELIST

The Minneapolis Labor Case is the major case of the present war period involving the rights of labor and freedom of speech. The 18 defendants, now serving their periods of imprisonment in federal jails, have been made convicts by the United States Government merely because of their opinions. The Smith "Gag" Act under which they were convicted is in flagrant contradiction with the Bill of Rights which states unconditionally that "Congress shall pass no laws . . . abridging freedom of speech."

Despite this flat contradiction between the provisions of the Smith Act and those in the Bill of Rights, the Supreme Court of the United States has, on three occasions now, refused even to hear the appeal of the defendants. IMPERIAL FREEDOM

The menace involved in these actions by the government and the federal courts should be clearly seen by all who have concern with the rights of labor and of freedom of speech. The history of fascism teaches us that the first attacks made by reaction are against the labor movement, and usually against its extreme left wing. The 18 prisoners in the Minneapolis Case belong to the Socialist Workers Party and to Minneapolis Truckdrivers Local 544-CIO. As their indictments specifically state, they have been put behind bars because they propagated the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, because they believe in the principles of the "Communist Manifesto."

Now the force of law and the police power of the state, instead of reason, argument and debate, have become weapons used to combat the ideas of these defenders of Marxian socialism. Whether or not one agrees with the program and perspectives of this working-class political movement, it cannot be denied that Marxian socialists have consistently been in the forefront of the struggle for the advancement of labor and the defense of democratic rights. They have pledged the sincerity of their convictions, not merely by words, but by deeds. In many

countries and for generations they have suffered jailing, torture and death at the hands of reaction in loyalty to their ideas.

The facts of this case plainly demonstrate that one can become a criminal here today in the United States if one defends these ideas. For, it must be repeated, these men have been imprisoned not for any overt action, but merely because of the views which they have presented openly and publicly.

**PREPARES FASCISM**

This attack upon labor, this suppression of socialist ideas and imprisonment of socialists paves the way toward fascist reaction even if it is taken by a government which proclaims itself the enemy of fascism. This is the way that fascism undermined democracy and seized power in other countries. Will we permit this to be repeated in the United States? Is it going to happen here?

These are questions which all of us must answer, not merely by words but by actions. Free speech and the rights of labor are not lost all in one fell swoop. These rights are eaten away. Precedents are established. Once they have been so established, they are then used for further acts of repression.

We now see this pattern, which ultimately led to fascism elsewhere, unfolding in this country. The government has promptly used the precedent established in the Minneapolis Case for another attack upon labor in its latest effort to deport Harry Bridges, CIO Longshoremen's union leader, even though he is a staunch supporter of the administration's policies. This should demonstrate

if further demonstration is needed — that it is not only the 18, not only opponents of the administration's policies, whose rights and liberties are endangered by the Smith "Gag" Act. The entire labor movement, the cherished democratic rights of the American people are directly threatened.

**DANGEROUS THOUGHTS**

Free speech is most important for those who have something new, important and vital to say. It means little to those who agree with prevailing opinion, supported by the powers that be. The fundamental significance of the rights of free speech and free press is that they permit those sponsoring other views to express them openly and in public. Where such guarantees of free expression exist, men are enabled to think honestly.

If the minds of men are not free, if they are made to feel that thoughts alone are dangerous and criminal, then the seeds of cowardice are implanted in the midst of society. Cultivate this seed by establishing precedents such as this, based upon the Mikado's doctrine of "dangerous thoughts," and you will have established one of the most important prerequisites for a police state, based on force and fear.

**OUR DUTY**

This pamphlet contains a summary of the salient facts in the Minneapolis Labor Case and brief biographies of the 18 prisoners. The story of their lives shows how they have fought for the interests of labor, for their ideas, and for a better world. They have not given up that cause, even at the price of jailing. Today behind prison bars they remain loyal to their principles. It is the duty of those of us who are outside the prison walls and can speak and act, who understand the importance of this case, who realize the dangers it can lead to, it is our duty to devote ourselves to the campaign for their freedom. It is our duty to fight for the repeal of the vicious Smith "Gag" Act.

Unless we do this and do it vigorously, there may be many more than these 18 behind bars.

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## Labor Organizations And Parties In Argentina

By A. Roland

Argentina has been built up by the immigrants who flocked there before the war from southern Europe. The large numbers of Italians and Spaniards settled down for the most part in the cities and towns. Conditions on the farms were not such as to attract European workers. Today the Argentine presents somewhat of a paradox for a semi-colonial country, in that 74% of the population live in the urban centers and only 26% are rural.

The Socialist Party was organized as far back as 1896. In the defeats of the early strike movement the idea of political action gained among the Buenos Aires working class, so that in 1904 the first socialist deputy was elected to the lower house. The trade union question, the opposition between moderate and revolutionary trade unions, led to a split in the Socialist Party as early as 1906.

During the first world war when the first great political crisis struck Argentina, the socialists managed to elect as many as 43 deputies to the lower house. This was in the administration of the Radical President Irigoyen. The socialists then held the balance of power for them had twenty percent of the deputies, the Radicals having forty percent and the Conservatives the other forty.

**UNION ORGANIZATION**

Textiles form the largest industry in Argentina, with 320 cotton mills, 20 spinning mills, and 30 weaving mills. Shoe factories employ 30,000 workers. The 150,000 railwaymen make up just under 20% of the industrial proletariat. This proletariat is well organized in trade unions. In 1939 66% of all industrial workers were organized.

It must be remembered that the largest enterprises are foreign-owned, so that a strike is directed immediately against the imperialists. The government often found it politically expedient in the past to tolerate the trade unions and the strikes of workers so long as these were directed against foreign business.

As in Mexico, the government has maintained a firm hold on the trade unions, their leaders accommodating themselves to government policies. But in the present period the ruling class feels a threat to its own power in the labor movement. In Congress.

This was brought about in the tense situation that arose when Castillo took over power from Ortiz. Opposition to the completely reactionary policies of Castillo led to the election of seventeen socialist deputies. No

majority existed in the House. The Radicals pursued a policy of obstructionism to the National Democrats. But Américo Gioldi, socialist leader, declared that the party was opposed to mere obstructionism (except when "principles" were involved) and that it would support the government. The socialists too stand for entry into the war on the side of the Allies. In short, in a tense crisis, the socialists again prove that they have no real solution for the workers.

**UNION MOVEMENT**

The trade union movement, now under attack by the reaction, forms a powerful force. The largest union organization today is the CGT with over 300,000 members. The syndicalists in the Union Sindical Argentina (USA) have 27,000. These are mostly public employees, maritime workers, telephone workers. The Catholic Unions exist among the women workers in the needle trades with about 20,000 (in the FACE). Then there are autonomous unions with about 120,000 workers. The railroad men (90,000) form the backbone of the CGT. Its leaders incline to the SP, with a few Stalinists. This movement must now come to grips with its future under the threat of a military reaction.

**ANARCHIST INFLUENCE**

**ONLY A BEGINNING**

**OUR DUTY**

## THE MILITANT

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AMG has already handed over the rule in southern Italy to the King and his Duke of Addis Ababa. Imagine the outraged feelings of workers in northern Italy battling against the Nazis and the remnants of Mussolini's mercenaries when they know that in the event the Anglo-American forces drive the Nazis from the peninsula they will then have reimposed upon them the detested King and Marshal who ruled over them under fascism!

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So Churchill and Roosevelt are compelled to seek an agreement with the present Stalinist leadership of these popular movements in order at a later and more favorable stage to strangle their democratic aspirations and suppress their revolutionary potentialities. In Greece, says Churchill, "we are doing our utmost to bring about a reconciliation, or at least a working agreement, between

the opposing factions." In Yugoslavia the Anglo-American allies are striving to bring together King Peter with Marshal Tito.

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When Hull returned from Moscow and Roosevelt from Teheran, they solemnly swore that no secret agreements had been concluded at these secret conferences. But now Churchill finds it expedient to reveal a bit of the bargain he and Roosevelt made with Stalin. "Marshal Stalin and I... agreed upon the need for Poland to obtain compensation at the expense of Germany both in the North and in the West..." This disclosure not only exposes Roosevelt and Hull as hypocrites and liars. It also goes to prove that at Teheran such rotten methods of traditional secret diplomacy and power politics as the partitioning of territories without consultation with or concern for the peoples involved held full sway.

The counter-revolutionary policies and reactionary aims of the Kremlin ruling clique are of the greatest service to the Anglo-American partners in promoting their sinister designs. To crush Germany and Japan, and even more in order to obtain Stalin's aid in crushing the European revolutions, they must come to terms with the Kremlin and give certain concessions to Stalin. That is why Churchill tacitly acquiesces in the incorporation of the Baltic countries into the USSR; agrees to surrender part of old Poland, and switches military support from Mikhailevitch to Tito.

It is true that the Tory Churchill is attached to "the monarchical principle" which has proved so useful to the British capitalist rulers as it has to the propertied classes elsewhere in Europe. But Churchill's-and-Roosevelt's basic attachment is to the principle of capitalist private property. It is to protect the property, profits and power of capitalism that they support the monarchists and military swine, that they make secret deals with the counter-revolutionary Stalin, that they fear to give any kind of democracy to the Italian people. These stewards of Big Business understand that the European workers and peasants don't want either the retention of their capitalist oppressors or the return of any of their crowned or uncrowned political servants. They look forward to the creation of a new society of equality, freedom and security under socialism. Allied intrigue and secret diplomacy aims to head off and crush these revolutionary aspirations of the European masses.

## Baruch Plan

The Baruch-Hancock "demobilization" plan, inspired and promoted by the Roosevelt administration, would enable the big corporations and banking houses to tighten their stranglehold upon the productive wealth and resources of the country. It would pour more billions in profits and properties into the laps of the plutocratic parasites who have already piled up the greatest profits in history during this war.

This plan provides further proof of the Roosevelt administration's complete catering to Big Business. The corporations have filled their treasures to overflowing through government war contracts. Roosevelt's principal appointees and advisers in the war production and contracting agencies come directly from the offices of the monopolist companies and the big financial houses.

Now, after having poured streams of wealth into their coffers, Roosevelt and his aides are planning to hand over to the privateers of industry and finance not only many billions more but most of the government-owned properties. These servants of Big Business have become so brazen that they no longer resort to such window trimming to conceal their chicanery as occurred with the war production agencies where "labor advisory committees" covered up the profiteering operations of the dominating corporation agents.

The thousands of up-to-date government-financed plants which the Roosevelt administration under the Baruch plan proposes to dump into the hands of monopolies have been built by the workers and paid for by the taxes of the American people. These productive facilities, these efficient plants and modern equipment should be used for the benefit of the workers to provide them with jobs and with consumers' goods.

Instead, Roosevelt has shown his intention of selling them for a fraction of their cost to the monopolists. Wherever and whenever these private interests need to maintain their profits or to limit production, these plants would be shut down or scrapped. Their control by the profit-seeking monopolists would mean starvation wages, destitution, mass unemployment for the workers and ex-service men. Such is the prospect in store for the masses if the administration and Wall Street are able to put over the gigantic swindle of the Baruch plan.

In order to combat this attempt to steal the people's property and operate American economy for the exclusive benefit of the monopolist blood-suckers, labor needs a program which will ensure the use of all existing productive facilities and resources for the welfare of the masses.

Not a single government-financed plant must be turned over to the big labor-hating corporations. Let all the war industries be taken away from the monopolists by the government and operated under workers' control. In no other way can the workers be assured that industry will be operated at full capacity to provide jobs and living necessities for the people.

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