

Fraternal Body Supports Fight To Free The 18

Reading Railroad Union Leaders Join Protest in Labor's Ranks Against Jailings

NEW YORK CITY — The Workmen's Circle, biggest labor fraternal organization in the United States, last week gave vigorous endorsement to the national campaign of the Civil Rights Defense Committee to free the 18 prisoners in the Minneapolis Labor case. In a letter to all branches, J. Baskin, General Secretary of the Workmen's Circle, wrote:

"At a meeting of the National Executive Committee of the Workmen's Circle, held on Feb. 6, 1944, it was decided to endorse the work of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, which has undertaken to provide defense and relief for the 18 Minneapolis union and socialist leaders and their families. The work of the Civil Rights Defense Committee is essential for political and civil liberty. We appeal to the Branches of the Workmen's Circle to give their moral and every financial support to the efforts of the above mentioned Committee."

RAIL UNIONS PROTEST

The Civil Rights Defense Committee is circulating the 850 Workmen's Circle branches throughout the country with an appeal for financial aid.

In a joint letter to the CRDC a group of railroad union leaders from the important rail center of Reading, Pa. also registered their protest against the frameup and jailing of the 18. Their letter states in part: "To convict and imprison trade unionists and members of a minority political party not for what they did, but solely for their beliefs, is contrary to every principle of democracy and in violation of the Bill of Rights." Among the signers who called upon President Roosevelt to grant pardon to the Minneapolis prisoners were Clarence Fieragame, Vice-Chairman Machinists Union, Berkshire Local 682; John Torchia, Local Chairman, Blacksmiths Union, Local 197; Elery Oeksider, Jr., Secretary Railway Carmen of America Local 652; Giuseppe A. Befano, President Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Lodge 2780; George K. Oarsons, Vice Local Chairman Boilermakers Local 560.

LABOR LUNCHEON

Carolyn Carey, CRDC regional representative, and Myra Russell,

CRDC TOUR

George Novack, Secretary of the Civil Rights Defense Committee this week, starts upon his national speaking tour in behalf of the 18 prisoners in the Minneapolis Labor Case. On March 16-17 he will be in Rochester, N. Y.; on March 18-19 in Buffalo, N. Y. The following week he is scheduled to speak in Youngstown, Akron and Cleveland. During his tour, which will last for over three months, the CRDC Secretary will address audiences in the principal cities from coast to coast. Watch for his appearance in your city.

wife of one of the 18 prisoners, were the principal speakers at a labor luncheon given by the Philadelphia CRDC last Tuesday. Myra Russell told how much the aid of the CRDC meant to the prisoners, and their wives and children who are receiving regular monthly relief allotments from the defense committee. Local union sponsors of this affair included President Michael Harris of the Philadelphia Industrial Union Council, Robert Parker, Area Director of the National CIO War Relief Committee, and Franz Daniels, General Organizer of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America-CIO. A number of pledges of support to the CRDC's campaign were received.

Miss Carey also addressed a meeting of the Philadelphia National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the issues involved in the Minneapolis Labor Case. Among the prominent Philadelphia leaders who have recently endorsed the work of the CRDC are Theodore Spaulding, President of the NAACP, Frank E. Ritter, Chairman, Legislative Committee Delaware County Industrial Union Council, Rev. Douglas Horton, Congregational Christian Churches of the USA, Rev. Marshall L. Shepard, Mt. Olivet Tabernacle Baptist Church, and Edith M.

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URW MEMBERS FIGHT AGAINST NEW DALRYMPLE EXPULSIONS

AKRON, O., Mar. 9 — The strike of tire builders at the General Tire and Rubber Company was answered by punitive action on the part of the United Rubber Workers International General Executive Board last Monday. They expelled Howard Haas and Ray Sullivan, leaders of a rank and file opposition group. The opposition group had fought Sherman Dalrymple's previous bureaucratic action in expelling 72 band builders for participation in an alleged "wildcat" strike.

After a week of deliberation, the General Executive Board voted to reinstate 62 of 69 bandbuilders who had been fired several weeks ago from their jobs as a result of Dalrymple's dictatorial expulsions. This retreat was due to a campaign of growing proportions against Dalrymple's arbitrary moves against the militant membership of the General local.

But the URW board accompanied its capitulation in the cases of the 62 workers, who were reinstated and put back to work with full seniority rights, with expulsion of Haas and Sullivan, both former General local presidents, on the grounds of "disruptive activity." The expulsion of the two was met with a strike of tire builders, which spread throughout the General Tire and Rubber Company plant.

The strike was referred to the

W. L. B. by the Labor conciliator, John R. Steelman. The WLB sent telegrams ordering all workers back to work, and threatened to call in the armed forces to break the strike.

The stormy situation at the General local promises to continue unabated as the International Board members follow one dictatorial action with another. In expelling Haas and Sullivan, the most authoritative spokesmen of the membership were hit.

The fact that their expulsion was met by another strike is proof in itself of the sentiments of the rank and file. Despite Dalrymple's threats and regardless of his strong-arm methods, the membership is determined to maintain the democratic rights guaranteed under the constitution of the URW.

Dalrymple is now faced with a dilemma. He cannot expel all the General workers. Should he expel additional workers as "ring leaders" of this latest strike, he risks provoking another and even more serious strike. Meanwhile, the company, growing bolder by the hour, has increased its campaign of intimidation and provocation.

The events thus far have demonstrated to the hilt that the URW membership is prepared to fight the attempt to impose a dictatorial regime on the rubber union.

Biggest British Strike Since 1926; Italian Masses Defy Nazi Ultimatum

Striking Millions In Northern Italy Brave Nazi Terror

By RALPH GRAHAM

Bloody repressions by the German Wehrmacht and Fascist cut-throats have failed utterly to quench the spreading fires of revolution in Northern Italy where millions of workers are engaged in a life-and-death struggle against the Nazi oppressors and their Italian henchmen.

On March 10, with the flames of mass working-class action leaping ever higher, the capitalist press threw the blanket of censorship over the momentous Italian events and no news has appeared since. But before the censors clamped down on this mighty battleground of the class struggle, sufficient had been reported to show that Italy's heroic working-class, far from capitulating before the Nazi terror, were continuing the struggle with the greatest determination.

On March 7, German machine-gun squads took up posts in the streets of Milan, Turin and other industrial centers, ready to back up with gunfire an ultimatum to 6,000,000 striking workers to return to their jobs by 8 a. m. the following day.

DEFY ULTIMATUM

At the same time, General Zimmerman, commander of German troops in Lombardy, met with representatives of the workers in an effort to avert a showdown at arms. Piero Parino, Fascist provincial chief, informed Zimmerman that despite radio appeals, workers in 43 provinces would defy the ultimatum to return to work.

Indicating the grim determination of the workers to continue the fight against the Nazi-Fascist oppressors, the workers' representatives presented five demands as a condition of work resumption. That the Nazi ultimatum resulted, not in surrender, but in a series of counter-demands by the workers shows how deeply the proletariat has been stirred and what great reserves of revolutionary energy it possesses.

The five demands, as listed in a UP dispatch from the Italo-Swiss frontier, were:

1. Immediate improvement in quantity and quality of food-stuffs and a curtailment of prices.
2. Withdrawal of the order calling up the classes of 1924-25 for active military service.
3. An end to the shipment of Italian technicians to Germany.
4. Reduction of curfew hours in principal Italian cities.
5. Immediate liberation and return to Italy of thousands of

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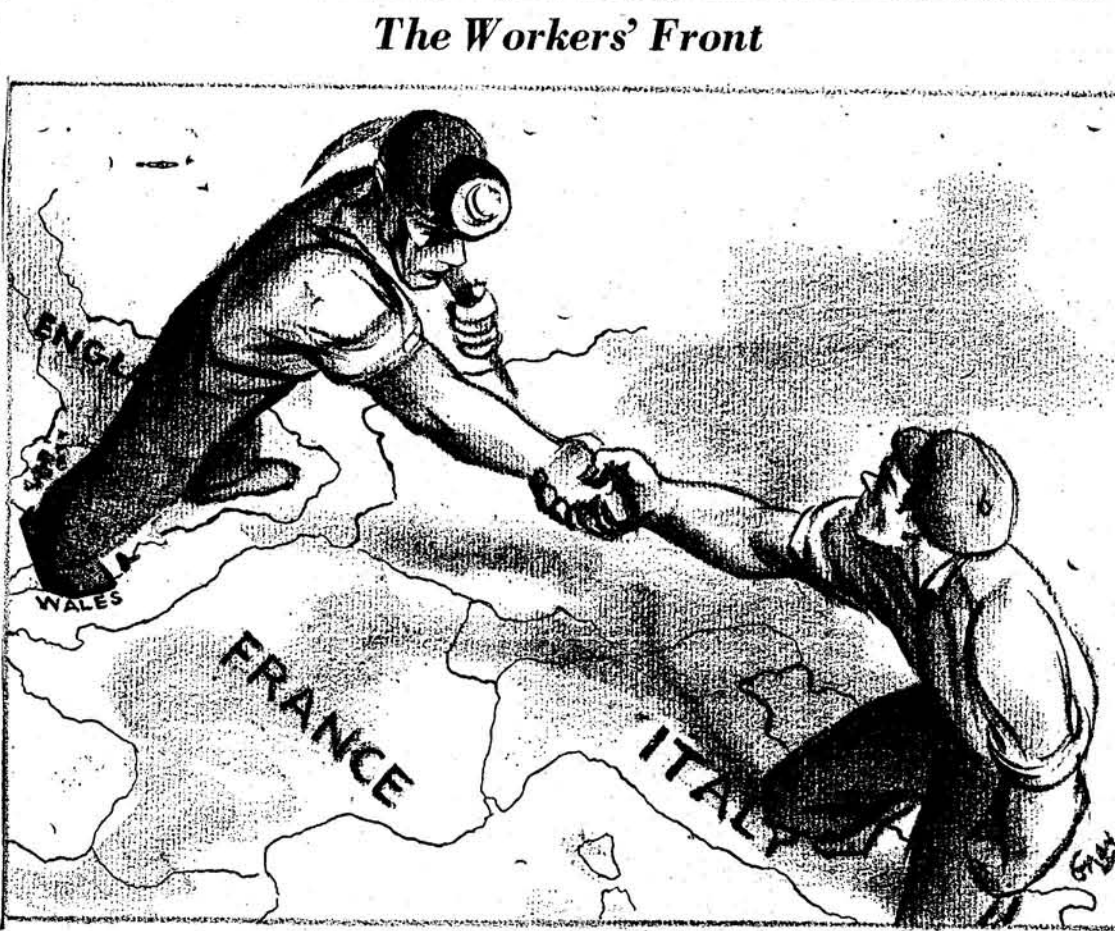
SENIORITY AND THE DRAFT

Col. A. V. McDermott, New York City Selective Service Director, last week instructed employers in his area to disregard seniority provisions of union contracts by laying off draft-eligible first, regardless of their length of employment in a given plant.

The effect of the new policy, which applies to more than 700 New York City war plants, will be to nullify the contractual seniority rights for men between the ages of 18 and 38 who do not have a 4F status.

In his announcement, Col. McDermott stated that "we cannot be concerned with seniority questions as the demands of the armed forces must be met."

It is clear that this ruling establishes a precedent enabling the government to wipe out by edict the chief means for protecting workers from arbitrary discharges and anti-labor discrimination. It would have the further effect of permitting the government to abrogate union contracts generally under a pretext of wartime "necessity."



New Political Party Launched At Michigan Labor Conference

By John Saunders

DETROIT, Mich. — 415 delegates from 85 CIO and AFL unions of Michigan representing a total membership of over 225,000 responded to the call of the Michigan Committee for the promotion of a Farmer-Labor Party and sent delegations to the study conference at the Book-Cadillac hotel on Saturday and Sunday, March 4 and 5. More than two-thirds of the delegates came from UAW-CIO locals.

This splendid turnout is all the more significant since all of the organizations that participated in the conference braved the antagonistic pressure and opposition of the whole national

mentations on "Recruiting, Education, Public Relations"; the second chaired by Frank Marquart, Educational Director of the Ford River Rouge Local 600 UAW-CIO took up "Building a Policy and Platform"; the third under the guidance of Professor Wesley Maurer, of the Department of Journalism of the University of Michigan, dealt with "Looking Toward Party By-Laws and Constitution"; and the fourth under the direction of Brendan Sexton, International Representative, UAW-CIO, studied the problems "Looking Toward Elections."

NECESSARY SPADE WORK

Although everyone at the conference realized in the words of Chairman Matthew Hammond, President of Local 157, UAW-CIO, that "now is the time" to build a new party, the panel reports all indicated that a lot of spade work would still have to be done before a slate of candidates could be run. The emphasis was placed on winning the support of many more mass organizations, especially the CIO unions. It was realized that insufficient organization work had been done in key UAW-CIO locals to combat the opposition of the top CIO leadership. The panel reports proposed plans to carry the fight directly into those union locals where the official leadership was opposed to an independent labor party. Despite the tendency of the temporary officers to weight the scale in favor of non-union organizations, as was done in the issue of the Call to the Study Conference, the panel recommendations rejected this manner of representation and adhered to the more democratic method of apportionment according to numbers irrespective of the nature of the organizations involved. In this way the unions will be accorded their just representation.

REAL BUSINESS

After listening to the opening addresses of Matthew Hammond, Larrie Piercey, member of the Executive Board of the Michigan and Greater Detroit Council of Government Employees, AFL, Tucker P. Smith, Vice-President of Michigan CIO, and David Lewis, National Secretary of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation of Canada, the delegates got down to the real business of the conference.

The conference divided itself into four study panels, with practically every delegate participating. The first discussion panel was headed by Willard Martinson, Educational Director of the Ford Bomber Local 50 UAW-CIO. It drew up recom-

Second class mailing rights are restored to *The Militant*, effective as of this issue, by order of the Postmaster General's office, the paper's Business Manager was informed last Friday in a letter from the New York City postmaster. These rights were cancelled on March 3, 1943, after a number of issues had previously been confiscated and destroyed by Post Office officials.

The Militant is informed, however, that the postal authorities will continue to hold up the mailing of each issue before final dispatch in order to permit the Solicitor of the Post Office Department to determine its "mailability" in conformity with postal regulations.

PANEL REPORTS

Although the panel discussions disclosed many differences of opinion, the delegates nevertheless arrived at certain clear-cut conclusions accepted by the overwhelming majority of the participants. Panel Number 1 urged recruitment for the new party among diversified organizations, especially "labor, farm, small business, profession, racial and minority and religious." It laid the groundwork for forming labor party clubs and caucuses

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Militant Wins 1st Round in Its Fight For Mailing Rights

The immediate provocation of the strike was the refusal of the Churchill government to redress the grievances of the miners arising out of the Porter Commission awards. While the coal operators have been piling up monumental profits through big price boosts and fat government subsidies, the government commission, headed by Lord Porter, last January brushed aside the miners' modest demands and established a minimum wage of only 5lbs. (\$20) a week for inside workers and 4 lbs. 10 shillings (\$18.50) for surface workers. This represents only a fraction of the minimum wage increase sought, and provides no raises for most of the miners, who work on piece rates. In addition, the award allowed no differentials for skilled men and those with long experience and ignored the demands for health and safety conditions. To the miners the Porter award was simply an insulting slap in the face.

No sooner was the Porter award announced than one local mine strike after another broke out. Each succeeding strike has been more extensive, feverish and aggressive than the previous one. The counter-pressure and threats of the government and mine owners, and the exhortations of the treacherous union officials, all failed to quell the fury of the miners that finally blazed in its full intensity last week.

This fury springs from a far deeper source than the immediate issue that provoked the strike.

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English Capitalists Alarmed By Display Of Miners' Power

Welsh Workers Lead Struggle; Ignore Pleas Of Strikebreaking Stalinist Union Heads

By Art Preis

MARCH 13. — Britain's ruling class stands panic-stricken as over 100,000 striking coal miners enter the second week of their militant struggle, the greatest demonstration of British working class power since the 1926 General strike. The majority of the South Wales miners, who represent the heart of the strike movement, at rank and file pit head meetings today rejected the demands of their treacherous leaders that they resume work. These leaders over the week-end

sought to drum up a back-to-work vote with frantic patriotic appeals and glib promises that all the miners' demands will be granted after they return to work. But the labor bureaucrats have, for the time being, lost all control of the situation. The rank and file members are fighting mad.

The strike was launched early last week by 85,000 workers in the key South Wales collieries and quickly spread with thousands of other miners walking out all over England and Scotland. The conflagratory sweep of this struggle in Britain's most vital industry immediately evoked hysterical and fear-ridden agitation by the entire capitalist press.

IMMEDIATE CAUSE

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This upsurge of class struggle, which comes in the fifth year of the war and on the eve of the full-scale Allied invasion of the European continent, has a profound political significance, not lost on the British capitalists.

The present coal strike is the culmination of a growing labor upsurge in England, which in 1943 witnessed the greatest number of strikes and strikers since the 1926 conflict. This evidence of acute labor dissatisfaction has found direct political reflection in the mounting resistance to the Tory-Labor political truce. Independent candidates, tearing up the coalition agreement, have won sweeping victories in recent important by-elections over the Tory-coalition candidates.

The miners themselves are fighting with such a sense of immediacy and urgency out of fear for their future under continued capitalist control of the mines. After years of grinding poverty and mass unemployment before the war, the miners find that five years of war which have enriched the coal owners, have brought them only the barest existence despite long hours, speedup and the increasing hazards of work in the mines. And ahead of the mine workers lies another bleak vista of economic crisis and even worse conditions of unemployment and starvation wages.

NO ORDINARY STRIKE

"This is no ordinary strike," reveals the N. Y. Times correspondent writing from Wales. "For the sake of the record, of course, there is a dispute over the wages and allowances set forth in the Lord Porter award... But the trouble goes much deeper... back to the last war and before that... back to the black days of unemployment, shocking working conditions and bad pay... The feeling is taking root that if Government cannot control the mining industry at a crucial moment in world history, what measure of direction can it be expected to provide in peacetime?"

Behind the dispute over the Porter wage award lies a more fundamental—the real—issue of the strike. That is the desperate need and desire of the miners for organization and operation of the mining industry in a manner

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The Stalinist Bureaucrats And Their Policy Of Cooperation With Wall Street

By R. Bell

The Communist Party has become so totalitarianized that even the hint of a difference of opinion in the leadership is considered news. Reports of a clash between William Z. Foster, national chairman and Earl Browder, national secretary, over the application of the new line of the Stalinists was published in the capitalist press last week. According to the reports, the rift occurred over Browder's recent proposal to dissolve the Communist Party by converting it into an "educational" society to preach the glory of the "free enterprise" system of monopoly capitalism. The nature of the difference was indicated by the March 9

N. Y. Times, which reported that Foster, supported by Sam Darcy, a member of the national committee, had "declared that while they would be willing to cooperate with the 'liberal capitalists' like Thomas W. Lamont, head of J. P. Morgan and Co., who has taken a friendly position to the Stalin regime in the Soviet Union, they could not condone cooperation with 'reactionary capitalists' like Henry Ford." Browder stood for cooperation with any and all "clear headed Wall Street business men" who supported the decisions (as yet unpublished) of the Teheran conference.

The day after the appearance of these reports, the *Daily Worker* published a front page statement by Foster deprecating the "florid imagination of the writers on certain New York newspapers in conjuring up imaginary struggles within the leadership of the Communist Party." Foster insisted

that there was no "struggle" over the "main line." "Such discussions of it as have developed within the party do not touch upon the main line," says Foster, "but turn about the further clarification of questions of secondary importance." Such "questions of secondary importance" presumably, as whether the Stalinists are to cooperate with the "bad reactionary" as well as "good liberal" capitalists. Things have come to such a pass in this thoroughly rotted, thoroughly corrupted monolithic party, that its National Chairman must rush into print with a public apology for having asked for a "clarification" of "questions of secondary importance."

No one should entertain any illusions however about Foster's rebelling against the "Teheran" policy, enunciated in Browder's Madison Square Garden speech. William Z. Foster is an old case hardened and cynical bureaucrat.

As long ago as 1928, he told CP members in personal conversation that Trotsky had the only correct communist program. Foster remained faithful however to the Stalinist bureaucracy, because Stalin had the machine and Foster hoped to become the "beloved leader" of the American CP. Since then, for nearly 20 years, Foster has gone along with every Stalinist betrayal and sell-out, as he will go along with the latest proposal to lie down in bed with the American capitalists, including Girdler, Ford and the NAM.

Stalinist workers, who do not want to become strike-breaking tools and stooges of Big Business, whether of the "good" or "bad" variety; who are genuinely indignant at the latest betrayal, had better give up all illusions about a "change" in policy and break here and now with the treacherous and reactionary Stalinist movement.

TRADE UNION NOTES

By Joseph Keller

The current War Labor Board panel hearings on the steel workers' wage demands have been a farce from the start. The first representative of the steel companies to appear before the panel, John A. Stephens, a U. S. Steel Corporation vice-president, flatly disputed the right of the panel even to consider a wage increase for the 750,000 workers represented by the CIO United Steelworkers of America.

Stephens argued that the steel union demand for a 17 cents-an-hour wage boost was "deliberately" aimed at smashing the "national stabilization policy" based on the Little Steel formula, and contended that the panel hearings were not the place "in which to determine a change in the national stabilization policy."

Of course, everyone is aware of the fact that the only function of the WLB is to administer the wage freeze and prevent the granting of any wage increases above the Little Steel formula.

President Philip Murray, however, took the occasion to defend these farcical hearings and reassert his anti-strike policy, stating it was not his purpose to "obstruct the work of the panel or encourage in any way whatever a stoppage of work."

At this same hearing, a spokesman for 500 steel fabricating companies disputed the right of the panel to consider the demands of their workers because they were not "basic steel." Other stalling points of procedure were introduced by the panel chairman. In this fashion, the steel negotiations have bogged down into an interminable squabble over procedure and "jurisdiction."

The WLB industry members and the steel corporation spokesmen are contesting the power of the WLB even to consider the steelworkers' demands. But Murray is playing the burlesque through to the end, in a frantic effort to prevent the workers from taking direct militant action. He wants the steel workers to sit back passively and watch the government and corporation shysters shunt their demands through all the WLB twists and mazes leading only to a dead-end.

"Disciplinary" suspensions of three Ford Motor Company River Rouge plant workers, two of them ex-marines with medical discharges, provoked a heated session on March 8 between several hundred protesting workers and the company's labor relations officials. The workers stormed into the labor relations office and, according to the company version, mugged it up a bit and gave a dose of tough medicine to a plant cop who tried to get rough.

The two marine veterans were given suspensions for smoking in a lavatory. According to Joseph Twyman, President of Ford Local 600, UAW-CIO, because of their nervous condition these ex-servicemen "need a cigarette once in a while." The protest of the workers "was the spontaneous reaction

of the rank and file against the inhuman and dictatorial treatment of the veterans of this war."

This is a preview of the kind of treatment the worker-soldiers are going to get once they return to the production lines. That's really what the bosses mean when they prate about "nothing is too good for our heroes."

The company has fired 10 workers who participated in the demonstration. But the union's international officials, through a statement of President R. J. Thomas, have refused to defend the discharged workers and have called on the local to take "drastic and effective action" against them. The statement acknowledges the provocations of the company, but directs the workers, in effect, to submit unconditionally to the company.

Joseph Curran, Stalinist head of the CIO National Maritime Union, appeared before a Truman Senate Committee hearing last week and tried to discount the committee's revelation about the Liberty ships, scores of which have cracked up at sea because of defective construction.

Curran nauseated even the none-too-sensitive capitalist politicians of the committee with his statement that he rose to vouch for the "soundness" of these ships because a scandal about them might be used "to smear the administration."

Probably some of Curran's own union members have died in these crackups. Certainly, union seamen have testified to the committee that "they'll never get me on another Liberty ship." The CIO shipbuilding workers union, representing the men who build the Liberty ships has run lengthy exposures in its official organ, the Shipyard Worker, of the deliberate profiteering practices at the Kaiser shipyards which have resulted in dangerous Liberty ship construction.

But the lives of his own union members and the testimony of fellow CIO unionists mean nothing to a lickspittle Stalinist bureaucrat who wants to demonstrate his reliability to the capitalists.

The CIO won 1,766 NLRB elections out of 2,360 contests in 1942-1943, polling a total of 515,271 votes, while the AFL won 1,398 out of 2,018 elections, receiving 267,118 total votes, or half the number cast for the CIO.

Independent or unaffiliated unions participated in 745 elections, winning 416. Their total individual votes numbered 140,780. The CIO surpassed by more than 100,000 the combined votes of all other unions.

These comparative figures reveal the tremendous attraction of industrial unionism, despite the do-nothing policies of the CIO leaders. The total vote in favor of unionism generally, in a period that has witnessed only retreats on the part of the leadership, testifies to the inherent attractive power and vitality of the American labor movement.

New Party Launched In Michigan

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Highlights Of The Labor Conference

When David Lewis contrasted the sumptuous surroundings of the Book-Cadillac Hotel to the rickety frame building where the CCF held its founding conference in Canada, Tucker P. Smith replied that the Book-Cadillac had been rented not for its elegance but because it afforded the largest floor space available.

Later a woman delegate was overheard to explain that the study conference would not have been held on "the largest floor space available," were it not for the well-organized trade unions in Michigan, many of whom financed large delegations to the conference. She pointed out that the CCF, founded 12 years ago, was forced by circumstances to find its base among farmers and workers who were as yet unorganized. In this difference lay a factor wholly advantageous to the Michigan movement.

Among the large UAW locals represented at the conference were Locals 50, 400, 600, and 900, comprising the Ford group; also amalgamated tool and die Local 157, Briggs Local 212 and Chrysler Local 490 from Detroit, and locals 599 and 659 from Flint.

While there was much healthy discussion and disagreement among the delegates, on one point there was complete unanimity: that post-war problems demanded political action which could not be entrusted to the Democratic or Republican parties. These workers and farmer delegates knew that to avoid the unemployment and misery which capitalism holds in store for them, they must take matters into their own hands.

Among the vitally interested visitors at the Saturday afternoon session was a group of soldiers home on leave.

The CIO and UAW top bureaucrats, who had denounced the movement for independent labor political action may soon be doubting the wisdom of bucking the tide. Tracy Doll, head of the Progressive Labor League participated in the study conference as a delegate, while John Gibson, President of the Michigan State CIO Council and Richard Leonard, one of the top men of the Reuther caucus, were present throughout as observers.

The thoroughly reactionary role of the Stalinists in the labor movement is apparently well understood.

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE ENDORSES CAMPAIGN TO FREE PRISONERS

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Hurley, President, Penna. Association of Teachers of Colored Children.

STALINIST SMEAR

A typical Stalinist attempt to smear the Minneapolis prisoners was exposed and rebuffed by the Crucible Steel Local 2149, United Steel Workers of America-CIO. Without the knowledge or approval of the union leadership or membership, the Stalinist A. Fishman, former editor of the local union paper, "Steel Front" inserted a slanderous item against the Minneapolis prisoners.

In response to a protest from the Civil Rights Defense Committee, George P. Masi, Recording Secretary of Local 2149 wrote on March 8: "Our membership is deeply resentful of the fact that Mr. A. Fishman utilized our good name and our local paper for the propagation of his own views and for his own personal gain. Our Executive Board has removed him as Editor, and is recommending his expulsion from the Local. I trust that this information will assure you that Local 2149 does not share the views of Mr. A. Fishman, and we deeply regret the slanderous reference to the 18 Minneapolis defendants."

SUPPORT CASE

"Moreover, at our regular membership meeting of Feb. 17, the case of the 18 was taken up, your letter and the statement of Irving Abramson, President of the N. J. State CIO Council, were read. A motion was made and passed endorsing the statement of President Abramson, endorsing the defense of the 18, and urging President Roosevelt to pardon them."

"I am sending a copy of this letter to the State President so that he will know that our Local, representing over 10,000 employees of Crucible Steel Company, Aha Works, gladly joins with him and the State Council in defense of the Minneapolis defendants. I wish

derstood. David Lewis's reference to "those who have recently dissolved themselves into a study group for the promulgation of the ideas of big business" needed no further explanation. Likewise his allusion to "those left-wingers who are only one yard to the left of the extreme right wing."

Anyone who signed a pledge card stating that he favored building an independent party of labor now, was eligible to register as a delegate and participate in all the proceedings of the study conference. This did not prevent Nat Ganley, the Stalinist whip in the UAW, from attempting to butt in at the Sunday afternoon general assembly.

Announcing himself as a delegate observer from Local 155, he asked for the floor and was told he could have it upon signing the pledge card and paying his registration fee of \$1.50.

Ganley retired momentarily to read the pledge, but was soon back asking for a point of special privilege. In spite of derisive laughter and cries of "Sit down" from the delegates, he again took the floor to propose that instead of the pledge adhered to by all the other delegates, he be given the floor on the basis that he had supported the Farmer-Labor Party in 1936 and was willing to do so again in 1944 should conditions similar to 1936 prevail.

"You don't get the floor," said Chairman Hammond, and that was the last heard from Ganley, although he remained to observe for the rest of the conference.

There was a definite tendency evinced by the top committee to soft pedal the panel reports on organizing drives among rank and file union members. To counteract these panel recommendations, the presiding officers kept reminding the delegates of the importance of the diversified middle class elements and groupings which "must not be alienated. There are loads of people in Michigan," they said, "who don't belong to unions."

Tucker P. Smith came to the mike at the close of the conference to make a plea that the delegates go out and recruit new members and raise funds. He was thinking now in terms of action and results. Where did he tell the delegates to go for aid? "Go back to your unions and your plants, and get to work," he cried.

in the trade unions to combat the policies of the present leadership in its recommendation that "in organizations where official opposition is met, steps should be taken to form new party promotion groups." It further stated "that the way to recruit farmers is to help farmers organize into their basic economic organizations. All possible help should be given such organizations as the Farmers' Union."

Nat Grey, Educational Director of B-Building, Local 600 UAW-CIO, reporting for the second panel, voiced the necessity of "taking control of economy from the exploiters by the people who built it." Special stress was placed on the proposition that the present government-owned and government-financed plants were not to be turned over to the monopolists. Among the recommendations brought in by this discussion group as a basis around which to rally Michigan workers, farmers and soldiers were the following: A guaranteed 48-hour work week during the war; After the war a five-day, six-hour wage week with adequate pay; Against the National Service Act; Compulsory Vacations with pay; Confiscation of all war profits; Union wages for soldiers; Full democratic rights for soldiers; Genuine Collective Bargaining, doing away with the War Labor Board; Crop insurance for farmers.

CONVENTION SET

Panel Number 3 recommended that a call for a Constitutional Convention be issued as soon as possible. The full conference later made the period more specific, within seven months. The panel proposed the basis of representation of 100 or less and one delegate for every additional thousand or major fraction thereof. The structure of the new party was to be "a federation of organizations, of party clubs and of individual membership. And it is further recommended that the sole requirement for membership be a pledge to abide by the program of the party."

The last panel which discussed elections recommended that "this party shall not have a candidate for the office of the President of the United States" in the coming election. It recommended the gathering of petitions to place the new party on the state and local ballot, pending the call for a Constitutional Convention where the decision would be made what candidates would be run. The panel recommendations also declared "that between candidates of other parties, this party, as such, shall adopt an attitude of neutrality though it may be critical of all." Under Michigan state law no candidate is permitted to run on more than one ticket.

Substitute Report

All the panel reports were given to the general assembly before the noon recess. They were then to be mimeographed and distributed to the delegates upon reconvening for discussion and action by the general body. Upon reconvening, however, not all the panel reports were made available to the delegates. The recommendations on the policy and platform were not forthcoming. The typed copy of the report of panels 3 and 4 had several important omissions and changes. Instead of these reports, two typewritten pages of "Recommendations of the Study Conference Recommendation Committee" were distributed to the delegates, supposed to be a condensation of the four panel reports. The wording of these recommendations was so equivocal and full of double meanings that the delegates had difficulty in understanding them. Many of the important panel recommendations were either omitted or made innocuous. The Chairman informed

ed the body that in some cases the panel recommendations would not be followed.

SHOWED RESENTMENT

Before the delegates had an opportunity to comprehend what was taking place, the over-all recommendations were substituted for the panel reports and discussion started on that basis. When the delegates finally had an opportunity to digest the substitute report, they openly displayed resentment at this maneuver on the part of the presiding committee and laid the report on the table in order to take up the panel reports. Most of the panel chairmen however had disappeared and only Brendan Sexton was present to present his panel's recommendations. Sexton stated that the Recommendations Committee had omitted two of his five recommendations, the first one being not to run a presidential candidate for 1944. The conference accepted this recommendation almost unanimously because of the impracticability of running a presidential candidate in one state. On a question asked by Paul Silver, Sexton stated that the recommendation of the panel not to run a presidential candidate could not be construed as endorsement of Roosevelt.

NEW NAME

So much time had previously been expended over procedure, that after the conference acted on this panel report, there was little time left to consider the other panel reports point by point. Since the second panel report was not mimeographed there was no way for the conference to pass on it. The delegates were thus forced to take up the overall report. During the discussion on the over-all recommendations, rank and file delegates stressed the necessity of building pro-labor party groups in unions where the official leadership was in opposition to the new party and calling upon the State-wide Committee to establish subcommittees for that purpose. The Chairman assured the delegates that this proposal was embodied in the report.

After a heated discussion the conference voted to accept the name Michigan Commonwealth Federation instead of the Farmer-Labor designation thus far used. This was undoubtedly due to the influence of the CCF whose national secretary was present and actively participated at the conference.

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Canadian News Letter

Since the election for the Ontario provincial legislature in August, 1943, the representatives of Canadian big business have shown their panic at the growing class consciousness of the Canadian working class.

In this election, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation secured thirty-four seats in a house of eighty-five. Of the remaining seats, the Conservative Party holds thirty-five, the Liberals thirty-six and the Labor Progressive (Stalinist) Party, two. This is the first time in the history of eastern Canada that labor has turned so sharply against the capitalist parties.

Since the outbreak of war in September 1939, the organization of the workers in industry has proceeded at an ever increasing tempo as a result of the enormous expansion of Canadian industry. The Canadian Congress of Labor, CIO, has increased its membership since 1940 from 55,000 to 250,000. The AFL and the Catholic syndicates in Quebec province have had a corresponding growth. The Canadian capitalists, in a frenzy of fear, have imposed a series of vicious anti-labor laws designed to protect their profits and saddle the workers with the whole cost of the war.

The workers finding their efforts to maintain even the present living standard opposed not only by the bosses but by the whole power of the capitalist state, have become conscious that their fight is on the political as well as the economic front. This is evidenced by the preponderance of CCF candidates elected and the heavy CCF vote in the industrial areas.

Another significant feature of the election was the vote of the armed forces. The CCF received an even higher percentage here than in the civilian vote.

The alarm of the ruling class manifested itself immediately. The kept press unleashed broadsides of slanderous and scurrilous editorials. They proved to their own satisfaction that the CCF is a National Socialist

(Nazi) and a totalitarian party. Speeches made by CCF leaders have been deliberately falsified. In one instance, a CCF leader in the west stated that those who refused to obey CCF legislation would be dealt with by the police and the military. He was quoted as saying that those who are opposed to the CCF would be shot. At the same time the big corporations and banks have published hundreds of advertisements and pamphlets extolling the virtues of free enterprise. What the ruling class fears primarily is not the spineless leadership and reformist program of the CCF but the radicalization of the Canadian workers which its growing strength reveals.

The course taken by the CCF leadership in the face of these reactionary assaults clearly indicates the path of betrayal they would follow if elected to power. Instead of mobilizing the working class to come to their support against the class enemy, they tour the country addressing Rotary clubs and similar bourgeois organizations and they water down their already weak program in an effort to gain the support of the middle class. The recent statement of David Lewis, the national secretary of the party, that under a CCF government Canada would be such a well ordered country that American capital would flow in and be paid a good rate of interest makes amply clear how far these "socialists" will go to convince the capitalists that they are respectable and trustworthy.

Nevertheless, support of the CCF is a tremendous step forward in the development of the Canadian labor movement. The Canadian Congress of Labor has endorsed the party as the political arm of labor and many unions have already affiliated. It is the duty of advanced Canadian workers to support this movement, to work for the conversion of the CCF into a mass party based on the trade unions, and to formulate and fight for a militant and aggressive Socialist program of action.

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A worker in one of the big shipyards in the New York vicinity told us that "The Militant is the best paper in the country" and he wondered why it doesn't sell better. "Maybe," he thought, "because it is only four pages." He also told us that he has noticed the distributions at the yard have had an effect because some union members who take the floor show by their remarks that they have been influenced by articles in The Militant.

The following letter was sent to us from Plains, MONTANA: "Will you please have the kindness to send me a sample copy of The Militant, as I am deeply interested in the fight for full social, economic and political equality for the colored people."

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The Negro Struggle

By Charles Jackson

The Preacher Takes a Back Seat

One of the unmistakable signs of increasing self-confidence in the younger Negro is the very definite trend away from the church. One or two generations ago the church was one of the most influential institutions in the every-day life of the Negro. The church had a large following of all ages and the preacher was usually the most revered and respected leader in his community. Today, the church has very little following among the young Negroes except in some of the more backward small towns of the South where no other recreational centers exist. The community leader now is more often an outstanding trade unionist or a progressive professional worker.

This plainly points to the fact that the Negro, in his political growth, is passing from adolescence to manhood. He is no longer willing to take a kicking around and continue praying on bended knees. Instead of waiting for some mystic force to hand him down "dem golden slippers" he is demanding sufficient income to buy himself leather shoes he can wear right now. He is saying: "I will take bread today for my labor and will not wait for 'pie in the sky when I die'."

The common belief that religion is deeply imbedded by nature in the Negro's mind is a myth. What has happened is that his mind has been artificially conditioned by constant religious propaganda forced down his throat in overdoses from infancy to old age. This was done, incidentally, in a methodical way and for a very earthly and materialistic purpose. When the slaves were brought to this country 300 or so years ago they knew nothing about the Christian religion. Just like the Eskimos, Aztecs and other primitive people, they gave a supernatural interpretation to the phenomena of nature, like thunder, lightning, rain, etc. Their tribal dances and other religious expressions stemmed from basic impelling interests such as the hunt, the feast, sex and wars for existence against competitive tribes.

The missionary activity whereby they were "converted" to Christianity was initiated and financed by the slave owning ruling class. This class was acting in its own interests and not in the interests of the slaves. These men knew that the fear of the unknown could be employed as an auxiliary method to keep the slaves in bondage. Curiously enough, the non-violence of the Christian gospel was stressed in preaching religion to slaves who were held in bondage only by violence.

The promise of great reward in "after life" in return for "humble ways" on earth was calculated to lull the exploited people into the belief that laboring without pay or freedom was a great virtue.

The ruling class here, as usual, used members of the oppressed group to carry out the betrayal. The Negro preacher was built up as the leader of the people in return for selling to his brothers the "boss-man's" religion. To be

fair, we should mention that there were a few exceptions where isolated preachers double-crossed the ruling class by leading revolts and adopting militant methods of struggle. This was seen on a larger scale in Ireland where priests of the Catholic Church, (an historic agent of the ruling class) participated in certain periods, in the revolutionary struggle for Irish freedom. The majority of Negro preachers, however, have been and are today Uncle Toms when it comes to a real fight for equality.

The most brazen of the present lot is Bishop Gregg, who was chosen by the War Department to visit Negroes in training camps and overseas. All reports indicate that the Negro soldiers and sailors are not accepting without protest the unjust treatment meted out to them in this Jim Crow Army and Navy. Yet after his "survey" Bishop Gregg had the gall to inform the public that all the boys, in the segregated labor battalions, are well satisfied and their morale is high. In other words, the War Department policy as to treatment of the Negro soldier is just peaches and cream. The Bishop serves his master, (his earthly one), very well.

In connection with the church as a whole, we find a popular misconception as to what it can accomplish in the minority struggle in this country. Negro and white spokesmen are advising the church to take the lead in practicing the vaunted slogan of "brotherhood of man" by abolishing segregation within their holy walls. Ted Le Berthon, author of "White Man's View" devoted his column of March 11 in the Pittsburgh Courier to such admonitions. What he and others like him fail to realize is that the church as an institution is serving and has always served the interests of the ruling class. The church does not and can not stand on its own feet. It is helpless to put its lofty principles into practice on a scale that would be of any practical value to the Negro or any other oppressed group. It is the agent of those who do not want equality any more than they want a workers and farmers government because it would endanger their profits and rule. Its property is tax-free, its schools are subsidized by "philanthropists" and its ministers are built up as community leaders. In return for its subsidized existence, its policies are about as "Christ-like" as those of J. P. Morgan. It can not lead the fight for equality because the policy of its master is to divide, exploit and rule.

Recourse to religion in solving our problem has been calculated to, and certainly will, warp the reasoning power of otherwise intelligent and conscientious militants. If we would become men we must "put away childish things." Superstition, fear of the unknown and blind obedience to the traditions of the past must be discarded forever. We must step forth unhampered — with clear minds and freehands — if we are to be successful in our struggle for racial equality and freedom.

PIONEER PARAGRAPHS

WINNING A POPULAR MAJORITY FOR THE IDEAS OF SOCIALISM

Q: (By Mr. Goldman) What is the opinion of Marxists, as far as winning a majority of the people to Socialist ideas?

A: (By Mr. Cannon) Yes, that certainly is the aim of the party. That is the aim of the Marxist movement, has been from its inception. Marx said the social revolution of the proletariat — I think I can quote his exact words from memory — "is a movement of the immense majority in the interests of the immense majority." He said this in distinguishing it from previous revolutions which had been made in the interest of minorities, as was the case in France in 1789.

Q: What would you say is the opinion of Marxists as far as the desirability of a peaceful transition is concerned?

A: The position of the Marxists is that the most economical and preferable, the most desirable method of social transformation, by all means, is to have it done peacefully.

Q: And in the opinion of Marxists, is that absolutely excluded?

A: Well, I wouldn't say absolutely excluded. We say that the lessons of history don't show any important examples in favor of the idea so that you can count upon it.

Q: Can you give us examples

in American history of a minority refusing to submit to a majority?

A: I can give you a very important one. The conception of the Marxist is that, even if the transfer of political power from the capitalists to the proletariat is accomplished peacefully, then the minority, the exploiting capitalist class, will revolt against the new regime, no matter how legally it is established.

I can give you an example in American history. The American Civil War resulted from the fact that the Southern slave-holders couldn't reconcile themselves to the legal parliamentary victory of Northern capitalism, the election of President Lincoln.

Q: Can you give us an example outside of America where a reactionary minority revolted against a majority in office?

A: Yes, in Spain — the coalition of workers' and liberal parties in Spain got an absolute majority in the elections and was no sooner installed than it was confronted with an armed rebellion, led by the reactionary capitalists of Spain.

(From "Socialism on Trial," by James P. Cannon; pages 34-35; 112 pages, 10c. Order from Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York 3, N. Y.)

What The Immortal Paris Commune of 1871 Means To The International Working Class

By J. A.

Today, on the seventy-third anniversary of the Paris Commune, the French workers, shackled by the Nazi invaders and betrayed and terrorized by their own capitalist class, are unable to honor with demonstrations and mass meetings, as is their custom, the memory of the heroic fighters of the Paris Commune. At the end of this May, they will be unable to carry wreaths, as is their custom, to the tombs of the Communards who were murdered in the dreadful slaughter of the "May Week." But we can be certain that the memory of that historic event still burns deeply in the

hearts of the countless thousands of partisans and underground fighters, who are preparing today to follow in the footsteps of their gallant forbears. And we can be equally certain that they will, in their homes, their retreats and hiding places, take the oath that they have customarily taken over the graves of the Communards, to intensify the fight until the Nazis are destroyed, until their accomplices, the French capitalist class, are deprived of their rule and until the cause of the Socialist revolution is victorious.

PARIS COMMUNE

The Paris Commune, the first workers' government, was able to exist for only seventy-one days. From the very first day of its birth, it was surrounded on all sides by enemies, who plotted its destruction. From the very first day of its birth, it was forced to concentrate most of its energies on military preparations and defense. Still in that short period of time, it left a record of achievement and work which inspired the working masses of the whole world and revealed to all mankind what immense vistas lie before humanity, once it succeeds in removing the deadly grip of capitalism. By the same token, the Paris Commune aroused the fiercest hatred on the part of the capitalists all over the world, who determined to wipe it out and to efface the memory of its accomplishments.

The Commune abolished the standing army, the time-honored weapon in the hands of the ruling class, and replaced it by the universal arming of the people. It proclaimed the separation of church and state and the nationalization of all church property. It abolished state support of all religious bodies. It gave to popular education a purely secular character by forbidding religious inculcation in the public schools. It moved to protect the new government against careerism and bureaucracy by its decree that the highest salary received by any employee of the Commune, including the members of the government, could not exceed 6,000 francs.

WORKERS' CHARACTER

The Commune was unable, because of its difficulties, to undertake a very ambitious program in the social sphere. But even here, it showed its character of a popular workers' government. Night work was abolished in bakeries. The system of fines, whereby bosses imposed wage cuts on their workers, by arbitrarily fining them, was forbidden. Finally, the famous decree was issued which authorized that all factories and workshops abandoned or closed by their owners, were to be turned over to associations of workers and production resumed under the workers' control.

Karl Marx, who followed with passionate interest the developments of the Commune from London, was overcome with enthusiasm. He kept in constant touch with the Parisian members of the First International, in the Commune sending them advice and aid. He wrote to his friend Dr. Kugelmann on April 12, "What elasticity, what historical initiative, what capacity for self-sacrifice in these Parisians! After six months' starvation and ruination by internal treachery, even more than by the enemy without, they rise under the Prussian bayonets as if there had never been a war between France and Germany, and as if there were no enemy outside the gates of Paris. History offers no parallel to this greatness!"

MARX'S ESTIMATE

In his celebrated work "The Civil War in France," Marx estimates the work and significance of the Paris Commune. "The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in various wards of the town, responsible and revocable at short terms. The majority of its members were naturally workingmen, or acknowledged representatives of the working class. The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary body, executive and legislative at the same time. Instead of continuing to be the agent of the central government, the police was at once stripped of its political attributes, and

turned into the responsible and at all times revocable agent of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, the public service had to be done at workmen's wages. The vested interests and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of State disappeared along with the high dignitaries themselves. Public functions ceased to be the private property of the tools of the central government. Not only municipal administration, but the whole initiative hitherto exercised by the State was laid into the hands of the Commune. . . . Its true secret was this. It was essentially a workingclass government, product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labor.

RED FLAG

"When the Paris Commune took the management of the revolution into its own hands; when plain workmen for the first time dared to infringe upon the governmental privilege of their 'natural superiors,' and, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty, performed their work modestly, conscientiously, and efficiently — performed it at salaries the highest of which barely amounted to one-fifth of what, according to high scientific authority, is the minimum required for a secretary to a certain metropolitan school board — the old world writhed in convulsions of rage at the sight of the red flag, the symbol of the republic of labor, floating over the Hotel de Ville."

The capitalists of France, as indeed of all Europe, frightened to death, determined that the Paris Commune had to be crushed, effaced, drowned in blood.

The memory of its achievements had to be wiped out. The rule of capitalism was not safe while the red flag continued to fly over the Paris City Hall. The Commune,

By A. Roland

The present deep-going crisis in Argentina is a fresh illustration of the importance of a revolutionary party leading the working class with the guidance of a correct program. The ruling class of that country is confused, uncertain and torn by factionalism. Its main and final reliance, the army, reflects faithfully the social and political situation. The shifting struggle of would-be dictators for personal and clique power occurs against a background of internal and external cleavage. It adds its own instability to the general political turmoil. With the ruling class thus torn asunder, unable to unite on a policy, there is only one element lacking to characterize the situation as a revolutionary one — an independent working class party capable of leading the oppressed.

It is primarily but not solely the impact of the second world war which has created the present difficulties for the Argentine landowners and capitalists. The war has torn the normal ties of Argentina with world economy. Its first effects were to disrupt the normal import and export trade upon which Argentina is absolutely dependent. The raw materials and foodstuffs that found their way to England and Germany piled up in the warehouses and granaries. The first result was to produce a growing unemployment. In 1940 the government reported 180,000 unemployed, unusual for Argentina.

The industrial bourgeoisie was strengthened in relation to the big landowners. The Argentine government sought and obtained aid from both the United States and England for the purchase of commodities that might otherwise have found their way into Axis hands. But much of the material purchased remained inside of the country for lack of shipping space. The surpluses have piled up.

CRITICAL SITUATION

The explosiveness of the social and economic forces at work soon came to view in politics. Ortiz, who had become president, through the choice of Justo, in one of the most fraudulent elections seen in Argentina in many years, resigned for reasons of ill-health in July 1940 on the eve of a great political scandal. The following month, with Castillo acting

The Workers in Power



A drawing of the forerunner of the Soviets. Here is depicted a district committee of the Paris Communards, men and women, workers, soldiers and intellectuals, who were creating, in the words of Lenin, "a new type of state—the Workers State."

bor, floating over the Hotel de Ville."

The capitalists of France, as indeed of all Europe, frightened to death, determined that the Paris Commune had to be crushed, effaced, drowned in blood. The memory of its achievements had to be wiped out. The rule of capitalism was not safe while the red flag continued to fly over the Paris City Hall. The Commune,

with its message of Internationalism, of brotherhood and cooperation, of equality and freedom, was a menace to the old world founded on exploitation and slavery.

Bismarck, head of the German Government, witnessing the impotence of the defeated French capitalists, agreed to release to them the French army held captive by the Prussian forces. With this

are concerned even more in the present stalemate over the possibility of independent action on the part of the masses of workers. The last thing desired by the imperialists is a revolt of the masses which would awaken in the toilers in the factories and on the land a new political consciousness.

The situation in Argentina is still fluid. It is possible that the trades unions will act in the interests of self-preservation. Naturally, without the intervention of the masses, the bourgeoisie will overcome the crisis and reach some form of relative stability. The likelihood is that under the tremendous pressure now being exerted by United States imperialism, the native capitalists and landowners will be forced to follow the course on the world arena desired by the allies.

There remains the need for a really independent working class party that would know how to take full advantage of the present crisis. Democracy will not be achieved in Argentina by the victory of the industrial capitalists over the landowners. National liberation cannot be achieved by the native bourgeoisie. It is just as impossible for the Argentine capitalists to wage a successful struggle against imperialism as it was for the Chinese ruling class. The capitalists can only seek some form of compromise with one camp of imperialism or the other, whichever exerts the dominant influence. To really fight successfully against imperialism and thus to achieve national liberation, it is necessary to arouse the masses to the highest pitch of enthusiasm and activity in the struggle. But that would mean following a program in the real interests of the workers and toilers of city and country. Such a program can be offered only by a working class party. It would be directed not only against the foreign imperialists, but also against the native bourgeoisie.

That is the lesson of every single struggle in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. It must serve as the foundation on which the Argentine workers will build the party which will lead them to power. In such a struggle they will find allies in the working class of the United States and abroad.

THE STALINISTS

The Communist (Stalinist) Party lost all influence in Argentina because of its political gyrations. It has several thousand adherents, but the party is outlawed and exerts slight influence. The line trade upon which Argentina is absolutely dependent. The raw materials and foodstuffs that found their way to England and Germany piled up in the warehouses and granaries. The first result was to produce a growing unemployment. In 1940 the government reported 180,000 unemployed, unusual for Argentina.

The idea that entry into the war on the side of the allies would aid the cause of democracy in Argentina is one of the worst illusions on the part of the workers and the middle class. The United States was not concerned in the slightest at the threat against the 'existence of the trades unions when the military junta overthrew Castillo. It was, as a matter of fact, prepared to give cordial support to the new dictator, General Ramirez, when he broke off relations with the Axis and acted to carry Argentina into the war on the Allied side. The Anglo-American imperialists

army the French bourgeoisie entered Paris, and overcame the resistance of the Communards.

BUTCHERY

As soon as the capitalist soldiers under General McMahon crushed the opposition, a butchery of the Parisian proletariat began, the like of which had not been witnessed since the days of antiquity. The French capitalists determined to teach the proletariat a lesson it would never forget. "It was only after eight days' fighting" Engels relates in his introduction to Marx's work, "that the last defenders of the Commune were overwhelmed on the heights of Belleville and Montmartre; and then the massacre of defenseless men, women, and children, raging all through the week on an increasing scale, reached its zenith. The breech-loaders could no longer kill fast enough; the vanquished workers were shot down in hundreds by mitrailleuse fire. The 'Wall of the Federals' at the Pere Lachaise cemetery, where the final mass murder was consummated, is still standing today, a mute but eloquent testimony to the savagery of which the ruling class is capable as soon as the working class dares to come out for its rights. Then came the mass arrests; when the slaughter of them all proved to be impossible, the shooting of victims arbitrarily selected from the prisoners' ranks, and the removal of the rest to great camps where they awaited trial by courts-martial."

LURID LIGHT

"The civilization and justice of bourgeois order," Marx wrote, "comes out in its lurid light whenever the slaves and drudges of that order rise against their masters. Then this civilization and justice stand forth as undisguised savagery and lawless revenge. Each new crisis in the class struggle between the appropriator and the producer brings out this fact more glaringly. Even the atrocities of the Bourgeois in June 1848 vanish before the ineffable infamy of 1871. The self-sacrificing heroism with which the population of Paris—men, women and children—fought for eight days after the entrance of the Versailles, reflects as much the grandeur of their cause, as the infernal deeds of the soldiery reflect the innate spirit of that civilization of which they are the mercenary vindicators. A glorious civilization, indeed, the great problem of which is how to get rid of the heaps of corpses it made after the battle was over!"

"To find a parallel for the conduct of Thiers [head of the French capitalist government] and his bloodhounds, we must go back to the times of Sulla and the two Triumvirates of Rome, the same wholesale slaughter in cold blood; the same disregard, in massacre, of age and sex, the same torturing of prisoners; the same proscriptions, but this time of a whole class; the same savage hunt after concealed leaders, lest one might

escape; the same denunciations of political and private enemies; the same indifference for the butchery of entire strangers to the feud. There is but this difference, that the Romans had no mitrailleuses for the despatch, in the lump, of the proscribed, and that they had not 'the law in their hands,' nor on their lips the cry of 'civilization.'"

100,000 VICTIMS
All in all, about 30,000 Parisians were murdered, another 45,000 arrested, many of whom were afterwards executed, thousands more imprisoned and sent into penal servitude or exiled. Paris lost about 100,000 of its sons, including the best workers of all trades.

The working class was of course still very inexperienced. The socialist proletariat was itself divided into many sects. Moreover one of its most important leaders, Blanqui, was a prisoner in the hands of the capitalists. The Communards committed many important mistakes in their fight with the capitalists.

The fundamental reason however for the vanquishment and obliteration of the Commune is to be found in its historic pre-maturity. Marx himself established the historic law that no social system passes from the stage until it has exhausted its progressive potentialities. And capitalism, in the day of the Commune, was far from having reached its zenith. In this sense, a workers' government was still historically premature. The French capitalist class, its powers far from exhausted, was able to drown the Commune in the blood of its heroic fighters.

INSPIRED WORKERS

Despite the brutal crushing of the Paris Commune, its achievements inspired the workers throughout Europe. Within a few years, new mass socialist parties arose in the principal countries of Europe, able to build on the foundations erected by the heroic Communards. The Commune showed what kind of a government the workers must have in order to hold power and begin the work of building a new socialist society. The Paris Commune for the first time showed what the "dictatorship of the proletariat" meant in practice. It pioneered the struggle, which later saw further development and fulfillment in the construction by Lenin and Trotsky in 1917 of the Workers' State in Russia.

"Working men's Paris, with its Commune," wrote Marx, "will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them."

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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To defend the USSR as the main fortress of the world proletariat, against all assaults of world imperialism and of internal counter-revolution, is the most important duty of every class-conscious worker.

— LEON TROTSKY

JOIN US IN FIGHTING FOR:

1. Military training of workers, financed by the government, but under control of the trade unions. Special officers' training camps, financed by the government but controlled by the trade unions, to train workers to become officers.
2. Trade union wages for all workers drafted into the army.
3. Full equality for Negroes in the armed forces and the war industries—Down with Jim Crowism everywhere.
4. Confiscation of all war profits. Expropriation of all war industries and their operation under workers' control.
5. A rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living.
6. Workers Defense Guards against vigilante and fascist attacks.
7. An Independent Labor Party based on the Trade Unions.
8. A Workers' and Farmers' Government.
9. The defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack.

Britain And Italy

The military defeats of Nazi Germany have brought a qualitative change in the mood of the European masses. The victories of the Red Army have inspired more intensive revolutionary mass opposition in the Nazi-held territories. The collapse of Fascist Italy engendered by the mass resistance to the Mussolini regime and its war, unleashed the Italian revolution which again reveals its unconquerable power in the present general strike. The growing resistance movements in the Balkans have assumed a distinctly class character. And now the British Tories are trembling in the face of the militant and stubborn struggle of the British coal miners. The European workers and peasants are entering the political arena as an independent force. The fiction of "national unity" is giving way to the realities of the class struggle.

The specter of the proletarian revolution is haunting the champions of capitalist "order". In an editorial comment on the revolt of the workers in northern Italy, the N. Y. Times, authoritative spokesman of the American money bags, concludes that: "The rising of the northern workers suggests that the Italians, like the French, may have something to say about their own Government and even about their own fate in the final reckoning. It is another sign that the Europe that will rise when Germany is defeated may have ideas for the future that will not always fit into the plans of the Great Powers."

The European workers and peasants have gone through an historical experience since 1914 richer in lessons than the whole preceding history of mankind. It will not be as easy to fool the workers this time; it will not be as easy to cheat them; it will not be as easy to suppress and enslave them. What the European masses are determined to avoid is a return to the conditions of capitalist anarchy under a new and worse Versailles treaty which will Balkanize Europe and reduce the continent to a wilderness of exploitation, starvation and suffering without end. The workers have shown a keen class instinct in their striving to unite against their oppressors. With a correct program and leadership no power on earth can stop the forward march of the European revolution. The European workers will yet upset all the reactionary schemes and conspiracies hatched during the secret diplomatic meetings of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. They will thrust aside all their would-be oppressors, exploiters and dictators. Under the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe, the British coal

miner, the Balkan peasant, the Italian worker, together with their class brothers in the Soviet Union, France and Germany, will sweep on to victory.

No-Strike Pledge

The speed and audacity of the labor bureaucrats in moving against their own rank and file members stands in glaring contrast to their craven attitude and halting pace in the struggle against the wage and job freezing program of Big Business. A case in point is that of the top leadership of the United Automobile Workers, CIO. The union is demanding wage increases beyond the Little Steel formula. To replace the wage freeze, the UAW executive board instructed all local unions to demand in all union contracts an escalator clause: a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living. This program, if meant seriously, involves a head-on conflict with the Roosevelt administration and its "wage stabilization" policy.

Yet, there has been no serious preparation for such a struggle. The official leadership is marking time, playing "politics," and shielding and whitewashing their "friend" in the White House. They indicate very clearly that they have no intention of leading a fight against the corporations and their political agents in Washington. The UAW International Executive Board recently made public a resolution complaining about the number of corporations who were taking advantage of the "no-strike pledge" by denying the union membership their rights under the union contracts and who were seeking "to provoke them into engaging in work stoppages." The resolution amounted to a confession that the no-strike pledge had deprived the union of the power to enforce its contracts and rendered it helpless to offer any organized resistance to deliberate company provocation. It would seem that the obvious need under the circumstances is to rescind the no-strike pledge in order to rearm the union for the impending showdown with the corporations. Certainly if the union, bound hand and foot by the no-strike pledge, finds itself incapable of enforcing its existing contracts, how can it conduct an effective struggle to scrap the Little Steel formula and win an escalator clause in the new contracts?

Instead of this obvious conclusion, the UAW resolution proceeds to reaffirm the no-strike pledge "without any qualifications" and threatens drastic penalties against local unions and members who engage in "unauthorized" strikes. As there can be no such thing as an "authorized" strike under an "unqualified" no-strike pledge, the resolution of the UAW executive board amounted to a statement of unconditional surrender to the auto barons.

It wasn't long before the first victims were offered upon the altar of the unconditional surrender resolution when ten men were discharged and ten others suspended by the Ford Motor Company for engaging in an "unauthorized" work stoppage and participating in a disturbance which was caused by outright company provocation. This "disciplinary" action by Ford came on the heels of a letter in which R. J. Thomas, UAW president, called upon the Ford local to take "drastic and effective action" against the union members involved. Lacking the guts or will to counsel "drastic and effective action" against the corporations and their agents in Washington by leading a fight for the escalator clause, the labor fakers use the no-strike pledge to strengthen their bureaucratic grip on the union in order to protect themselves from the justified wrath of the rank and file.

The preservation of the UAW as a progressive and democratic union requires that every local union adopt resolutions demanding that the executive board withdraw its "unconditional surrender" resolution. The fight for internal union democracy is intimately tied up with the fight against the no-strike pledge and the wage freeze.

Military Rule

A new, ominous development in American life is the growing power of the military caste and its increasing intervention in all fields of civilian life and activity. The most recent example was the appearance of General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, who appeared before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, to express, in the name of the War Department opposition to the resolution sponsored by Senators Wagner and Taft favoring the free entry of Jewish people into Palestine and the eventual establishment of a Jewish homeland there. In commenting on the incident, a columnist for the N. Y. Times remarked: "As always, the General made his military statement with authority which none was disposed to question." Washington correspondents agree that as a result of this intervention the resolution will remain buried in the Senate committee.

This concept of unquestioning subservience to the authority of the military caste is being advanced from all quarters of the ruling capitalist class. When the chiefs of the War, Navy and Maritime Commission came out in support of a labor draft, the head of the War Manpower Commission, Paul V. McNutt, withdrew his previous opposition with the statement: "When those in charge of the prosecution of the war decide that such an act is necessary, 'who are we to question?' Therefore, I support it."

The existence of a professional clique of military brass hats which interferes in every sphere of activity, the extension of the Prussian military code to civilian life, spells the end of democracy and the establishment of an openly reactionary military dictatorship. The danger is real and only an aroused labor movement can lead a struggle for the defense of democratic rights against the attempt to Prussianize the nation. Only by breaking decisively with the political agents of the military caste and launching an Independent Labor Party can such a struggle become effective.

North Italian Strikers Brave The Nazi Terror

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Italian workers arrested and deported to Poland.

STRIKE CONTINUES

Failing to receive any satisfactory reply to these demands, the workers' gigantic strike action continued. The New York Times correspondent in Berne could only report on Mar. 9 that less than one-third of the 6,000,000 striking workers had returned to the factories and that of this one-third not more than 25 percent were actually working. This report is of the utmost significance. It means that while 4,000,000 workers are out on the streets battling the armed forces of the bloody Nazi oppressors, about 1,500,000 are engaged in a virtual sit-down strike within the plants.

The German military authorities, for the first time since the commencement of the imperialist war, are confronted with an uprising of mighty proportions and tremendous revolutionary significance. An AP dispatch from Naples on Mar. 10 stated that the Germans had moved tanks into action against strikers in Milan and other industrial centers on the Lombardy plain.

If the workers create, in the course of their struggle, revolutionary leadership which can lift the struggle to the high revolutionary plane of a fight for socialism, if they can win out against the Stalinist and Social-democratic traitors within their ranks and against their brutal enemies without — a long nail will have been driven in the awaiting coffin of European capitalism which spawned both the Nazi and Fascist regimes.

The importance of the issue at stake is realized by the Nazi-Fascists. The Milan Fascist newspaper Corriere della Sera, declared on Mar. 10 that the workers had deserted their jobs "purely for political and military reasons" and would be punished as "enemies of the state."

In other words, the struggle far transcends the seemingly immediate issues represented by the workers' five demands and takes on a distinctly revolutionary character in which the question of power is of necessity involved—the question: "Who is to rule Italy?"

This is understood by the "democratic" imperialists just as well as by the Nazis and their Italian henchmen. That is why news of the struggle has been cut off by the censors as with a knife. Washington and London naturally welcome any action which creates difficulties for their Nazi imperialist rivals, but they want the Italian workers to restrict themselves to actions of a simple anti-Nazi character, to hold these actions within limits which they shall dictate, to refrain from raising fundamental issues of a revolutionary character.

However, the situation is such that the Italian workers can secure a real amelioration of their miserable plight only by a fundamental shake-up — by a victorious struggle to vanquish capitalism and establish their own rule. It is just this — independent action by the workers around an independent program of their own — that all the imperialists fear.

INSPIRES WORKERS

Meanwhile, the struggle is a source of inspiration to workers

everywhere. These workers will say to themselves: "If our Italian brothers can make such a glorious fight in the teeth of Nazi tanks, machine-guns, bayonets and firing squads, we too, can act more boldly." And so the "democratic" censors are doing all they can to conceal the Italian events.

While great events are unfolding in Northern Italy, with the workers displaying an unconquerable determination to defeat their oppressors, Southern Italy presents a picture of a political morass in which the "leaders" of the masses—the rotten coalition of the Stalinist, Socialist and Action parties—are striving with might and main to deliver the workers' movement, bound and gagged, into the hands of the Allied imperialists.

At the insistence of the Allied occupation authorities, these craven capitulators called off a ten-minute strike which the workers had forced them to proclaim in protest against Allied policy in supporting the hated King and his Marshal Badoglio. But, finding themselves unable to restrain the masses completely, the fake leaders decided on a mass protest demonstration in Naples, where the AMG authorities permitted them to criticize "Italian personalities" but not the Allied occupation authority.

Thousands of workers gathered for the demonstration, which took place under the watchful eyes of Allied troops. Nearby, according to the New York Times, monarchists favoring retention of the King attempted a counter-demonstration, but so small was the response that the attempt had to be abandoned.

Biggest British Strike Since 1926 Alarms Capitalist Class

(Continued from page 1)

that will give assurance of lasting jobs, decent conditions and permanent security. Thus, the basic demand of the miners is for nationalization of the coal industry to end the capitalist anarchy which makes a blight of the miners' lives.

PORTER AWARD

The Porter award has evoked this militant resistance because it has convinced the miners that the government has no intentions of running the mines contrary to the profit-interests of the owners. If this is what the Churchill government hands the miners in response to their very modest immediate demands during the crucial war period, reasons the miner, how can this government be relied upon to operate the mines in the interest of the workers once demand for coal slacks off? The answer of the British miners is to press the fight for a solution of their problems right now.

A United Press dispatch recounts: "The scene of Richard Llewellyn's best-seller 'How Green Was My Valley' today has a tint of red. The coal miners talk admiringly of communism. . . One man, who said he earned 4 lbs. a week after forty years in the pits, said: 'Our only hope for this country is to have the Communists take over.'"

This indicates the tenor of the political thinking of the British miners. It is the same sort of sentiment which roused the miners to give the Commonwealth Party candidate an overwhelming victory in a recent Yorkshire by-election when he ran on a program calling for immediate nationalization of the mines.

POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The full political significance of the miners' struggle is further clarified by the character of their top union officials, who are sold body and soul to the Churchill government and are seeking to behead the strike by every means at their command. The key South

Wales Miners Federation is headed by Arthur Horner, a leading Stalinist, and the whole leadership is heavily weighted with Stalinists. Harry Pollitt, British Stalinist leader, is touring the mine fields pleading with the workers to return to the pits. Thus, the British hirelings of the Kremlin are emulating the strike-breaking of the American Stalinists during the general coal strikes in the United States.

Whatever the immediate outcome of the present coal strike, its occurrence on the eve of the tremendous revolutionary struggles impending in Europe is a fact of profound importance both for England and the European revolution. The insurrectionary strikes in North Italy and the virtual civil war in France are harbingers of the titanic mass upheavals to come. But already one of the two major imperialist powers aiming to crush the European revolution is itself torn by open class struggles. And the great coal strike is only the beginning.

International Notes

MEXICO

The political resolution, "Perspectives and Tasks of the Approaching European Revolution," adopted last November by the 15th anniversary Plenum of the Socialist Workers Party, has been published in Spanish in the form of a pamphlet by the Mexican Section of the Fourth International. A striking cover design shows the upraised fists of workers projecting from a global world against a background consisting of the sickle and hammer emblem of the workers' revolution.

SOUTH AFRICA

Jim Crow is not an exclusively American phenomenon. It is practised in all the countries where white-skinned imperialists hold sway over black or brown-skinned peoples. The "war for democracy" has brought fresh manifestations of the reactionary race discrimination which Jim Crow connotes.

Negroes in South Africa, one of the components of that Empire which Churchill has sworn to uphold and preserve at all costs, are now being denied the right to buy articles of which there is a shortage due to the war. One of them, writing in the Bantu Mirror, a South African Negro paper, tells the following story: "I was out shopping and went into a leading bazaar and asked for a milk jug. A good lady told me politely, 'Sorry James, but we are not allowed to sell milk jugs to boys.' ('Boy' is a term universally used by the white imperialists in addressing or referring to Negroes; it was also used by the white imperialists in China when addressing their

Chinese servants.) I went into another shop and asked for a yard of tobralo. The sales assistant said contemptuously, 'We have no tobralo for boys here.' Now we would like to know whether this is the freedom from want for which African blood is being spilled in this global war?"

IRELAND

A hunger strike by Irish Republican Army prisoners in Belfast comes as a reminder that British imperialism rules over and oppresses not only peoples with colored skins, but some with white skins as well. Northern Ireland is a British colony where fighters for the country's independence are persecuted in much the same way as are the fighters for India's independence.

The hunger strikers, some 30 in number, and led by Hugh McAteer, IRA chief of staff, are demanding that they be segregated from the common criminals and treated as political prisoners. But the British jailers determined to uphold Britain's arbitrary rule, are resisting this demand with the same stubborn arrogance they display in India. Like Pharaoh of old, they "harden their hearts" against all who resist their tyranny. They realize that in this period of war and revolution only the strong arm of repression can delay the day of reckoning—the day in which colonial peoples will rise in their full might to throw off the chains of imperialist slavery.

ESTHONIA

A tragic picture of what Nazi domination has meant to the peo-

ple of the tiny Baltic state of Esthonia is drawn in the Feb. 1 Bulletin of the International Federation of Trade Unions. According to the Bulletin, some 13,000 buildings and 2,500 farms have been totally destroyed. Stocks and herds have declined as follows: horses, 30,500 (15 percent); cattle, 239,800 (34 percent); sheep, 320,000 (46 percent); pigs, 223,600 (51 percent).

"For the most part," the Bulletin declares, "industrial undertakings have just ceased to exist. Spinning, weaving and paper manufacture, which were relatively important at Tallinn and Turku, have been wiped out of existence. . . There are only 141 trucks and 170 private cars still serviceable. The entire mercantile marine has vanished, or has been sunk or requisitioned. . . Approximately 100,000 persons have been carried off, deported or killed. Over 9,000 are in prison. There has been a 10 percent drop in the total population, bringing it to about 1,000,000, but the number of men between the ages of 20 and 35 has fallen by over 50 percent. . . Whereas export prices have fallen (under Nazi pressure) by about 50 percent since 1939, prices on the home Black Market have gone up twentyfold. Official rations, with a food value of 950 calories, are the lowest in Europe and about one-quarter of pre-war consumption. They are wholly inadequate for keeping body and soul together and supplementary supplies from the Black Market are out of the question. Maximum wages are 113 marks a month, which would just buy one kilo of butter in the Black Market. . ."

AFL Head Speaks Out For 'Free Enterprise' Plan

William Green, AFL President, in a recent Detroit speech found only one objection to the Baruch "re-conversion" plan, the Wall Street-Roosevelt scheme to hand over all government-owned plants, equipment and supplies to private monopolies. Green complained merely that the Baruch plan makes "no provision . . . for labor and management to participate in the administration of post-war planning."

The reference to "management" is purely gratuitous. As Green well knows, Big Business drafted the Baruch plan, administers it and is its sole beneficiary. He is really whining because the bureaucratic union handmaidens of Roosevelt have ignored in the Baruch monopoly "post-war grab-all" plan. Wall Street and the Roosevelt administration have grown so contemptuous of the "labor statesmen" they no longer feel the need for their services in the "post-war" planning.

On the basic purposes of the Baruch plan, Green sees eye to eye with Wall Street. The Baruch report proposes to create the "atmosphere in which private initiative and resourcefulness can again take hold." Green orated in Detroit that "American private industry faces the opportunity of a century in the post-war period. . . the opportunity to justify the advantages of our free enterprise system."

Green thus applauds the Baruch scheme to help the monopolies snatch up the tens of billions worth of government "surpluses" paid for by the workers. He votes with both hands for the "free enterprise" system that is preparing to usher in a more devastating era of mass pauperization and unemployment than was known even in the decade before the war.

Whatever complaints Green and the rest of the union leaders may have about being shoved into a back seat under the Baruch plan, they are compelled to support its fundamental propositions by virtue of their continued support of Roosevelt and the government. The Baruch plan is Roosevelt's "blue-print" for the "post-war world." As loyal servitors of Roosevelt, the union leaders automatically serve his program. This is the end-product of their refusal to break with capitalist politics.

Army Sells Unused Tools As 'Scrap' to Companies

A preview of what will happen to tens of billions worth of government-financed plants and tools under the new Baruch plan is given by a War Department sale to private corporations of \$1,721,000 worth of valuable unused cutting tools as "scrap" for \$36,000.

The tools were originally provided the Studebaker Corp. under a 1940 contract entered into by Undersecretary of War Patterson. The contract was changed, and the tools remained unused. Finally, the Army Air Force removed them and placed them in its Detroit tool store.

In July 1943, the WPB ordered the Air Forces' headquarters liaison officer to scrap these valuable tools, but no publicity was to be given the matter "as it was desired to keep the public from knowing too much about overpurchases and cushion ordering."

After the tools were already given away to various corporations for 2 percent of their value, a Chicago firm bid \$1,250,000 for this "obsolete" equipment. The whole transaction is under investigation by the Truman Senate Committee, which revealed that several officers involved in the deal have been reprimanded, but "no action was taken against any higher authority."

Real Aims of Roosevelt's Oil Deal in Middle East

The Roosevelt administration's project for a government-financed pipe-line across Saudi Arabia to aid the Standard Oil, Texas and Gulf Corporations aroused such complaints from small competing oil independents about the "thin wedge of government ownership" that the government has been compelled to issue a reassurance on this score.

"High government officials who must remain anonymous," according to the N. Y. Herald-Tribune, March 10, issued a statement "to the industry to dispel its suspicions. . . The Petroleum Reserves Corporation, it was declared, would not become an owner or part-owner of any oil property abroad. . . nor does it intend to compete in any way with private industry."

These "high government officials" reveal that the purposes of the PRC are "to assist the oil industry by installation of pipe-lines or other necessary facilities which would be self-liquidating and privately operated. . . the PRC will be in position to assist American oil companies in efforts to participate in foreign oil reserves."

That this "participation" is at the expense of the Arabian peoples, whose natural resources are being looted, is not mentioned.

At the same time, Roosevelt intends to protect the big American oil monopolies from the competition of rival imperialist interests. "British financial largesse to Middle Eastern rulers put private American firms at a disadvantage. . . the American government is determined to sit down at the oil bargaining table with the British this spring and to display a friendly but strong hand," explains the Herald-Tribune.

The American people are thus warned ahead of time that they will have to continue paying huge taxes, will have to continue to send their sons to the far corners of the earth, in order to guard the stolen wealth of the oil barons, and to police the colonial peoples, so that they may be more thoroughly exploited for the greater profit and glory of the Wall Street monopolists.

The real meaning of the "four freedoms" and the Roosevelt-Churchill talk about "equal access to raw materials for all nations great and small," is being demonstrated in the Middle East, where the Arabian peoples are being asked to hand over their oil reserves at the point of Allied bayonets and permitted the "freedom" to watch the imperialist bandits squabble over a division of the spoils.