

The Fighting Worker

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the World
Unite!

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Avoid the Errors of the Paris Commune

March 18, 1871 still stands as a glowing tribute to the heroism of the workers of Paris of that day. It was then that they drove their treacherous government out of the city, took over power and established the Paris Commune. For 70 days they democratically administered their own affairs, maintained a government of the working class, by the working class and for the working class, but, because they confined themselves to one city, had faith in the "liberals" of that day, and failed to crush their capitalist class they themselves were crushed.

The French capitalists made their immediate peace with Bismarck, the war between the capitalists of two different nations was called off while they united to smash their common enemy—the working class in action.

In 1917 the errors of the Paris Commune were carefully avoided and the Russian workers carried their struggle through and established a Workers' State.

In 1944 the Russian Bureaucracy

closes its eyes to the bloody lessons learned by long years of struggle. It advocates "national unity" in Europe, America, wherever the capitalists have the upper hand. It preaches an old sermon of betrayal by faith in the exploiters. But the rulers have not forgotten the Paris Commune. They united to crush the revolutions during and after the last war. They are prepared to do it again—their own battle for markets can wait when it is a question of the profits for some of them versus a question of profits for any of them.

The workers are still learning the hard way, through death and defeat and decimation. The next revolution will not stop at half-way measures. The glowing words of the "liberals" no longer blind them. The bayonets of the bosses no longer frighten them. The apparatus of the state as the weapon of the ruling capitalist class is no longer concealed from them. The working class is learning the lessons of the Paris Commune!

FERMENT IN JAPAN

The chiefs of the Japanese army and navy, Field Marshal Sugiyama and Admiral Nagano, have been removed from their posts by the imperial government.

In the midst of war, where the Japanese victories of 1941 and 1942 have hardly been touched, this is a surprising incident.

Some people say the two men were removed because of the loss of 200 planes and 20 ships at Truk. That "explanation," however, is ridiculous. After Pearl Harbor, where America lost much more—only the admiral and general on the spot were removed, not Admiral King or General Marshall—the chiefs of staff, much more important people.

It has also been suggested that there is now a possibility of peace between Japan and Chang-Kai-Shek. Conditions in China are miserable. There is inflation of 5,000 per cent. Madame Chiang and her husband are being called Fascist by none other than Madame Chiang's sister, the wife of the founder of the Chinese Republic, Sun Yat Sen. There may or may not be a basis to the peace rumor. But it hardly seems prob-

able that Japan would remove its highest military officials on the eve of such a victory.

INTERNAL DISCONTENT

It must be remembered that in Japan the Army and Navy play important roles in the political theater. The most logical explanation for the removal of such important imperialist figures seems to lie in the internal policies of Japan.

Can it be that mass discontent is forcing some changes in Japanese politics? Allied Labor News reports giant strikes in 1941 and 1942. The same source, interviewing Japanese prisoners in China, concludes that the peasantry is highly critical of the regime and the sacrifices imposed. After the first war, in which Japan hardly participated (it lost only 300 men in the first World War) there were giant struggles in the countryside.

We do not yet know the facts behind the change. But there is a strong hint that important class struggles against Japanese imperialism are shaping up within Japan, as well as within all other capitalist countries.

Stalin's 16 Republics

February 15, 1944—Stalinism has granted "autonomy" in foreign relations to 16 Soviet Republics, and many bourgeois writers hint that there are "disturbing factors" behind this move but don't tell what they are.

Some are childish enough to believe that the present move is an attempt to gain 16 votes at a peace table. But "peace" treaties are written in terms of military strength, not numerical votes. Otherwise the big imperialists would always be outvoted by any coalition of lesser powers.

No one can be naive enough to think that Stalinism is suddenly granting some democratic rights to some of the Soviet nationalities. The biggest Soviet Republic, under the new arrangement, the Moscow Republic, is about two or three

times as large as all the others put together, and within its confines are literally dozens of non-Russian peoples in Siberia and elsewhere.

No, the move is purely political. And its guiding motif is the basic antagonism between the degenerated workers state and the imperialist powers.

CLASS UNITY

Let's dig beneath the surface and see what comes up. Germany today is facing a war on two major fronts. She also faces the threat of revolution within Europe and within the Reich itself. Should the revolution occur soon, German capitalism will be faced with the choice of making a quick deal with the three "allied" powers or with one or two of them. To unconditionally surrender to all three would mean a complete defeat. It

surrender to the Soviet Union (notwithstanding Stalinist deterioration) would mean giving material and political aid to the revolution within Europe. The most likely alternative, therefore, would be a deal with Britain or the United States, or probably both, to have the Allied troops come into Germany to keep "order." On such a basis the "Allies" might even be willing to give Germany a free hand in the East, or they might unite to help smash the Soviet Union.

History is filled with such examples. In 1871 the French capitalists invited Bismarck and his troops into Paris, rather than face the Paris Commune.

In 1940 the French bourgeoisie made "peace" with Germany rather (Continued on page 3)

Beneath Barkley's Blowoff

Senator Barkley, in condemning Roosevelt's veto of the revenue bill, has shocked the bourgeois world. The President's outstanding supporter in Congress has roundly condemned the "big boss" himself.

Naturally the pro-Administration press attempts to pass it all off as a "matter of war nerves" that will heal quickly. The anti-Administration papers, on the other hand, gleefully present the incident as a sign that "Congress is waking up" to the bureaucracy of the New Deal.

But there is more to the outburst, and the latter apologies by both sides, than meets the naked eye. The issue runs deep into the veins of capitalism itself. It isn't just accidental or incidental. On the contrary, Barkley's attack and Roosevelt's apology are only symptoms of a pernicious disease.

THE NEW BILL

What was all the shouting over? Roosevelt wanted a revenue bill that would tax 10 billion dollars more out of American pocketbooks—partially from the rich, and mostly (inevitably) from the poor. Congress gave him only 2 billion dollars in additional taxes.

That might not have been too bad, but the new bill is too rank even for a Wall Street representative like Roosevelt. It saves the exploiters a 1 per cent tax on their total yearly payroll (a billion dollars or more). It grants favors to industries like lumber, gas pipelines, airlines, and many others.

WAC DRIVE FLOPS

The WAC recruiting drive, originally scheduled to enroll 150,000, has succeeded in enrolling only 60,000 women after nearly two years of effort. Col. Oveta Culp Hobby, female head of the WAC, explains that: "Nothing leads me to believe that we are going to get a volunteer army of 400,000 or 500,000 women. We've never been able to get a volunteer army of men that big." (Time Magazine, Dec. 27, 1943.)

Col. Hobby thus reveals that not only are men largely opposed to voluntary service in the military but that women are even more hostile to the idea.

This situation is doubly bad—in the eyes of the bourgeoisie—because Col. Hobby's statement reveals that the originally planned

It opens up new loopholes for the wealthy—about 150 billions' worth. And it protects the big corporations from "re-negotiation" after this year. (The swindles of Big Business are so great that even THEIR government must siphon off some of it in "re-negotiation.")

SAVING THE SYSTEM

The Capitalist Administration is naturally interested in gaining more profits for the rich. For instance, Under Secretary of War Patterson has pointed out that the big moguls are putting away 40 billion dollars in postwar funds, WHICH ESCAPES TAXES. But a far-sighted capitalist like Roosevelt is worried not only about the present needs of Morgan, Rockefeller, Dupont et al., but about their long-term needs.

Capitalism in the period of decay needs ORGANIZATION and DISCIPLINE from its own class. The state tells each company how much steel it can get, how many hammers it can make, what pay it can give, to whom it can sell, etc. Without such DECREES capitalist anarchy would cause defeat in the present war and a revolutionary crisis. Roosevelt must save his capitalist system from such a "catastrophe."

The revenue bill plays petty favorites; it does not siphon off enough money from the biggest national income in history. Mr. Roosevelt feels that will lead to greater inflation, will upset his "compensatory economy," to use a term of Stuart Chase.

strength of the WAC at 150,000 has been tentatively at least, increased to 400,000 or 500,000 and in spite of this ruling class desire the women won't come in.

In fact when the WAAC was changed to the WAC and women were permitted to resign about one out of five resigned and went home. Mrs. Hobby, herself a mother of two children, now states that compulsory recruiting—conscription—would be necessary to meet the quota.

REGIMENTATION NOT GLAMOROUS

Col. Hobby's excuse that even men do not volunteer in such numbers does not explain why WAC recruiting has been such a dismal flop after all the high pressure propaganda put into selling the idea. Two Senators (bright chaps, no doubt) explain it all by the statement that the WAC uniform is not "snappy enough" and doesn't have "that certain touch—that something which sets the WAVES and lady Marines apart."

But the WAVES and lady Marines recruiting drives have also come to a virtual standstill even though their quotas were much lower than the WAC.

Directly contradicting the two "clever" Senators is Dr. Donald A. Laird, internationally known psychologist, who was quoted in a January 5th, 1944, United Press item as follows: ". . . It is not the uniform which is at fault—it is the name. The name WAC is much wackier than the uniform . . . women dislike nicknames unless they are complimentary or flattering ones." Someone should whisper to the good doctor that military service, by any other name, is still military service.

(Continued on page 4)

SECTIONAL COMPETITION

Congress, on the other hand, just doesn't give a damn. This is election year, in the first place. The Republicans are out to gain a mass support, as a loyal opposition, and (like all non-ruling parties) they don't care how they get it. They're trying to play up to ALL section of the population. They are reacting to all sorts of pressure.

The Southern Democrats are motivated by other things. The war has brought gigantic new factories and investments to the South. The South has few unions; it has low pay; and if left alone—without government interference—it hopes to compete with Northern industry on a better than equal basis. It wants "free competition" for its own sectional aims. It is opposed to organization and disciplining of the WHOLE capitalist class, and it wants much sterner measures against the working class.

DECREE DICTATORSHIP INCREASING

Therein lies the fundamental conflict between Congress and the Administration—a conflict as basic as the contradictions of capitalism itself. Congress has outlived its usefulness as a bourgeois instrument. It is unwieldy, too slow, too subject to pressure. It resists the organization of capitalism (organization of anarchy and scarcity) just like the German Reichstag resisted it in 1930-32 and the French Parliament resisted it in 1937-39. The Roosevelt government, on the other hand, is like the Daladier government of 1937 in France, or the Von Papen or Bruening governments in Germany. It is a government that rules increasingly by decree—the decree orders of a War Labor Board on wages, or War Production Board on production quotas, or OPA on prices, etc.

In all capitalist countries today the trend is unmistakable—Parliaments and judicial bodies are being reduced to impotence. The trend is toward greater and greater government centralization.

The Bonapartist regime of Roosevelt is at a mild stage in this process. Although the present regime is definitely capitalist, it appears to rest "above" classes. It disciplines (or attempts to) its own class, and it lashes and bleeds the working class through higher taxes, higher prices, controlled and frozen wages, freezing of jobs, proposed labor draft, etc. The hammer blows, of course, are against the working class—its direct enemy. It is only trying to organize its own class for its supposed historic role—imperialist ruler of the universe. And that role demands discipline, elimination of "free" competition, government by decree, and an organized economy of scarcity.

HISTORY DEMANDS COMMUNISM OR FASCISM

Congress cannot fight off the real dangers—it is too phlegmatic and disorderly, too subject to lobbying and pressure. But the Administration must TRY. Unfortunately, Roosevelt Bonapartism (or Willkie or Bricker or Dewey Bonapartism, which may replace it) cannot achieve the task, either. It suffers from the "handicap" that a labor movement still exists.

The plain truth is that capitalism, must either be overthrown and replaced by Communism, or to gain even a temporary respite, it must "develop" to Fascism.

SURVEY ON THE RISING COST OF LIVING

(This article is continued from the February F. W.)

In our study of these figures, we used the diet provided by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in its advice to policy-holders on how to keep healthy on low incomes. This booklet was published during the depression, and cut the diet to the minimum, assuming that the father was unemployed, or working only part time. We worked on the theory that the insurance company could have no reason for not giving the best possible diet at the lowest cost, since the health of its policy-holders directly affects the profits of the company; in addition, we have checked this diet against authoritative medical sources. However, in deference to the longer working hours of the father, we increased the amount of meat used materially, allowing approximately 50 per cent greater amounts, and some improvements in the types used. At the risk of elevating bourgeois eyebrows, we have allowed our worker's family to have chicken every other Sunday, and some sort of roast—of the cheaper cuts, of course!—on the alternating Sundays. We also slightly increased the amounts of cheese and eggs allotted, but made no other changes in the insurance company's budget. But this brings our minimum diet up to \$15 per week for a family of four, or \$780 per year as opposed to the \$668.25 permitted by the Bureau. It looks as if we may have to put our worker back on pig's knuckles and neckbones after all!

Delving just a little deeper into food price increases, we find again

the increases are greatest on those items which make up the bulk of the workingman's diet. We note such increased percentages as these: Eggs, 84.6; white potatoes, 87.5; spinach, 71.8; green beans, 90.3; onions, 119.4; dried beans, 77.6; apples, 156.8; sweet potatoes, 158.2; pork liver, 100.0; and numerous others, all of them staples in the food budget of the lowest income groups.

Bear in mind that these figures are not made up out of our own minds, or even compiled by our own writers; they are the published figures of the Bureau of Statistics of the Department of Labor. And they are published by the same government that has the temerity to hold us to the disgraceful 15 per cent steal formula; and that even draws the conclusion from its own figures that the cost of living for the worker's family has risen a bare 23.2 per cent!

We did not attempt to do the same thing for clothing and other items, partly because no details are given in the Bureau's report; but also because admittedly food is the largest item in the worker's budget, and it is food particularly that has gone up out of all proportions, despite "ceiling" prices, subsidies and other supposed palliatives which are not felt in any appreciable effect on the worker's pocketbook; and we have used Washington prices because that city is taken as the base in the Bureau's report. But we submit that similar studies, with perhaps even more startling results could be made with the costs in cities where defense industry has swollen the population and the prices out

of proportion to the admittedly larger wage increases of those cities.

What a steal! What blatant and open-faced deception of the workers! When with the simplest arithmetic, the figures can be shown to the false, the government yet presents them to us and asks us to accept them! Insisting that we must not strike, that we must be "patriotic," must accept the petty wages handed out to us, barely enough to support a minimum standard of living (by their own figures) and must pay the enormous taxes—levied by them, not by the workers—and close the "inflationary gap" by putting our "surplus" into war bonds—for them, to support THEIR war!

But more and more, the workers are asking, "What gap are they talking about?" and suggesting that the gap be closed between the wages they actually receive, and the cost of living, plus taxes, compulsory bond purchases, plus savings for the inevitable hangover from this war, plus a little ordinary decent, human style of living for themselves and their children. That is the real "gap" that needs to be closed, and it needs to be closed by smashing the "Little Steel" formula and bringing wages up to somewhere near a decent standard of living.

Only under a government controlled by and for the workers will the cost of living approximate a "living wage," and will a living wage mean real LIVING, and not the bare subsistence, with a little more over for the propagation of more workers for the bosses to exploit, that is handed out to us under the capitalist system.

Workers of the World

NATIVE "RIGHTS"

When Robert Chauke, a Negro from Transvaal, asked for a work permit at the Pass Office of Johannesburg, the two white clerks refused it, trying to make him admit illegal entry from Rhodesia. Chauke insisted on his right to work in Johannesburg, so they took him into the next room and tried to hang him. The clerks were arrested and fined \$100, but are continuing to serve at the Pass Office. British imperialism shields as best it can those who do its dirty work.

In British South Africa a native is not even free to be exploited, is not free to slave for a starvation pay. He has to come from the same province and then he has to beg the British administration for a work permit.

ITALY IN FERMENT

AMG and their puppet Badoglio are not the only ones having trouble in Italy. The same is true for the "Government of the Italian Social Republic," Mussolini's outfit for Northern Italy. Although the Italian Revolution has been momentarily halted, the workers' militancy is a constant threat. Factory councils, formed after Mussolini's downfall, have been maintained and the government is taking over essential factories and enterprises in an effort to prevent the workers from taking them. There is one strike after another. On December 13, for example, there was a large strike in several industries in Milan. In Turin, Genoa, Milan, Novara and Alessandria, after constant struggles between boss and workers, the Wehrmacht finally ordered flat wage increases from 15 per cent to 30 per cent—all of which solves absolutely nothing, prices have gone up from 200 per cent to 700 per cent in this area.

Even though their immediate demands are mainly economic, the Italian workers know that their fight is much vaster. Together with the workers of America, of the world, they must fight to overthrow their oppressors, be they aligned with the "Allies" or the "Axis."

THE FRENCH RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

Resistance against the Germans in France is not one large, brotherly, national movement. On the one hand there is the National Council of Resistance, which claims to be a "United Front," or the "leftist" side of the movement. It recognizes "with criticism" the authority of the French Liberation Committee in Algiers. Those are the supporters of the Allied imperialists against the Axis imperialists. Their most active and largest elements are the Stalinists or "national Communists," as they call themselves and their following of misled workers.

Opposed to these are what the Chicago Daily News terms the "Trotskyites," which term obviously stands for the conscious revolutionary internationalist workers who are not taken in by nationalist illusions. The term "Trotskyite" is being used in the same sense as was "Communism" before it put on respectable clothing and became acceptable in high society, when it was still "a spectre haunting Europe, the spectre of Communism."

FOOD FOR INDIA

Great Britain's dominance of India is being threatened with a new weapon. Economic dominance being the most successful way of controlling colonies, American imperialism is trying to get India included among the countries that UNRRA (United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Association) is going to "help." Despite the fact that the USA officially has only one voice, it is financially the strongest and most dominant power, and UNRRA in the last analysis is one of its weapons. Having UNRRA go to India to help "rebuild" that country prepares the way for American capital to take over the exploitation of that oppressed colony.

FRATERNIZATION AT THE FRONT

On the Italian front, the German and Allied armies arranged a local truce for some hours to allow both sides to evacuate their wounded. This is the first news of such incidents in this war, although this was frequent during the last war and became more and more so toward the end.

Such an incident shows what pressure by the workers in uniform can accomplish and it is up to the soldiers on all fronts to follow this example on an ever larger basis by fraternizing with their brothers in the foxhole opposite. Starting with restricted aims, such as evacuation of the wounded, letting food supplies pass, to swapping food and cigarettes and finally realizing that the enemy is not the worker on the other side but the capitalists on both sides, will help put an end to the war.

JAPAN HAS TWO CLASSES, TOO

Japan's success is entirely due to U. S. materials, says Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek, and she ought to know. "What conclusion do you think we could draw from the knowledge that the great U. S. was supplying Japan with all the gasoline, oil, and materials she needed to enable her to continue to send airplanes and mechanized forces about our land and to blast the lives out of our people and to raze our homes to earth?"—From "This Is Our China."

According to the CIO News there were strikes in Japan in 1941 that encompassed as many as 100,000 workers. In the city of Kobe early that year, the resentment against long hours was so great that despite lack of leadership and strong unions, there was a general strike which resulted in an appreciable lowering of hours. At one stage the masses shouted slogans against imperialism and imperialist war.

The following year, after the war with the U. S. had started, there were additional strikes. The Japanese workers and peasants, like the oppressed elsewhere, have stomachs and minds that react to hunger, long hours and imperialist slaughter. Instead of the much publicized hari-kari, the workers of Japan practice mass action.

zation although they have done some important work in the Trade Unions recently and they carry on political propaganda.

CLYDE WORKERS COMMITTEE

The Clyde Workers Committee is the nucleus of a new shop steward movement in Britain. It was established in the early part of last year as the result of some strikes on the Clydeside. It has groups and scattered support elsewhere and a good perspective for growth.

In that respect, too, the British workers are ahead of the Americans. The Clyde committee is

highly political for a trade union group. It calls for "hands off Italy" and for "a Soviet Italy." It opposes the capitalist state as such and represents a very hopeful development.

The old Britain is disappearing. Class stirrings are beginning to mount. Britain is not the ideal picture that is represented in the American press as one of "Sweet unity" and a "oneness of purpose." The class cleavage is greater in Britain than in America and far more ominous at the moment—for the capitalists.

CLASS CLEAVAGE IN BRITAIN

(The following is an eye-witness estimate of class relations in Great Britain by a comrade who has just returned.—Ed. note).

England is experiencing a tremendous internal convulsion. Class relations are sharpening, with a deep left shift among the masses.

The background for this development is Britain's international position. The war has brought out in sharp relief England's losing fight, particularly in relation to the United States. The Empire is in decline; it is felt everywhere. At the moment her position seems improved in a military sense; but the victories are not *her* victories—they belong to the Soviet Union and to the enormous subsidies in food and munitions by the United States.

Even now Britain can afford few concessions to the masses. After the war the situation will be desperate. To retain even a second rate position in the world market will require a deep cut in the living standards of the masses. And that assumes that Britain can not only hold on to India, Australia, Canada and other parts of the Empire, but can also steer safely through the sea of revolution.

LEFT SHIFT OF THE MASSES

In spite of the military victories there is a growth of radicalization and discontent. The war has changed the consciousness of the working class, and of all classes in fact. Normal life is disrupted in a thousand ways; men and women by the millions are torn from old, settled, routine life and thrown into the armed forces; homes destroyed, bombed, nightly blackouts, family life disrupted, women in industry, rationing, scarcity, inequality, the youth in the army, navy, etc.; the middle class crushed; the masses are responsive to new ideas, new solutions, dissatisfied with the old; restive; in constant ferment.

The old faith in the ruling class is shattered; the ruling class itself has lost faith in itself. There is

a dissatisfaction with the defeats in the first years, defeats that brought out clearly, sharply and suddenly, the declining position of Britain's ruling class.

Bitter general criticism meets every instance of inefficiency, incompetence and inequality. The trade unions claim eight million members—the highest in Britain's history.

Strikes are increasing in number, scope and political level. In 1942 there were more strikes than in any year since 1926. But in 1943 the strikes became larger, involving more workers and taking on an increased political content of opposition to government decisions. The miners, shipyard workers, transport workers and "engineering" (tool and machine shop, lathe hands, drill press, assemblers, etc.) that is heavy industry—takes the lead.

It should be noted that in 1938 some 65 per cent of Britain's population was the working class; in 1943 over 75 per cent.

The ruling class is compelled to rest on labor, to depend on the labor "leaders" to carry out their measures. If it were not for the Labor Party coalition Churchill would fall tomorrow. This fact in part explains the degree of democratic rights, of freedom of speech, still afforded the workers.

POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS RISING

The masses support the Labor Party in place of something better; but criticism of the leaders is widespread and general. Among some of the people the disillusionment with the officialdom takes the form of rejection of all politics.

This is especially true of sections of the youth. The officialdom is moving to the right, the masses to the left.

The bourgeoisie makes great efforts to create rifts between workers and soldiers by stories of high wages in industry, strikes, etc. This has some effect. But, on the other hand, British soldiers have a high political level, far higher

than the Americans. They even go so far as to have political discussion groups in the army and open discussions and debates on whether the war is imperialist. The army is very close to the people, consisting practically of workers, and living in, or close to, the cities and towns.

POLITICAL GROUPINGS

The Labor Party has been inactive as a political force. There are a few meetings of branches, very occasional public addresses, etc. But no real life, despite the fact that it has millions of members. They are resentful of the party leadership, but unclear without a line, apathetic.

The Independent Labor Party experienced a growth with the war on the basis of a centrist line and the Labor Party coalition truce. But this growth is declining lately. It seems probable that if the coalition ends the I. L. P. tops will seek entry into the Labor Party.

The Stalinists are recruiting members from raw working class elements, mainly on the basis of the Soviet Union and the Red Army gains. The more advanced workers, and those who more directly experience its strike-breaking role, are leaving. There is a large turnover.

There are two Trotsky groups. The official Cannon group is small and split into a number of factions—all of them WITHIN the Labor Party. The Workers International League—now in the process of uniting with the other group—is considerably larger. It came out of the Labor Party Youth primarily. Its basic principles are the same as Cannon's in the U. S. It considers entry into the Labor Party tactical and proposes a Labor Party government, etc. It rejects the program of revolutionary defeatism and will probably eventually return to the Labor Party.

Our own comrades of the Leninist League of Great Britain are few and in great need of organi-

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Japanese Atrocities

"If the morality of America has sunk so low it requires this kind of propaganda (the stories of atrocities in Japanese prisons) to sell war bonds, we wonder what the boys are fighting for." This is the statement of Dr. Spensley, president of a Bataan relief organization in Albuquerque, and father of a soldier who died in a Japanese prison camp.

Lieutenant-Governor Jones, of New Mexico, which has more men captured in Bataan than any other state in the Union proportionately, stated that he, too, could not believe the atrocity stories.

On the heels of the atrocity reports, Secretary Morgenthau reported that bond sales skyrocketed. In Chicago they doubled, in New York they doubled. Bond buying was "spirited" in Washington and other cities.

Are the stories true? Did Japanese guards beat, starve and murder prisoners?

Atrocity stories are as old as war itself. Most of them are highly exaggerated. The present stories may or may not be true; probably only a portion of it has any truth. But the important thing is that THE WHOLE WAR IS AN ATROCITY—an immense history of brutal murder, starvation, and imprisonment by the millions.

Is the starving of two million British Indians any less an atrocity? Are the stories published by the Australians of American brutality to Japanese any sweeter? The orders to American soldiers in the Pacific to "Take no prisoners" means deliberate murder. Is the shameful bombing of the workers in Milan any less an atrocity?

It is inevitable in a war for imperialist aims that there will be atrocities on all sides. Each side builds up the stories and uses them for their own purposes. Revolutionists condemn ALL the atrocities, and particularly the fountainhead of them—IMPERIALIST WAR ITSELF.

One thing should be remembered: America is anxious to reduce Japanese imperialism to a nonentity in the capitalist world. To do that she must keep nurturing a spirited hatred against the Japanese people, to make them sub-human, monstrosities. But the Japanese, like the rest of the human family, is also divided into two classes, and the working class suffers, starve, strike and fight back against the tyranny of its Mitsui and Mitsubishi rulers the same as workers of other lands fight against their oppressors.

Whenever glaring atrocity stories appear, a political motivation will be found buried under the tons of propaganda and hatred. But never will the capitalists publish the biggest atrocity story of all—that the imperialist war, for which all capitalist powers share the guilt—IS THE BIGGEST ATROCITY.

SOVIET - FINNISH 'PEACE' PLANS

February 14, 1944. If peace rumors between Finland and the Soviet Union develop into a living reality, workers everywhere should watch closely the role of the United States in the actual peace negotiations.

Finland is one of the doors into the Workers' State, the northern door. It is just as important in this sector as the Dardanelles are in the south. We should remember that Germany tried to keep that door as far ajar as possible in 1939-40, when it insisted on a "peace" between Russia and Finland which kept Finland almost intact, except for a small stretch above Leningrad and some territory in Karelia. As a result of German (and American) pressure then, the valuable nickel mines in the north and other important areas were turned back to Finland.

Only a few months later Germany attempted to utilize Finland to open the door into Russia, via Leningrad. This effort failed—the small territorial gains were sufficient to absorb the German and Finnish advance and check it.

But now American imperialism is striving for a "peace" between Finland and the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that the Finnish reactionary government fights side by side with the Nazi legions, Secretary Hull has maintained diplomatic relations with the government of the butcher Mannerheim (well remembered by the workers for murdering thousands after the 1918 Revolution). Besides being a commentary on the sincerity of the struggle "against Fascism" this step is significant because the U. S. undoubtedly has ideas of her own relative to Finland.

Will the farce of 1940 be repeated? Roosevelt will certainly attempt to limit Russia's territorial gains with

cries of "four freedoms," "self determination," "no territorial aggrandizement," the Atlantic Charter, etc. Behind smooth words, however, lurks the shadow of intervention, of plans for an attack against the future Revolution of Europe and the degenerated Workers' State.

Workers should be on guard against the talk of "Red Imperialism," for behind this attack there exists the REAL imperialism of the Soviet Union's present allies, just as behind the German maneuvers of yesterday for "peace" there existed the REAL war aims of German imperialism.

The Finnish Social-Democrats who evoked such great sympathy from the American liberals, reformists and even the Schachtmanites, a few years ago, for their "heroic fight against aggression," have shown conclusively what they are made of. They united willingly and unashamedly with Hitler and Nazism to fight the Soviet Union.

World events must be looked at from a CLASS point of view, not from momentary incidents like "attack" or "defense," "attacker" or "defender." In that light this war is a struggle of the imperialists to re-divide and conquer the world markets, and to smash the proletarian revolution and the Soviet Union (despite Stalinism). Little countries play no role except to prop up one imperialist clique or the other. The Finnish social-patriots are distinguished by the fact that in the course of this war they have supported BOTH groups of imperialists. That is an historic achievement for which the Finnish working class will no doubt well reward them—by retirement and elimination as a political force—under a Soviet Finland.

C. P. OF U. S. A. GOES WHOLE HOG

The "new" program of the American Stalinists in open support of capitalism, now and after the war, has deep significance.

It shows, first of all, that the social-patriots must go the whole hog for capitalism. The crisis of imperialism is too great for support with "ifs" and "buts." Support of the war means support of strike-breaking, lowering the standards of living, higher wages, dictatorship, elimination of freedom of speech, no freedom of press, or assembly, outlawing the right to strike, etc.

More than that, however, it means that the social-patriots must go along with the imperialist government, promising "pie-in-the-sky" after the war—peace, plenty, higher standards of living, and other such lies. These words have become stale in the mouth of Henry Wallace and the other demagogues. They need reinforcement. The Stalinists, with considerable strength in the top of the trade union movement, come to the rescue.

They promise to give full and unconditional support to the system of "free enterprise" (National Association of Manufacturers' pet theme) after the war; to liquidate as a political party and to give support to the two big political parties of capitalism—the Democrats and the Republicans.

All this is possible, they say, because of the Teheran conference. The Soviet Union and the capitalist states have worked out an agreement which makes for a better world—with a higher standard of living! An alliance with the Soviet Union guarantees a peaceful capitalism without "civil war." But what are those agreements at Teheran? Why are the kept secret? Certainly no plan

for increasing the standard of living need be a MILITARY SECRET!

The truth is that the Teheran conference agreed to use FORCE against the oppressed masses of Europe, Asia and America, if they fight for real peace and plenty. The agreements are kept secret and only vague and meaningless generalities are disclosed. And Stalinism has suddenly discovered a "peaceful" capitalism, without wars or revolutions, and with a higher standard of living. (Even the capitalists haven't been able to find such a paradise for themselves!)

Stalinism again is doing the dirty work for the imperialists. It is keeping alive their lies and garbing them as a new truth.

Today, the Stalinists, in America and wherever they are, try to lull the masses into subjection to imperialism by words; tomorrow they will implement it with force, counter-revolutionary tactics and behavior.

This new turn of the Stalinists must not be tossed off lightly. It reveals an open and firm alliance between Stalinism and capitalism against the proletariat. It means the working class will have to defend itself not only against the wordy lies but also against the deeds of this alliance. Workers' guards, clean unions, a national progressive group, councils of workers' delegates and soldier delegates to fight the shutting down of the factories, struggles for a higher standard of living and an increase in real wages, struggles for a society with production for use under a Workers' Council Government—this is the answer the working class will have to the latest plans of imperialism and their underlings skulking within the workers' ranks.

NEW 'AUTONOMY' DIVIDES STRENGTH OF SOVIET UNION

(Continued from page 1)
er than submit to proletarian revolution.

In Russia in 1917 the Cadets attempted a similar strategy, and were only thwarted by the vigilance of the Bolsheviks.

STALIN'S WEAPONS

While a Stalin-Hitler pact was possible in 1939, it is a far removed possibility today. 1939 was the end of a revolutionary wave—the defeat of the Spanish revolution was a decisive set-back. 1944 is the beginning of a new wave of proletarian revolutions. And the imperialists can not afford to give the Soviet Union a free hand, because despite Stalinism, the Red Army will make important gestures to aid the working class wherever it contacts it in revolution.

Stalinism therefore must attempt to defend itself. Having long ago given up faith in the proletarian revolution (which would destroy Stalinism by its very dynamics) and working merely on the basis of bourgeois diplomacy, Stalinism resorts to:

1. Propaganda to subtly warn the masses that the Allies may betray the Soviet Union. In the Pravda incident (the story of a British separate peace deal with Ribbentrop) Stalin is telling the British and American people that

the idea of a separate peace is in the minds of the Soviet "allies." He picks some damaging material against Britain, and not against America, only because Britain is the lesser power and not as important in lend-lease. He can not attack the "Allies" openly, so rumors, which no doubt have some basis in fact, are put out.

2. The preparation of buffer states against the Allies, just as annexations of parts of Finland, Rumania, Poland and the whole Baltic states in 1939-40 were buffers to protect the Soviet Union against the German invasion.

The Soviet Union is now divided into "autonomous" Republics so that other European states may join with these Republics—such as Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, all of Poland, etc. Here is laid down the political formula for Stalinism to build a federation of states to protect it from its capitalist "allies." There is no doubt, too, that the "autonomy" in "foreign affairs" and "military affairs" will extend—insofar as countries such as Czechoslovakia are concerned—to the sphere of "internal economy." In other words by extending the so-called autonomy Stalinism can make room for capitalist states to become part of a big Russian federation of states.

It is significant that Stalin refuses to make a deal with the British controlled Polish government-in-exile; that Dimitroff is boiling the pot in Bulgaria and demanding that Bulgaria secede from the Axis—presumably to join the Soviet Union fully and unconditionally; that the Polish group in Moscow is getting more and more recognition from Stalin and is undoubtedly being groomed to take over all of Poland.

It is also significant that Jan Smuts, British leader next to Churchill in authority, is calling for a British federation of states, composed of the British Empire, Holland, Belgium and other countries in Western Europe. The Dutch have already signified a willingness to join such a federation.

"AUTONOMY" ISN'T DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

The Stalinist manoeuvres have one basic shortcoming. They are based on shallow premises. They assume that Stalinism will be able not only to hold the Revolution in check in Europe and Asia, but will also be able to keep internal order in the Soviet Union itself.

But the granting of "autonomy" in itself is a concession to nationalist elements and open bourgeois elements within the Soviet Union—particularly in the Ukraine. The

strengthening of these forces will make the counter-revolution within Russia that much easier. At a time when the workers republic should be confronting the outside capitalist world as a UNIFIED WHOLE, Stalinism chooses to grant this type of so-called autonomy, and confront the capitalists as 16 different parts.

Marxists are in favor of autonomy in a workers state, but it is a cultural and limited political autonomy. We are always opposed to the federalist form of autonomy, where every workers republic is totally divorced in economy and foreign affairs from every other. We are FOR autonomy BASED ON DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM. The present "autonomy" is a caricature. Underneath the surface Stalinism will still try to control through the Party apparatus, but it is giving enormous aid to the federalist, nationalist and capitalist elements. "Autonomy" in foreign affairs presumes that at the earliest opportunity there will be autonomy in foreign trade, that the monopoly of foreign trade will be broken, and that following that there will be incursions into the monopoly of state industry.

The "autonomy" move of Stalinism continues to weaken the Soviet Union. It is part and parcel of the sell-out perpetrated in the

"democratic" countries, where the Stalinists support their capitalist masters. It attempts at one and the same time to:

1. Strengthen its own weakened base WITHIN the Soviet Union, by granting concessions to the nationalist and bourgeois elements; and

2. Strengthen its position internationally by creating the political formula for adding new buffer states to Russia, against the inevitable new intervention.

Both aims, however, only serve to undermine the real defense of the Soviet Union. Only the proletariat can defend the workers state; only proletarian revolution. The new moves confirm what we have always stated—that STALINISM CANNOT DEFEND THE SOVIET UNION. It can win limited military victories, but it can not win the big battle, the decisive victory—which is social and political, as well as military. Stalinism in fact, undermines the base of the Soviet Union and brings it to the brink of capitalist restoration.

The Soviet Union can be defended only through the extension of the October Revolution. It must be defended against world capitalism, despite and against its Stalinist and other agents, both inside and outside the U. S. S. R.

WOMEN AVOID ARMY

(Continued from page 1)

All these people—Col. Hobby, the two Senators and the others—are beating around the bush and avoiding the real point. It is true that the name WAC is wacky and that women dislike it; the uniforms are drab and grow drabber with each day of wear; grow tiresome when worn day in and day out; even less than men will the women volunteer. But these are not the basic reasons for the recruiting failure.

The real fact is that women simply don't want any part of the army. They refuse to submit to regimentation. The pay is low; privileges few and meaningless compared to the pay and privileges of a civilian. There is no glamor in being in uniform as the women have discovered from hard and bitter experience.

NO NORMAL LIFE

The experiences of the women in the WAC, WAVES, etc., reveal ever more clearly that these organizations are designed primarily to relieve men for combat duty overseas. It is apparent that if enough women volunteered or were drafted into service then additional millions of young able bodied males could be shipped overseas and thus denude the country of men. The women realize, in their own way, that such a situation would not be good either for the men or themselves.

Women realize that the WAC, like the rest of the military, is an organization which upsets normal living by separating men and women and making sure that they stay separated. WAC members are forbidden motherhood while in service. (Many hundreds have, however, resorted to pregnancy and thus been relieved from service.) Negro WACS are separated from the white members of the organization.

Women who join the WAC are mainly, lonely, super-patriotic people who are momentarily caught in the hysteria of war. Their sweethearts, husbands and sometimes fathers or sons, usually are in the service and they think they are helping their loved ones when they first joined the WACS but realization comes very soon.

In the WACS the women learn for the first time what the army really means. First is the lack of freedom of movement. Every move of theirs is surrounded by the

antiquated Prussian system of regulations. A pass is required to get out of camp. A furlough usually means months of waiting. Then income takes a steep nose-dive—particularly for those women who worked in industry before joining the WACS. Their separation from men, enforced by the rigid army set-up, increases their isolation from the civilian community and completes their break with past experiences as civilians. The harsh treatment by the army of personal problems weighs heavily upon women.

Though the women do not shoulder guns they do have to drill and learn many other things that the men have to be taught. These things are pounded into the women in true drill-master style and this does not operate to increase women's respect for the army.

WOMEN ARE ANTI-WAR

The failure of the WACS recruiting drives shows women as passively anti-war. Their reaction is still negative. As yet they have not found any positive way in which to manifest their essential opposition to the mass murder and senseless slaughter of imperialist war.

All the excuses about unattractive uniforms, a bad organization name, etc., only hide the fact that women need only the knowledge of ways to positively express their essential opposition to this imperialist carnage.

Needless to say that the government will not sit idly by and permit the women to escape the war. The government needs to send ever more men overseas into the slaughter and without women in the services to replace men the male overseas quotas will fall short. This fact explains the remarks of Col. Hobby and the rest, for a national draft of women. The government may attempt to institute it gradually to cushion the shock of forcing women into military service against their wills. But no matter how such a step is introduced or cushioned it now appears that drafting of women and forced regimentation will be bitterly opposed by the women themselves. In this opposition the women will transform their passive, negative anti-war role of today into a positive and effective mass action and revolutionary role which will place women in the vanguard of the fighters against imperialist war.

Negro Troops Worse Off Than War Prisoners

After a tour of ten Negro Army camps, the Fraternal Council of Negro Churches has reached the conclusion that Nazi prisoners in the United States get better consideration than regular Negro troops of the U. S. Army.

What a startling commentary on the "war for democracy"! The American Negro is treated like a Jew under Naziism. He is segregated and treated like an "inferior" race.

The hatred of the Negro for this system is expressed in all of the big Negro papers. Soldiers write in and ask: "What are we fighting for?" They write in and complain of "useless training for Negro troops." The horrible discrimination in Army camps is so great and has seeped through to so many Negroes "back home" that delinquency and malingering is very high amongst the Negro people.

At one draft board, for instance, in Chicago, on a particular day 26 of approximately 80 Negroes failed to show up for a pre-induction exam. The attitude of many of these is that there is little difference for them whether they go to the Army or jail.

There just is no sign for the

Buick Election Shows Need Of Organized Activity in Shop and Union

In a hotly contested election at the Buick Melrose mark Plant on March 1st, the Progressive Group slate was nosed out for the leadership of Local 6, UAW-CIO by a slate of job seekers and former officials.

Three run-off elections still remain to be held for the offices of president, trustees and sergeant-at-arms, but the results will not change the outcome. Of the four officers elected the Progressive won two and the Petros office-seeker slate won two. However, for the executive board at large and shop committee the Petros slate won ten men to six for the Progressives.

The Progressives' program was:

- 1.—Rescind the no-strike pledge.
- 2.—Withdraw immediately from the War Labor Board.
- 3.—A militant struggle against lay-offs and for some immediate demands such as better and less expensive cafeteria service, etc.

The Progressives were considerably handicapped because of the fact that their caucus lacked effective organization. The Progressives failed to label the Petros group for what it was—an unprincipled clique of office seekers, close to the International officials in town and not too hard on the company. Worse than that, the Progressives permitted a number of unprincipled individuals on their slate which hurt them.

A "maintain the no-strike" pledge

WHAT THE SHOOTING IS ALL ABOUT

(The following is from "Maneuver in War," by Lt. Col. Willoughby of the U. S. Army.)

"Great Britain, France, Russia and Holland control enormous territories, acquired in colonial, expansionist wars of past centuries, while Japan, Italy and Germany have entered this colonial race too late; the resulting population densities, exclusive of colonial space, range from 21 to 76 inhabitants per square mile for the former, and 137 to 460 for the latter; the figure for Japan is nearer 800 if one considers the non-arable, mountainous sections of the island. In these appalling figures may be found a rational basis for the currently popular BUT WHOLLY FICTITIOUS line of demarcation between 'gangster' nations and the 'democracies'—the former accused of incurably imperialistic, war-like tendencies, while the latter are credited with an enduring peaceful disposition. The 'Empire Chart' clearly reveals that the line of demarcation in reality is between powers with ample colonial space and those with limited ter-

grouping was completely snowed under in the elections, gaining only a few hundred votes out of 3,197.

The defeat of the Progressive group is not fatal, although the members had confidently expected a victory. The Petros group will undoubtedly split up as issues are brought before it. If the Progressives remain firm and keep their caucus alive and functioning better they will certainly regain lost ground.

Alert and organized leadership is a MUST for every progressive and honest trade unionist today.

ritories, or, as it is popularly phrased, a conflict between the 'have' and the 'have-not' powers. It is important to note and easily demonstrable that the 'haves' acquired their present favorable position through historical, unvarnished conquests and that the 'have-nots' are merely attempting to follow suit at a belated hour; to attempt to make a moral issue out of this is sheer hypocrisy. . . ."

That makes the U. S. government propaganda sheer hypocrisy.

"Population pressure or 'ratio of population density to available space' is only one of many factors that drive nations on the warpath.

"For the ancient world, it was the quest for land, for grazing space, that drove the nomad hordes to conquest; for our age, the possession of basic raw materials essential to a modern, industrialized civilization becomes the dominating factor—a vicious cycle of conflicting interests, in which the pauper nations regard the others with sullen envy."

These words are astounding, all the more so since they are written by an American Army officer, whose book is required reading for all other American Army officers. Here they tell the truth about the war and imperialism.

WE NEED AT ONCE 50 copies of the September 1943 International News, containing the article "The Class Struggle and the Underground Movement."

Please mail your copy back to us at 708 N. Clark Street, Chicago, Ill.

OPEN INVITATION TO ACTION FOR FREEDOM OF 18 TROTSKYITES

One of the most important political tasks of the American working class today is to free the 18 Trotskyites, who are now serving terms in Federal prisons, from their frame-up convictions on charges of "sedition." Freedom of speech and of the press remains a mockery so long as these workers remain in the penitentiary.

The task of freeing them, however, can ONLY be accomplished by the working class with the aid of workers' allies and workers' friends among the liberals and other sections of the population.

In December, 1943, the RWL wrote to the Socialist Workers Party and suggested United Front action on a national scale among the various political parties that opposed the frame-up and all the other working class groups that could be enlisted. We received in reply an invitation from the Chicago Branch of the Civil Rights Defense Committee to speak at a local meeting. We gladly accepted and we think our participation gained the respect of the local members of the SWP and of all others who attended the meeting. We contributed all we could, under the circumstances, in finances, organization and publicity. But that is all the activity we were invited to—a mass meeting in one city.

COURTS BELONG TO CAPITALISTS

In Cleveland, Ohio, where no such meeting as the above was organized or any other mass action on the matter carried on, the Cleveland Unit of the RWL took the initiative and called together various groups and proposed action in defense of the Minneapolis and other class war prisoners. The first meeting was attended by the RWL, the IWW, the Workers Party (Schachtmanites), the La-

bor Defense Congress and the official Trotskyites, the Socialist Workers Party.

The SWP, from whose ranks most of the Minneapolis defendants were seized, bolted the conference and refused to participate in any action — DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY HAD FAILED TO ORGANIZE ANYTHING IN CLEVELAND. The SWP representatives stated that all their activity was organized and carried out through the Civil Rights Defense Committee and they would handle the matter ONLY through the courts and ONLY deal with the Minneapolis cases. They insisted on a purely "legalistic" struggle.

The Schachtmanites and the IWW went along for another conference at which they, too, decided on no activity other than that initiated by the CRDC, which organization, in Cleveland, is merely a name on paper.

In Chicago the RWL was officially invited to participate in a meeting with the CRDC. Our representative was there confronted with a proposal for a "petition campaign." We stated that while we had no objection to a petition campaign we felt the main activity of the committee should be in gaining union support, holding mass meetings and in distributing literature to the working class. A SWP representative countered our proposal with the flat statement that the petition campaign was sufficient and that they were primarily interested in getting names of "prominent people, such as clergymen and lawyers." The RWL was made to understand that if it didn't want to go along on such a perspective it was not wanted.

The Revolutionary Workers' League again repeats publicly our

sincere desire to participate to the fullest extent of our forces in the campaign to free the 18 Trotskyite victims of capitalist injustice. Not only because they were framed up but because we recognize that if this frame-up succeeds others are planned and will be carried through against us and others.

WORKERS' ACTION NEEDED

But the campaign must base itself on the working class and must be a united front of workers' organizations. To place the main reliance on liberals and "big names" will not free the 18 defendants. Such elements should be used only as auxiliary to demonstrations, meetings and other forms of workers' pressure. We already have the lesson of Odell Waller, who was electrocuted only two years ago because such limited and weak support was not sufficient—was in fact detrimental because of the false and non-working class policies of the liberals.

There has been a tendency in the last six years for the working class groups to completely forget the necessity of a class struggle defense policy. Instead there has developed a tendency to place the fate of workers in the hands of the "liberals." The movement must turn back to the old policies applied in the Sacco-Vanzetti, Mooney and Billings, Scottsboro and other cases. Faith in the liberals as our deliverance is a mean illusion.

The RWL makes this concrete proposal to the Trotskyites—you organize a united front of organizations to fight for the release of Cannon and the others and in every city where the RWL has members we will do more than our share of the work. All we want is an opportunity to EFFECTIVELY fight for the freedom of the 18 Minneapolis class war prisoners.

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