

The Answer to Congress Strike-Breaking

WE NEED A UNITED LABOR OFFENSIVE!

Miners Stay Out Of Pits, Demand Safety Actions

By DAVID COOLIDGE

The coal miners have been through their week of mourning for the Centralia dead. This protest of the coal diggers over the Centralia slaughter brought out the fact that the overwhelming majority of the coal mines in the United States are unsafe. The miners remain out of the pits until assured they are safe.

The Secretary of the Interior closed 518 mines under federal control because they were "believed dangerous." When did Mr. Krug discover that these 518 mines are probably dangerous and should not be operated? If he knew this before the Centralia slaughter, why didn't he close them? If their unsafe condition was discovered after the 111 were wiped out in the Centralia explosion, just what is wrong with mine inspection that this was not discovered through the routine inspection? There are federal inspectors and state inspectors. What do they do with their time? How do they while away the hours?

Of all the mines in the country only two were discovered which were considered completely safe by federal inspection standards. A glorious record for the coal operators and the federal government which now has the mines placarded with the information that the mines are "U. S. Government Property!" This means that with the exception of these two mines, an explosion might happen any day in any mine in the country.

DISPUTE AT INVESTIGATION
In the "investigation" there was a dispute over whether the explosion was caused by dust or by the discharge of a large amount of powder. If the explosion was caused by the accidental firing of a large amount of powder, it is claimed that this would absolve both the Centralia Coal Co. and the Federal Bureau of Mines Administration of responsibility. H. C. Niermann, assistant superintendent of the mine, testified that the smell of powder was very noticeable in the mine. However, the mine manager, who had not heard Niermann's testimony the day before, testified that he detected no powder smoke in the return (exhaust) air. The operator of the hoist at the bottom of the mine said that he had noticed no powder smoke. The night foreman gave the same testimony. The coroner, who examined the bodies said there was no powder burns on the miners. Thus

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Ruhr Strikes See German Labor Revival

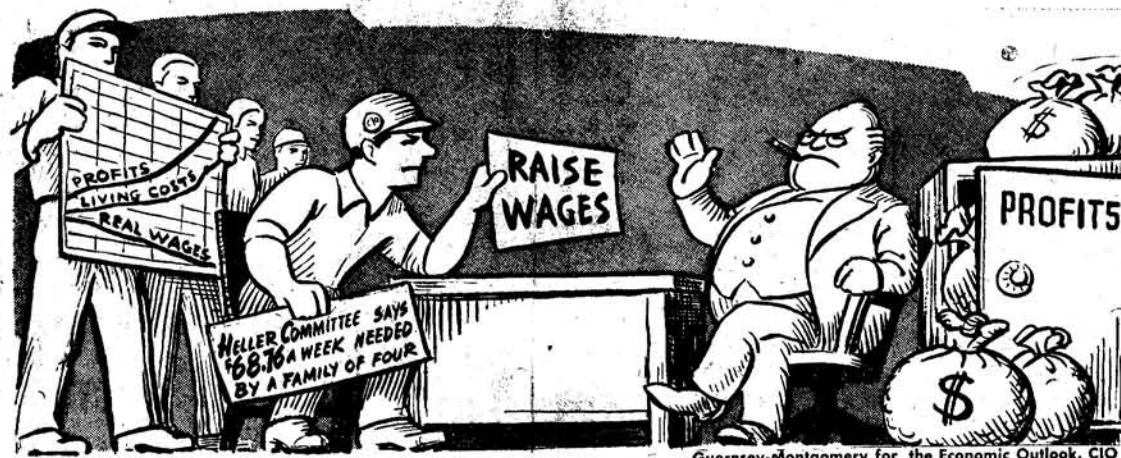
By HENRY JUDD

In a series of powerful and impressive demonstrations, the German working class, headed by the courageous miners of the Ruhr coal mines, has announced, in effect, to its imperialist oppressors that henceforth it intends to intervene militantly in the social and economy problems of Germany. Beyond any question, the strikes and demonstrations in the Ruhr and British zones mark the greatest step forward yet taken in Europe's most capable, best organized and most advanced working class—the workers of Germany.

Given the state of Europe as it is today, nothing more significant and more hopeful from a working class viewpoint could be imagined than the aggressiveness, the militancy and the solid class solidarity displayed in last week's demonstrations, spearheaded by the coal miners. If the occupying forces were not aware of it before, they are now—a new factor is appearing on the scene, the slowly but steadily reviving German working class. In this sense, the class action of the Ruhr workers will, in the long run, have far greater historic meaning than all the doings of the Big Four soundboreds seated at Moscow's conference table. The Ger-

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THE CIO HITS THE NAIL ON THE HEAD!



Guerney-Montgomery for the Economic Outlook, CIO

Telephone Workers Strike Against AT&T Monopoly

APRIL 7—More than 300,000 telephone workers all over the country went out on strike at 6 a.m. today in the first national telephone strike in the nation's history.

The strike, called by the independent National Federation of Telephone Workers, is directed against the Bell System telephone monopoly. Reports from various parts of the country indicate that the strike is almost totally effective. Telephone service continuing despite the strike consists of automatic equipment, which requires no operators, and of equipment operated by scabbing company executives.

The central strike committee in New York, co-ordinating the strike strategy of the four New York NFTW affiliates, has reported that offers of assistance from other unions continue to pour into its headquarters.

A meeting of representatives from over 100 CIO, AFL and railroad brotherhood locals is scheduled for tomorrow night to discuss plans for an all-out general union support to the strike. The agenda will also include proposals for joint action against the Hartley bill, prohibiting strikes in government-operated industries.

The strike is breaking records in fields which have traditionally been weak in the American trade union movement. With 40,000 workers leaving their jobs in Southern states, it is the biggest strike the South has ever seen. It is also the biggest strike of women workers in the history of this country, with 225,000 of them walking on NFTW picket lines.

These girls, and the men who are striking with them, are fighting one of the most solidly entrenched monopolies in America. The American

Telephone & Telegraph Company not only owns more than nine-tenths of the voting stock of its 21 Bell System affiliates, but also owns nearly all of the stock of the Western Electric Company, which manufactures over 90 per cent of the supplies and equipment of the Bell System.

It directly owns and controls 98 per cent of all American long distance telephone lines and controls, through the Bell System and connected companies, all but 14,000 of the nation's 31,612,000 telephones.

The telephone workers' average wage and working conditions compare unfavorably with those of workers in similar industries. The last available figures—those of September, 1946—show that while telephone workers received an average of only \$44 weekly, workers in the electric light and power utilities, for instance, received \$52.

The main issues of the strike, in addition to union demands for a \$12 wage increase, include the union shop, a \$100 minimum monthly pension, a reduction in wage differentials throughout the country, and longer vacations. The union demands industry-

wide bargaining, which AT&T, in line with its union-busting policy, refused. A union offer to submit all demands to arbitration was also refused by the company which, fearing the union shop, will agree to arbitrate only wages and fringe issues.

The NFTW is a loose federation of independent local unions of telephone workers. At a recent conference, these unions have agreed to amalgamate and to form a single national union for all telephone workers. This organization—to be known as the Communications Workers of America—is scheduled to hold its first convention in June.

Telephone workers all over the country will welcome this step to centralize their organizations. Most of them feel that just as the Bell System trust has its central labor relations strategy board in the New York offices of the AT&T, telephone workers need a permanent, well organized strategy center to combat the offensives of the management.

In the meantime, the entire labor movement stands solidly behind the telephone strikers to help them to gain their deserved demands.

A Brilliant Political Portrait—

HAROLD STASSEN

Republican "Liberal" Eyes the White House

Jack Ranger, Labor Action Staff Writer, has written the most detailed and penetrating analysis of this Republican politician yet to appear in the American press. A feature you can't afford to miss. Turn to page 5.

Price Boosts Cut Labor's Purchasing Power

Purchasing Power of Wages Cut by 10 Per Cent in 1946 As Corporation Profits Zoomed to Dizzy Heights

By SUSAN GREEN

The March issue of Economic Outlook, CIO magazine, has a compilation of wages, prices and profits and their co-relation that should fill a reader with indignation. Here, in graphic form, is exploded the capitalist pre-fabricated fiction that increased wages have forced prices up. Here also, in black and red, we see the profit motive riding roughshod over the nation and taking cruel advantage of the shortages all over the world.

First let it be noted that the Economic Outlook did not pluck its figures out of a hat. Its sources are the published financial statements of the companies mentioned, the reports of the government Bureau of Labor Statistics and information given by the Bureau of Census of the Department of Commerce. Also, so fair-minded was the Economic Outlook that it excluded any year when a company lost money in the pre-war period 1936-39, thus making the current bonanza appear comparatively lower than it actually is.

Now let's have the attention of the housewife whose radio dings into her ear hour after hour that if it weren't for those grasping workers, prices would not be so high. In its charts on meats, the Economic Outlook shows that during 1946 actual wholesale price increases reached 90.6 per

cent above 1945. However, wage increases of those grasping workers in the meat industry during 1946 warranted only a 1.6 per cent increase to pass on to the consumer the entire wage boost. Thus 89 per cent of the 90.6 per cent rise in meat prices had nothing at all to do with wages.

WHERE DID THE REST GO?

In other foods the price increase needed to reflect wage increases was a mere 1.8 per cent, whereas food prices rose 57.9 per cent during 1946. In textiles the disproportion between wage increases and price increases was a bit less, wage rises warranting a 6.7 per cent price increase, whereas wholesale prices actually increased 31.8 per cent during 1946. What about that 25.1 per cent? And here's a set of figures that will interest the homeless veteran especially. Prices of iron and steel which go into building, climbed 16.7 per cent last year, of which only 1.9 per cent could be accounted for by higher wages. That other 14.8 per cent was added just because.

From the above it must not be assumed that it is necessary for the capitalists to pass on wage increases to the consumer in order to maintain the same level of profits—not that we are particularly concerned about profits. As the United Auto Workers proved back in 1945, the auto indus-

try could then have absorbed a 30 per cent wage increase and still increased its profits. The Economic Outlook gives another example:

"Food profits in 1946 were what they were because of the short-range view of industry that the public should pay as high a price as the market would bear. Wholesale prices of food products increased 58 per cent during the two years 1945-46. During this same period, hourly wage rates went up 21 per cent. But as we have pointed out in previous Outlooks, an increase in hourly wage rates doesn't require an identical increase in prices by any means. According to the 1939 census of manufacturing, wages represented less than 9 per cent of the value of the product in the food industries. This means that food companies could maintain their same profit level by increasing prices only 2 per cent. With increased productivity and efficiency of operations, most industries could absorb this increased wage cost WITHOUT PASSING ANY OF IT ON TO THE PUBLIC. But passed on as it was, the food industry increased prices MORE THAN 30 TIMES what was needed to take care of the wage increase."

The above should be enlarged, framed and pasted over every radio in every home. No matter how figured, wage increases are not the rea-

son but only the flimsiest of pretexts for the greedy price spiral.

These inflationary price boosts actually cut the purchasing power of wages by nearly ten per cent in 1946. Profits, however, have reached new dizzy heights. The big four in the meat industry, Armour, Swift, Cudahy and Wilson, increased their profits in 1946 over 1945 respectively as follows: 228.3 per cent, 33.2 per cent, 168.3 per cent and 105.1 per cent. Other outstanding profit increases of 1946 over the previous year are for National Biscuit Company, \$19,700,000 against \$10,500,000; American Woolen Company, \$22,400,000 against \$8,300,000; United States Steel, \$88,700,000 against \$58,000,000.

Still another way to grasp the enormous take of capital is to see how the return on investment has climbed since the beginning of the war and especially during 1946, when price controls were abolished. On the couple of bucks a worker may have in the savings banks he gets these days about 1 1/2 per cent interest. Before the war he got more than that, maybe 2 or 2 1/2 per cent. Now watch what has happened to the percentage of return of what the capitalists invest. For Cudahy Packing the rate was 3.49 per cent pre-war, 8.1 per cent in 1945 and 16 per cent in 1946; for Pacific Mills it was 4.1 per cent pre-war, 7.8 per cent in 1945 and 38.4

in 1946; for Continental Baking 8.6 per cent pre-war, 11 per cent in 1945 and 24 per cent for 1946; for Inland Steel 13.6 per cent pre-war, 12.7 in 1945 and 17.4 in 1946.

What a commentary on the capitalist system! Remember the full-page advertisements by the National Association of Manufacturers promising that if price control was abolished, goods would flow into the consumer markets and prices would come down. The capitalists moved heaven and earth, but especially their Congressmen, to end price control. Now we see the reason, which indeed was very easy to foresee. Instead of prices coming down, they were marked up and up, and every working class family that has had to pay these prices to live, has added its hard-earned dollars to the pile of profits the capitalists have accumulated.

Workers are again bestirring themselves for wage increases to wipe out the actual wage cut that soaring prices have meant to them. Workers will not stand for the declining standard of living which static wages and skyrocketing prices have resulted in. Now you'll hear something from the bloated capitalists. They will scream that they cannot afford to raise wages, that higher wages will force prices up more. However, that bluff has been exposed, and how!

Attack! Attack! This is the burning need of the labor movement today, as a series of conflicts between the American working class and its bitter opponents—the capitalist class and its government—sharpen in intensity.

Two major sections of the American labor movement showed their power this week: the coal miners, who refused to return to unsafe pits, and the telephone workers, who began a nation-wide strike for a decent wage.

In Congress, the hysterical agents of big business prepared legislation which, if enacted, would lower the American workers to the level of virtual serfs, depriving them of hard-won rights for which pioneers of the labor movement gave their blood in the many American industrial battles of the past century.

The CIO countered with a call for a nation-wide conference of all its unions in Washington on April 13 to fight against anti-labor legislation. It declared this month to be Defend Labor Month.

This was the pattern of conflict this week. Let us examine it in more detail and see what it means for the American workers.

Most dramatic conflict of the week centered around the miners' struggle. When the Department of Interior, through its head, Krug (the of the size 12 shoes and size 5 hat), announced that only two mines in the entire country were safe to work in—after the appalling disaster at Centralia, which angered and sorrowed every miner in the country!—the United Mine Workers, through John L. Lewis, its president, announced that its members would not return to the pits until inspectors stated that they met federal requirements of safety.

Because the miners refused to work in pits in which they might be smothered at any minute, the U. S. government moved, through the Department of Justice, to restore the \$3,500,000 fine placed last December on the miners' union by Justice Alan Goldsborough, and which was reduced to \$700,000 by the Supreme Court.

MINES ARE UNSAFE
The wretched, lard-bottomed bureaucrats sitting in Washington and serving their capitalist masters were forced to admit after the Centralia disaster that the mines were unsafe. Then when the miners—Centralia staring them in the face—naturally refused to work in what might at any moment become death-traps, the august government of the United States moved to reimpose a \$3,500,000 fine on them. Could there be any evidence more blatant of the capitalist nature of this government—which insists that miners return to unsafe pits.

But lest the Democratic Party-controlled executive branch of the government be outdone in anti-labor moves, the Republican-controlled legislative branch moved in with a piece of anti-labor legislation which made all previous proposals seem sweetness and light. Enraged because the telephone girls dared go out on strike in order to get themselves a few dollars' raise, Congress prepared legislation which would ban the closed shop, restore government by injunction and cripple labor in a dozen other ways.

In the House a bill sponsored by its Labor Committee proposed to give the government power to break (Continued on page 7)

Viet-Namese Gov't Thanks Workers Party for Support

We publish below a communication received from the Viet Nam government of Indo-China, at present engaged in a struggle to rid its land of French imperialism:

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
"Independence—Freedom—Happiness"

Near HANOI, February 15, 1947
Dr. PHAM-NGOC-THACH, Under Secretary of State
To Mr. Chairman of the "Workers Party" NEW YORK

Dear Sir:

We were deeply moved by your big demonstration in New York in favor of the struggle for Viet-Nam's independence. On behalf of President HO-CHI-MINH and the Government of Viet-Nam's Republic, I convey to you and your organization our gratitude.

On the other hand The Viet-Nam's Labor Federation asks me to send you and your organization their warmest greetings and thanks.

It was the first time American people openly supported our present fight. We hope through your activities American progressive organizations would send us arms, ammunitions and medicines in order to help us to wipe out the French imperialism.

Sincerely yours,
P. N. THACH

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Analyzes Rubber Wage Agreement

By GEORGE WHITNEY

AKRON—The 11½-cent increase secured by the United Rubber Workers from the Big Four rubber companies is being characterized in some quarters as a "shameful defeat" and in others as a victory. Actually it is difficult to say how many cents represents a victory and how many a loss. It is a victory in the sense that it represents a reversal in the present trend. But the reaction of most of the workers in the industry appears to be unenthusiastic. They feel that they should have and could have had more.

The role that the international officers of the URW played during the period immediately preceding the negotiations and during them must certainly come in for criticism in any attempt to analyze what happened. During the period when the Big Four negotiations should normally have begun, the International was busy negotiating a contract on a company-wide basis with the United States Rubber Co. The International Policy Committee of the URW had already outlined its seven-point program. One of the points in that program was the demand for a 30-hour basic week.

The Big Four negotiations, which were to cover this point as well as the other six points, were postponed for two reasons. First, the companies didn't want to meet at all. They wanted to postpone it as long as possible. Secondly, since the International was tied up in the U. S. Rubber negotiations, they were willing to postpone those with the Big Four. The point concerning the 30-hour week assumed considerable importance because the fight between those who favor the 40-hour week and those who want the rubber industry as a whole put on a 36 and eventually a 30-hour week has sharpened.

In many of the plants in Akron, which is the stronghold of the 36-hour week, 8-hour shifts have been worked repeatedly during the past year. So that all those militants in the URW who stand for the six-hour day felt that it was necessary to press this point.

DOOM SIX-HOUR DAY

Despite this situation, the International came out of the U. S. Rubber negotiations with a company-wide contract calling for an eight-hour day and a 40-hour week. This agreement, sealed with one-fourth of the Big Four, doomed in advance any fight by the supporters of the six-

hour day to impose it on the industry. In effect it settled in advance that point of the seven-point program.

On the question of the 26-cent increase and the 11½-cent compromise, equally serious mistakes were made. First, it is necessary to understand that the International Policy Committee is composed of representatives of all the URW locals. Those from Akron represent roughly 50,000 rubber workers and those outside Akron approximately the same number. With one or two notable exceptions, the locals outside of Akron represent the conservative influence in the International. During the negotiations there was therefore pressure from this section to settle for figures that were not satisfactory to the majority of the Akron delegation.

This situation is fully appreciated by the company negotiators. When it became aggravated, the International and presumably a majority of the full Policy Committee decided to scale its demands down to 16 cents with the naive hope that the companies would appreciate their efforts to be reasonable and effect the settlement. Actually what happened was that they became intransigent and set 10 cents as their absolute maximum.

THE "THIN DIME"

At this point negotiations were broken off and the URW as a whole began preparations for the strike, as already reported in LABOR ACTION. The Akron locals did a very effective job of preparation. City-wide committees were set up, a joint paper was issued and several radio programs were devoted to talks and discussions by leaders of the URW. The whole burden of this publicity was to the effect that ten cents or a "thin dime," as it was called, was an insult to every worker in the industry. The original demand had been computed on the basis that the industry could pay it and still make more profit in the coming year than it did during its peak year. With this in mind, it is understandable why it is hard to convince some people that a thin dime is a crowning insult, while 11½ cents is a rousing victory.

But the important thing to understand is that it was absolutely necessary for the responsible militants on the Policy Committee to vote for the 11½ cents once they were confronted with this situation when the companies made their last-minute offer.

They based their decision on the fact that to call 100,000 rubber workers out on a protracted strike would in the end net them a compromise, not between the ten cents offered by the companies and the 26 demanded originally by the union, but a compromise between the 10-cent figure and the scaled-down demand of 16 cents.

If it went to conciliation, and there is no reason to believe other-

wise, then they could hope for a final settlement of 13 cents. So to vote against the 11½ cents and in favor of a strike meant to vote for a long and costly strike to gain a cent and a half. The irresponsible people on the committee were those who went along on all the scaling down and then at the last moment voted against the 11½-cent settlement for the record and for factional reasons.

Workers Dictionary

Anarchism, a theory which, like socialism, condemns capitalism, and aims at the abolition of the state and proposes to set up a system without private ownership in the means of production. Anarchism differs from socialism in its methods and goals. Whereas socialists believe the workers, once they have overthrown capitalism, will need a transitional state of their own to suppress the former exploiters, the anarchists believe it is possible to go directly from capitalism to a stateless society. Socialists believe in large, centralized socialist production, while anarchists favor decentralized, small-scale production. There is very little of an organized anarchist movement in the United States; its main strength has been in Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland and Russia. During the civil war in Spain (1936-38) the Spanish anarchists, despite their anti-political theories, participated in the Popular Front government controlled by the Stalinists. More recently some Spanish anarchist leaders are reported to be seeking an alliance with the monarchists against Franco.

Anti-Semitism, prejudice and hostility to the Jews. Politically, it has been used in many countries by reactionary politicians to divert the workers' wrath from the employers and direct it against the Jews, who are falsely accused of responsibility for all evils.

Anti-trust laws, laws supposedly passed to curb the trusts and monopolies. The Sherman Anti-Trust Law, passed by Congress in 1890, was directed against the big corporations. However, these were left largely untouched, and the law was turned instead against unions, the latter being accused of restraint of trade. Since this was a clear distortion of the law, the union movement forced through the Clayton Act in 1914 which specifically exempts worker and farmer organizations from such anti-trust laws. It is this law which the Department of Justice breaks when it uses the anti-trust laws against unions.

Arbitration, a method of settling disputes by referring the matter to an arbitrator or arbitration committee which makes a decision which is binding upon both parties. The arbitrator is supposed to be a neutral or disinterested party agreeable to both sides. Arbitration between employers and employees rests upon the fiction that it is possible for any person to be neutral in the struggle between labor and capital.

Army, an armed and disciplined body of persons. In every class society, whether based on slavery, serfdom, or as at present on wage labor, the ruling class is armed, that is, it maintains an army. The right to control the army is a fundamental right of state power. The army roughly parallels the society which maintains it; the lower ranks of the army are comparable to workers, the officers are comparable to employers. As a rule, the employing class maintains much closer relations with the army officers than does the working class with the ranks of the army. In periods of great social struggles within a nation, the army usually splits apart, the bulk of it going over to the side of the workers, some of the officers siding with the employers.

TAPPING THE WALL STREET WIRE

By JACK RANGER

BEHIND OUTCRY ABOUT HIGH PRICES

In the past few days a number of surprising persons have suddenly started to cry out publicly that prices are too high and must come down. From President Truman to the National Association of Manufacturers, we hear this cry. What is behind it: (1) It is a psychological offensive against the union movement, now negotiating new wage agreements; (2) prices have so far outstripped wages that even the meatheads among the capitalists can see we are headed for a depression, unless drastic steps are taken.

It is not the unwillingness of the people to pay the high prices asked that is responsible for the current drop in retail sales, states the New York Journal of Commerce in a recent discussion of the state of the economy. "It can be statistically demonstrated that national income at present is insufficient to support the prices asked for all the goods that are being produced," says the Journal. "A national income of approximately \$224,000,000,000 rather than the present rate of around \$185,000,000,000 would be necessary to move the present industrial production into consumption at the present price level."

A stronger argument for the CIO demand for higher wages WITHOUT price increases could scarcely be conceived. The very paper that denounced the CIO Nathan report for advancing the demand for wage increases without price increases now acknowledges that "prices are approximately twenty-one per cent too high on an average relative to the current levels of national income and industrial production."

"The relationship between the value of production and national income in the first quarter of 1947 closely resembles the relationship in 1920 (the year of a sharp economic crisis—J. R.)," the paper says. "Fundamentally, conditions now are very similar to those in 1920 with new peacetime highs for industrial production, with price inflation, and with national income insufficient to fully absorb production at the price level. . . . The conclusion is inescapable that a correction of the imbalance between national income, prices, and production will occur in the not far distant future. Even if government spending for relief and support of certain countries abroad attains the maximum figure mentioned anywhere of \$5 billion annually, it still will be far from sufficient to offset the indicated deficit in national income."

Indeed, if prices remain at their present level, the government would have to hand out, not \$5 billion but \$39 BILLION, to provide the necessary additional purchasing power to absorb the goods being produced. Obviously, the government won't do it. The union demand for price increases without wage increases, and union committees to enforce the demand by inspecting the books of the companies, is just what the doctor ordered.

The American Public Welfare Association, in the current issue of "Public Welfare," states that continued inflation will cast many marginal income families on relief once their savings are exhausted. Even in 1945, before inflation really got started, three U. S. families out of ten had to live on less than a "marginal budget," reports the magazine. It estimates that at least one-third of the families living on sub-maintenance incomes already are receiving some form of public assistance, and that more severe effects are expected when more families with "marginal income"—below \$2,000—consume their savings. In 1945, 19 per cent of the families in the less-than-\$1,000 income bracket were spending savings to pay living costs, while 21 per cent of the families in the \$1,000-\$2,000 bracket were doing likewise.

WOMEN AND JOBS

One of the sure signs that times are tough lies in the return of women workers to the job market. Rosie the riveter is looking for a job again, as the Wall Street Journal observed. In February there were 100,000 more women looking for jobs than in the previous month. "Usually it's quite obvious that their husbands just can't make both ends meet," said the manager of the Connecticut employment service. In that state, 219,000 women are employed in non-agricultural jobs, close to the wartime peak and more than double pre-war. In the nation, employment of women totaled 15.4 million in

February, some 4.2 million above the total for 1940, the last full year of "peace."

The Census Bureau, noting that wholesalers' inventories had climbed another four per cent in February, said that many pipelines to retailers were filling up. "At the end of February, two months' supply of merchandise on hand was quite common, even among such fast moving lines as groceries," said the bureau. While more goods are available, less are being sold. Sales decreased in February over January were reported for 28 out of 36 businesses checked, more than three-fourths.

ECONOMIC NOTES

Charge accounts in the nation's stores declined \$162 million in February, to a total of \$2.6 billion. Credit for installment buying (other than automobiles) declined \$9 million, to a total of \$977 million. Credit given for buying automobiles on the installment plan increased \$44 million, to a total of \$625 million, reports the Federal Reserve Board. . . . A Wall Street Journal compilation of 1946 earnings reported by 340 companies in 21 different industries gives a general picture of the profiteering now rampant. Of the groups analyzed, textiles led the way, increasing its profits 219 per cent over 1945. Here are the profit increases for other industries, 1946 over 1945: Pulp and paper products, 163 per cent; distillers, 145 per cent; rubber and rubber goods, 104 per cent; retail stores and mail order, 100 per cent; food products, packing houses, 79 per cent; building equipment and supplies, 74 per cent; iron and steel companies, 54 per cent, etc. Only three industries showed decreases from war-swollen 1945 profits: Aircraft, auto and electrical equipment manufacturers. First industry to feel the impact of unemployment is the very industry that has been guilty of the most flagrant profiteering, the textile industry. At least 14 woolen mills in New England have closed down, and 22 more are working only part-time.

The mills that are hard hit are those making woollens; there is still a good market for worsteds, a better-quality cloth. . . . Despite Truman's whoopla about the need for lower prices, a nationwide industrial survey by the Wall Street Journal showed that "most of industry is not primed for price slashing." The aluminum, steel, lumber, electric supplies, building materials and coal industries say "Nothing doing."

BUSINESS NOTES

The Chicago Journal of Commerce recently called editorial attention to a secret survey of manufacturers on the question of prices. "Only two per cent of the respondents feel that their products are priced too low," reported the Journal. "Forty-four per cent believe that the prices are too high. Sixty-one per cent report higher prices since ceilings were removed in November. Zero per cent report lower prices. . . . Business inventories continue inexorably to rise, as high prices drive the masses out of the marketplace. The book value of manufacturer inventories rose another \$385 in January, the Census Bureau reports. The increase, which set a new high of \$20.7 billion for the value of inventories at the end of January, was about equally divided between the durable and non-durable industries. Goods in process rose nearly \$200 million. Finished goods inventories rose \$150 million, the first rise since October. Shipments of non-durable goods by manufacturers to their customers were up 33 per cent from a year ago. But new orders booked by manufacturers were only 14 per cent ahead of January, 1946.

The New York Journal of Commerce, surveying the situation, reports that "shipments by manufacturers are running ahead of new orders. Inventories are increasing faster than new orders. Obviously, this relationship cannot long continue. If new orders do not turn up very soon, production and shipments will have to be curtailed, for otherwise stocks will pile up. And new orders are not going to turn up with retail sales in smaller volume than a year ago." While department store sales in February were up a little less than eight per cent over a year ago, since the retail price level was 20 per cent higher, unit sales were smaller this year. "The evidence accumulates that a recession in the non-durable goods industries is at hand," reports that paper. . . . January department store sales were up 14 per cent, but stocks were up 56 per cent higher than at the end of January, 1946.

Ford Local Chooses Militant Leaders

Edgewater Local Ousts Old Leaders, Elects Reutherites to Take Top Posts

In a strong reaction against its 1946 union administration, the workers of Ford Edgewater Local of the United Automobile Workers of America, CIO, voted by a powerful majority to oust the conservative and opportunist leadership of the local and to demonstrate that they are tired of machine politics and of kowtowing to the management of the Ford Motor Company in this large New Jersey plant.

The election of union officials which took place several weeks ago was one of the strongest blows against conservative trade union leadership which has occurred in the past year in District 9 of the United Automobile Workers, CIO. The opposition groups captured the offices of president, vice-president, financial secretary-treasurer, recording secretary and a number of positions on the Ford sub-council. One after another, workers went to the union polls to cast their votes against the 1946 administration of the local. Only a dodo bird could fail to understand the sentiment of these union men who sweat under the Ford Motor Co. speed-up assembly system.

For more than a year now, the workers of Ford Motor Co. in Edgewater have worked under a contract which contains better company security clauses than it does provisions for more human working conditions and wages. The vote in Ford can only be interpreted as a decisive rejection of this contract, now that it has a period in which to show whether it was written for the company or for the men. The contract, and the conservatism of the trade union leadership up to now, have allowed the company to gain position after position against the workers and has created a feeling of no-confidence on the part of the workers in their leadership. Since no organized opposition slate was presented, the rank and file created its own tendency by voting down the line against the major administration candidates in a closely fought campaign. Real interest was generated by the election and only a very small percentage of the membership failed to vote. The victory of the "Ellis-Riley" ticket means the installation of a pro-Reuther Executive Board.

There was, however, no unity in the forces which won the election. Since all candidates who ran against the administration machine ticket

felt constrained to run on the basis of their independence from any and all machines, no cohesive slate was presented, nor did the progressives have a well developed program. As a result, different tendencies and degrees of emphasis exhibited themselves among the various candidates.

NATURE OF OPPOSITION

F. J. Ellis, president prior to the war, who was once again installed in office, ran on his past record, his promise of future militancy, his opposition to the administration, his independence of all machines, and a program of minor local reforms. His major fault, aside from his lack of a really positive program, is unwillingness to encourage active rank and file participation in union affairs.

The Committee for an Independent Caucus endorsed a set of independent candidates headed by Arthur Riley, a supporter of Socialist Party politics, who captured the vice-presidency and garnered more votes than any other candidate. This group emphasized a program of a guaranteed annual wage, an improved seniority set-up and union control of time study. It opposed Richard T. Leonard's attempt to use the pension demand to preserve almost intact the present company security contract and called for security today, not only tomorrow. This caucus is in an amorphous stage as yet, but nevertheless represents the best rallying point for union militants.

In an attempt to prevent "unfair time study practices," the Independent Caucus raises the slogan of mutual agreements between the union

and management on time study. This would mean, however, union acceptance of the principles of time study. It would force the union to participate in and share responsibility for the speed-up, since the aim of time study is to gear production in the direction of the fastest worker.

UNION CONCESSIONS

The union would find itself making constant concessions to the company on time studies and would find it almost impossible to lower the speed or number of operations once a procedure had been agreed upon. The result would be increases in speed with no chance for downward revisions; results which have been the experience of those unions which have succeeded in establishing so-called "union control of time study."

FAILURE OF NEW YORK TEACHERS TO STRIKE SEEN AS REASON FOR SALARY DEADLOCK

By A TEACHER

Unremarked during the fire and smoke of the recent assault of New York teachers on Governor Dewey's trafficking with the problem of education, was the sly skill with which he extricated himself from his indefensible position. In yielding some ground to the public clamor for higher salary schedules and other needed improvements, he succeeded in diverting the concentrated attack of the teachers on the State administration and Legislature to isolated battles against local municipalities.

For he held out successfully against adequate state appropriations to meet the costs, and empowered municipalities to raise the money by increasing their taxing power. The results of this strategy are now becoming apparent.

A recent meeting of the New York Teachers Union, CIO, is reported as "calling" on the New York Board of Education to consult teachers in drafting new salary schedules. The probability is that similar actions will follow in other cities.

The press also carried the gist of a report by the auditor of the Board of Education to the effect that per capita pupil expenditures by New York City have been increasing. Apparently the city is moving faster

and management on time study. This would mean, however, union acceptance of the principles of time study. It would force the union to participate in and share responsibility for the speed-up, since the aim of time study is to gear production in the direction of the fastest worker.

Furthermore, the union would be aiding the company in setting standards of production while the company would still maintain complete control over profits and prices. So long as production is in the interests of the boss, so long as the boss can determine prices and thereby profits, so long as production is capitalist production, the union has no interest in maintaining or setting the STANDARDS of production. Instead of trying to control time study in order to prevent "unfair time study practices," the union must brand the use of time study as a system which pits the bodies and nerves of workers against the mechanism of a clock. The union must reject time study itself as unfair and must oppose any and all time studies, no matter who controls them.

than the teachers to build up "public" support against the probability of a local fight for higher salary schedules.

Had New York City teachers gone on strike it would not now be necessary to "call" on anybody to consult the teachers in determining new pay rates. In settling the strike the teachers would have been a party to the establishment of salary schedules. That it is now necessary to appeal for that consultation is a convincing proof that the teachers did not make the most of their opportunity. As a result they find themselves in a less favorable position than they could have won for themselves.

CHICAGO MAY DAY MEETING**LABOR MUST FIGHT BACK**

Speaker: NATHAN GOULD
Natl. Org. Director, WP

1501 W. MADISON

SUNDAY, MAY 4, 8:00 P. M.

Ausp. Chicago Br., Workers Party

Result of Chicago Election

By R. FERGUSON

CHICAGO, April 6—In a record-breaking balloting last week the citizens of Chicago voted in Democrat Martin Kennelly as mayor of Chicago.

Backed by practically every union leader in the city, Kennelly's election means that labor officialdom in Chicago has learned nothing politically as a result of labor's sacrifices over the recent years. Posing merely as an "independent" Democrat who spoke nothing but the most insipid platitudes about what he would do when elected, Kennelly shrewdly won the support of the crawling labor leaders, including those of the Stalinist-dominated unions, who had "nowhere else to go."

The Democratic Party is trying to draw comfort from the Kennelly election to show that the Republican "tide" has now been stemmed, and that the Democrats can confidently work to victory in 1948 by using the "Chicago strategy." The Republican Party is busy attempting to prove that Kennelly's victory is merely a "local" phenomenon which cannot be repeated elsewhere. As already forecast in LABOR ACTION, this "strategy" on the Democrats' part amounts solely to putting up a candidate who is as respectable and wealthy a big business man as ever ran on a Republican ticket.

Kennelly is a millionaire owner of a huge warehousing-trucking concern; he is a director of the profiteering Wilson & Co. meat trust. At no time has he held the mildest pro-labor convictions. The best that his labor supporters could produce in the way of a "clean labor record" is the testimony of various AFL leaders whose unions have contracts with his company that he deals "fairly" with his employees. In other words, these labor "leaders" are saying that the workers Mr. Kennelly employs are

by and large not subject to any worse exploitation than labor as a whole is throughout the country.

A prize example of the reasoning of these people for supporting Kennelly is that as head of numerous Red Cross drives he has never come out in favor of the Red Cross' segregated blood banks! But then, of course, neither has he come out AGAINST this racist practice.

The only national significance of Kennelly's victory is the following: The Democrats now have "proof" that they can dress up their corrupt and discredited big-city machines by

Disregard Prison Bureau Records, Says CO Secretary

Records of the U. S. Bureau of Prisons on cases of Selective Service Act violators "cannot provide you with accurate information on which to base your amnesty recommendation to President Truman."

This was the warning given the President's Amnesty Board by Albon Man, secretary of the Amnesty Committee, in a long letter giving specific instances of how the prison officials completely failed to understand the conscientious objectors' position.

"It is necessary to evaluate the Bureau's records in the light of the following considerations: the fact that the Bureau is a branch of the Department of Justice, the nature of the prison system and the reactions of COs to that system together with the feelings of a large number of prison officials and guards toward the objectors," Man wrote the board.

He went on to point out that the Bureau, in reports, public statements and correspondence, always sought to rationalize the imprisonment of COs by impugning their motives,

putting forward very respectable nonentities. They feel they can count on the labor leaders falling for the clap-trap of sheets like the Chicago Sun, whose liberal-sounding crusade will so enchant the workers that they will forget about any genuine and independent orientation in their own interests.

But, of course, no sooner were the votes counted than the City Council henchmen of the discredited Kelly-Arvey machine, who unanimously had supported Kennelly, sprang into action to see that the interests of the machine are not menaced. Now the population will be treated to a spectacle wherein the valiant "independence" of Kennelly will be chopped down and a more or less comfortable arrangement will be arrived at so that no perceptible change in the status quo will be apparent to the naked eye.

As pointed out consistently during the pre-election campaign by the Workers Party write-in candidate for mayor, Albert Goldman, the working class of Chicago still faces every single one of the problems that it faced before Kennelly came into office. Captain Barnes' police strike-breaking squad must still be abolished, and Kennelly has not ever referred to it. The terrible housing crisis which Kennelly calls the No. 1 problem will not be solved by his remedy—another conference! Jim Crow and restrictive covenants will more pressingly weigh upon the vast Negro population, for which the Democratic Party has no solution other than further restrictions.

The greatest lesson from this campaign remains: no one is going to help the working class but itself. Politically, labor's future still depends upon its ability to put forward a program, a leadership and an independent party of its own before the tide can possibly turn in the workers' direction.

Ten Years Since the Dewey Commission:

The Vindication of Leon Trotsky

Facts on the Moscow Trials

Here is the list of victims of the Moscow Trials:
The First Moscow Trial, August 19-24, 1936
Zinoviev, Kamenev, Yevdokimov, Bakayev, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, Terl Vaganyan, Dreitzer, Reingold, Dickel, Holtzman, Fritz David, Olberg, Berman Yurin, M. I. Lurye, N. I. Lurye.—ALL SHOT.
The Second Moscow Trial, January 23-30, 1937
Pyatekov, Serebryakov, Muralov, Lifshitz, Drobnis, Boguslavsky, Kniazev, Rotaichak, Norkin, Shestov, Turak, Hrasche, Pushin, Arnold.—ALL SHOT.
Radek, Sokolnikov—10 years imprisonment.
Stroilov—8 years imprisonment.
The Third Moscow Trial, March 2-13, 1938
Bukharin, Rykov, Yagoda, Krestinsky, Rosengaltz, Ivanov, Chernov, Zelensky, Ikraniov, Khodiyev, Sharangovich, Zubanev, Bulanov, Levin, Kazak, Maximov, Kryvchikov.—ALL SHOT.
Pletnov—25 years imprisonment.
Rakovsky—20 years imprisonment.
Ressonov—20 years imprisonment.

Some of the more important victims of the Moscow Trials:
Zinoviev, G.—35 years in revolutionary movement; one of the founders of the Bolshevik Party and first elected to its Central Committee in 1907. Was chairman of Petrograd Soviet. On Lenin's motion was elected first chairman of the Communist International and held the post until 1925.
Kamenev, L.—Bolshevik from 1903, when Party was first formed, joining at the age of 18. Chairman of Moscow Soviet from 1918-25. Vice-chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars. Member of Central Committee and their Political Bureau.
Pyatekov, Y. L.—Bolshevik Party member since

1910. Assistant Commissar of Heavy Industry and member of Central Committee when arrested.
Radek, K.—Active worker in German and Polish working class movements. Collaborator of Rosa Luxemburg. Joined Bolsheviks in 1917; Central Committee member 1919-24, and Bureau member of the E.C.C.I. One of the editors of Izvestia after 1931.
Bukharin, N.—Old Bolshevik and a leading theoretician of the Party. Former chairman of the Comintern.
Rakovsky, C.—Soviet diplomat, collaborator of Trotsky.
The members of the Commission of Inquiry into the Moscow Trials:
John Dewey—Educator and philosopher. Member of Sacco-Vanzetti and Tom Mooney Defense Committees.
John R. Chamberlain—former literary critic for the New York Times.
Alfred Rosmer—Member of Praesidium, 2nd Congress of the Communist International, 1920; Executive Committee member of Communist International, 1920-21; Editor-in-Chief of L'Humanite, 1923-24.
Edward Alsworth Ross—Educator and author.
Otto Ruehle—Author, biographer of Karl Marx; former Social Democratic member of the German Reichstag; Leader of the Saxon Revolution, November 1918.
Benjamin Stolberg—Author and journalist.
Wendelin Thomas—Leader of the Wilhelmshaven revolt, November, 1918; Independent Socialist and later Communist member of Reichstag, 1920-24.
Carlo Tresca—Labor and Anarchist leader.
Francisco Zamora—Mexican labor journalist.
Suzanne La Follette—journalist.
Counsel for Commission
John F. Finerty—Former counsel for Sacco and Vanzetti, counsel for Tom Mooney.

By ALBERT GOLDMAN

IT is not in any way detracting from the great work of the Dewey Commission to say that even without that work the Moscow Trials would by this time have been accepted as frame-ups by all except the blind or vicious followers of Stalinism. The accusations made against Trotsky by Stalin, through his prosecutors, could not possibly stick. So great is the variance between them and Trotsky's record that no intelligent person with any independence and integrity could possibly swallow the Stalinist falsehoods. Most educated persons probably know enough of Trotsky's record to reject out of hand Stalin's preposterous charges. They know that he began his career as a revolutionist in his early youth; that he was twice exiled to Siberia by the Czarist regime and that he escaped both times. Those who know anything about the Revolution of 1905 know that he was chairman of the St. Petersburg Soviet. It is well known that he was one of the revolutionary socialists who opposed World War I as an imperialist conflict. Everyone who is not a Stalinist knows that next to Lenin he was the most important leader of the Russian Revolution. The miraculous achievement of organizing and leading the Red army to victory was accomplished by Trotsky. It is also well-known that he was an exceedingly prolific and great writer on revolutionary subjects.

"THEORY OF CAMOUFLAGE" ANSWERED BY TROTSKY

Simply on the basis of the highlights of Trotsky's record it would have been impossible for those not in the Stalinist camp to believe that he betrayed the ideals for which he struggled throughout his life. In a striking section of his great summation before the commission, entitled "The Theory of Camouflage," Trotsky shows how absurd is the idea of a person devoting all of his life to revolutionary activities, writing innumerable pamphlets and books on behalf of revolutionary ideas, and spending a mere three days for secret plots to destroy the open work of many years. As Trotsky put it: "The public—that is, the 'hypocritical'—activity, which served only as 'camouflage,' surpassed my secret—that is, the 'genuine'—activity almost a thousand times in quantity and, I venture to assert, equally in quality. One gets the impression that I built a skyscraper to 'camouflage' a dead rat. No, it is not convincing." (THE CASE OF LEON TROTSKY, page 57.) The efforts made by Stalin to convince the world that a great revolu-

tionist was a traitor to the revolution could only convince the educated and penetrating person that the accuser himself was burdened by the knowledge that he had turned traitor to the socialist revolution. That Stalin did not succeed in destroying the reputation and influence of the one he feared most is proved conclusively by the more drastic measures he had to take in order to get rid of Trotsky. Four years after the first Moscow Trial one of Stalin's assassins accomplished the task which Stalin failed to accomplish with his frame-up trials. The Kremlin dictator, by means of the assassin's pick-axe, stilled the voice of Trotsky and thus dealt the revolutionary movement a terrific blow.

The organization of the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the charges made against Trotsky in the Moscow Trials was, by itself, a serious blow to Stalin and his lieutenants. For the first time Stalin's charges against an opponent were to be investigated by a group of impartial persons, many with great standing and authority. The Stalinists boycotted the commission. They could have appeared before it and examined witnesses and produced evidence had they wanted to. This was not a privilege furnished to Trotsky's friends by the Stalinist prosecution in Moscow. But the accusers in Moscow and their friends in this country refused to appear before the commission thus admitting that they were afraid of presenting their case to any kind of an impartial body.

Pressure was exerted by the Stalinists in order to interfere with the work of the commission. One member yielded to that pressure in the midst of the hearings, but so powerful was the authority of the commission and so honest was its procedure that the resignation of Carleton Beals had no adverse effect whatever. The commission went on with its work; it gathered all the evidence, analyzed it and made its conclusions. Due primarily to the great efforts of Suzanne LaFollette, the superb analysis of the evidence together with the conclusions were published in book form under the title NOT GUILTY.

Before the commission, holding its hearings at Coyoacan, we undertook to prove "that in all of Trotsky's activities there is not the slightest trace of acts, declarations, or even thoughts which might serve in the slightest degree as a support for the accusations brought against him." We took up Vyshinsky's challenge. The Stalinist prosecutor claimed that two types of evidence confirmed the guilt of the accused—"the historical connection which confirms the theses of the indictment on the basis of the Trotskyites' past activity"



The above picture shows the author of the adjacent article, Albert Goldman, who served as Leon Trotsky's attorney conferring with Trotsky during the Dewey Investigation on the Moscow Trials.

and "the testimony of the accused which in itself represents enormous importance as proof."

As against the distortions and falsifications of Vyshinsky's "historical connection" Trotsky presented before the commission the story of his life, his activities, his ideas as they were set down in various books, articles and pamphlets. Trotsky explained that he believed in a political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy but he did not believe in terrorism; Trotsky showed that he defended the Soviet Union in spite of his advocacy of a political revolution. The idea that he could conspire with Hitler to destroy the Soviet Union during all the years that he was advocating the defense of the Soviet Union was too preposterous to merit the slightest consideration.

It was indeed not very difficult from a legalistic approach to destroy the basis of the Moscow Trials. The validity of the trials rested upon the evidence of those defendants and witnesses who claimed to have talked with Trotsky personally or with his son Sedov. Although not listed as a defendant, the real defendant was Trotsky. It was he who, it was claimed by the prosecution, was the chief conspirator; it was he who allegedly organized the plans

and gave the directions. Without him there was no conspiracy.

EVIDENCE PROVES STALIN ORGANIZED CONSPIRACY

If the testimony of the defendants and witnesses who claimed to have seen and talked with Trotsky or his son is disproved what is left of any conspiracy? Obviously nothing except the conspiracy of the prosecution against Trotsky.

One of the defendants was E. S. Holtzman who claimed to have met Sedov in Copenhagen at the Hotel Bristol. He and Sedov were supposed to have gone to see Trotsky. We showed that there was no Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen. The GPU must have gotten hold of an old hotel directory of Copenhagen and Vyshinsky, the smart lawyer, did not think of the possibility that a hotel could be closed up. Prior to 1917 there was a Hotel Bristol but it was closed up in that year. We also showed that Sedov was not in Copenhagen when his father was there and that at the time Holtzman allegedly saw Sedov in Copenhagen the latter was actually in Berlin.

The defendant Pyatekov testified that in December 1935 he went by plane from Berlin to Oslo and then traveled for about thirty minutes to get from Oslo to the place where Trotsky was staying. It was proved that not a single foreign plane landed in Oslo in December 1935. When Vyshinsky decided to change the landing place from Oslo to the Kjeller Airdrome near Oslo he was confronted by the same answer from the people in charge of that airport—no foreign planes landed in December 1935.

And all other defendants who were instructed by the prosecution to name places and dates where and when they allegedly saw Trotsky suffered the same fate as Holtzman and Pyatekov.

In truth Vyshinsky was in a dilemma. To have all the defendants confine themselves to vague generalizations without any one of them stating that they saw Trotsky in a certain place at a certain time would be a little too raw. To give the story some plausibility he was compelled to have some of the defendants testify that they saw Trotsky and name the place and date. This was his undoing for he gave us the opportunity to destroy the whole basis of the frame-up.

The hearings at Coyoacan, a suburb of Mexico City, did not of course receive the publicity which the Stalinist bureaucracy got for its show trial in Moscow. Moscow had millions at its disposal and great favors to grant in order to buy the purchasable consciences of some persons who were in a position to befuddle the public. Coyoacan had extremely limited resources with which to spread truth about the Moscow Trials.

But the voice of one man speaking the truth before commissioners who were willing to listen to the evidence, truthfully to analyze it and draw conclusions from it was too powerful to be suppressed. The truth of Coyoacan has not as yet achieved final victory over the falsehoods of Moscow and that is why we must continue the struggle against everything that Stalinism represents.

Depression Threat Stirs Annual Wage Demand

By SUSAN GREEN

In spite of President Truman's "panorama of prosperity," economists with their ear to the ground hear ominous rumblings of an approaching "recession." The basis for the coming let-down is the widening disparity between purchasing power and prices. Though there is a flood of goods and people need them, prices are becoming prohibitive. The result is bound to be overstocked inventories, cancellation of orders, slowing up production. And what will follow? The firing of workers from stores where goods are distributed and from factories where goods are produced. Four or five million additional workers will become jobless and join the several millions already unemployed.

The economists also predict that this "recession" will not be a major depression. It will take place, according to them, only to allow for a price adjustment to levels within the purchasing power of consumers. The feeling is that the demand in this country for goods not available during the war plus the dire need for everything in other parts of the world will continue the boom—on a less boomerang basis. This would be President Truman's "panorama of prosperity."

However, workers are from Missouri in a different sense from the way in which President Truman is from Missouri. They have heard this talk about unending prosperity before. The anarchy of capitalist production has a way of asserting itself and penalizing the working people. When the volcano of economic insecurity begins to boil and bubble, as it is doing right now, workers want more than a "panorama of prosperity." They want real protection.

GUARANTEED ANNUAL WAGE

One of the devices that would give workers the means of livelihood the year around is, of course, the guaranteed wage. Right now this becomes an important issue. Recently the White House received a report on the subject from the Advisory Board of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. It is remarkable that this report received such little publicity.

In this article the details of the report will not be dealt with but only the general conclusions. The conclusions, it must be said at the start, mean that the whole issue of the guaranteed annual wage is being put on ice indefinitely.

The board's letter to the President begins with what looks like approval clearly that plans guaranteeing wages of the idea, as follows:

"The board believes a study shows or employment when suitably adapted to the needs and conditions of the industry or establishments, are valuable to the entire nation and afford

a wholesome and desirable means for improving both worker and employer security."

But notice how this approval is full of hemming and hawing. The guaranteed annual wage must be a nation-wide policy to be effective for the protection of the working people as a whole. But the board does not recommend the guaranteed annual wage as a national policy. It limits its recommendation to "when suitably adapted to the needs and conditions of the industry or establishment." What about the "needs and conditions" of all workers in all industries threatened with unemployment and destitution? Should not that consideration be paramount?

Again, the board gives a very moderate and measured evaluation of the whole idea as affording "a wholesome and desirable means for improving both worker and employer security." To be sure, this is a very touching example of class collaboration. However, those who find it desirable to eat and pay rent and clothe themselves all the year around and every year, feel a lot more urgency about the matter than the board elicits. Nor can the worker, under the circumstances, be too worried about "employer security."

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

Hammering home the false idea that the guaranteed annual wage should not be a nation-wide policy, the board informs the President that this protection for workers should not be placed in operation by law. It should, according to the board, be a matter between individual employers and their employees and settled through collective bargaining. Because the board has a palsied approach to the matter of the annual wage, it thus misinterprets the function of collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is the medium for settling demands arising from workers' needs, changing with conditions and peculiar to each industry. However, some things are fundamental, apply to all workers, and must be guaranteed by society. Such a fundamental is, for instance, the right of every worker to the means to buy food, shelter, clothing, medical care and the other things that have become necessities of modern life.

The government claims to be organized society, and it is up to it to guarantee the means of life to the working people. If the capitalist government cannot do this, the working people will have to get themselves a government that can. But relegating a nation-wide social problem to the realm of private industry, as the board does, while kindly taking the onus off the shoulders of the capitalist government, does not solve the problem.

Not that it is incorrect for unions

to demand a guaranteed annual wage when negotiating contracts. Quite the contrary. One of the demands now being made by the United Steel Workers of the steel industry is the guaranteed annual wage. The Auto Workers Union has also put in a wedge in the right direction by asking for a guaranteed weekly wage. It is to be hoped that these unions will do some good pioneering work in the struggle for this protection for workers, long overdue. However, in a national report to the government on a social problem, to assign the guaranteed annual wage to the field of collective bargaining alone is equal to absolving capitalist society as a whole from responsibility for unemployment.

The grand finale of the board's conclusions sent to the President is a recommendation for continued study "to advance the frontiers of knowledge" and that government agencies should provide data and information "to those interested in wage guarantees." This language is easily recognizable as putting the whole matter in cold storage. As stated above, with a "recession" almost upon us and with the whole future in turbulence, cold storage is not the place for the vital issue of the guaranteed annual wage.

Dead Vet's Mother Pleads for Amnesty, Gets Truman Speech

Rachel M. Jaques, who, upon receiving her dead son's second Purple Heart decoration, wrote President Truman an amnesty plea, received in response excerpts from the President's January 6 message to Congress and a speech by Warren R. Austin, chief U. S. delegate to the United Nations.

The Austin speech was headed: "Collective Security Depends upon American Military and Economic Strength." Both speeches were sent from the State Department and reached Mrs. Jaques in Susanville, Calif., more than three months after she sent her plea to the President. After receiving them, Mrs. Jaques wrote President Truman: "I am still hoping for an answer to my letter of December 16, 1946, and I would like to be assured, by your actions in regard to the COs in prison, whether your words on the Purple Hearts I received mean anything or not."

"From your message to Congress, how can you call this nation peace-loving, when you still keep peace-loving men in prison? How can you say we are peace-loving, when you advocate universal military training?" Mrs. Jaques also wrote Austin, urging that the U. S. take the lead in working toward disarmament and abolition of military conscription.

Big Business Adds to Its Profit

The Tax Evasion Racket

By TOD WILKINSON

So extremely skillful has the capitalist class in this country become in the game of transferring to the backs of the workers the main financial burden of supporting the capitalist government that at times one cannot but admire the deviousness of Big Business. Take the latest instance. Just the other day Big Business had its Congress delete a \$30,000,000 item from the Revenue Bureau enforcement activities. In recent years the government enforcement staff has picked up \$20 for every dollar of enforcement money spent. That is, staff members have caught the wealthy cheating on their taxes and have forced them to pay up. This year the tax investigators picked up a cool \$2,000,000,000 over and above what the wealthy had originally paid in. So Big Business calls off the treasury tax probers by firing them from the government payroll. Henceforth it will be still easier for the wealthy to conceal their wealth and thus avoid paying taxes.

Another device used by the rich is that of designating state and municipal bonds as tax exempt. Some \$16 billion of state and local bonds are held by the wealthy, upon which they receive an annual interest of about \$400 million. Were this income taxed like other income, it would return some \$200 million to the treasury. Instead, the \$200 million stays in the pocket of the wealthy investors.

OIL WILDCATTING TO EVADE TAXES

One of the odd phenomena of the war was the extent to which all kinds of businessmen went into the business of oil wildcatting. Taxes then took 90 cents of every dollar of excess profits. But if the dollar was invested in wildcatting and charged off on the company books as an expense it was not taxable. Hence, the company was actually risking in its oil venture only 10 cents—the part of the dollar that would not have been claimed by taxes. At the end of the war, Big Business knew Congress would reduce taxes and any lucky oil strike would pay off handsomely.

The list of such oil wildcatting who took advantage of this situation is amazing. For instance, Steve Halas, owner of the Chicago Bears' professional football team, recently organized his own Big Bear Oil Co. in Oklahoma. Hamilton Fish, former New York Congressman, teamed

up with a former Oklahoma politician to form the F. & G. Oil Co. The Nu Enamel Corporation of Chicago owns interests in 40 oil and gas wells, carried on the company's books at the end of 1946 at \$1.1 million. The company brought in its first well in 1944.

A little more than a year ago Kennecott Copper Co. jumped into the oil game with both feet. Northern Pump in Minneapolis tossed millions into the oil fields. The Peter Fox Brewing Co., together with the Architectural Iron Works, another Chicago concern, back in 1943 got behind an Oklahoma oil promoter and struck it lucky, bringing in the discovery well of the huge West Edmond oil field north of Oklahoma City.

OIL WELLS AND SALES TAXES

The Beech Aircraft Co. brought in a gusher while drilling for natural gas to run its plane factory at Wichita, Kan. New York's J. M. Huber, Inc., manufacturer of printing inks, has brought in 300 or more wells in the last few years. Hundreds of doctors, lawyers, real estate speculators, have become wildcat investors in recent years. With crude oil now selling at \$1.95 a barrel, against \$1.25 a year ago, the profits for the lucky ones have been very good—especially as the investment was made with government money.

The sales tax, that most unfair of all taxes to the worker, has been sweeping the country in recent months. Almost a score of California cities have adopted a local sales tax already this year. At least 52 cities in California have adopted sales taxes since Santa Barbara and San Bernardino pioneered the measures in the state in 1943, reports the N. Y. Journal of Commerce. Several Alabama cities recently adopted license taxes on retailers measured by the volume of gross sales.

Such taxes are of course passed on to the consumer. Montana is the most recent state to clamp on a cigarette tax, according to the Wall Street Journal. Thirty-two of the 48 states now are in the cigarette taxing business with levies ranging from two cents to six cents a pack. Experts figure the tax "take" from cigarettes by states now amounts to \$240 million a year, second only to the \$700 million annually garnered from liquor taxes. The federal tax on cigarettes now brings more than \$1 billion yearly.

The rich profit and the poor pay.

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Editorials

Wages and Hours Law in Danger!

Under the guise of a bill to prevent portal-to-portal suits, Congress is preparing one of the most extraordinarily vicious attacks on the labor movement. A series of "riders" has been attached to the bill which in effect destroy the present wage and hours law which, ineffective and inadequate as it of course is, still provides some measure of protection for the poorest paid sections of the American working class.

At present this bill is in conference between the two houses—both have already passed slightly different versions—and once the minor differences are ironed out, it will go to the White House. Let us just list a few of these provisions so that you'll know what the "friends of labor" elected in the last election are "doing for you."

1) The House bill puts a one-year limit on back-wage claims; the Senate bill a two-year limit. Such a provision of course encourages the employer, especially the kind who runs the smaller, fly-by-night business, to take a chance. If his workers aren't organized into a union, he would figure, there's a reasonable chance they might not file suit within one or two years, and then he'd be safe. This is especially true in view of the subsequent provisions.

2) The bill, in both its present versions, permits violations of the wage and hours law if such violations were not committed by the employer in "bad faith." Just what either "bad faith" or "good faith" means in this connection, neither we nor anyone else knows. We do know that as far as the workers are concerned, they're interested in the wage levels they receive, not in their employers' faith. However, you can see for yourself how wide open a loophole this leaves for chiseling on minimum wages—the boss need merely claim that he did it in "good faith"!

3) Another provision of the House bill permits employers to secure waivers or releases from their workers on claims to back pay under the wages and hours law.

This gives the bosses a powerful weapon with which to intimidate workers, especially if they are not unionized, into surrendering their claims for a pittance. Incidentally, this provision was ruled contrary to the previous wage and hours law by the Supreme Court; hence the "need" for Congress to insert it as an amendment.

4) Perhaps most crippling of all is the provision in the House bill which prohibits workers from assigning their claims to anyone else and requiring them to sue individually. This makes for a tremendous duplication of expense and effort on the part of workers claiming back pay. It is a powerful blow against the rights of workers.

Now it is possible and even likely that President Truman will veto this bill. For one thing, it is much too harsh even from the point of view of the capitalist class at the moment; it would provoke too much of a protest from the workers once they began to feel its weight on their backs. For another thing, it would hurt Truman's chance for re-election; he is at present trying to rebuild his sadly sagging fences. A veto of this bill gives him the opportunity to pose as the liberal "friend of labor" defending the workers from the reactionaries' attacks—even though such a pose would ignore his blatantly anti-labor treatment of the miners and his previous recommendations for "milder" anti-labor legislation.

But the fact that such a miserable bill could even be passed in both houses of Congress should be proof positive of how the political policy of the two labor federations has failed; how their policy of supporting the "good" capitalist candidates results only in labor getting it in the neck once elections are over. Here again is evidence that labor needs a party of its own, to send representatives to office who will defend its rights—the rights of the overwhelming majority of the people—day in and day out.

The Near East Oil Grab

Some more of the real story behind the Second World War and the current preparations for a third, leaked out last week at a hearing of the Senate War Investi-

Neatest Trick of the Week

"U. S. Reporters Find Soviet Newspaper Not Censored."

"Pravda writers and editors don't work under orders or censorship and often differ among themselves, American newsmen found in interviews with the Soviet Communist Party newspaper editors yesterday. Pravda's building, a UP correspondent found, is a nice place for munching fine pastries and sipping tea."

—From the Daily Worker, Stalinist paper, April 5, 1947.

NEXT WEEK:

THE TWO GROUPS IN THE AUTO WORKERS UNION

By Ben Hall

JAMES BURNHAM'S LATEST BOOK

Reviewed by Irving Howe

THE POLISH BORDER PROBLEM

By A. Rudzienski

WORLD POLITICS

Stalinism and the Vatican

At a recent session of the Italian Constituent Assembly, a clause was accepted for the proposed new constitution which would incorporate into it the infamous Lateran Treaty of 1929 with the Vatican. This treaty, it will be remembered, formalized the alliance between Mussolini's dictatorship and the Vatican hierarchy by providing that government taxes would be used to pay clerical salaries and that compulsory Catholic indoctrination would be maintained in the public schools. In return Mussolini received the support of the Vatican.

Now that Mussolini has been overthrown and replaced by a parliamentary republic, a clause is adopted by the Constituent Assembly which perpetuates the arrangement by which millions of Italian workers involuntarily give financial aid to the Vatican. That the present premier, De Gasperi, should press for this arrangement is not unexpected. He is the leader of the Vatican's political party, the Christian Democrats, and a faithful servant of the hierarchy; he was at one time chief librarian in the Vatican.

But what is remarkable is the news that the Italian Stalinists, led by Tagliatti, voted for the incorporation of the Lateran Treaty into the new constitution, the first clause of which is, ironically, to read "Italy is a democratic republic founded on labor." Their vote in fact was decisive. The Christian Democrats favored the incorporation of the Lateran Treaty and the Socialists opposed it. The Stalinists swung the balance in favor of the Vatican.

How remarkable a fact this is can best be understood when one recalls the history of this Lateran Treaty. From 1870 to Mussolini's advent there had been a breach between the Vatican and the various parliamentary regimes of that period. The Church was among the first to rally to Mussolini's support. When, on February 11, 1929, the Lateran Treaty was signed, Mussolini gained the united and universal support of the Church while the latter's financial problems were solved and its traditional status as ruler of Italian education restored.

THE CHURCH'S SERVICE TO MUSSOLINI

How helpful this treaty was to Mussolini is vividly described by one of Mussolini's most fawning biographers, Anton Zischka, who wrote, "From that day on the Duce could count on the support, direct or indirect, of 336,000,000 Catholics throughout the world. By this move . . . the clever Mussolini immensely strengthened his position both inside and outside Italy. Henceforth his policy would be defended by 320,000 priests, 265,000 monks, 400,000 nuns, and 35,000 missionaries scattered from Greenland to the Malayas, from Japan to North Africa; by 1,578 bishops, 245 archbishops, and 55 cardinals; by the papal nuncios in the various capitals who . . . are agents of inestimable importance."

And it is this treaty which the Italian Stalinists have, by their decisive vote, allowed to become part of the new constitution. They have thereby helped the Vatican to regain whatever ground it lost during the period after Mussolini's overthrow.

The opposition to Church domination of the state and of public education is not a uniquely Socialist position; it predates the Socialist movement. A demand traditionally associated with the bourgeois, or capitalist, revolution, it received its classical expression in the Great French Revolution of 1779. This position does not destroy the Church, it merely tries to limit it to religious matters and to throw off its age-old stranglehold on the political regimes of those countries with a predominant or large Catholic population. As such it has of course been supported by the socialist movement since its inception, since socialists are the most rigorous and consistent defenders of democratic rights.

Calcutta General Strike Celebrates Viet Nam Day

A general strike took place in Calcutta on February 5 as a sequel to police brutality on January 21, when a procession of students, young boys and girls in their teen age, was broken up by tear gas, lathi charges and revolver fire.

The barbarity of the attack can be ascertained by the fact that one student had his brains battered out in the street. In all, three were killed and 100 injured.

Boys and girls were gassed and unconscious in the street while the police charged over their prostrate bodies.

The students were celebrating Viet Nam Day and decided to hold a procession in defiance of Section 144, their destination being the French Consulate, where they intended to demonstrate against French oppression in Indo-China. The students were attacked by the police immediately they emerged from the gates of the university. They retreated inside the building in the face of intense tear-gas attacks, but returned again, to be met with the same treatment.

These sallies and retreats continued for the greater part of the day, until the whole area had been cordoned off by the police and the streets were practically impassable, due to tear-gas fumes. By this time the Moslem students had joined the demonstration in force and the whole community had evaded the police and rallied inside the building.

BOSE HOWLED DOWN

A large meeting was held and addressed by various political personalities. Notable among them was Sarat Bose of the Congress. He urged the students to go home but was howled down with cries of "Go back, Sarat Bose." Evidently the students had not forgotten the role he played in November, 1945, when he tried the same game of disrupting the students' anti-imperialist struggles. He met with more success this time, as when he left the platform and walked out, half the gathering dispersed. The meeting, however, continued and al-

though the students were anxious for further action, no program was put before them.

Despite several requests, which were supported from a section of the gathering itself, the Trotskyists were refused the platform and the president attempted to close the meeting. The Trotskyists thereupon stormed the platform and succeeded in capturing it. They placed a concrete program before the students based on cooperation with the working class.

The tear-gas was being fired outside the building and it was touch and go whether the students remained in the building or rushed out in the streets. Cries of "program" were met with long-winded appeals to remain calm and disciplined.

CONGRESS ALARMED

The Congress was alarmed at the fact that the students had approached the workers. The alarm was no doubt justified, as it betokened lack of faith in the premier nationalist organization as well as a realization of the power of the workers. They therefore went all out to sabotage the strike. The president of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee issued a press statement denouncing the strike. This produced an immediate reaction, as all the middle class party groups inside the Congress, through their representatives in the Council of Action, came out against the strike. This was to be expected and is another instance that proves the impotence of the petty bourgeois parties who have no independent line of action of their own and despite their "left" phraseology act only in accordance with the dictates of the capitalist Congress. The BPTUC, however, with the All-India TUC sessions to be held in a couple of weeks' time, realized its existence was at stake and in spite of opposition from Congress labor leaders inside the BPTUC itself decided to enforce the strike.

Thus the anti-strike propaganda of the last few days—that the strike was likely to result in riots and disturbances—proved false. In keeping with the decisions of the Bengal Provin-

The vote of the Italian Stalinists is not merely, therefore, a betrayal of the entire working class tradition on this matter; it even runs counter to the tradition of bourgeois-democratic revolution.

REASONS FOR THE STALINIST POSITION

Why, then, did the Stalinists vote in support of the Vatican? One reason offered is in terms of internal Italian politics. In a dispatch to the Nation (April 5, 1947) Alvarez Del Vayo, the Winchell of socialist journalism, reports from Milan that the Stalinists are trying to garner support for the coming national elections next October. They have voted for the Lateran Treaty, he says, because they "have won a large following in rural districts and are anxious to avoid alienating the Catholic farmers."

But though there may be something to this, it is certainly not the main reason for the Stalinist position. Their attitudes on such major questions are always determined by the position of Stalinist Russia in the international arena. At the present time Russia is hard pressed by a new diplomatic and economic offensive launched by the Anglo-American bloc. The Italian Stalinist vote can therefore be understood as part of a general Stalinist strategy to persuade the Vatican to adopt a less hostile attitude toward it. It is part of the same policy which has led the Polish Stalinist regime, desperately seeking a modicum of popular support, to initiate negotiations with the Vatican for closer relations.

Stalin of course does not expect a long-range accord with the Vatican. But if he could gain just a brief respite, even a measure of decreased hostility by the Vatican to his moves in eastern Europe, it would help his position considerably. That in doing so the Italian Stalinists betray the simplest, most elementary concepts of socialism and even of simple liberal democracy does not bother him in the slightest.

For this is the one crucial point about the Stalinist parties that must be reiterated constantly until it sinks into the consciousness of workers everywhere. The Stalinist parties are simple puppets of the Russian dictatorship; what they do, what political positions they take depend exclusively on the interests of that Russian dictatorship, and on nothing else.—I. H.

P. S.—After writing the above column, I came across an article in the Daily Worker of April 5 by Joseph Starobin which tries to justify the position of the Italian Stalinists. It is really a masterpiece of squirming; it's a pity there isn't the space to reprint it here in full.

The basic tack of Starobin's piece is to use the vote of the Italian Stalinists as proof that the Stalinist parties act independently, that "they guide themselves by the specific conditions facing them. . . ." To believe this claim one must believe the patent absurdity that on as burning a political issue as the relationship of Stalinist Russia to the Vatican today, the Italian Stalinists acted without consulting their Kremlin masters!

Starobin attempts to utilize the action of the Italian Stalinists to offer an olive branch on a small scale—just as his Italian partners are doing on a large scale—to American Catholics. See, he says, how we Stalinists protect the "rights" of the Catholic Church.

He merely neglects to mention that the struggle for separation of church and state has been a basic plank in the program of every liberal, republican—let alone socialist—group in such countries as France and Italy for decades; he merely neglects to mention that the Italian Stalinists in voting for the Lateran Treaty lined up with the reactionary Christian Democrat Party of De Gasperi, the political arm of Vatican reaction; he merely neglects to mention that the Italian Stalinists voted that those millions of Italians who have broken with the church or never accepted it should be forced to pay taxes to maintain it. That is Stalinism in

RUSSIA:

An Engrossing Novel
Describes Its Terror

By IRVING HOWE

Near the Kremlin where Russia's masters work deep into the night, there is a street known as "the Route." This is the street along which the bureaucrats' limousines speed to their country dachas; it is the most closely guarded spot in Russia. Citizens of the "workers fatherland" unfortunate enough to live here have to get their papers checked each month by the GPU. And every janitor on the street, it is common knowledge, works for the GPU.

It is in this miserable spot, where the extremes of Russian society momentarily meet, that the action of Godfrey Blunden's novel, *A Room on the Route* (Lippincott, \$3.00) takes place. In the little room of Rachel, fighter in the civil war and one of the few survivors of the heroic revolutionary generation, there gather its central figures. They are largely of the older generation: Rachel, bitter and desperate with hatred for the degenerate regime, her husband at the front and her son in a labor camp because of an indiscreet remark; Lizavetta, a simple old woman returning to God as a source of solace in a time of misery; Gregor, a GPU official who maintains his intelligent perception of the truth though he knows himself trapped and sees no solution but self-destruction; Mitka, a growing but shrewd peasant type; and finally the Anglo-Saxon Ferguson, who works for a foreign embassy and is drawn to these people out of curiosity.

In a way this group represents a generation, the Witnesses, those who know pre-Stalinist life and who know what Stalinism did, those who can compare the past with the present and whose minds have not been formed by the propaganda machine. No wonder the regime considers the entire generation dangerous and frequently commits sections of it to prison or labor camps. For they were the Witnesses; in the innermost areas of their hearts there must remain hidden a spark of freedom intolerable to the Kremlin.

DESCRIBES FATE OF THESE PEOPLE

The novel presents the criss-crossing fates of these people, their gradual destruction by the regime. It reaches a climax when Rachel's son Karl returns from his prison company now organized for the war into suicide battalions. His personality as emancipated as his body, he has lost faith in every credo except the assertion of the individual will. If all programs are suspect, there remains only the individual's heroic, self-destructing act against tyranny. So he decides on the ultimate justification for his death: the destruction of the greatest tyrant of all. He waits in the Room for the limousine which will bear the beloved leader. He will of course die; but the act will have been committed and by its defiance of the authority which millions have been forced to bow, it will give new courage and confidence to the masses taught to acquiesce.

But Karl's plan is frustrated by Gregor, the disillusioned GPU agent who is himself waiting to be "taken" by the regime. Gregor instills doubt into Karl's mind: even if the Beloved Leader were destroyed, it would be kept secret from the masses. The bureaucracy knows how to preserve itself. Intent on his self-destruction, Gregor provokes Karl to kill him; thereby Karl's plan is unrealized. Karl and Gregor self-destruct; Rachel set to exile; Lizavetta returns to God; Ferguson escapes from the prison-country.

EFFECT OF BLUNDEN'S BOOK

A Room on the Route belongs to that doubtful category which for lack of a better name we must call the journalistic novel. It is the sort of thing that Koestler specializes in and though it is most questionable in terms of esthetic values, it is perhaps unavoidable in these times. Such novels, spurred by political conception rather than imaginative feeling, may be of only transient literary value, but to their contemporaries they have a special quality of excitement.

This novel produces a terrible hatred for Stalinism in the reader. If we quickly forget its characters, we cannot as quickly forget the tragic fact it helps underline: this universal cynicism; this equally universal fear; this is what the great dream of the heroic generation has come to.

Perhaps the most remarkable and the one truly realized scene in the book shows a group of older men who have volunteered or been cajoled into the "Peoples Defense Guards" at the time the Nazis are near Moscow. A group of 15 of them becomes detached from its division, which is being slaughtered by the Nazis. The men discover that they are all of the generation of Witnesses, that they have all been sent to prison camps by the new tyranny, and that they have all "confessed" to the most heinous crimes.

This remarkable group of men suddenly discovers that it is alone, that it need not fear a GPU agent—and if there is one among them it makes no difference either, for their respite is temporary and soon they may be killed by a shell. Blunden's description of how they slowly and then with desperate eagerness begin to talk, to slough off the epidemics of fear which has imprisoned their thoughts, to think and debate honestly, is magnificently effective: it moves one to compassion for these men but even more to hatred, terrible searing hatred for the Stalin tyranny.

What these men say is itself not really very valuable. Cynicism, nihilism, Machiavellianism, attacks on Trotsky for not remaining in Russia (as if he could have!), bewilderment—these are a few of the reactions. But the process of gradual reassertion of personality, of the man free to think and speak his mind is what so moves the reader.

I think, too, that Blunden's description of the reactions of such men is largely accurate. It seems likely that if the Stalin regime were overthrown and men could again speak freely, there would be pervasive trends to cynicism and nihilism: a people does not go through an experience such as Hitlerism or Stalinism without having its faith in any and all ideas severely shaken.

In Russia there is only deep, corroding cynicism and pervasive fear. Even if the generation of witnesses has largely been destroyed, it has left enough of a tradition to make people deeply skeptical; that they cannot openly express this skepticism does not deny its existence. It is in the light of this fact that Blunden's description of how the older generation would react, giving an atmosphere of free discussion, seems so credible; it also seems likely that the younger generations who do not even have the residue of revolutionary idealism which persists among the witnesses would be even more cynical.

A Pen Portrait of an Ambitious Politician

Harold Stassen: 'Liberal' Eyes the White House

By JACK RANGER

THE University of Minnesota even back in 1928 already had an enrollment above 10,000, so that the only students you got to know were those in your own fraternity, or athletic squad, or those who shared your special interests. I was on the campus during the same years as Harold Stassen. I had heard of him, but never met him. He was a campus big shot—a debater, politician, active in the ROTC, champion rifle shot.

In their article on Stassen in the September 7, 1946, *Saturday Evening Post*, the Alsops mentioned Stassen's success in organizing the Gopher Party on the campus in 1928, based upon the fraternity and sorority vote.

I remember it well. At the time I asked some fraternity brothers who were on the law campus with Stassen what he was like. I got the same answer that, 18 years later, I received when I put the same question to some leading Republicans in Minneapolis: "He's a smart punkin-head, but a real ——" I have yet to meet anyone who likes him.

John Gunther, writing on Stassen in the January, 1946, *Harper's*, says that "friends recall that while still an undergraduate Stassen told them he intended to be governor of Minnesota before he was 35." I recall hearing the same about Stassen. He made it at 31.

Stassen was born in 1907 in West St. Paul, of German parentage, his mother being partly Norwegian. The name and the family background are good for Minnesota politics. Harold was raised in a conservative petty bourgeois Baptist family. His father, a truck driver, was three times mayor of that small community. Harold has three brothers—one is a foreman and was formerly a member of the AFL Sheet Metal Workers, another owns a grocery store, and a third is a state pay-roller, supervisor in the state petroleum division.

Stassen worked his way through the university, doing night work in

LABOR ACTION is pleased to print here the most detailed and revealing political portrait of Harold E. Stassen, former governor of Minnesota and a candidate for the Republican Presidential nomination next fall, which has yet appeared in the American press. Jack Ranger's article is a thorough expose of the "liberal" pretensions of this Big Business politician. It is valuable, however, not merely as an expose of this individual politician, but also as a portrait of a certain type: the political agent of Big Business clever enough to try to gain popular support by posing as a liberal. We hope that all of our readers will give this article the wide circulation it deserves.

a bakery. He also worked for a brief period as a sleeping car conductor. The year 1929, significant for all of us, was particularly so for Stassen. That year he graduated, married a childhood acquaintance, opened a law office, and had a slight touch of T.B. which put him in a sanitarium for a few months.

Stassen's law partner was and is Elmer J. Ryan, Irish Catholic and successful Democratic politician in St. Paul. The association has helped both politically.

AMBITION LEADS HIM TO ENTER REAL POLITICS

The key to Stassen's make-up is his driving ambition for political power, a passion probably unmatched by any other figure of his generation.

There was no time to waste. He entered politics immediately and was elected county attorney at the age of 23. Stassen is acutely aware of the need for a good press, and has always made it a point to enjoy particularly good relationships with the newspapers and magazines. In the early 1930's he began to cultivate the county editors, inviting them to visit him in groups of two or three.

He got ahead fast. By 1936 he was president of the County Attorneys Association and had organized the Young Republican League. Other former campus luminaries had turned leftward under the impact of the crisis. (Ken Haycraft, All-American end at Minnesota, was out organizing Farmer-Labor Youth Clubs.) Stassen never hesitated, as did other young Minnesota politicians in those days, between the Republican and Farmer-Labor parties. His instincts, his family environment, his legal training, his long-term political strategy, told him that his road to power lay through the Republican Party. Not with the Republican Old Guard, but against it.

of Stalinism. Such people make a profession of not seeing through the trick. Stassen worked it to perfection in putting across his Slave Labor Law.

A JOB FOR BUSINESS IN WRECKING EDUCATION

Stassen did a real job for Big Business in the state department of education, forcing the resignation of John Rockwell, a very able and progressive administrator but a muddled liberal who, indeed, had supported Stassen in the election because of a well-founded distrust with Benson. Stassen further forced the dismissal of Rockwell's aide, Eugene Carstater. The governor took a firm stand against labor's agitation for public housing, and to this day Minnesota is one of the few states that has no enabling act to permit it to take advantage of federal housing funds.

In a word, under Stassen's admin-

LAUNCHES ATTACK ON LABOR UNION HEADS

What had happened was that John Cowles, publisher of the *Minneapolis Star-Journal*, the *Des Moines Register* and other papers, and an early Willkie booster, had convinced Stassen he should back Willkie. Stassen has always been very careful to please big publishers. That is why he gets such a good press. He's always had the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth papers solidly behind him. The Luce publications are for him, as they were for Willkie. Stassen was attracted to Willkie for other reasons, too. He saw Willkie attempting the same maneuver that he himself planned to make some day—capture the Republican machine as a "liberal," and ride for the White House.

STASSEN FINDS A STOOGIE IN SENATOR JOE BALL

A brief side light. During Stassen's second administration, one of those lucky historical accidents befell him. The Minnesota Senator, Ernest Lundeen, Farmer-Laborite, was killed in an airplane accident. This gave him the right to appoint a successor. Stassen appointed Joe Ball, political writer for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, a man who was one of the first to ballyhoo Stassen for governor.

Ball began his newspaper career working on a small daily in Crookston, Minn. He drifted to St. Paul and was glad to catch on with the *Dispatch* and *Pioneer Press* at \$20 a week. When the Newspaper Guild began organizing Twin City newspapermen in 1933, Ball signed up. The Guild won a good contract, and Ball's wages shot up to \$60 a week. Ball is a smart fellow, one of the few newspapermen in the country who

ANTI-UNION STASSEN'S SLAVE LABOR LAW

Tobin, a member of the national committee of the Democratic Party, wired the White House, and President Roosevelt wired back he'd go down the line for the teamster's skate. In the meantime, John L. Lewis, then still head of the CIO, had offered Local 544 a charter in District 50 of the Miners. At a meeting on June 9 the Local 544 membership voted unanimously to get out of Tobin's union and accept the Lewis charter. Soon afterward, Roosevelt's Attorney General, Biddle, a liberal twirp, indicted 29 leaders of Local 544-CIO and of the Socialist Workers Party. Naturally, this didn't make it any easier for the union to conduct a fight against Tobin, who in the meantime had flooded Minneapolis with goons from Detroit, Kansas City, Texas and other spots. ("Holy Joe" Casey, who came to Minneapolis to lead the Tobin forces, is himself today conducting an oblique fight against Tobin out in Oakland, Calif.)

Under the Stassen Slave Labor Law, a state labor conciliator must conduct an election among the workers if a majority sign cards indicating they wish to be represented by a union of their choice.

On June 20, 1941, Local 544-CIO filed petitions with the state labor board for industry-wide elections, whereby the workers themselves could democratically indicate their choice of bargaining agent: Local 544-CIO or Tobin. Local 544-CIO presented the blue pledge cards and petitions signed by thousands of drivers in all the various crafts. The first labor board hearing was in the wholesale grocery industry, and on July 21 Local 544-CIO proved that the majority of the drivers there were members of the union and wanted an election.

Hearings were held in industry after industry. On July 30 Tobin laid his petition before Stassen's labor conciliator, the infamous Alfred

istration the conservatives rewon all the ground lost in the course of the Farmer-Labor administrations, and more to boot.

His progress in office more and more caught the eye of Big Business nationally. Too, Stassen made it his business to get around the country, familiarizing himself with the local Republican machines everywhere, becoming acquainted with ambitious local politicians critical of the Old Guard.

As a result he wangled the invitation to become the keynote at the Republican national convention in 1940. He was 33 years old. A Republican who was present with the Minnesota delegation told me the following story:

By tradition, the keynote is a neutral person, partial to no candidate. Stassen let Roy Dunn believe he was for Dewey. Dewey himself was skeptical. Stassen delivered his keynote address, saying nothing in the time-honored way but saying it with passable conviction.

The next day the Minnesota governor suddenly revealed himself as Willkie's floor manager, to the consternation of Dewey and some members of the Minnesota delegation. Dewey walked over to Stassen on the floor of the convention with fire in his eyes, swore at the big Minnesotan, accused him of being a double-cross artist, and warned him to stay out of New York. Stassen smiled.

really knows the difference between a Trotskyist and a Stalinist.

When Ball was promoted to political editor in 1937, his wages were raised. By this time the Guild had developed from a more or less professional society into a good union. Ball stood up in union meeting one evening and resigned.

STASSEN DRIVES KNIFE INTO TEAMSTERS UNION

It is Ball whom Stassen picked to fill the Minnesota vacancy in the Senate. Ball had never held public office and had no party standing or support. That gave Stassen a hold on him, and also gave the Minnesota governor a voice in the U. S. Senate. Stassen and Ball have a division of labor. Ball is out in the open against organized labor, huckstering all the anti-labor legislation. Stassen, as is his custom, is quieter and appears to be not quite so far to the right.

In 1941 Stassen got his chance to put the boots to the Trotskyists, who had won control of the Minneapolis General Drivers Union back in 1934, and had subsequently helped to organize hundreds of thousands of workers in the Midwest. The Minneapolis union, Local 544, had got crosswise with Dan Tobin, international president of the Teamsters Union, at its 1940 convention, when Miles Dunne, and other Local 544 delegates opposed Tobin's attempt to get himself a salary boost and to receive the right to appoint receivers over any local union. In the spring of 1941, Tobin called some 544 officials to Washington and had the gall to suggest they step down and let him appoint a receiver over the union. The officials reported back to the 544 membership, who told Tobin to take a flying jump.

The union appealed when Stassen's aides rejected the claims for unemployment insurance. Hearings were held. Stassen's administrator would put on a sober face, listen to our story—and notify us in writing that our applications had been rejected.

The odds were too great in the fight. With Roosevelt, Stassen and the Republican mayor, Kline, and his police ganged up against 544-CIO, the union didn't have a fighting chance.

The significance of Stassen's labor policy

Stassen's intervention in the Minneapolis drivers' fight merits study, because it clearly indicates what

A DIRTY JOB GETS AN APPROPRIATE REWARD

Local 544-CIO then filed strike notices against all the bosses. Stassen pulled out the 30-day "cooling off" clause and referred the strike notice to one of his "fact-finding commissions" which found on August 30 that the union's strike notices were "invalid," on grounds Local 544-CIO should wait for Blair and Stassen to decide on the 544-CIO petitions for elections.

Again Local 544-CIO forced Blair to hold hearings. Scores of rank and file drivers and warehousemen appeared to testify, and during four days of hearings told how Tobin hoodlums in squads of 50, 100 and 200 swarmed around the plants and docks and warehouses, armed with guns, knives, ballbats, how Tobin gangsters boasted they were supported and protected by Blair and Stassen and the cops.

Finally, late in the fall, Blair announced his decision. He turned the Minneapolis drivers over to Tobin, without an election.

Local 544-CIO challenged the decision in court, on grounds that Tobin had failed to prove before Blair the consent of the employees involved as required by Section 16 of the Slave Law; that a city-wide bargaining unit as proposed by Blair was contrary to provisions of the



Stassen law and the history of collective bargaining in Minnesota; that Tobin had been guilty of unfair labor practices and other provisions of the Stassen law and was not entitled to benefits of that law; and that Blair hadn't even heard large numbers of 544-CIO petitions. A Stassen judge decided the case for Stassen and Tobin.

Both Stassen and Blair received appropriate rewards: the former, an invitation from Tobin to address the 1941 American Federation of Labor convention in Seattle, the latter, a job as labor conciliator with Gamble Robinson, the same company that had been largely instrumental in provoking and prolonging the 1934 drivers' strikes.

Just as Stassen blocked the Minneapolis drivers from exercising a democratic choice of unions, so he used his control over state unemployment funds to deny relief to the leaders of 544-CIO. No one had seen a paycheck since the middle of June. By September we were selling anything we had to live—homes, cars, clothing.

The union appealed when Stassen's aides rejected the claims for unemployment insurance. Hearings were held. Stassen's administrator would put on a sober face, listen to our story—and notify us in writing that our applications had been rejected.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF STASSEN'S LABOR POLICY

Stassen's intervention in the Minneapolis drivers' fight merits study, because it clearly indicates what

JOINS THE ROOSEVELT PRO-WAR CAMP

Naturally, this decision threw the spotlight on the lieutenant governor who would succeed Stassen. The incumbent lieutenant governor was a nice little boy from Brainerd, a magazine peddler about Stassen's age and a friend of his. Stassen decided that C. Elmer Anderson was a little light in the poop. He chose a wealthy farmer, Edward J. Thye, a member of his machine, to run on the ticket with him.

Stassen and Thye were elected, and when the legislature adjourned Stassen gave final instruction to Thye and to his Minnesota machine. On April 27, 1943, he resigned, put on a tailor-made sailing suit, and joined the Navy. In nothing flat, due to perseverance, character willpower, brains, and bravery, he worked himself up to the post of flag secretary to Admiral Halsey, receiving a sleeve with four stripes.

(Actually, because he is a former lumber, Stassen wasn't even eligible to join the Navy. But what's a little thing like that among politicians? Navy Secretary Frank Knox smoothed the way.)

Stassen served 30 months in the

union progressives and militants may expect from the man should he ever be empowered with the presidency.

The fact is that Stassen, with the policies which his supporters insist upon, can never WIN any labor support. He is in the political stable of America's 60 families and they don't permit him to make few concessions, either to labor, the Negroes, the unemployed, the aged, or any other group of the dispossessed.

Stassen can only intervene in inner-union disputes, always backing the more reactionary side. In this way he manages to pick up a labor skate here and there who will go along with him. To this day, the lieutenants of Tobin in Minnesota support Stassen in all his anti-labor twists. So do the reactionary leaders of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor. During the war the Stalinist-led CIO in Minnesota got behind him because of his pro-war stand.

Long before Pearl Harbor, Stassen's bosses had made up his mind to join the Roosevelt pro-war camp. Stassen signified his position by appointing the "Roosevelt Republican," Ball, as U. S. Senator. The support of the imperialist war given by Ball and Stassen, coming from the heart of the anti-war Midwest, was of inestimable value to Roosevelt and Wall Street. Roosevelt was grateful to Stassen and repaid him by appointing him to the San Francisco United Nations Conference at the end of the war.

Having crushed the guts out of the Minnesota labor movement, Stassen raised his political sights. In early 1942, he announced he would run for governor a third time, and if elected would serve only four months of his two-year term (while the State Legislature met), and would then resign and enter the Navy.

Navy. Say the Alsops: "Halsey's staff was known throughout the Pacific for the gaiety and general abandon of its parties. As Halsey's aide it was Stassen's duty to act as something of a master of ceremonies at these affairs. Perhaps for the first time in his life he was not a success."

You know how people of rank look upon war—as an excuse to have a hell of a good time drinking, stealing, throwing the government's money around, getting workers shot up, going to exciting foreign places, making a little dough on the side, living high, wide and handsome.

Stassen came out of the war with a whole skin, as his friends in Minnesota had predicted. The best that Gunther could wring out of Stassen's war record was the following: "His record was distinguished, though he did not see much actual fighting."

Even that is quite a stretcher. The post of flag secretary is about as exciting as playing Knight of the Garter to a dead king. The worst that happened to Stassen was the time he got hit in the back with a bean bag during a souze party aboard ship. The home

papers tried to picture him standing firm amid the shot and shell of the Pacific, a bulwark between the Japanese and Minnesota's womanhood. It left the people pretty cold. After all, a lot of inland sailors from Minnesota left their bones on various islands stretching across the watery highway from Honolulu to Tokyo.

The war ended. Stassen had no sooner arrived back in this country than Roosevelt appointed him a delegate to the San Francisco Conference. The "victors" in the war were trying to put the world together again.

BEGINS CAMPAIGN FOR REPUBLICAN NOMINATION

When the conference ended, Stassen was 39. He decided to start his campaign for the Republican nomination for President in 1948. He went back to St. Paul, aired out his law office, tightened up a few screws in his machine and began the job of organizing his fight inside the Republican Party.

The first hurdle between him and the White House porch is the Republican Old Guard. Taft, Dewey and Vandenberg, to mention only a few, have seniority rights over Stassen. As Stassen sees it, he must repeat what he did years before to the Republican machine in Minnesota. He must organize the younger "outs" against the "ins."

Way back in 1940 Stassen had the shrewd notion that the returned veterans would be a big political force for change. The vets would be "outs" and those who stayed at home would be "ins." Stassen wanted the Republican veterans on his side, and figured the best way was to become a veteran himself.

Stassen had observed Willkie closely, as the former Republican presidential nominee had organized his Willkie clubs in 1940. Stassen began organizing his Republican open forums, monthly forums to discuss political issues of the day. Actually, a Stassen forum is about as democratic as an Episcopalian church service.

Stassen made an inauspicious beginning in Nebraska, where he backed the "internationalist," Governor Dwight Griswold, against the isolationist incumbent, Hugh Butler, Nebraska Senator. Butler won. The "internationalism" of Stassen and Griswold is only a term used by Luce journalists to indicate that a boss politician believes American imperialism ought to organize the world.

Undismayed by his Nebraska gamble, Stassen went home, where he knew he could deal the cards. He backed Governor Ed Thye against the incumbent Senator, Henrik Shipstead, the old Farmer-Labor dentist, who had been softened up in Washington by 24 years of rich living at the hog trough. Thye won.

STASSEN'S MEN: CREAMPUFF SCABS

Stassen's joint money raisers are Alfred Lindley, young Minneapolis lawyer, and former Governor William Vanderbilt of Rhode Island, custodians of the Minnesota Fund, Stassen's war chest. Lindley is best remembered for the appearance he

(Continued on page 6)

SUPPORTED BANKERS' PROGRAM IN 1938

Formed in the early 1920's the Farmer-Labor Party was in the saddle in Minnesota politics by 1930, with Governor Floyd B. Olson as its leader. The FLP was careful, however, never to win a majority in both houses. That would put it too much on the spot. Olson died of cancer in 1936. The Stalinists took over the party, swung it sharply to the right (those were the People's Front days), and nominated a small-town banker, the incompetent Elmer Benson, to succeed Olson. Benson whipped the Republican gubernatorial candidate, Martin Nelson, in 1936. Accepting direction from the Stalinists, he no sooner took office than he crossed with the organized labor movement, antagonized the teachers, made a whole series of false moves. Coming into office with the largest majority ever given a Minnesota governor up to that time, Benson ran, through his political capital in just two years. His Stalinist line was too poisonous, and the fact that he himself was a meathead put him on the skids.

STASSEN TIES UP WITH MORGAN INTERESTS

Stassen decided to run against Benson in 1938. He asked Roy E. Dunn, Republican national committeeman and wealthy resort owner, to run his campaign, but Dunn was wary. So Stassen ran his own campaign. He staged a good show in the primaries. It was at this time that he attracted the attention and support of U. S. Steel and the millers, who began backing him with money. This was an important connection for Stassen, who has been a Morgan man ever since. (U. S. Steel owns the Mesabi mines in northern Minnesota and is a powerful factor in state politics.)

Stassen beat out Martin Nelson in the Republican primary, chiefly because most of Nelson's backers entered the Farmer-Labor primary to

PROGRESS OF REPUBLICAN PARTY POLITICO

This is what Stassen actually did. He put through the U. S. Steel tax program, cutting the state tax on iron ore mined from the Mesabi Range. He raised the legal interest rate on small loans from eight per cent to thirty-six per cent. He put through a vicious old age pension plan that forced old people accepting state relief to turn over all real property, including homesteads, to the state. He put through the Stassen Slave Labor Law, over the opposition of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor which called a special emergency convention to combat the bill. This bill provided for a thirty-day "waiting period" during which the employers and Stassen "conciliators" could flangle to weaken a union or corrupt its leaders.

Here a comment on Stassen's po-

litical technique is in place. As was Roosevelt, he is an expert at the following game: On bills with a social content, he permits the extreme right wing to introduce the most outrageous measures directed against the people. When a great public outcry flares up, Stassen introduces his own measure, more moderate in character. He calls in the labor leaders with the more flexible spines and convinces them to support his bill. This splits the opposition. His bill is passed. When the dust of the battle has settled, the people discover that they have lost considerable ground. The Roosevelt or the Stassen who works the game emerges untouched. The tactic requires careful timing, a straight face and, above all, the ability to involve the liberals or the labor lieutenants of capitalism and

The Centralia Disaster in Retrospect

The Capitalist Class Is Responsible for Agony of the Miners

By J. R. JOHNSON

The mining disaster in Centralia, Ill., coming after the persecution of the miners by the coal operators and the government is a dramatic touchstone of what our society really is:

LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party say again: The system is responsible. Until the men who go down into the pits control every stage of production, until we have a government composed of workers or those whom they chose to represent them, these barbarous conditions of life and labor will continue.

This is not merely a question of a hundred dead men and their sor-

rowing families and friends. Charity and regrets will not help. The men and their families live with this threat over their heads every day. They live with it from childhood until they are killed or die. What kind of a life is this that when a man leaves home in the morning, neither he nor his wife and children know if he will return?

There is no need for these conditions to exist. There are ways and means whereby they can be reduced to a minimum. If the power of science were devoted to making mining safe, if the elementary precautions known already were taken, we would

not have this unnecessary toll of lives and the permanent strain upon the consciousness of millions.

No wonder the miners are bitter and have the supremest contempt for all except their union and those who directly support it. We hope they will rapidly learn that they are marked out to be among the leaders of those who will tear to bits this murderous capitalist society and build a human existence for themselves and all who bear upon their bent backs the expenditures, the crimes, the follies, the greed and the hypocrisy of capitalist society.

Listen to the *New York Post*: "We're sure the miners who died doing their jobs wouldn't want that kind of memorial.

"What they might want would be some guarantee that government officials, like Governor Green of Illinois, would act in the future when a local union committee complains of dangerous conditions. They also might favor prompt action by the top men in their union—like John L. Lewis—when such warnings get no result. He or his appointees didn't make any great outcry a year ago, after the appeal to Governor Green produced nothing. They might hope that some pressure would be put on the mine-owners quickly enough to do some good."

Isn't that shameful? See how they are protecting capitalist society, white-washing the state, blackened by a century of criminal negligence.

THE PM WHITEWASH

Max Lerner in *PM* writes an editorial entitled *The Enemy: Fire-damp*. That is a monstrous lie. The enemy is not fire-damp. The enemy are the coal owners and the government and all who support them.

To say that the enemy is fire-damp is to be no more than a lackey of the capitalist class. True, later in the editorial, he blames the coal owners and ends with the pious wish that until we have a government like the British Labor government which takes over the mines and runs them, we shall not have responsibility where we can locate it.

This too is hypocrisy and fraud. We leave aside for the moment what exactly the British Labor Government is doing for the miners. But what has Max Lerner done to contribute to the forming of such a government? Has he written a line to the miners telling them that only such a government will help them?

Has he said "I am for such a government. Miners, steel workers, railroad men, rubber workers, to end your trials, you need a labor government. I and my colleagues shall do all that we can to help you form one"? No, he hangs on to Roosevelt's coat-tail, then transfers himself to Truman's. Then he says that Truman's government is a failure, but the liberals must be careful lest they let the Republicans in by opposing Truman. So he jumps from side to side defending capitalism.

Is the word hypocrite too strong to be applied to Max Lerner? Tell us, please, what other word can be applied to an ex-professor, author of numerous books, and editor of a paper, who writes, as he does, in this editorial:

"It would seem more decent for the spokesmen of the coal operators, instead of attacking John L. Lewis, to accept the stoppage and recognize the grievance, and to join with the miners and the government to make this the last major mine explosion in America."

In the name of sense and reason, who else but a hypocrite (or a raving lunatic) can ask the spokesmen of the mine owners to join with miners to prevent explosions? The coal owners are the enemy. The government is their ally. Their spokesmen are paid to attack Lewis and cover up the crimes of the mine owners. To ask them to join with the miners is a shameful mockery and could come only from a pen which first and foremost seeks always to defend capitalism. That is the truth about

Penalty for Death And for Trespassing

The greatest penalty that the Illinois state mining laws place on the coal company responsible for the loss of 111 miners' lives in the Centralia disaster is the following: "A fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or imprisonment in the county jail not to exceed six months, or both, at the discretion of the court." (Penalties, Section 28.)

The nature of capitalist legality exposes itself clearly when it is seen that this penalty is EXACTLY THE SAME penalty that can be applied to ONE person if found to be guilty of TRESPASSING on company property!

Max Lerner and all his type and we want the miners to know them and remember them and recognize them as soon as they open their mouths. Brothers and sisters of the mining areas. We cannot claim to appreciate a fraction of the tortures to which capitalism daily and hourly subjects you. We can only claim that you do not detest this monstrous system with a greater hatred than we do. We understand that nothing, nothing can correct its evils but its overthrow by the workers.

We know that in a socialist society you yourselves can organize production so as to produce coal at only a fraction of the cost in suffering, in

and bitterly criticize your leaders, it is not as the liberals and the labor leaders criticize him. We at times denounce Lewis because he will not understand that this society, capitalism, will never be able to give you a human existence. We criticize him for not leading you politically in an unceasing struggle for the overthrow of the system.

We ask you to read our press, pass it around, tell us what you think of it, knowing that in all your difficulties we are with you, and if we differ with you, it is as comrades and friends who wish only to convince you that the destruction of capitalism is our only solution.

Bituminous Coal in U. S. Industry

Who Owns the Coal Industry?

By JOHN DILLON

Bituminous coal is mined in at least thirty states in the U. S. A. The major soft coal deposits are in the Appalachian Mountains region, running north and south, with Pittsburgh, Pa., on one extremity and Harlan, Ky., on the other.

Largest operator in the bituminous coal fields is the Pittsburgh Consolidation Coal Company. As of December 31, 1945, the company owned or held mineral rights to 250,111 acres of bituminous coal fields, operated 35 deep mines and 8 strip mines. Consisting of 3 operating divisions, the company carries on mining operations in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio.

Among others of the corporate grants are: The Island Creek Coal Company which, as of 1934, owned 27,278 acres of bituminous coal fields and held mineral rights to 5,199 acres, plus other lands on lease, in Logan and Mingo Counties, W. Va.; the Pittston Coal Co., primarily a holding company which controls 264,000 acres of coal fields through subsidiaries; the West Virginia Coal and Coke Co., which owns 63,000 acres of undeveloped reserves in West Virginia and has 15,000 acres in Gilmer County, W. Va., containing an estimated one hundred million tons.

Production in 1945: 574,163,000 tons; 1944, 620,000,000 tons; 1943, 590,149,000 tons; 1942, 582,693,000

tons; 1941, 514,149,000 tons; 1940, 460,722,000 tons; 1938, 348,544,000 tons; 1937, 445,531,000 tons.

LINKS IN A CHAIN

As an example of how these companies developed, we can take The Island Creek Coal Co., which acquired the assets and property of the United States Coal and Oil Co. in 1910. In 1926 the company sold the Island Creek Railroad Co. to the Chesapeake and Ohio which had charge of actual operation. In 1938 a majority of the stock of Carnegie Coal, Corp. was acquired. By 1942, the company had acquired 99.97 per cent of the stock of United Thacker Coal Co. The Island Creek Coal Co. has put money in the development of oil wells on its property, \$200,000 in 1945 alone, and intended to enter the gasoline market this year. Financially, the company has always been in good shape. A \$6 per share dividend has been paid every year of the war on preferred stock. The estimated 1945 net profit is \$2,351,409 more than in 1945, despite strikes which caused the operators to yell bloody murder.

The Pittston Coal Co. is a good illustration of how holding companies operate. It controls company stores, trucking, retailing, and wholesaling of coal. The company has controlling interest in 16 subsidiaries and in turn is controlled by the Allegheny Corporation which owns 263,286 shares of common stock. The Allegheny Corporation loaned \$6,000,000 to the company in 1945. (Allegheny is the huge holding company currently controlled by Robert Young of the Chesapeake and Ohio network. It was formerly the bubble pipe for the notorious Van Sweringen railroad bubble.)

When the immense tonnage of mined coal is considered, one must expect it to be a large source of revenue to those who control the transportation system. And so it is. The railroads are the big coal haulers. To some railroads it is the largest source of income, and the main commodity by tonnage carried. Bituminous coal mined in 1945 totalled 574,163,000 tons, and with minor exceptions it was all carried by railroads. As an example of the importance of coal in railroad income we can cite the following:

The Baltimore and Ohio railroad in 1945 carried 59,066,947 tons which contributed \$78,020,049 to the company, representing 25.3 of the company's total revenue. The Chesapeake and Ohio carried 72,746,255 tons in 1945, on which it made \$109,853,764, or 61.7 per cent of its total revenue. The Chesapeake and Ohio is the big soft coal carrier, but there are other companies close to it.

(To be continued)

AMNESTY PLEA RENEWED AS DRAFT EXPIRES

On March 31, the day the Selective Service Act expired, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, chairman of the Committee for Amnesty, called upon President Truman to grant a complete amnesty to conscientious objectors and other men sentenced under the Act.

"In view of your statement of March 15 hailing the Greek amnesty, we feel it would be supremely timely for you to proclaim an amnesty for our own political objectors," Mrs. Fisher wrote the President.

Slave Labor Used Widely By Stalinist Dictatorship

Evidence of the vast system of slave labor in Russia continues to come from many sources. Some time ago we printed a compilation of reports from a number of American pro-Stalinist writers and newspaper reporters which indicated the increasing role of forced labor in Russia; elsewhere in this issue, we are reprinting material collected by the AFL on the subject. In this article, we present further facts.

First of all, there is the following report in the *New York Times* of March 30:

"VIENNA, March 29—The arrival of 350 Austrian Jews from Russia yesterday gave startling verification of reports of the hard fate of many Jews who fled from Hitler to Russia."

The 350 were in a shocking condition. Their clothes were rags. They were half starved. Members of the group said they had been on the way from a Russian work camp at Kazakhstan in Central Asia for nearly three months."

The 350 Jews involved in this report may not seem like a big factor. However, it is from isolated reports of this sort that we have to piece together a more complete picture of the Russian slave labor system.

In the *New Leader* of March 29, information is presented on the life in the forced labor camps. It gives a description of the spy system of the GPU, which utilizes a great number of the prisoners themselves as agents. By keeping the living standard of these unfortunates sufficiently low, the GPU forces many to become informers to alleviate

their hunger. In this way the Stalinist machine is supplementing the physical destruction of its victims with a carefully planned destruction of their human integrity.

This policy is further pursued by a division of the prisoners into four groups in accordance with their individual productivity. Only the strongest are in the highest group—the "Stakhanovites"—and can enjoy something approaching a bearable diet. For all the rest, the report tells us, "hunger is a normal condition of life."

Of special interest is a report on the "left-wing political oppositionists"—the "Trotskyites"—in these camps, which has been reproduced from the testimony of a Polish lawyer in "Le Justice Sovietique," by S. Mara and P. Zwierniak, published in Rome in 1945. According to this report, the political retained their morale against the terror of the GPU in holding on to their solidarity. The report speaks of organized hunger strikes which were carried out very often with fatal results.

Another fact which has not been generally known, and which was brought out in this *New Leader* article, is that most of the Russian war prisoners who were liberated from the Germans were immediately sent to forced labor camps. All over Europe, the GPU is now searching for Russian citizens who sought to escape the Kremlin slavery by staying in the West. In France, the GPU maintains a special camp for this purpose with the permission of the French government.

Harold Stassen Eyes the White House --

(Continued from page 5)

made in the course of the Minneapolis drivers' strike back in May, 1934, when he entered the market attired in a polo hat and riding breeches, bearing a club and anxious to beat the brains out of any striking driver who dared to stand up and holler for 42½ cents an hour.

Lindley told the Alsops that individual contributions to the Minnesota Fund are limited to \$1,000, which, say the Alsops, "is most unusual self-denial in work of this sort; but the money has been coming in well."

In boss politics a man's dividends increase in direct proportion to the earliness with which he puts dough on the line for the candidate he backs. Obviously, a lot of big shots have invested dough in the belief that Stassen will be the next President. The *New Republic*, as far back as May 6,

1946, estimated that Vanderbilt and others had already raised \$4,000,000-odd for immediate use. The funds are to be made available to Stassen chiefs around the country in time to stake them to a real try for control of the state delegation to the 1948 Republican convention.

Another Stassen money raiser is John Hanes, the former Democrat whom Stassen backed unsuccessfully for the post of Republican national chairman. Hanes is related to the wealthy Chatham textile family in North Carolina.

Henry T. McKnight, Minneapolis business man, has the job of organizing Stassen's forums. By September, 1946, McKnight claimed that 1,000 had been formed. He aims at 20,000 forums by the summer of 1948.

Stassen has told members of his camp that he believes he can already

count on the support of about one-fourth of the Republican organizations in the country. Through his forums, with the dough that big business is tossing his way, he figures to win over or buy up more than one-fourth more. That's what he needs to win.

Stassen's friends claim he can get the labor vote, the farm vote, the Republican vote, the internationalist vote and the service vote. Political hangers-on always talk that way before an election.

John Gunther believes that Stassen should be conservative enough to win the 1948 nomination in an Old Guard convention, and then liberal enough to beat the Democratic candidate.

Stassen, says Gunther, is "above all a man of the middle."

Even Gunther couldn't like the man. "I asked a lot of people in Minne-

sota who his best friends are, and the answer I got was usually 'Stassen,'" he writes.

His chief defect, says Gunther, according to most of Stassen's friends, "is his intense ambition, which serves to make him seem too calculating."

When the Alsops inquired around Minnesota who started the Stassen boom for president, a Stassen henchman replied, "Why, I guess Stassen started it."

Even after eight years of Stassen control in Minnesota, many Republicans hate him.

PORTRAIT OF A POLITICAL CAREERIST

Here is as good a place as any for a portrait of Stassen. Back in college he used to be slim. Now he's got a slight pot. He's six feet three, 220 pounds, awkward in his movements, a pale skin, big skull which is round like Hoover's, spare sandy hair, frog eyes like Eisenhower's, ungraceful, a cold smile, bogus heartiness, solemn expression, ugly to the bone.

There is no law that says a political leader must be personable—the contrary, most of them throughout history have been pretty ugly specimens of humanity—but Stassen abuses the rule.

What are Stassen's political principles, asked the Alsops (as though it were not crystal clear that Stassen's principal aim is to get elected in the service of big business): "The party liners call him a phony liberal. He is not a liberal at all. The quality of his home state underlines that fact. He is solidly supported in the center. The less radical labor leaders, the more enlightened young business men, the non-isolationist farmers, these are the Stassenites...."

"Stassen is... a literate conservative. He is quite willing to make changes in the outer structure of society, but only that the basic structure may be the better preserved."

Stassen in several respects resembles ex-Governor Ellis Arnall, about whom I wrote in *LABOR ACTION* recently. Like Arnall, he entered politics early in life, supported the Roosevelt foreign policy, started in as a cog in an established political machine, then bucked the old leaders. Like Arnall, he is the darling of the young business men, he gets a good press, he is indifferent or hostile to organized labor and to all minorities, he talks liberal and acts reactionary. Arnall is the better speaker, but Stassen is a shrewder man, more ruthless, more ambitious for power.

The latest Gallup poll on the question, that of March 3, indicated that Dewey is still the leading Republi-

cans choice, with 45 per cent. He has lost 7 per cent since last December, when he polled 52 per cent. Stassen, in second place in both the December and late February polls, has picked up one point, from 17 to 18 per cent. The rest of the Republicans are far behind—Taft, Vandenberg, Bricker, Eisenhower, MacArthur, Warren and others.

The performance of the GOP majority in Congress doesn't seem calculated to enhance the prestige of any GOP officeholder. Dewey too, as governor of New York, will be continually on the spot between now and the summer of 1948.

Stassen is a very smart man. He not only abstained from office during this period, he left the country. At present, he is touring the world, spending several months abroad acquiring a veneer of knowledge about world affairs so that he can present himself as an expert. Stassen is the only "internationalist" among Republican leaders, save Vandenberg, who is too old to make the try for the White House. Stassen knows, even if Taft does not, that the successful politician today must have an intimate knowledge of the world which his ruling class is organizing for exploitation.

Recently, Jim Farley, asked to name the top three Republican contenders for the GOP nomination, didn't even mention Stassen.

Farley is a professional political analyst and his predictions carry considerable weight. A betting man would be wise to take his advice. Nevertheless, Stassen just cannot be counted out. Throughout his career he has established the record of always making a much better race than advance notices indicated. He has a faculty of tapping those hidden veins of support among big business circles which lift a candidate to the top. His political line more closely approximates the needs of America's Sixty Families than that of almost any other candidate in sight. Stassen is the archetype of the politician that American capitalism spawns in its decay.

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Program of the Workers Party

- I. For Price Control by Labor and the Consumers**
Wipe out profiteering and high prices by action. Only the workers can control prices. Labor must have the decisive voice in determining the prices of consumer commodities. For wage increases without price increases. For popular price control committees.
 - II. For a Living Wage**
1. For an immediate wage increase to meet the rising cost of living.
2. For an escalator clause in every union contract to provide for automatic wage increases to cover any additional price rises.
3. For job and wage security through a guaranteed annual wage, providing for a \$5,000 annual minimum per family.
 - III. Clear the Slums! Build Homes!**
1. For a 250 billion dollar five-year program to provide decent housing at low rental for all and an extensive public works plan to provide schools, hospitals and other needed community facilities.
2. For a national plan to begin work immediately on the erection of 25 million permanent low-cost housing units.
 - IV. Tax the Profiteers**
For a 100 per cent tax on all profits above five per cent on invested capital. For a \$25,000 ceiling on all annual incomes.
 - V. Nationalize Big Business**
For the nationalization of the big monopolies: the industrial establishments, transportation and communication systems and the banks. To be owned by the nation and operated under workers' control.
 - VI. End Discrimination Against the Negro People**
For full social, political and economic equality for Negroes.
 - VII. Open the Doors to the Jews**
1. For full and unrestricted immigration into the United States by the persecuted and homeless Jews of Europe.
2. For the right of the Jewish people to unrestricted immigration to Palestine or any country of their choice.
 - VIII. For Full Economic and Educational Opportunities for Veterans**
1. Readjustment allowance, on-the-job training subsidy provided by the GI Bill of Rights, to be based on a wage of \$40 a week for single veterans and \$55 for married veterans, plus \$5 a week for each additional dependent.
2. For immediate granting of a federal bonus of \$1,000 for each year of service.
 - IX. For Peace and Freedom**
1. For the right of all peoples and nations to decide their own future. For self-determination for all nations. For freedom of the colonies.
2. For the withdrawal of all armies of occupation. Bring the American troops home. For an end to conscription.
 - X. For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers Government**
For an independent Labor Party of the workers and working farmers based on the trade unions. Break with the Republican and Democratic Parties. For a government of and by labor.
- FOR A SOCIALIST AMERICA AND PLENTY FOR ALL!**

The Labor Action Sunday Forum:

HAROLD BROWN
Composer and Teacher
"Relationship Between Artist and Audience"
April 13 — 8:00 P. M.

GUENTHER REIMANN
Author of "The Vampire Economy"
"Is Germany Doomed?"
April 20 — 8:00 P. M.

LIONEL ABEL
Critic and Poet
"Contemporary Writing in France"
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With the Workers Party

AKRON Write to Box 221 for information.

BALTIMORE Headquarters: 21 West Preston St. Meetings of Socialist Youth League held every Friday at 8 p.m. Public forums are held second Friday of each month. For details of Workers Party branch, contact above address.

BUFFALO HEADQUARTERS: 639 Main St. Open meetings on Sunday evenings.

CHICAGO LABOR ACTION, 1501 W. Madison, 2nd floor, Chicago 7. Telephone—CHeasapeake 5795. Office hours: 8-1:30 p.m. daily, except Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesday evenings. DISCUSSIONS: Wednesday, April 2 and April 9, "The Russian Question," 8:45 p.m. CELEBRATE the seventh anniversary of the founding of the Workers Party, Wednesday, April 10, 8:45 p.m. SOCIAL honoring the seventh anniversary of the WP at 8:30 on Saturday, April 19. SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE—Saturday, March 22, 8 o'clock—"Ye Olde Barn Dance"—Squares, reels, floor show. All invited, young and old. Free food; 50c contribution.

CLEVELAND The Cleveland branch of the Workers Party meets every Sunday at 8:00 p.m. The Cleveland branch of the Socialist Youth League meets every Friday at 8:00 p.m. A class in basic Marxism meets every Monday at 8:00 p.m. Definite headquarters are not yet established for these meetings.

DETROIT Headquarters: 6341 Gratiot, Rooms 9 and 10. Telephone: PLaza 5553. Write or phone for information about the discussion group on "Stalinism."

LOS ANGELES New headquarters address: LABOR ACTION, 3314 So. Grand, Los Angeles 7. TEL: FRosport 6032. (If no answer, phone AX 2-9067). Office hours: 2 to 5 p.m. daily except Sunday.

LOUISVILLE For other information regarding LABOR ACTION, New International and Workers Party—Write Robert Durant, Box 1181, Louisville, Ky.

NEWARK HEADQUARTERS: 248 Market St. OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday—3 to 6 p.m.; Wednesday—12 to 3 p.m.; Saturday—3 to 4 p.m. Forums every Friday at 8:30 p.m. at Labor Action Hall, 248 Market St.

NEW YORK CITY CITY CENTER: 114 West 14th St., third floor; Open every day from 10 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. except Saturday until 6 p.m. Telephone: CHelsea 2-9681. You are welcome to attend all open Branch meetings of the Workers Party in New York City.

BRONX BRANCH: Meets every Thursday at 8:15 p.m. at Wilkins Hall, 1330 Wilkins Ave., Bronx.

HARLEM BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 2143 Seventh Ave. (near 126th St.), room 106.

CENTRAL BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

CHELSEA BRANCH: Meets every Thursday, 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON BRANCH: Meets every Saturday at 2:30 p.m. at the Workers Party City Center, 114 West 14th St., third floor.

BROOKLYN BOROUGHS HALL BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday at 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 276 Fulton St., second floor.

BROOKLYN-BROWNSVILLE, EAST NEW YORK BRANCH: Meets every Wednesday at 8:15 p.m. at De Luxe Palace, 558 Howard Ave. (near Pitkin Ave.).

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE: Meets every Friday at 8:15 p.m. at the Workers Party Headquarters, 276 Fulton St., second floor.

READING For information regarding the activities and affairs of the Reading Branch of the Workers Party address: P. O. Box 1671.

PHILADELPHIA HEADQUARTERS: 1139 West Girard Avenue (3rd floor). Workers Party Branch meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Coming events at Labor Action Hall, 1139 West Girard Avenue: Friday, April 18, 8:15 p.m.—Special forum on "Red Witch Hunt." Saturday, April 19, 8:30 p.m.—Dance and Social. Sunday, April 20, 8:15 p.m.—Fourth lecture in Social Forces in the U. S.—Industrialism Triumphant. Sunday, April 27, 5:00 p.m.—Dinner sponsored by American Committee for European Workers' Relief. Sunday, April 27, 8:15 p.m.—Fifth lecture in Social Forces in U. S.—New Deal and Permanent Social Crisis. Friday, May 2, 8:15 p.m.—May Day Rally. Speeches, songs, greetings, movies, etc. Sunday, May 4, 8:15 p.m.—Sixth and final lecture in Social Forces in U. S.—American Finance Capitalist Imperialism Versus Russian Bureaucratic Collectivist Imperialism. Saturday, May 17, 8:30 p.m.—Lecture on History of Jazz, Concert and Dance.

ST. LOUIS Write Douglas Bridge, 6517 Corbett Avenue, University City 14.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA For information on the activities of the Workers Party in the San Francisco Bay area write: LABOR ACTION, 466 Tenth St., Room 206, Oakland 7, Calif.

SEATTLE Write to P. O. Box 29, University Post Office, for information.

For information of Workers Party addresses and activities in cities not listed above, write to Workers Party, 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y.

United Labor Offensive Must Answer Congress Moves to Restore "Government By Injunction" --

(Continued from page 1)

strikes by injunction under the pretext of protecting national health and safety. (These stooges of big business didn't worry about what would happen to the health and safety of workers who are underpaid and who'd be unable to fight for better wages under the proposed bill.) In the Senate, a similar bill was introduced by Senator Taft (R., Ohio). This bill differed from the House version only in that it imposed a 60-day time limit on injunctions. In effect, both bills would give the government UNLIMITED power to break strikes—for any strike could be declared a "menace to national health and safety."

STRIKE-BREAKING BILL Among the other provisions of the House bill were:

- Outlawing the closed shop;
- Preventing industry-wide collective bargaining;
- Repeal of the Wagner Act and abolition of the National Labor Relations Board;
- Prevent mass picketing and severely limit all picketing;
- Strike at the union shop, while outlawing the closed shop, by providing that any union member could revoke his decision to pay dues;
- Subject unions to innumerable suits "for damages" by employers;
- Wreck the Norris-La Guardia Act by permitting injunctions not only against strikes but against mass picketing, "unlawful concerted activities" (a deliberately vague phrase to permit the "widest" interpretation).

As Allan S. Haywood, vice-president and director of organization of the CIO, put it, the bill is "blatant and open interference in a labor dispute on the side of the employers." The CIO called a conference of all its unions for April 13 to fight this bill. Good—but not enough. For the crisis has reached such a pitch that a concerted, nation-wide attack by the entire labor movement is now necessary. Along these lines we suggest the following program:

- 1) A Nation-Wide Labor Conference of All Labor Groups to Create a Joint, United Board of Strategy Representing All the Organized Workers of America With the Purpose of Beating Back All Attacks on Labor and Pushing Forward Labor's Just Demands!

We need a national gathering of every AFL, CIO, Rail Brotherhood and legitimate independent union in the country. Such a conference to

consist of representatives from the ranks in the shops, mines and factories, as well as the union officials. Here a national Board of Strategy chosen by this conference should be selected to lead the struggle against reaction's anti-labor offensive. But not merely defense! Active, aggressive attack in behalf of all of labor's legitimate demands!

- 2) For a Nation-Wide Coordinated Offensive on Wage Demands, Centering Around the Famous UAW-GM Slogan:

Wage Increases Without Price Increases!

On page 8 of this issue, Susan Green, our staff writer, has a full and detailed account of how the big corporations have been soaking up record profits. The facts which she discloses must be borne in mind when considering the new wage demands coming up this spring.

Everyone knows that the cost of living has gone up; as reported in last week's LABOR ACTION, it has risen seven per cent since abolition

of price control last October!

Now the big CIO unions are preparing for a new wage demand. Such a demand is due—and overdue. The CIO Steel Workers Union has discovered that in its negotiations with the steel corporations, it has been unable to gain any sizable wage concessions at all. The bosses are trying to play it tough. In that case, the workers have only one answer: play it tougher!

Philip Murray has called a gathering of his 170-man Steel Workers Wage Policy Committee to decide what to do next. One thing that must now stand out clearly in the light of the present situation is this:

If the labor movement allows itself to be seduced by talk of "acting mildly" and "not provoking strikes" and "being reasonable," it will get one of the greatest raw deals in its history. This is the time to fight—to counter-attack and then to attack. If that means a strike is necessary; if the workers of any industry decide a strike is necessary—then strike!

It would be an excellent thing too if these wage offensives were coordinated by the national Board of Strategy which we have suggested above in Point 1. Such a wage offensive would be of most value to the American workers if it were conducted around the famous UAW slogan raised at the time of last year's GM strike: Wage Increases Without Price Increases! The figures prove that the capitalists are making unprecedented profits. Let the wage increases come from their unearned wealth and profits, rather than be passed on to the workers in the form of price increases.

- 3) Labor Needs Its Own Party—an Independent Labor Party Completely Free from Any Connection with the Two Old Capitalist Parties.

Both of the old parties are joining in on the current attempt to drive

the knife of reaction into the workers' backs. Both have been proved time and again to be the agents of the bosses. Truman hits at the miners; the Republican Congressmen would hit at the telephone workers and then at all of America's workers.

It is time for labor to break with these two political machines; it is time to break with the bankrupt policy of "supporting the lesser evil" among the capitalist politicians.

Let us build our own party—an independent labor party, representing the interests of our class, fighting as the independent political arm of our class just as the unions are our economic arm!

This is Defend Labor Month, says the CIO. Right! Labor needs to defend itself. But more, labor needs to turn to the offensive. Let us give our whole-hearted support to the miners and telephone workers! Let us begin a nation-wide wage offensive! To the bosses' offensive, let us reply with an offensive of our own!

Attack! Attack! That must be labor's watchword.

GATES ADDRESSES WEST VA. MINERS

WEST VIRGINIA—Nearly thirty coal miners attended a meeting at Dallas Hall, Pursglove, W. Va., Sunday, March 30, to hear Albert Gates, LABOR ACTION editor, speak on "The Next Step for the UMW."

Tracing the development of American capitalism and the rise of the UMW, Gates pointed out that the goal long sought by the miners—complete unionization of the coal mining industry—had been achieved. Nevertheless, he stated, living conditions had not greatly improved. The role once played by the operators had now been taken over by the government.

Send in Your Greeting For Our May Day Issue

LABOR ACTION is planning an attractive MAY DAY ISSUE, in keeping with the revolutionary tradition of our press. This issue, to be dated April 28, will be out on April 25 and will be mailed immediately so that it can be in the hands of our readers by May Day.

We are asking readers of LABOR ACTION and members and friends of the Workers Party to send us the traditional May Day greetings as an expression of revolutionary solidarity on this day of workers' struggle. To which we add the frank admission that we need the greetings to sustain the EIGHT PAGE LABOR ACTION. Most of the branches of the Workers Party and some friends sent greetings to LABOR ACTION for the Seventh Anniversary of the Workers Party. Though the issues will be only a few weeks apart, we look forward to a greeting from every Workers Party branch, and from our sympathizers in every city.

GREETINGS TO BE RUN IN THE MAY DAY ISSUE MUST BE IN BY MONDAY, APRIL 21!

HEIGHT	One Column	Two Columns	Three Columns
1 inch	\$2.00		
2 inches	4.00	\$8.00	
3 inches	6.00	10.00	\$15.00
4 inches	8.00	15.00	20.00
5 inches	10.00	20.00	25.00

THE DEAD-LINE IS MONDAY, APRIL 21, WITH PAYMENT!

LABOR ACTION
4 Court Square
Long Island City 1, New York

Please accept the enclosed contributions for Greetings in the MAY DAY issue of LABOR ACTION.

Name and City



LABOR ACTION SUB-DRIVE NETS 789 SUBSCRIBERS

The LABOR ACTION March subscription drive has now been completed, with a total of 789 new readers and subscribers obtained for the paper. While this total fell below our expectations, for reasons explained in last week's issue of LABOR ACTION, it nevertheless represents a substantial boost to our list of subscribers and is the result of hard work by branches of the Workers Party.

DETROIT BRANCH WINS PRIZE

The best work during the drive was accomplished by the Detroit branch of the Workers Party, under the able direction of Big Billy, who sent in a total of 110 subscriptions. This branch, because of its success in almost fulfilling its assigned quota, will receive the book award previously offered by LABOR ACTION. Other branches that did comparatively well are New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Akron. All tried hard to overcome the difficulties involved due to the current red-baiting drive, and price complications. At a future date, LABOR ACTION expects to hold another and more successful campaign.

The best individual sub-getter of the campaign was Comrade Frank Harper of the Philadelphia branch. Not only did he run and organize the campaign that obtained 74 subscriptions, but Frank, on his own, obtained sixteen of these! He is, by far, the best sub-getter and one of LABOR ACTION's most loyal and energetic supporters. We are sending him a copy of "Selected Correspondence" of Marx and Engels.

Below are the final results of the drive. Subscription prices to LABOR ACTION are now 50 cents for six months; \$1 for one year.

NEW YORK	221
DETROIT	110
San Francisco	85
Chicago	75
Philadelphia	74
Los Angeles	47
Akron	30
Newark	28
Cleveland	25
Buffalo	20
Seattle	19
Reading	8
St. Louis	7
Streator, Ill.	6
Youngstown	5
West Virginia	5
Boston	3
Louisville	2
Baltimore	1
Minnesota	1
Miscellaneous	17
TOTAL	789

We wish to thank all our LABOR ACTION agents and supporters for their efforts to make the drive successful, and express our hope that they continue to carry on the important job of getting more and more subscriptions to LABOR ACTION.

Mass Pressure Needed to Rush Pennsylvania FEPC

PHILADELPHIA—A Fair Employment Practices bill was introduced into the Pennsylvania House of Representatives last week. This bill, known as House Bill 1093, was introduced by a Negro Republican named Upshur at the very last minute for submission of bills for this session of the Legislature. This bill was later withdrawn to make way for an administration sponsored bill, under the same title and number.

Last week LABOR ACTION detailed the behind-the-scenes story of how the Republican administration did everything to evade presenting an FEPC bill; how Governor Duff sought to renege on his campaign promise. It was seen that the five Philadelphia Negro Republicans, Upshur, Mintiss, Smith, Thompson and

Henry, though constantly subject to the mass pressures of their predominantly Negro constituencies, went along with the Duff-controlled House machine. They begged a bit and pleaded a bit but did nothing to bring out an FEPC bill on the floor. They remained tied to the Republican machine, its tools and victims simultaneously.

The April 5 issue of the Pittsburgh Courier substantially corroborates these statements: "William Upshur and Rev. Clarence Smith had an FEPC bill prepared some weeks ago for introduction. They were persuaded not to introduce their bill by Republican leaders, who promised them that an administration bill would be prepared by Deputy Attorney Adams.... Upshur and Smith waited."

As the last day for admission of bills arrived, the five Philadelphia Negroes grew desperate since they had quieted the growing discontent back home by relaying the administration promise. Says the Courier: "Last Wednesday the five Negro legislators... went to Deputy Attorney Adams and asked for the administration FEPC bill.... Adams contended that the bill was not yet prepared." It must be remembered that this meant no FEPC this session since this was the last day for submission of a bill.

According to the Courier, "Upshur told him (Adams) that this would not do, that he had brought along his own FEPC bill and intended to introduce it." What is especially disgusting; as revealed by the Courier and reported in last week's LABOR ACTION, was that Mintiss, Brown, Thompson and Henry did not join Upshur but remained in Attorney Adams' office to bargain further with him. The Courier reports: "Upshur thereupon left the other Negro legislators in the Attorney General's office and got Rep. Louis Sax, white, of the Fourth Ward to sign the bill with him."

The Duff administration had tried to kill the bill by delays. In this tactic it found little opposition from the so-called representatives of

Philadelphia's Negro people. The lesson is clear that these men are incapable of representing the needs of the Negro people simply because their bread is sliced and buttered by the capitalist controlled Republican Party.

As members of that party, they are subject to its discipline and its leadership. Whether they come from wards that are predominantly Negro or white, working class or middle class, does not matter. After the election they represent only the party that sponsored them. That party is owned and controlled by the Grundys, Pews, Mellons, the banks, the real estate interests and the ruling circles of the rich coal and steel barons of Pennsylvania.

If these men had been representatives of a real people's party, a working class party of labor, they would have had to fight for an FEPC regardless of the composition of their wards, or else be expelled. A labor party would have had to fight for the elementary rights of the Negro people. That is the lesson of the story of the FEPC bill fenagling in Harrisburg.

MASS PRESSURE ESSENTIAL

What is the future of the bill? Will it become law? The Duff machine will place its prestige behind it in

order to conciliate the aroused Negro voters, especially in Philadelphia. But it will take great mass pressure to pass the bill through the State Senate.

Here is how the Courier puts it: "There is, however, considerable doubt whether even the Governor can force the bill through the Grundy-controlled State Senate. The Board of Trade and Chambers of Commerce of Pennsylvania are known to oppose any strong FEPC legislation and it is these rich elements which Mr. Grundy serves as spokesman."

Mass pressure through demonstrations and mass meetings are needed. The trade union movement, representing over a million workers in the state, should take the lead; together with the Negro organizations, to force through an FEPC. Such mass support would also serve notice that there is a great popular force ready to act as guardians of an FEPC to enforce it everywhere.

It was mass pressure that forced Duff to support H. 1093. For a complete victory it is necessary to strengthen and increase popular support. Above all, it is essential to begin NOW to plan for a MARCH ON HARRISBURG. Such a demonstration at the State Capitol even Grundy will understand.

Philadelphia Lecture Series

PHILADELPHIA—The Philadelphia Branch of the Workers Party has launched an elaborate program of spring activities with a dance and social on Saturday, March 29, followed on Sunday by the first lecture in the series, Social Forces in the Development of the United States.

Other social activities scheduled to follow the recent Mardi Gras party are: a dinner on Thursday, April 3, in celebration of the seventh anniversary of the Workers Party and LABOR ACTION, a dance and social on Saturday, April 19, and a concert, dance and lecture on the History of Jazz on Saturday, May 17.

The Philadelphia Workers Party is sending an invitation to the Socialist Workers Party, Socialist Party and

other socialist and labor groups to participate in a United May Day Rally. In the event the invitation is not accepted, the Workers Party will hold its own rally on May 2.

The educational activities, except for a special forum on "Red Witch Hunting" on Friday, April 18, will center around the series of six lectures on Social Forces.

The first lecture, entitled The First American Revolution, was delivered by Joe Arnold, educational director of the Philadelphia Local. A short introduction was given, which explained the Marxian historical materialistic concept as contrasted with other concepts of history.

In this first lecture, the speaker discussed the background, causes and

achievements of the First American Revolution. Throughout this lecture, as will be the case in the entire series, the speaker tried to portray a major historical event as the struggles in the light of class conflict and economic forces. For many of the audience, which included students from several of the Quaker City universities, this approach to history gave distant events a concrete reality far different from the "academic" abstractions which strip these events of their real significance.

Invitation was extended to the audience to attend the remaining lectures of the series: The Struggle for the Constitution, Civil War and Reconstruction, Industrialism Triumphant, New Deal, etc.

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- PAUL THIRY D'HOLBACH, by Pierre Naville—A biography of the Swiss philosopher 3.00
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- LES PROBLEMES THEORIQUES ET PRACTIQUES DE LA PLANIFICATION, by Charle Bettelheim 3.00
- L'ECONOMIE ALLEMANDE SOUS LE NAZISME, by Charles Bettelheim—An aspect of capitalist decadence 3.00
- LA PLANIFICATION SOVIETIQUE, by Charles Bettelheim 3.00
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A Question to John L. Lewis: When You Attack Democrats, Why Defend GOP?

By E. R. MCKINNEY

During the past weeks the leader of the miners, John L. Lewis, has made two appearances before Congressional committees on matters dealing with the UMWA and its affairs. As is always expected of him, he has held his own on both occasions. His language has been vigorous and colorful. The press reported that "Mr. Lewis had a field day in tilting with Senators. . . ." He said that the government used "a black-jack in favor of the bituminous coal operators." Last week before the House Committee he told the members that "our people are tired of working in Krug's slaughterhouses." Krug is an "arch criminal . . . a scheming, designing politician . . . a grotesque monstrous mistake . . . a modern Hercules with a No. 12 shoe and size 5 hat."

This is all very well and good. Perhaps it is all true, but neither the miners nor labor in general will be aided much by concentration on Krug. To be sure Krug is a "scheming, designing politician." And so was Willkie, whom Lewis supported for President against another scheming, designing politician, Roosevelt. Dewey too is a scheming, designing politician. Lewis was for him in 1944. The whole leadership of the Democratic Party is a bunch of scheming, designing politicians. This is just as true of the Republican Party. What does Lewis think Taft, Vandenberg, McCormick, Gov. Green are about or why? Is he willing to leave the fate of the miners and the working class to the tender mercies of Taft, Dewey and Col. McCormick? And does Lewis believe that the Republican leaders wear No. 5 shoes and No. 12 hats?

When Lewis appeared before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in March to protest amendment of the Wagner Act, he said that the labor bills in Congress

"run to the question of the retention of our form of government . . . and everything in our social and political life which we have held to be of value and which has resulted in such a high standard of living and such material blessings that are without parallel in history." This statement sounds more like one coming from a coal corporation president than the president of the miners' union.



Where is this high standard of living and the material blessings for the miners? Does Lewis call their cabins in the mud a high standard of living? Perhaps it would not be out of place to suggest that the top officials of the UMWA take themselves and their families for a year's sojourn in one of the company houses, say around Morgantown, W. Va.

Labor in the U. S. has the highest standard and more material comforts than labor in any other country. That is true but it is also true that production, profits and dividends are bigger than any country in the world. Last

year's net profits, that is profits after all expenses and taxes, went to a fabulous high. Right now wages could be raised twenty-one per cent, prices stay as they are and still industry would have five billion dollars net of its 1946 profits left.

There are millions of workers in the U. S., including the miners, who have not a high but a very low standard of living. We are talking about the U. S. with its tremendous accumulated wealth and with profits after taxes in 1946 of 12 billion dollars.

Lewis told the committee that nothing was wrong with the coal industry except that it mistreated the miners and according to Lewis that is a personal matter between the miners and the operators. This is an incredible statement. Why do the coal companies mistreat the miners? Because they are bad men or because they are capitalist owners trying to get their capitalist profit, salaries, dividends and the bankers' interest payment? And isn't this particularly relevant in this very sick and highly competitive industry?

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Lewis remarked that if the government would stop blackjacking the miners, the miners could settle with the coal operators. Following this he stated that the operators have the services of the government, they are satisfied with government operation; under government operation the operators are clearing about \$250,000,000 a year. Why does Lewis think the government stepped in with its blackjack except to guarantee that 250 millions of coal profits?

Does Lewis believe that the mines would no longer be "slaughterhouses" if Dewey were President, Gov. Green Secretary of the Interior, and Taft Secretary of Labor?

Lewis has had a great deal to say

against the government. But what is he talking about when he uses the term government? It is clear that he means the Democratic Party. This is an interesting light on the labor bureaucracy in its political thinking.

When Lewis talks about the government in a derogatory way, he means the Democratic Party. When Murray takes the same line he means the Republican Party. The whole labor leadership has distributed itself between the two capitalist parties and carries on a constant struggle to win the workers to one or the other of the two parties.

TILTING AT SENATORS

Tilting at senators or labelling proposals of Truman, "quack medicine" will not take care of the serious problems confronting labor. The real "quack medicine" is the politics which is fed to the working class by the trade union leaders. It is quack medicine because it is taken from the medicine chest of the capitalist ruling class, from the medicine chest of the coal operators, the steel manufacturers and the Wall Street bankers. The working class, no matter how strong and militant, can never accomplish anything with a program straight from the National Coal Association, the NAM, the Iron and Steel Institute, or the Chamber of Commerce.

Such a program is the program of the capitalist class for labor; whether brought by Dewey or Truman, Bilbo or Taft. It is no less the program of the capitalist class for labor when such a program is served, with the necessary labor frills, by a Lewis, Murray or Bill Green.

Only labor, the working class, can have a program, a political party and a government of Washington, which will NOT "be a deadening blow to the national economy and the ultimate ruin of all."

10,000 At United Labor Rally In Oakland Attack Scabbing Of Municipal Administration

By WILLIAM BARTON

OAKLAND, Calif. — Over 10,000 workers packed the Oakland Civic Auditorium on April 3 to express their desire to depose the present city administration whose protection of scabs was the direct cause of last November's general strike. The meeting was sponsored by the Alameda County Joint Labor Committee to Combat Anti-Labor Legislation.

This committee is composed of representatives of most AFL, CIO locals and several railroad brotherhoods. While the attendance at the meeting was excellent and significant, the work of the committee has been handicapped by the decision of the powerful teamsters local to bolt the Central Labor Council rather than unite with the CIO.

Despite the large attendance the meeting was not very inspiring. There was a great deal of talk about the present anti-labor drive but the committee had no real program for defeating the enemies of labor. There were no plans for putting up a slate of real labor candidates. The committee only endorsed a list of people who promised "fair and impartial treatment of labor disputes" and "no strikebreaking." The attitude seemed to be that "anything is better than the Knowland stogees now in City Hall."

LACK CLEAR IDEA

All speakers at the meeting emphasized the dangerous situation now confronting the labor movement all over the country, but no one gave the audience any clear idea of just what should be done about it, except to support the slate of candidates in the April 15 election. The featured speaker, Senator Glen H. Taylor of Idaho, whose address came by telephone from Washington, made a big hit by calling the present session of Congress the "year of the Big Grab," the period when legislative action to curtail living standards and fill the coffers of the profiteers went all out. The senator concluded by joining with his wife and son in a trio rendition of three separate songs.

State Senator Oliver Carter, AFL attorney James F. Galliano, Stalinoid radio commentator Sidney Roger, radio producer and Councilman candidate Scott Weakley, and meeting chairman Gus Gaynor of the Brotherhood of Railroad Clerks all presented the same line—the local, state and national governments are out to gang up on labor. Therefore, everybody go home and get out the vote for the guys who might be better.

COMPARES MEETINGS

One could not help comparing this meeting with what took place in this same auditorium during the General Strike. An enthusiastic overflow crowd that somehow managed to get there despite the lack of transportation and left ready for any type of militant action featured that assemblage. This current affair found a much smaller crowd, despite wider sponsorship and as great an interest in the problem. People left in droves before the meeting was halfway through, apparently glad to get away from it all.

Before the meeting, several salaried men of LABOR ACTION outside the auditorium were attacked by a group of goons headed by Jack Reynolds, prominent Building Trades official. Although they went on a rampage

shouting "drive the Commies out of here," it is significant that no "People's World" salesman was molested. Reynolds was arrested on assault charges, but to avoid having the incident used as a labor-smearing device, charges against him were dropped. The Workers Party letter to the committee and the Building Trades Council protesting the use of such hoodlum tactics by labor representatives is excerpted in another column of this issue of LABOR ACTION.

The united activity of all labor against the anti-labor drive is to be warmly commended. It can be intensified and extended to other cities.

The reluctance of teamster officials to participate should be condemned. The attempt actively to take part in election campaigns is more than welcome. But, the work of the united committee until now has been another case of an excellent possibility gone sour. Failure to initiate or even suggest any concrete action, holding dull and uninspiring mass meetings featured by telephonic vocal refrains from Washington, supporting candidates because "they are bound to be better than the guys in office," beating up distributors of publications of working class parties are not the way to combat labor's enemies.

WP Branch Protests Attack On Labor Action Distributors

April 4, 1947

Joint Labor Committee to Combat Anti-Labor Legislation
2111 Webster Street, Room 115
Oakland, Calif.

Dear Brothers:

Last night, in front of the public mass meeting organized by your committee at the Oakland Auditorium Arena, a number of men led by Jack Reynolds of the Building Trades Council attacked some girls who were peacefully selling our paper LABOR ACTION and distributing leaflets addressed to the workers going into the meeting.

These men threatened and insulted the girls, then tore the literature out of their hands and began shoving and striking the distributors. When two men who were also distributing our material attempted to protect the girls, they were set upon and an attempt was made to beat them up too. As a result of these goon-squad tactics, Brother Reynolds was arrested by the police on a charge of battery.

We would like to draw to the attention of the committee that the actions of Brother Reynolds and his accomplices in this matter are exactly the kind of thing the bosses and their representatives in government like to use to discredit the labor movement.

Brother Reynolds, it seems, does not like our paper. That is his privilege. But it is not his privilege to attempt, by physical force, to keep other workers from reading what we have to say. The labor movement has a proud tradition of being the greatest defender of free speech and a free press in America. Labor has not defended these rights only because it knows that any infringement on them will be used first of all against the labor movement, but because it is confident that its cause is just, and that in a free play of information and opinion its cause will be vindicated. . . .

Your committee called this mass meeting to protest the anti-labor drive in Congress. It is attempting to unite all sections of the labor movement, regardless of differences of opinion on other matters, to fight the reactionary drive directed against it. LABOR ACTION has been supporting labor 100 per cent in its opposition to the attack by Congress. Actions such as those by Brother Reynolds and his accomplices last night can only serve to throw discredit on your committee and the good cause in which it has been organized.

The fact of the matter is that Brother Reynolds' attack was not incited by anything written in LABOR ACTION or in our leaflet. He and his friends kept repeating that our distributors were "Commies" and were selling the Peoples World, though anyone within the labor movement who has bothered to inform himself knows that the Workers Party and LABOR ACTION disagree violently with the Communist Party and the Peoples World. This shows that he had not read what we had to say, but was simply intent on beating up any "radicals" around. Thus, if his tactics are not denounced and rejected by your committee, it is plain that he and like-minded people will continue to launch physical attacks on all groups within the labor movement with whom they disagree, thus disrupting the joint fight of labor against reaction rather than helping it. . . .

The Workers Party is determined to do everything it can to prevent the vicious and irresponsible actions of certain representatives of the labor movement from bringing discredit on labor as a whole. We have therefore prevailed on Miss Drasin, one of the people attacked, to withdraw her charges against Brother Reynolds.

We are confident that your committee will condemn the actions taken by some of its representatives in this case, and will see to it that such things do not happen in the future, either to representatives of the Workers Party, or to others who peacefully sell or distribute literature to gatherings of workers. If, however, our distributors are subjected to repeated attacks we will see to it that they are adequately defended, both physically and legally. We, and our comrades in other countries, have not ceased our struggle for the rights of labor and for socialism out of fear of the bosses' goons, or of the murderers of the Gestapo and the GPU. We are not going to be intimidated by those who ape their tactics in the labor movement itself.

Fraternally yours,

GORDON HASKELL,
Organizer, S. F. Bay Area Branch
Workers Party

Revival of German Labor Movement - -

(Continued from page 1)

man proletariat is beginning to reassert itself!

The forces behind this new-found militancy of the Ruhr workers are simple enough, illustrating again the fact that economic recovery and progress—no matter how slight—is, and will be, the essential factor behind the revival of the German proletariat. The Ruhr miners, most important sector of workers in Germany from the point of view of the occupying powers, occupy a comparatively privileged position in that country. As heavy workers, their food rations have been the highest, and so dire is the need for coal that all sorts of minor privileges (better housing, extra tobacco and clothing rations, etc.) have been extended to them. Their union was the first to recover and reorganize itself, so that today it is 300,000 strong—unquestionably the most powerful union in post-Hitler Germany. Stimulated by a recovery sufficiently strong enough to rouse them out of a state of apathetic demoralization, the miners have been able to take the lead and to reassert their existence again as a working class force within the nation.

diate causes of the demonstrations. The miners were, according to a New York Times correspondent, growing "sullen and . . . losing any illusions that any of them may ever have had about the delights of democracy." They decided to act.

After preliminary meetings and deputations who visited the military government officials, lasting over a period of two weeks, 300,000 Ruhr miners last week held a one-day work stoppage. The entire Ruhr valley shut down in a great display of proletarian solidarity. Not only did the miners participate in these demonstrations, but other workers from various factories joined in. Even the office workers in the mines (for the most part members of the Christian Democratic Party) supported the strike and adopted resolutions for a 20 per cent wage increase. In the city of Bielefeld, 600 factories were shut as workers paraded through the

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streets. Industrial workers in Gelsenkirchen, Bochum, Köln, Remscheid, etc. (all Ruhr or near-Ruhr industrial cities) staged hunger demonstrations in the streets, before Allied military headquarters and before bureaus of German food officials. In 26 cities, 150,000 workers were reported at demonstrations. Ten thousand workers in the former Krupp factories in Essen staged a sympathy walkout with the coal miners. The examples of sympathy strikes were numerous.

Although all political parties gave their support to the strikers, grudgingly in the case of the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats, it is clear this was not a Stalinist-led movement. Support was given by the political parties because elections are approaching, but this does not nullify the basic fact that this movement was a genuine popular movement, springing from the workers themselves, and led by their union delegates and leaders. The 500 miners' representatives who voted the one-day strike by almost unanimous vote were expressing the sentiments of the 300,000 union miners they represented. These men led the demonstrations, formed the various delegations and ran the strike. The Stalinists, naturally, are anxious to utilize the miners' militancy for their own reactionary political purposes; but in no sense was this their movement.

The British occupation officials are attempting to shift the blame for the food situation to the doors of their appointed German officials, whom they charge with inefficient distribution. They likewise threaten the miners with loss of their alleged "privileges" and say they will pay for the loss of 500,000 tons of coal that might have been mined if not for the stoppage. Since everyone knows where responsibility lies, these hypocritical efforts will have little success. The British are running the Ruhr, with American advice; they are responsible for the entire setup. Their quisling stooges in the administration cannot be blamed for the failure of food, clothing and vital commodities to arrive. Nor can they be blamed for the hundreds of shut-down factories, or the hundreds of thousands of unemployed in the area. At worst, these petty German quislings engage in black marketing and make things easier for the many Nazis still running around free, thanks to the British.

The Ruhr workers have delivered a sharp warning to the foreign imperialist powers in possession of their country. They have flexed their muscles and shown again—for the first time since Hitler—the potential power of the German working class. Last week's demonstrations mark the revival of this proletariat and should be hailed by the labor movement the world over.

Miners Stay Out of Pits, Demand Safety - -

(Continued from page 1)

all the people who worked inside the mine, and not in the company office, had no knowledge of any powder having been set off to cause the explosion.

This attempt of the coal company to escape its responsibility for operating an unsafe mine and for ignoring reports of competent and conscientious inspectors, is nothing new of course for capitalist corporations. They always try to place the blame for the killing, maiming and slaughtering of workers on the workers themselves. Capitalist corporations main-

tain lawyers, big legal staffs and company doctors for the purpose of "proving" that the company had no responsibility for the killing and injury of its employees.

Mr. Krug states that "coal mining is a dangerous business." During the past forty-six years there have been "an average of 129 deaths every month." But Krug is hopeful and thankful that "for each month since the Coal Mines Administration began its operations, ten miners have lived who would have perished had the death rate of the six preceding years continued." This is certainly some-

thing for the miners to be thankful for. In one month only 111 miners were killed; that was eighteen less than the monthly average for the "six preceding years."

The infamous John D. Battle, executive secretary of the National Coal Association, accuses Lewis of a "sickening exhibition of mock heroics," of launching a campaign "of hysteria and emotional sensationalism." Battle was talking about Lewis' statements and attitude before a House Labor Sub-Committee. It is evidently Battle's opinion that there is no hysteria in Centralia or

if there is, it was caused by Lewis' explosion in Washington and not by the actual explosion which took place in Centralia, Ill., after the killing of 111 real producers of coal.

Battle fears that the coal industry will "be at the mercy of a labor dictator on the one hand and timid politicians on the other." This will be a calamity of course because it will not promote mine safety nor bring any other benefits, but on the contrary will be a deadening blow to the national economy and the ultimate ruin of all." Here are the rayings of a hirling of the coal operators: a blatherskite trying to make it appear that he is somebody and he knows something. We do not know the size of Battle's feet but we are certain that he, like Krug, wears a "size 5 hat."

The coal companies and steel companies which have had mines closed by Krug expressed great surprise. They did not know that any of their mines were unsafe. U. S. Steel, Jones and Laughlin and Republic Steel were really dumbfounded when told that one mine of each corporation had been ordered closed. U. S. Steel wasn't worried much about the closing of one of its mines because it produced only 2,300 tons daily and this is "negligible" said a company official.

The vice-president of the Western Pennsylvania Coal Operators Association said that Krug's closing order "came as a shock to us." This gentle-

man is convinced that Pennsylvania's mining laws are "very strict and well-enforced." Why? "Because the inspectors are under civil service and are not political appointees." But Pennsylvania is dominated by the coal companies, the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Mellons, who incidentally control the biggest coal company in the state.

This is the kind of capitalist tripe and slush the miners and other decent people are being asked to believe these days. This will bring the 111 Centralia victims back or give aid and comfort to their families. This is considered great solace to the miners who have a seven hundred thousand dollar fine over their heads and 111 dead in Centralia.

What do Mr. Chief Justice Vinson and the rest of the Supreme Court majority think? They characterized the strike of the miners as defiance of public authority and "one who defies public authority and willfully refuses his obedience does so at his peril." Suppose the miners refuse to work in unsafe mines under government control? Will the Supreme Court consider that a "defiance of public authority?" How will the miners discover whether or not the mines are safe to return to? Will they go back and test the safety of the mine by waiting for another explosion. Or will they in states such as Pennsylvania, depend on the vigilance of the Civil Service Commission.

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