

NEW ANTI-SOVIET MANEUVERS REPORTED

Gandhi Fast Exposes Real Aims Of British In India

By Felix Morrow

The British government's refusal to release Gandhi from prison, in the face of his readiness to die as a protest, has undoubtedly served to clarify the fact that British imperialism has no intention of granting India independence under any conditions.

The Cripps Mission did a clever job of confusing the outside world, since Cripps — aided by the American capitalist press — pretended that he had gone to offer independence "after the war."

But the confusion sown by Cripps has been slowly dissipating during the ensuing year. For one thing, Churchill, over-confident at the results of the British repressions in India and the "United Nations" successes in the war, permitted himself to crow too soon when he boasted in November: "We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

For another thing, the continuing resistance of the great masses of India, despite the bestial British repressions, has brought home to many the simple thought that so many Indians would not be dying under British gunfire and in British prisons if Cripps had offered them a real alternative.

Now the awful spectacle of the aged Gandhi dying of hunger as his only means of protesting imprisonment has undoubtedly crystallized a world-wide realization of the real aim in India of the British ruling class. What kind of regime is it that dare not release Gandhi? Obviously a regime which has no support at all within the country and which is ready to massacre tens of millions to maintain its totalitarian rule.

WORLD-WIDE PROTESTS

That the true face of imperialist rule in India is becoming plain to a large part of the world is indicated by the protests demanding Gandhi's release which are pouring in on the British government. On the 14th day of Gandhi's fast, Feb. 23, the Executive Committee of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, representing the entire labor movement of that country, cabled a demand to Churchill for the release of Gandhi.

The same day, in Chungking the *Central Daily News*, known as an official spokesman for the Chinese government, called for the immediate release of Gandhi by the British authorities. This declaration is particularly important as the first public expression of Chinese solidarity with India since the first days of the civil disobedience campaign last August.

The British then took certain punitive measures and the Chinese, dependent upon British-controlled airports in India as the bases for air-borne supplies to China, were compelled to become silent. For an official Chinese

(Continued on page 4)

Pioneer Issues Pamphlet On 'Your Standard Of Living'

A new popular pamphlet, "Your Standard Of Living" by C. Charles, will be off the press and available for distribution within the next few days. Pioneer Publishers announced this week.

The pamphlet discusses wages, prices, taxes, profits, scarcity, the black market, etc., in the same lucid manner which has won favorable comment for the author's articles on these questions in *The Militant* and *Fourth International*. It concludes with an exposition of the Socialist Workers Party pro-

Arguments On Postal Appeal Will Be Heard In Spring

Trade Unions Send Funds to CRDC to Aid in Defense of Minneapolis Militant

MINNEAPOLIS, Feb. 21. — Defense attorneys last Monday filed briefs in the appeal to the Minnesota Supreme Court of the conviction of Kelly Postal, for many years secretary-treasurer of Minneapolis Teamsters Local 544. State prosecutors now have from 60 to 90 days to file their answering brief. The final oral argument before the Minnesota State Supreme Court will probably be heard in late May or June of this year.

Union Strikes to Win Equal Pay for Women Workers

By ELOISE BLACK

Women workers took the lead in a walkout at the Phelps Dodge Copper Corporation in Elizabeth, N. J., last week.

Complaining that their demand of equal pay for equal work had not been met, 100 girl employees in the field wire stranding section walked off the job.

Production was brought to a complete standstill when 1200 of the 1400 employees in the plant joined the walkout in support of the demand of the women workers, and at the same time brought forward a series of grievances on which they declared the union had been seeking arbitration for several months.

According to the union, Local 441 of the CIO United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, adjustment of the women workers' demand by the War Labor Board had been requested as long ago as October.

The militant action of the women, and the spirit of solidarity displayed by their fellow workers, quickly brought a promise from the Board that the grievances would be arbitrated immediately after resumption of work.

But the girls at Phelps Dodge found that it required the organized action of all of the workers in the plant to force the Board to even consider adherence to this principle.

The experience of these workers is not unusual; hundreds of unions have been given the runaround by the Board. On the other hand the Board has been too eager to intervene against the workers when employer groups have appealed for assistance.

The Phelps Dodge fight is an encouraging sign that the women workers, who are replacing men in industry in such large numbers, can and will shoulder the responsibility of defending the interests and hard won gains of labor.

gram to safeguard the workers' living standards. With the cost of living rising steadily, food shortages spreading and rationing being extended, this new pamphlet should be assured of a wide sale among workers and housewives. It is 32 pages long, has a well-illustrated front cover, and sells for 5 cents, with a special rate of 3½ cents for bundle orders. Another new pamphlet being distributed nationally by Pioneer Publishers, "West Coast Longshoremen and the 'Bridges Plan'" by C. Thomas, was published on

the West Coast this month. The pamphlet—28 pages, 5 cents—which is reprinted from the Dec. 1942 issue of *Fourth International*, is an analysis of the government's Pacific Coast Maritime Industry Board and its effects on the struggles of the waterfront unions. It contains a new introduction which sums up the need for the American workers "to maintain the independence of their trade unions free from domination or control by government boards."

Both pamphlets may be obtained from Pioneer Publishers at 116 University Pl., New York City.

Soviet Gains Continue



German prisoners emerge from dugouts to surrender to Soviet soldiers who had captured a fortified position in their great offensive. These Soviet victories are good news to every class-conscious worker, but the reactionaries don't seem to enjoy such news. (Federated Picture)

McNUTT GIVES ADMIRAL LAND DRAFT WEAPON OVER SEAMEN

Maritime labor appeared this week to have lost a vital round in its almost continuous battle of self-defense against the shipowner-dominated government bureaus. On Feb. 20 the War Shipping Administration, headed by the notorious Admiral "shoot-organizers-at-sunrise" Land, won complete control over the machinery of army deferment for seamen and their union officials.

Henceforth, both union leader and rank and file militants will be able to remain at their jobs only upon the sufferance of Land.

McNUTT'S ORDER

The vital war role played by merchant shipping has always resulted in the deferment of active seamen from army draft. Previously the maritime unions were empowered to make deferment requests to the draft boards for their own members, and to appeal to Washington headquarters of Selective Service if the local boards disregarded their requests. A Feb. 20 ukase handed down

'Absentee' Firings Set Pattern for Anti-Union Drive

BOSTON, Feb. 22. — The opening shot in what promises to become a new nation-wide campaign against organized labor, was fired this week when 150 welders employed at Bethlehem Steel's Fore River Shipyard in Quincy, Mass., were discharged for "absenteeism."

This is the first mass firing for absenteeism that has taken place in the country, but the Big Business propaganda campaign against this so-called "irresponsibility" indicates that similar moves against the workers will now develop rapidly throughout the industrial areas.

As the *Boston Herald* in its leading editorial of Feb. 17 stated: "What happens there (Fore River) may establish a precedent for the rest of the country." The *Boston Post*, also understanding the action, stated: "... employers all over the nation who are harassed by similar problems gave three cheers and prepared to do likewise." That the editors knew what they were talking about was evidenced by an immediate "work or fight" ultimatum given by the Boston Navy Yard to its civilian employees, following Bethlehem Steel's action.

The Quincy *Patriotic Ledger*, because its patronage is almost exclusively from shipyard workers, was forced to give a more accurate picture of absenteeism "... the basis of the whole trouble is a lack of understanding about the length of a work week for industries. In addition to the

(Continued on page 2)

Parliament Votes Down Move to Act On Beveridge Plan

Tories, Labor Heads Unite to Defeat Labor Party Motion

By MICHAEL CORT

The British House of Commons defeated on Feb. 18 a Labor Party motion demanding the immediate creation of a government bureau to implement the Beveridge Plan for unemployment insurance and post-war social security.

The Churchill government, which defeated the motion by 335 to 119, not only was critical of many sections of the entirely conservative Beveridge Plan, but refused even to explore any system of social security until some "later date."

The brief history of this plan has served as an index to the fluctuating fortunes of the British capitalist class. The plan was written by Sir William Beveridge during the darkest days of the empire, the summer and fall of 1942, when the British armies had been driven from Singapore, Hong Kong, Burma and Libya.

The existence of the Empire was threatened, and the British workers were restless and demanding to know what sort of a world they were working and dying for.

A NEW SITUATION

The Beveridge plan was meant to quiet the workers, to assure them that their sacrifices were not in vain. It talked in radical terms in order to divert them from taking the revolutionary path, to make them believe that the capitalists would voluntarily bring about a just and equitable society after the war.

But now, when the time had come to vote on the plan, the situation has changed. The British capitalists now feel sure of victory over their German rivals, and they are therefore more confident of their ability to suppress their own workers' resistance to exploitation. They cynically disregard the vague promises they made about security for the workers, and vote against consideration of the Beveridge plan.

(Continued on page 2)

Next Week's Issue

of *The Militant* will contain a detailed report from Mexico of the recent final hearings in the trial of "Frank Jackson," GPU assassin of Leon Trotsky.

USSR Menaced By Finnish 'Peace' Move, Polish Plan, Vatican Plots

Hard on the heels of the latest Soviet victories comes a new series of reports of anti-Soviet intrigues and maneuvers involving important forces in the democratic capitalist countries.

The reports this week centered around:

1. Finland, whose government is believed ready to desert the Axis in return for assurances that it will get Washington-London aid against the Soviet Union.

2. The Polish government-in-exile in London, which openly attacked the Soviet government on Feb. 21 and appealed to the capitalist "democracies" for support in its disputes with the Soviet Union on the ground that "at the Polish-Russian frontier not only the Polish problem is being decided but also the question of peace in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the whole attitude of the Soviet toward democracy."

3. The Vatican, today the principal center where anti-Soviet elements from the Axis, the United Nations and neutral countries can meet and negotiate. American Archbishop Spellman was on his way to the Vatican, after a visit

to Franco, with "U. S. support," said *Time* magazine, for a Vatican plan for a reactionary Central European coalition.

SYMPATHY FOR FINNISH GOVERNMENT

The Finnish government will soon take steps to arrange a separate peace, and intends to request the Vatican to act as go-between if it is inexpedient for either Washington or London to take the job, according to George Axelsson, newspaperman in Sweden who has contact with Helsinki (*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 22.)

Washington has thus far refused to declare war on Finland, although it is being used by Hitler as a base for air attacks on U. S. ships. And although Britain is formally at war with Finland, Churchill was reported, while he was in Turkey, to have held a conference with the Finnish minister to that country.

Ever since the first rumors of a Finnish peace move, the *N. Y. Times*, organ of the American monopoly capitalists, has been clamoring for aid to the Finnish government. In an editorial on Feb. 17 it stated: "Despite her present alignment, Finland deserves our sympathy, for she is one of the small nations victimized by the power politics of her mighty neighbors." Evidently the *Times* believes the Finnish government is more to be pitied than censured for its alliance with Hitler, and holds the Soviet Union equally responsible with Germany for this alliance.

The *Times* editorial even offers the services of the American government to the Finnish ruling class, declaring that "the American Government, an ally of Russia which also maintains diplomatic relations with Finland, is in a strategic position to act as possible mediator."

REAL MEANING OF FINNISH MOVES

In sharp contrast the Moscow radio on Feb. 19 broadcast a strong denunciation of the Finnish government. While not referring to the reports of a Finnish peace move, Moscow obliquely indicated opposition to further British-American negotiations with Finland.

The Stalinist *Daily Worker*, which has been strangely quiet for the most part on all these developments,

Sikorski has been known as the leader of the Soviet-"collaborationist" wing of the Polish ruling class, and has hitherto come under heavy fire from the anti-Soviet "collaborationist" wing which is dominant in Polish-American and Polish-British capitalist circles. Up to now Sikorski has deemed it unwise to openly tell his critics what was in his mind, but he now feels a little bolder as the result of the general atmosphere in London and Washington.

In an interview with the press, Sikorski said that "there are very great difficulties with Russia" at present. He "hoped" they could be overcome and that Poland's pre-war frontiers would be restored. In other words, Sikorski wants to overcome "present difficulties" on his own terms.

What these terms are was revealed on Feb. 4 by the well-informed head of the *Chicago*

(Continued on page 2)

Next Sunday Forum To Hear 'Labor Party Prospects-1943'

Why do American workers need their own independent political organizations? How are the trade unions becoming politically conscious? What is the significance of the recent elections and the pact for joint legislative activity between the AFL, the CIO, the Railroad Brotherhoods and the National Farmers Union? What is the attitude of the Trotskyists toward an Independent Labor Party based on the trade unions?

These are some of the questions which William F. Ward will discuss in his up-to-the-minute talk on "Labor Party Prospects—1943," to be given Feb. 28, 8 P.M., at the Sunday Open Forum, Second Floor, 116 University Pl., New York City.

The lecture, which should prove especially educational to trade union militants, will be followed

by a question and discussion period, and refreshments.

The following Sunday evening, March 7, the noted labor leader, V. R. Dunne of Minneapolis, will speak on "Labor and the Four Freedoms."

Announcement of future lectures will be mailed on request by the New York School of Social Science, 116 University Pl., which is sponsoring the Forum.

