

Seven Reasons Why Wagner Bill Does Not Benefit Jobless

Amter Contrasts H. R. 7598 with Fraudulent Wagner Bill

By I. AMTER

WHEN the Workers Bill H. R. 7598 is proposed, we frequently meet with the answer that there are "other 'bills' just as good." In view of the sweep of the Workers Bill through the A. F. of L., William Green has come out in denunciation of the Bill, calling it not "feasible" and "unconstitutional." The Socialist Party leaders, lining up with the bosses and the A. F. of L. officials in support of the N.R.A., file the same objections to the Workers' Bill and give support to the Wagner-Lewis Bill.

In many states, unemployment insurance bills have been introduced. In Wisconsin a bill was adopted by the state legislature, and shelved. Why suddenly this interest in unemployment insurance? Why the silence of Roosevelt since the election campaign of 1932 and in face of his statement on February 28 ("Roosevelt Program for Jobless") that

"Direct relief as such, whether in the form of cash or relief in kind, is not an adequate way of meeting the needs of able-bodied workers. . . . The Federal Government has no intention or desire to force either upon the country or the unemployed themselves a system of relief which is REPUGNANT TO AMERICAN IDEALS of individual self-reliance."

Why do Mr. Roosevelt, Miss Perkins and others, who have "forgotten" unemployment insurance since the Fall of 1932, suddenly support the Wagner-Lewis Bill? For the simple reason that the support behind the Workers Bill is growing so rapidly and invading the realm of the A. F. of L. and of the fraternal societies so effectively that Roosevelt, Perkins and Green are becoming frightened.

It is time, therefore, that the workers learn what the Wagner-Lewis Bill is and then they will understand that in supporting it Roosevelt, Perkins, Green & Co. are merely pursuing their policy of pilfering the unemployed and of providing strikebreaking measures, as they have in the National Recovery Act and in the Wagner Labor Bill.

What Is The Wagner-Lewis Bill?

The Wagner-Lewis "unemployment insurance" bill provides the following:

1. **No insurance for the army of 16,000,000 unemployed.** This is not openly stated in the bill, which declares that the insurance fund shall be raised by means of a "5 per cent tax on the employers' pay roll." Clearly the employer pays into the fund **only** for his own workers. The unemployed have no employers and therefore receive no insurance.

2. The bill further excludes the following: **agricultural laborers, domestic workers, teachers** in any school, college or university, those employed in the service of a **common carrier** (transport workers), government employees, physicians, surgeons, internes or nurses in hospitals, and workers in shops employing less than 10 persons. More than half of the working class would receive no insurance.

3. The act would provide a minimum of **\$7 a week insurance for 10 weeks in the year.** If the worker has worked at least five years for the concern he may be entitled up to 15 weeks insurance a year. In both cases there would be a **waiting period**, during which the worker would go without compensation, an-

ticipating another job. In other words, a worker working at the time that the bill is put into operation, would have to wait for a period before being entitled to insurance, and then would receive only \$7 a week for 10 weeks, or \$70. If he should be an older worker—that is, if he has been working for the company up to five years, then he would be entitled to 15 weeks of insurance. In short, the purpose of this bill is to make willing wage slaves of the workers, to keep them from striking—in a word, a strikebreaking bill.

4. The bill provides compensation only for unemployment—not for sickness, accident, old age or maternity. Increasing industrial and occupational diseases, discarding of elderly workers are the rule today. The Wagner-Lewis bill provides no protection.

Burden on Workers

5. The fund would be raised by a tax of 5 per cent on the employer's payroll. But this would not cost the employer a penny, for the amount would be deducted from his tax bill. This would necessitate higher taxes on the workers and poor farmers. Thus, the whole burden of the insurance would be shifted to the shoulders of the toiling population.

6. The bill, if enacted, would not go into effect until July 1935, and into operation in July 1936. Being a bill for adoption by the states, it would require many years in the states, since it is not mandatory. In Pennsylvania, for instance, this bill would require five years for adoption.

7. The bill is not a continuous mechanism. The employer might, according to the bill, pay into a separate fund. If he should go out of business, his employees would get compensation only as long as the fund lasted. If the future unemployment of those now employed should be of long duration, the amount of compensation would be determined by the amount paid into the fund by the employer. After that, unless the worker obtained work—and also after the ten weeks to which the worker would be entitled to insurance—the worker would be thrown into the streets to starve.

This is the bill which Miss Perkins, ladylike secretary of labor, supports and speaks for over the radio. This is the bill which it is reported Roosevelt, who is an ardent "advocate" of unemployment insurance, also endorses. One can understand why they are trying to put over this "insurance" fraud on the workers, who in millions are throwing their support to the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill H. R. 7598. In this, as in the effort to put across the whole N. R. A., the bosses of this country led by their governmental agent, Roosevelt, need the support of their labor agents. No wonder, therefore, that Green, Woll, Thomas and Waldman Co. endorse the Wagner-Lewis unemployment insurance bill and do not dare to face the issue of the Workers Bill.

How much to the point is the Workers Bill providing insurance for all workers for all contingencies of idleness, no matter for what reason, at a rate that will maintain them in decency for the full period of unemployment and at the expense of those responsible for unemployment. The Workers Bill (as introduced by Congressman Lundein and somewhat modified by him) calls for unemployment and social insurance (compensation for idleness as a result of unemployment, part time, sickness, accident, old age or maternity for all workers and farmers at the average local wages but at no time less than \$10 a week plus \$3 for each dependent; for the full period of unemployment or disability. There shall be no discrimination because of age, sex, race, color, or religious or political affiliation or as to whether they are industrial, agricultural, domestic or professional workers. In other words the whole working class.

The fund shall be raised by taxing inheritance and gifts and individual and corporation incomes of \$5,000 per year and over. (The original bill as drafted by the Unemployment Council provided that all war funds should be used for unemployment insurance. Mr. Lundein eliminated this provision from the bill he introduced.) The fund shall be controlled, not by the state machinery, as in the Wagner bill, but by commissions composed of rank and file members of workers and farmers' organizations.

Demand H. R. 7598

Compare the two and then you will see why the bosses and Roosevelt want the bogus Wagner bill, if any, to be enacted. The workers want the Workers Bill H. R. 7598.

The struggle for the Workers Bill must be intensified. In every shop, mine, union and other working class organizations, the Workers Bill should be taken up and discussed,

and compared with the bogus bills that are being introduced everywhere to stop the movement for the Workers Bill. Pass resolutions, organize meetings, demonstrations, stoppages and strikes in support of the Workers Bill. Demand that your congressman sign the round-robin petition now being circulated in the House of Representatives to take it out of the Committee on Labor, where Roosevelt hopes to have it buried. Demand that he vote for it.

The fight for the Workers Bill is on. Let's carry on! Show Roosevelt that the Workers Bill provides a system of insurance that is not repugnant to American Ideals!

Down Tools, Demonstrate May 1st to force the adoption of the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill, H. R. 7598!

MAX BLOOM, on "Fascism and the N. R. A." Pelham Parkway Workers Club, 2179 White Plains Road, 8:30 p. m. Questions and discussion. Admission 10c.

OPEN FORUM. Dr. Jacques Soifer on "The Health of the Worker in the Crisis." Tremont Progressive Club, 868 E. Tremont Ave., 8 p. m.

NAT BRUCE lectures on "Fascist Movements in America." 410 13th Ave., Brooklyn, 8:30 p. m. Ella May Bloor, Branch L. D. Admission 10c. Unemployed Sc.

LECTURE BY HAROLD BOLDT: Do you believe your newspapers? New Culture Club, 2345 Coney Island Ave., Brooklyn, 8:30 p. m.

LECTURE: Unemployment, War and Fascism in the U. S. Brighton Workers Center, 3200 Coney Island Ave., 8:30 p. m. Hunter's Island Take Lexington Ave. Ex-

park train to last stop, 8:30 a.m. The A. F. of L. and the Negro" at Harlem Workers School Forum, 290 W. 13th St., Room 214A, 3:30 p. m. ADM. FREE.

JOHN BOVINGDON speaks on "The Studio in Carnegie Hall, 3:30 Dramatic Program, 61. Adm. 25c. In the

D. CARTER lectures on "12 Years of Fascism in Italy" at Fordham Prog. Club, 7 W. Burnside Ave., Room 20. Adm. 10c, 8:30 DEBATE "What is the solution of the Jewish Problem—Soviet Russia or Palestine?" Representatives from American Jewish Congress and Morning Freiheit Social Youth Culture Club, 275 Broadway, Brooklyn, 8 p. m.

RED POETRY NIGHT, Sat., April 21, 8 p. m. at John Reed Club, 136 South 8th St. Open House at Office Workers Union, 130 8th St., April 21, 8:30 p. m.

MASS MEETING arranged by Unit 342 Kinsman Rd., 8 p. m., in support of United Front May Day demonstration.

ST. LOUIS, Mo.

MAURICE SUGAR will lecture on "An American Looks at Soviet Russia" Monday evening, April 23, 8 p. m. at Y.M.C.A. at Union and Enright Ave.

SPRING DANCE given by I.W.O. B. 2505 at Hungarian Workers Hall, 11 W. 11th St., Sunday, April 22, 7:30 p. m.

Buckeye Rd., Sunday, April 22, 7:30 p. m.

MASS MEETING arranged by Unit 342 Kinsman Rd., 8 p. m., in support of United Front May Day demonstration.

NEWARK, N. J.

SPRING DANCE given by Jack London Club Saturday evening, April 21 at London End Club, 515 Clinton St. Entertainment Adm. 35c.