
LABOR DAY 1943

BY ROSE WORTIS

Labor's Tasks for 1943

FORTY-NINE years ago, by an Act of Congress, the people of the United States gave official recognition to the vital role of labor in the building of our nation, our gigantic industries, and our democratic institutions.

The idea of setting aside a day to dignify labor arose during the period of great upsurge among the workers in the early 'eighties. The craft unions had constituted themselves into a national organization—the American Federation of Labor. The Knights of Labor were at the height of their influence. Both organizations, the A. F. of L., then known as the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, and the Knights, urged upon the unions that a special day be set aside for labor demonstrations.

On May 8, 1882, Peter J. McGuire, founder of the Carpenters' Union, and close co-worker of Gompers during the early years of the A. F. of L., proposed to the New York City Central Labor Union that it designate an annual Labor Day. The suggestion was followed and the Central Labor Union held a great parade of labor on the fifth of September of that year. The Knights,

who were meeting in general assembly on the same date in New York City, urged the designation of a special date for Labor Day and joined the parade. In 1884 the General Assembly of the Knights voted that future parades of labor should be held regularly each year, on the first Monday of September.

Following this, efforts were made in a number of states to declare the day a legal holiday. First to adopt such a law was Oregon, in 1887. New York, New Jersey and Colorado followed in turn.

In 1894 President Cleveland signed an act adopted by Congress to make Labor Day a national holiday. By 1910 most of the states had adopted the day as an official holiday, a day when the nation pays tribute to labor.

Since 1910 the prestige of the labor movement has grown together with its strength and influence. Labor has reached a higher stage of maturity, and has become increasingly conscious of its responsibilities as the unifying force of the nation in the present struggle against fascism.

Labor Day 1943 will see all sections of the population expressing public recognition to labor for its contributions to national unity in

this hour of national danger; for its achievements in war production; for the exemplary heroism of its sons in the armed forces; for its decisive role in building the national morale; and for its staunch patriotism, loyalty and devotion to the highest ideals and aspirations of our nation in this war for survival.

Labor Day 1943 takes on a special significance. It marks the turning point of the war in favor of the United Nations. It ushers in a period of great trial and great decision in which labor will be called upon to play an ever more decisive role.

Crucial battles are in progress on the Soviet-German front. The offensive of the Red Army is fast developing into a German rout. The magnificent capture of Orel, Belgorod, and Kharkov has destroyed the theory that the Red Army is incapable of offensive action during the summer months. The Anglo-American operations are being extended to the European continent by means of land invasion (though still on a small scale, and not in the most decisive field) and the air offensive over Germany, Italy, and conquered European countries.

At the first impact of the Anglo-American invasion forces in Sicily the whole rotten structure of fascism is beginning to crumble. The peoples of conquered and enslaved Europe are aroused to action against their oppressors.

This is the decisive moment for Britain and the United States to strike at the heart of Hitler-dominated Europe in unison with the

Red Army offensive on the Eastern Front.

This is the time for the opening of the long-delayed Second Front to which we solemnly committed ourselves in the conferences with Premier Molotov in June, 1942.

The Soviet trade unions, speaking through their official organ *War and The Working Class*, sharply call to our attention the urgency of the present moment and the responsibilities of labor and the entire people to press for decisive military action. The publication states:

"The enemy camp is experiencing a profound crisis. The prerequisites have been created for the final defeat of Hitler. Never before since the beginning of the war were conditions as favorable for victory over Hitler Germany as today.

"The history of wars knows what lost opportunities imply. In such cases victory slipped away, the war became drawn out, the peoples were doomed to endless, unnecessary sacrifices. And today millions of people throughout the world ask with profound concern: is everything being done for taking timely advantage of the possibility of victory over fascist Germany? This puts the problem of the Second Front in Europe in bold relief."

The mass of the American people are of the same mind. We know that the need of the hour is a full-scale two-front offensive. Under the powerful united blows of the Red Army in the East and the Anglo-American invasion forces in France, the shaking structure of Hitler's "New Order" will go crumbling to the dust.

American labor must join its powerful voice with that of the British trade unions and the Soviet trade unions to demand the immediate opening of a Second Front in Western Europe, not "to appease Russia," as some newspapers demagogically say, but to save thousands of American lives and bring the war to a speedy, victorious conclusion. We must see to it that the victory already within our grasp shall not be snatched from us through delay and procrastination. It is to be hoped that the Quebec conference between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill will move decisively in this direction.

Labor's Tasks on the Home Front

To assure the greatest speed in the full development of the military offensive, labor must also take the offensive on the home front against the defeatists. These agents of Hitler are making a concerted drive to disrupt national unity, create chaos on the home front so as to delay the final doom of fascism and lay the basis for a negotiated Hitler peace.

To defeat this conspiracy of the enemies within the gates, labor must use its power and influence to strengthen the anti-fascist unity of the nation; to extend and forge the most active, militant unity of the working class in the trade union movement, as the keystone to national unity; and to establish the closest ties with the trade union movement of our allies.

Labor, by its united action and bold leadership, can rout the defeat-

ists and appeasers and influence the direction and execution of the government's war policy, can determine the course and strength of national unity.

These are the major tasks confronting labor on this Labor Day when it takes stock of its accomplishments and charts its future course. Organized labor, representing the bulk of the productive forces of the nation, hand and brain, has distinct responsibilities on the production front. Its policies and activities influence the millions not yet organized. It sets the example for other sections of the people.

Much has been accomplished in advancing war production in which labor and the nation as a whole can take just pride. In the period of two years, in face of great obstacles, labor has achieved high production records never known in our country.

Thousands of planes and tanks, hundreds of ships, are rolling off the assembly lines and docks. They are already blasting the battlefronts and cities of the Axis. Labor has contributed of its talent, initiative, capacity for planning, and readiness for sacrifices to make our nation truly the arsenal of democracy.

However, the war of the United Nations requires armaments on a scale that would have seemed fantastic in the last World War. The present war involves not only the mass destruction of armies but also of weapons of war. Our President has made a solemn promise to our nation and our allies that we will soon strike the Axis from all sides; that Sicily is the beginning of

the end. This should serve to stimulate the productive capacity of the nation to much greater heights. Production for an immediate Second Front: this must become the guide, the inspiration to labor's efforts on the production front.

The reports of the War Production Board concerning certain fields should cause deep concern to labor. There is a dangerous lag in production schedules in some industries. Plane production has increased only by 175 planes in the past two months and is behind schedule. Labor-management committees, which contributed much toward increasing production and gave rise to a new form of cooperation between labor and management, are on the decline. The incentive wage plan, a great stimulus toward increased production, has been put into effect in but few industries and plants.

With the passage of the Smith-Connally Bill, there are serious dangers of the development of strike movements instigated by defeatists, whose chief aim is to lower work morale, to divert the attention of the workers from their supreme task of providing the armed forces with fighting equipment. In some instances employers, influenced by the propaganda that victory is at hand, are developing an attitude of complacency and beginning to turn their attention toward readjusting their plants to civilian production!

W.P.B. Chairman Nelson, in a recent broadcast to the nation, called for the production of 10,000 planes per month before the end of this year, and a 40 per cent boost in

output of combat munitions by early next year. American labor, with its high skill and ingenuity, its high degree of patriotism, will roll up its sleeves to fulfill these demands of the nation.

An inspiring example has been given to the labor movement by the United Steel Workers of America. Upon the invasion of Sicily this great union decided to increase production by 25 per cent. The workers of our Allies are forging the weapons of war at an ever more rapid tempo. Plane production in the Soviet Union has increased 75 per cent. Other war material has increased many times over. The British workers are setting new records in production.

Labor Day this year should serve as an occasion for arousing the workers and management to the full sense of their responsibilities to the needs of the war. The labor-management committees, now dormant or dissolved, must be revived and revitalized. Incentive wage plans should be initiated throughout all war industries. Production schedules must be revised upward, commensurate with present needs.

To these urgent tasks labor, representing the most advanced, the most conscious anti-fascist section of the people, must dedicate itself on this Labor Day.

*Unity of All Who Want to Win
the War*

To achieve maximum production labor needs the greatest degree of unity in its own ranks. In the course

of the war emergency old divisions in many unions along lines of Right and Left are gradually disappearing. Some Catholic workers, members of the American Catholic Trade Union Association, are beginning to find common ground with progressives, including Communists, on issues relating to support of the war. Examples of this we see in some locals of the automotive, transport, and shipyard unions. There can be only one line of division today: between those who want to win the war and those who are temporizing with the enemy.

Notable contributions toward unifying labor's ranks are the advances made by the trade union movement in fighting Negro discrimination and anti-Semitism. Negro workers are being integrated in the industries and unions in ever larger numbers, especially in C.I.O. unions. Outstanding Negro leaders are emerging in the trade union movement.

The June 7 Madison Square Garden Rally, initiated by the Negro Labor Victory Committee, the all-union support for the Marcantonio Anti-Poll Tax Bill passed in the House, are an expression of the growing unity between the Negro and white workers.

Labor was the first to raise its voice against the anti-Negro riots instigated by the fifth column to disrupt the home front. Labor closely cooperated with the Negro community in the recent outbreak in Harlem. It is now actively joining with all progressive forces, Negro and white, to put an end to the shameful conditions obtaining in

Harlem, which were the underlying cause of the disturbances. Labor is beginning to realize that the responsibility for the outbreak in Harlem rests, not on the Negro people, but on the white people, on the progressive New York community, for permitting such conditions to exist.

The growing collaboration between Negro and white workers in the war plants, in the trade unions, in the communities, has been a serious blow to the Hitlerite sham of white supremacy. It has given the Negro people a new perspective in their struggle for equality. This is evidenced most clearly by the recent survey conducted by the *Pittsburgh Courier* on the question as to whether Negro people should cooperate with the trade unions; the poll showed 96.4 per cent to be in favor, 2.4 per cent opposed, and 1.2 per cent uncertain.

However, the progress made thus far is only a beginning. We still have a long way to go to eradicate from the life of the American people this poison of racial hatred. We need but mention Detroit, Beaumont, Mobile, etc. There are still many A. F. of L. unions that bar Negroes from membership, even to the point of curtailing war production. The stoppage at the West Coast Kaiser shipyards a few months ago against the promotion of Negro workers is a blot on the shield of labor. Thousands of Negro workers are prevented from making their full contribution to the war.

Even in the C.I.O. there is not always present the needed alertness to act against the hideous practices

of race discrimination and baiting. Thus, while the U.A.W. and especially its outstanding leader, R. J. Thomas, are carrying on a vigorous fight against Negro discrimination in their own industry, they did not show the same leadership in the recent Axis-inspired anti-Negro riots in Detroit. Under the impetus of this war of national liberation these racial barriers are slowly being broken down. This process must be hastened—in the interests of victory. With labor and progressive America taking up the struggle in collaboration with the Negro people, the prospects for full Negro equality, for unity between Negro and white, are brighter than ever before.

Labor Unity

Since Pearl Harbor, the C.I.O., A. F. of L., and Railroad Brotherhoods have, despite the unfortunate division in labor's ranks, been drawn closer together through their common approach to the basic problems affecting the labor movement and the war. There is general agreement on all major questions of policy, although the joint organization on a national scale is still lacking. Jurisdictional disputes have been reduced to the very minimum. The withdrawal of the C.I.O. shipyard workers' union from the Kaiser plant eliminated the most aggravating jurisdictional dispute which constituted a serious obstacle to the war effort and to labor unity.

Despite some of its inadequacies, the Labor Victory Committee (which is a mere advisory commit-

tee) has served as a force for bringing greater unity in labor's ranks. In the fight against the Smith-Connally Bill, for subsidies, for enforcing the President's Executive Order, and on other vital issues, the C.I.O., the A. F. of L. and the Railroad Brotherhoods have acted as a unit. In many localities united action between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. unions has developed to a more advanced stage in the form of permanent united victory councils, conferences, joint delegations, agreement for united support of candidates for political office, etc. In Ohio joint committees, officially sponsored by the leadership of the state labor bodies, are functioning in nine cities. Similar developments are taking place in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Missouri, and other states. As a result of these joint actions and committees much of the antagonism against labor from other sections of the population has been eliminated. Labor is winning for itself a place of leadership and honor in the life of a good many communities in our land.

Danger Signs

In the past months, however, the defeatist forces in the labor movement, led by John L. Lewis, William Hutcheson, Matthew Woll and David Dubinsky, have initiated a drive to disrupt labor unity. Their latest maneuver is to bring Lewis back into the A. F. of L. They attempt to substitute this spurious unity move with the arch-enemy of the war effort for genuine unity between the A. F. of L. and C.I.O.

Lewis's sudden urge to rejoin the A. F. of L. has but one aim—to facilitate his conspiracy against the war effort and the Commander-in-Chief. Lewis's readmission into the A. F. of L. would bring about a new relationship of forces in the labor movement in favor of the reactionaries and defeatists. It would split labor's forces and tend to weaken labor's influence in the prosecution of the war and in the political life of the nation.

The enemies of labor are leaving no stone unturned to disrupt this growing cooperation between all sections of the labor movement. Therefore the main task of the win-the-war forces today is to expose and defeat all anti-unity maneuvers, to mobilize the millions of workers to achieve the utmost unity in labor's ranks.

The Executive Council of the A. F. of L. is now meeting in its final pre-convention session at Chicago. As a result of pressure from A. F. of L. locals and the national Administration, the Executive Council has referred the Lewis application to the October convention. This is only a partial victory. The danger has not been eliminated. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to intensify the struggle to keep Lewis out of the A. F. of L. Of special importance in influencing the course of the A. F. of L. are the state conventions which are to take place in some of the key states shortly before the national convention is held.

The heated discussion at the August meeting of the Executive Council and the subsequent action

in referring the matter to the convention bring to light the division in the Council between the Hutcheson forces and the majority of the Council members supporting the war. Further evidencing this division was the reaffirmation of the no-strike pledge, the discussion and action with regard to Congress and the coming election. The Council gave special attention to the question of a campaign for A. F. of L. members to register in political elections. Green also modified his earlier position with regard to defeating all Congressmen who voted for the Smith-Connally Bill, now recognizing that the real test is the general labor record of each Congressman, especially his position on the war.

The Council failed in its responsibilities to labor and to the nation when, at this critical juncture, which demands the fullest unity of labor as the backbone of national unity to defeat the enemy on the battlefield and the home front, it turned down the C.I.O.'s proposal for united political action submitted by Sidney Hillman, chairman of the C.I.O. Political Action Committee.

However, the very fact that the proposal was officially on the Council agenda is in itself a step forward. It should be noted, too, that the rejection was couched in friendly language. The door was left open for cooperation with the C.I.O. on individual issues. At a press conference during the Council sessions, William Green stated that, while the Council did not favor joint action with the C.I.O. on a national scale, in the localities

A. F. of L. unions will cooperate with the C.I.O. and other progressives in various campaigns. That these possibilities exist is evidenced by the fact that such cooperation is already in progress in many cities throughout the country. The deliberations of the Council meeting reflect the growing demand for labor unity on the part of the A. F. of L. unions in the various states and cities. A. F. of L. leaders, central bodies, state federations, are beginning to realize, on the basis of their own experience, that further division in labor's ranks spells defeat for labor and the people. They are beginning to realize that unity in labor's ranks is the only condition for safeguarding the workers' rights, for strengthening the war effort and the unity of the nation. And they are proceeding to translate this realization into action in their respective communities.

The action of the Council must serve only to stimulate closer relations and more effective action between C.I.O., A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhoods. This is the only way that the opposition to unity, coming from the Hutchesons, the Wolls, and the Dubinskys, can be broken down and labor unity realized in life.

Political Action

Organized labor today counts more than 12,000,000 members. Together with their families, it represents close to 40,000,000 citizens, the preponderant majority of the number that elected President Roosevelt in 1940.

There is no question as to where these millions stand on the burning issues of the day. The recent Gallup Poll gives the President a 71 per cent support among the workers. When we take into account the support among the workers for the Willkie Republicans the situation seems even more favorable.

Despite labor's almost unanimous support for the win-the-war policies of the President, we see the spectacle in which Southern reactionaries and Republican defeatists captured control of Congress and many state legislatures in the elections of 1942. This occurred because of the division in the ranks of labor and the win-the-war forces and because labor did not put forward its political strength in the elections. The reactionary bloc in Congress terrorized many of the weaker elements in the win-the-war camp. Congressmen elected with labor's aid either absented themselves from the sessions or went along voting for that vicious anti-labor, anti-war measure, the Smith-Connally Bill.

The most shameful pages in the history of our nation were written by this wrecking crew in Congress during the most serious crisis in the life of the nation. The whole Administration program presented by the President to strengthen the military and home fronts, with few exceptions, such as the Subsidy Bill, was defeated by Congress. This was the fate of the seven-point stabilization program, the taxation program, appropriations for O.P.A. and other war and social agencies. Instead, Congress gave us the Smith-

Connally Bill and the infamous Kerr Amendment.

Encouraged by reactionaries in Congress, nine states adopted anti-labor laws, which practically make it impossible for the trade unions to function. The floor of Congress became the platform for anti-Negro and anti-Semitic propaganda. Congress became the inspiration for widespread fifth-column activities on the outside, such as the race riots and strike provocations.

The sinister purpose behind the Smith-Connally Bill, characterized by the President as a strike, rather than an anti-strike, measure, is becoming clear to some of those who supported the bill under the illusion that it would bring uninterrupted production. Lewis was the first to make use of the thirty-day strike notice in an effort to disrupt C.I.O. unions and paralyze production, as in the case of Allis Chalmers. This is only the beginning. The ruling of Attorney General Biddle granting the right to minorities to petition for elections opens the way for fifth columnists, no matter how insignificant their number, to create turmoil and dissension in important war plants. Had labor been more united, more alert, and more active, had the millions organized in labor's ranks voted in the last elections, the defeatists could have been routed.

The passage of the Smith-Connally Bill has forced the labor movement to recognize its responsibilities for the setbacks suffered in Congress and the need to begin to take a more active part in politics. In the June issue of *Labor*,

the Railroad Brotherhood Journal, we read as follows:

"We fussed about minor issues and, worst crime of all, we didn't vote. In the last elections, we permitted Norris to be defeated in Nebraska, and 'Pappy' O'Daniel to be elected in Texas. We could have elected Norris and we could have defeated O'Daniel, *but we were too busy to go to the polls*, too busy even to register so we might go to the polls.

"As a consequence, the reactionary Senators elected last November were largely responsible for the passage of the Connally Bill last week. *Labor* repeats, we got what we deserve. Our forefathers were willing to die that men might have the right to vote. We have become soft and lazy so that we will not register.

"The passage of the Connally Bill was a slap in the face for the organized workers everywhere. If it will kindle our anger, it will prove a blessing in disguise."

There are encouraging signs that labor is becoming more conscious of the need for political action. Of tremendous importance in advancing labor's role on the political scene was the last Board meeting of the C.I.O. Held a few days after the passage of the Smith-Connally Bill, the Board unanimously reaffirmed its no-strike pledge and its unflinching support to the Commander-in-Chief. It outlined the following program of action to initiate a real crusade against the defeatists in Congress and to begin preparations for the 1944 elections:

"1. Immediately to start mobiliz-

ing the full force of the C.I.O. for political action both in the local and state-wide elections in the fall of 1943 and for the crucial national campaign of 1944.

"2. In each state and in each community to secure united political action with the A. F. of L. and Railway Brotherhoods, preferably through united political committees such as the Philadelphia United Labor Committee or through other means of collaboration.

"3. To involve in such united actions the broadest possible consumer, farmer and progressive groups and organizations.

"4. In the 1943 election and in preparation for 1944 to weld the unity of all forces who support the Commander-in-Chief behind a single progressive win-the-war candidate for each office.

"5. To work toward the formation of a national united labor league which will include all C.I.O., A. F. of L., Railway Brotherhood and unaffiliated labor unions who agree with our objectives and weld labor into the mighty political force which its numbers, strength, organizing ability and program entitle it to play in the life of our nation."

This program goes to the very core of the problem. It proposes the organization of labor in the political subdivisions, the Congressional Districts, the wards, together with all other citizens in the communities. It signalizes labor's coming of age. It means that labor is going into politics in earnest, in the fight for its life, for the freedom and independence of our nation. Labor is throwing its organized strength of millions of workers to cement

greater national unity and to weed the defeatists and fifth columnists out of the legislative halls and councils of the nation.

Since the C.I.O. Board meeting two important political conferences of the C.I.O. were held—in Philadelphia and in Chicago, under the leadership of Sidney Hillman. Two others are in preparation, in the South and on the West Coast. The C.I.O. is setting into motion the machinery for labor's political activities. The Philadelphia and Chicago conferences rejected the demagogic proposal for a third party sponsored by the Dubinsky Social-Democratic forces of the New York A.L.P. in collusion with Trotskyites and Thomas "Socialists," with the blessing of Lewis and the Republican Party. A third party at this historic period, the conferences declared, would split the labor-progressive forces and make impossible the rallying of all the people around the President in 1944 (since in most states candidates cannot run on more than one ticket). It also would open the way for the election of a Republican President and a negotiated Hitler peace.

These developments in the C.I.O. were greeted with great enthusiasm by C.I.O. and A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhood members. The conferences have stimulated increased political activity in many unions and the growth of community councils. The conferences have set for themselves immediate tasks: to develop the initiative and to strengthen the activities of labor in the political field, to organize the voters for mass public expression to

be transmitted to their respective Congressmen on the actions of Congress, and to guarantee mass registration in the 1943 elections.

An outstanding, nationally significant example of the beneficial effects of these developments on the labor movement and the community generally is to be seen in the state of New Jersey. There was a serious danger that the division in the Democratic Party would give this important industrial state to the Republicans in the 1943 gubernatorial elections. Such an eventuality would have been a serious setback to the win-the-war forces. Through the efforts of labor (and the efforts of the Communist Party), which ignored the slanders of the Social-Democrats and the confused liberals, and placed the real issues before the people, this calamity has been avoided. Labor and all the win-the-war forces now stand united around the Democratic candidate, Vincent J. Murphy, Secretary of the New Jersey A. F. of L. State Federation. The Democratic Party has recognized the vital role of labor in building national unity by placing a trade unionist as a people's candidate at the head of its ticket. The designation of Murphy has brought enthusiasm into the labor movement. Typical of the endorsements of Murphy were the remarks of Irving Abramson, President of the State C.I.O., at a trade union conference of C.I.O., A. F. of L. and Brotherhood Unions:

"This conference is the nearest thing to a State Convention of the C.I.O., A. F. of L. and Railroad

Brotherhoods. The unity at this meeting is the forerunner of the unity we must have in 1944."

All sections of the population must be drawn into the campaign, given representation on the campaign committees. Murphy must become not only a labor but a people's candidate; his election a people's victory. As a result of the developments recorded above, there are very good prospects that New Jersey will head the pro-Administration states in 1944.

The political developments in New York state are of equal importance.

When the American Labor Party came into existence in 1935 it had as its main basis progressive A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions, and played an important role in deciding the outcome of several local, state and national elections. In the past few years, however, the Dubinsky Social-Democratic clique of the I.L.G.W.U. has seized control of the party state machinery to the exclusion of all other unions, including the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. The A.L.P. has become the vestpocket edition of the Dubinsky-*Forward-New Leader* clique, echoing their anti-Soviet, anti-United Nations and anti-Roosevelt policies.

The statement issued recently by Sidney Hillman, advocating the restoration of the A.L.P. to its original trade union base and inviting the affiliation of all unions, has helped to expose the demagogic issue of Communist control of the A.L.P. It has helped to clarify the atmosphere and has no doubt contributed

to the defeat of these forces in the disputed counties, especially Kings, their former stronghold. The victory of the win-the-war forces now clears the way for uniting the A. F. of L. local unions for the A.L.P.

These developments in New York, like those in New Jersey, will strengthen the win-the-war forces for the coming struggle against the defeatists in Congress and prepare the ground for the victory of the progressive forces in the crucial elections in 1944.

Labor's International Role

American labor has tended toward a positive position in regard to many questions involving international relations. After the last World War, the A. F. of L. was opposed to intervention in the Soviet Union. At the 1917 convention the conservative President Gompers spoke with warmth and sympathy for the newly won freedom and aspirations of the Russian people. The A. F. of L. supported President Wilson's policy of affiliation to the League of Nations. It greeted the restoration of friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Notwithstanding the harmful position adopted by the A. F. of L. leadership in its policy of anti-Sovietism and of "non-intervention" in regard to Spain, labor early recognized the danger of fascism as a world menace. Conventions of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. spoke out for the policy of collective security. The A. F. of L. called for a boycott of Hitler Germany, fascist Italy and Japan.

Today the masses of the organized workers stand four-square for the policies of the United Nations and for closer collaboration with the Soviet Union. The anti-Soviet, Red-baiting campaign led by Dubinsky, Lewis, Antonini, and Matthew Woll is in conflict with the mass sentiments of the American workers. This is amply demonstrated in the enthusiastic response to Russian War Relief, the tremendous reception accorded the Jewish Soviet delegates, Professor Michoels and Itzik Feffer, and the strong sentiment for international labor unity among the A. F. of L. members and many leaders, as well as the official decision of the C.I.O. favoring affiliation with the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee.

The labor movement, by its very nature, is international in character. The pioneers of American trade unionism were trained in the international labor movement. May Day, international labor day, had its genesis in America. In the early period of its existence, the A. F. of L. established international ties with the Amsterdam Trade Union International and its component unions. These relations were interrupted only for a time during the post-war period and resumed in 1936. International relations with the trade unions of Great Britain exist today in one form or another. The key problem in the labor movement now is for the A. F. of L. to abandon its stupid, anti-workingclass prejudice against the powerful all-Russian trade unions with a membership of 27,000,000. The problem today is American

trade union affiliation to the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee, in order to strengthen the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition and labor's role in the decisive period of the war.

The matchless heroism of the Soviet people unmasked Hitler's slander against the Soviet workers. The great Soviet trade unions have astounded the world by their miracles of production and their valor on the battlefield. Millions of American workers stand in admiration of their heroic Soviet Allies, their comrades-in-arms. It is a heinous crime to allow a handful of defeatists—Hutchesons, Wolls and Dubinskys—to foist their policy on the labor movement in relation to international unity, not only to hold back the A. F. of L. but to hinder the C.I.O. and the Railroad Brotherhoods from establishing organizational ties with the Anglo-Soviet Committee.

Leading British members of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee and of the British Trade Union Congress came to these shores to call on our trade unions to add our strength to this committee. The C.I.O. responded. The Executive Council of the A. F. of L. rejected affiliation and prevented the C.I.O. from being accepted.

One year has passed, a year that marked the turning point of the war. It was the year of the great victories of Stalingrad, Tunisia, Sicily, Munda, Orel, Belgorod—the year of the beginning of the military defeat of fascism.

The Soviet unions, as well as the British miners', engineers' and rail-

waymen's unions, are again proposing that the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee shall be extended to secure unity of action of the labor movement of all the United Nations to speed victory over Hitlerism. Jack Tanner, president of the Amalgamated Engineers Union, embracing 600,000 workers, has also raised the question of forming an international metal federation or committee to co-ordinate and promote joint action of unions in the metal industries of the U. S. A., Great Britain and the U. S. S. R.

The Federation of Latin American Workers, meeting in Havana in July, decided on immediate affiliation to the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee.

These are proposals aimed at strengthening international labor unity, particularly now, in order to enhance labor's role and influence in the prosecution of the war against Hitler and the Axis, in helping to shorten the war and in shaping the organization of the post-war world.

Will the American trade unions permit the reactionaries to keep them on the outside, isolated from the world labor movement?

The coming A. F. of L. convention will be watched by the labor movement of the entire world. The A. F. of L. unions especially should make their voices heard at this convention. It is their great international responsibility, their solemn obligation to speak out for international labor unity.

World labor, divided, cannot exert its full influence in the councils of the nations. International

labor unity, a powerful organization of labor on an international scale, will enable labor to throw its full strength in helping to determine the course of the war toward rapid and decisive victory and a lasting peace. This is the direction in which the American workers are rapidly moving, despite the obstacles placed in their way by the defeatists in their own ranks.

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This Labor Day celebration coincides with the twenty-fourth anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party.

As labor progresses to greater maturity, as labor advances, it is also beginning to appreciate the role and contributions of the Communist Party through its national leadership headed by Browder and Foster, as well as through the rank-and-file Communists working in their respective trade unions and communities. The lies and calumnies circulated by the Red-baiters that Communists want to capture and dominate unions, that they want to use the unions for some sinister purpose, have been exploded by life itself.

A new relationship is developing between the mass of the organized workers and the Communist Party. This was evidenced in labor's active participation in the campaign for the release of Comrade Browder, the splendid response of labor to Comrade Browder's book, *Victory—And After*, which

was accepted by many trade unions as an essential contribution in helping them to solve some of the new wartime problems. It is exemplified in the recent party recruiting campaign, in which the largest number of new recruits came from the organized labor movement. It is evidenced in the endorsement of the *Daily Worker* by many progressive A. F. of L. and C.I.O. leaders.

These developments reflect the growing realization, in the face of the slanders and attacks by the defeatists, that the Communists constitute a great patriotic force in the national unity, a force of uncompromising fighters for the national interests of our people, far-sighted and ready to subordinate everything to the supreme needs of victory over Hitler and the Axis; that the Communists work consistently and devotedly for strengthening labor and national unity, for strengthening the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition, for launching the vital Second Front, for winning the war, and for achieving a just and lasting peace and post-war reorganization.

These developments are bringing closer the day when enemy propaganda against the Communists will not be tolerated in the trade union movement, when Communists will be permitted to function openly side by side with other progressive and patriotic forces in strengthening the role of labor and the entire people in this greatest of battles for the smashing of fascist tyranny.