

National Issues

A SURVEY OF POLITICS AND LEGISLATION

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Congress--The Seventh Inning

BY GENE DENNIS

The Anti-Alien Drive

BY PEGGY DUANE

Coughlin and the Axis

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The Small Business Man

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A Republican Preview

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BY ADAM LAPIN

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EDITORIALS

Congress—The Seventh Inning	<i>Gene Dennis</i>	3
The President's Peace Message		5
THE ANTI-ALIEN DRIVE	<i>Peggy Duane</i>	7
THE NEUTRALITY HEARINGS	<i>Adam Lapin</i>	9
COUGHLIN AND THE AXIS	<i>Alan Max</i>	11
A REPUBLICAN PREVIEW	<i>Milton Howard</i>	13
CONGRESS AND THE SMALL BUSINESS MAN	<i>Roger Bacon</i>	15
REACTION ATTACKS THE WAGES-HOURS ACT	<i>George Morris</i>	19
FARM TENANCY LEGISLATION	<i>Edward T. Allen</i>	21
ANTI-LYNCHING		22
CIVIL LIBERTIES		22
CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR AND DIGEST, MAY, 1939		23

JUNE NUMBER

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR 1939-40 • AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S PEACE MESSAGE • POLITICS AND WPA • THE NEW OPEN-SHOP DRIVE AND THE PROSPECTS FOR LABOR UNITY • A PROGRAM FOR MONOPOLY CONTROL • THE FEDERAL-STATE MILK MARKETING AGREEMENTS.

NATIONAL ISSUES: *A Survey of Politics and Legislation*

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Congress--The Seventh Inning -- *an Editorial*

The 76th Congress has been in session for four months. The President, in his opening message, charted its course. He charged Congress with the responsibility of meeting the people's demands for economic welfare, democracy and peace. He signalized the urgency and interdependence of social and national security.

What has this Congress done to speed jobs and economic recovery?

Its Democratic "economy bloc," headed by Garner, Glass and Harrison, joined the reinforced and emboldened Republican minority to sabotage recovery in the name of "restoring confidence" and "business appeasement." Together, they played politics with the deficiency appropriations for W.P.A., an essential cog in the wheels of industry and public employment.

Twice the Garnerites and Hooverites rejected the sums recommended by the Administration. In the end popular pressure and the fight put up by the staunch New Dealers wrested from them an additional \$100,000,000. But the Tories "saved" the Treasury \$50,000,000. This they call a "victory"—though it sets back recovery, dooms a million people to destitution, and weighs scarcely at all in the scales of the budget.

Housing is a key to recovery. But the reactionaries have succeeded so far in preventing a large-scale housing program from getting under way. Monopoly control, rehabilitation of the railroads in the interest of the people, an adequate farm program, Federal aid to education and health needs—all of these vital recovery measures are still at the starting post, because of the sabotage of the bi-partisan anti-New Deal coalition.

On the other recovery measures, such as for extending and liberalizing the Social Security Act, Congress has failed to act decisively. And here again the Republicans and the Copperheads within the Democratic Party bear full responsibility.

Reaction, ever more openly revealing its pro-fascist ori-

entation, has gained some new strategic positions in Congress. The House, by continuing for another year the reactionary, un-American Dies Committee (again with the connivance of the Garner-Vandenberg coalition) has provided a munitions depot for all the enemies of labor and the New Deal—foreign and domestic.

The Cox "investigation" of W.P.A. is a flank attack on the unemployed and the Workers Alliance and will be used to strengthen the direct offensive now being prepared against the 1940 W.P.A. appropriation and the New Deal program generally.

The Dempsey anti-alien bill has already passed the House. The Hobbs Concentration Camp Bill has been approved by the House Judiciary Committee, and ninety similar anti-foreign born bills have been introduced in this session. Here is another flank movement against the labor and progressive forces which aim to divide the people and to curb and nullify the Bill of Rights and our democratic traditions.

New Dealers in Congress, backed by the main sections of labor and the progressives, have so far held the fort against the avalanche of crippling amendments inspired by the National Association of Manufacturers to destroy the Wagner Act and labor's inalienable rights to organize and bargain collectively. "Appeasement" of big business, through drastic tax revisions that would throw even more of the tax burden on the people, has also been averted up till now.

This is the record of the 76th Congress in domestic affairs—so far.

On the basic question of national defense, Congress has been forced by popular pressure to take a few limited steps forward. Although Senators Nye, Clark, Reynolds, Vandenberg, George, *et al.*, echo Hitler and protest that the danger of war comes from Roosevelt and the democracies, Congress has carried out substantially the recommendations of the President's January defense message, and has ap-

proved certain measures to strengthen the anti-fascist collaboration of the Americas. To that extent, at least, it has partially met the people's demand for preparing to resist fascist aggression.

But in failing to pass the Barkley amendments to the airplane bill, it left American labor without protection against the steel trust and the munitions kings. Thus it showed how real is its intention to "take the profits out of war" and exposed the so-called War Profits Taxation Bill which is sponsored by Senators Nye, Bone, Vandenberg, and Clark, as a smokescreen for "isolation" and encouragement to the fascist war-makers.

Moreover, with the adoption of the national defense appropriations, the reactionaries in Congress are seeking to utilize the passage of the armaments program as a green light for cutting the Federal budget for social welfare, and as a substitute for pursuing a foreign policy which would take as its starting point concerted peace action of the United States with the Soviet Union and all other non-aggressor and democratic forces in the world.

Most important, Congress has dangerously delayed action to repeal or drastically amend the "neutrality" legislation so as to penalize the aggressors and aid the victims of the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis. By its un-neutral policy of "neutrality" it helped sacrifice democratic Spain to the fascist beasts. The tory-isolationist bloc, the Reynolds, Tafts, Nyes and Clarks, likewise have left no stone unturned to place obstacles before the President's efforts to use the moral, economic and political influence of the United States more actively on the side of world peace and democracy.

* * *

Four down and two months more to go, or at best, three. How can the New Deal and the people turn the tide against the Garner-Hoover Congressional coalition in the months that remain? What should be done to assure that Congress moves forward along the road to national and social security?

In this period, more than ever, we Communists think that the New Deal and its progressive supporters must more vigorously prosecute their counter-attack against reaction, within and outside of Congress. The disadvantages of a defensive position have already been tragically demonstrated in the four months Congress has been in session. *The strategic advantages of a united offensive of the New Dealers, labor and the progressives have not yet been adequately tested or really set in motion.*

And this is precisely what is needed to turn the tables during the rest of the session and to pave the way for a progressive victory in '40. *For if the New Dealers themselves, if a broad people's coalition, present a solid front and aggressively fight on at least six major issues: public works and relief, defense of the Wagner Act, adequate farm aid, social security revision, defeat of the alien and sedition bills,*

and neutrality repeal or revision—then the tide will turn in Congress in favor of the New Deal and the people.

At the same time it is necessary, we believe, to meet the "appeasement" demands of big business with effective government curbs on monopoly power, more steeply graded income and corporate taxes in the higher brackets, and stricter enforcement of the laws of the land, especially of labor and anti-trust legislation.

Instead of mere defense of the present inadequate W.P.A. standards and program, we advocate meeting such proposals of the Southern Bourbons as the so-called public works bill of Senator Byrnes and the "turn relief back to the states" plans of the Republicans with an extensive long-range program of public works and large-scale housing to provide jobs for all at union wages, *meanwhile maintaining and extending W.P.A. P.W.A. N.Y.A. C.C.C. F.S.A., etc.*

We believe that the progressives in Congress should enact the Thomas-LaFollette Oppressive Labor Practices Act and extend the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee long enough at least to wipe out the menace to the labor and progressive movement and to a people's victory in 1940 which is now presented by the Associated Farmers and other vigilante and fascist movements.

We believe that the Wagner-Gavagan Anti-Lynching Bill should be enacted into law without further delay, and the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments rigidly enforced by the Department of Justice.

We consider that the revision or repeal of the Neutrality Act, which is so vitally needed to safeguard our country's peace and welfare, should be accompanied, if not preceded, by the placing of an embargo against fascist Germany, Italy and Japan.

To realize all this, to achieve greater results for the people from Congress during the remaining months of this session, we repeat: *only the greatest collective efforts of all New Dealers and the people generally, only organized public pressure on a national scale can effectively influence the course of legislative developments in a progressive direction.*

* * *

To help accomplish this, the progressives in Congress, the New Deal Democrats and the Norris Republicans, should brook no further hinderances and differences in getting together, working in unison in support of the program outlined in the President's January message to Congress. Too much time has already been lost in needless hesitations, compromises and disunity. And this has played right into the hands of the Garners, Vandenberg and Tafts who are trying to shift their obstructionist and wrecking activities onto the President and the New Deal wing of the Democratic Party.

The New Deal Congressmen should more consistently and skillfully smoke out the tories. They should more clearly expose the tactics of monopoly capital which op-

NATIONAL ISSUES

erates through the Republican Party and the Garner-Glasswing of the Democratic Party. They should throw the spotlight of public opinion on the give-and-take play where the anti-New Deal Democrats carry the ball and take the formal initiative in sponsoring the most reactionary measures, i.e., W.P.A. cuts, Dies Committee, anti-alien legislation, etc., with the Republicans giving active support, though frequently behind the lines. For from their point of view, this is good strategy in preparing for a reactionary Republican victory in 1940, as well as for destroying the social gains of New Deal legislation now.

The Administration likewise is obligated to display more leadership and boldness in Congress. The chief source of strength of the President and the Administration in the recent period has come from the progress made in their efforts to establish more effective American leadership and cooperation in the sphere of foreign affairs, in the promotion of the Good Neighbor policy, in the struggle for world peace. The correct and bold declarations of policy issued recently by the President in identifying the fascist warmakers and in protesting fascist aggression and conquest have strengthened the prestige and popular influence of the President and the New Deal and the cause of peace and national safety. So has the firm resistance of the Administration to any curtailment of W.P.A.

However, when the President has yielded to the capitulators and reactionaries as on the recognition of Hitler's and Mussolini's puppet, Franco, or when the Administration has remained virtually "neutral" or passive on such questions as the Dies Committee, the Cox W.P.A. "investigation," etc.—then both the Administration and the people have suffered severe setbacks and the whole program of the New Deal has been placed in jeopardy.

The conclusion is obvious. The President and the Administration should take a more consistent and vigorous stand on all basic questions confronting Congress. They should give a firmer leadership to the New Dealers in Congress. *They should rely even more upon the people, especially upon organized labor and the progressives, and help rally the active support of the people.*

A heavy responsibility for what is achieved in the remaining days of the session and in the future political life

of the country rests upon organized labor. It is primarily the division in labor's ranks that has put the Wagner Act in danger and jeopardized the fate of all pending progressive legislation. The continuation of the "peace with honor" conferences between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. until they result in a united labor movement is indispensable to labor's victory over the National Association of Manufacturers and all open shoppers, as it is indispensable to the victory of all gains for democracy, security and peace.

But labor and the progressives cannot wait for the breach in labor's ranks to be completely healed. The struggle for labor unity should be continued and advanced in all localities, on all fronts, especially in joint action in behalf of progressive legislation and a positive American peace policy. Likewise labor and the progressives should proceed more rapidly with the task of building the broader unity of all anti-fascist forces around the banner of a people's coalition for economic recovery, democracy and peace. This will hasten and assist the unification of labor and consolidate the whole camp of democracy.

Fascist aggression scarcely pauses for breath between its brutal assaults on the liberties and independence of all democratic nations and peoples. At home, monopoly capital cements its ties with world fascism and girds for an election victory in 1940, combining its reactionary offensive on the legislative front with direct assaults upon civil liberties, unions and wage standards, as in mining, auto, rubber, marine and other basic industries. At the same time reaction launches a concerted Red-baiting drive, promotes strife between labor, the farmers and the city middle classes, and stirs up national and religious prejudices as part of its strategy to disorganize and divide the camp of labor and progress.

Labor, the New Deal, and progressives generally must work with greater speed, determination and unity. For the way to win is to organize, unite, and carry forward the fight against the reactionary monopolists and fascist warmakers. And what is done in the next few months before Congress adjourns may exercise a profound political influence toward achieving genuine national and social security for our people and country.

GENE DENNIS

The President's Peace Message

The world-wide response which was immediately evoked by President Roosevelt's peace message to Hitler and Mussolini has already served to emphasize the great historical significance of his action.

Choosing a moment when the world was holding its breath in expectation of another lightning blow by the fascist aggressors and when the question of war and peace

hung delicately in the balance, the Chief Executive of the United States signalized the source of the war danger—the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis—and questioned Hitler and Mussolini as to whether they would assure no further aggressions for at least ten years. This condition the President placed as a necessary prerequisite to a world disarmament and trade conference and the promotion of universal peace.

By addressing his message directly to Berlin and Rome, the President made it clear that these are the war-makers upon whom rests the responsibility for the second imperialist war which has been unleashed in China, Ethiopia and Spain, and which threatens to plunge the entire world into chaos and war. No matter what formal responses may now be forthcoming from Berlin and Rome, which at best would be evasive, ambiguous and deceitful, this positive contribution is of enormous value.

Nor did the President merely enter a general plea for peace. He named some two-score countries of Europe and the Near East whose national integrity is being threatened by the Rome-Berlin axis, and asked for specific guarantees that not one of these be made a victim of new aggressions. In doing this he made two things clear: first, the fascist war-makers cannot crawl out from under any general blanket guarantee against aggression on any pretext. Second, even more important in the light of the experiences of Munich, the President made it clear that he was not proposing an "appeasement" conference at the expense of the democracies in general, or of any of the smaller nations in particular, such as Chamberlain and Daladier would still like to maneuver if given the opportunity. He served notice that he was willing to discuss world disarmament and trade only on condition that further aggression, territorial sacrifices and concessions are entirely out of the question.

Taken together with the real content of the President's foreign policy as it developed since his famous "quarantine the war-makers" speech in Chicago in 1937, and as forcibly reiterated in his Pan-American speech of April 14, the peace message can be interpreted as the most effective step thus far undertaken by any leading capitalist democracy in the direction of preparing to halt the aggressors.

As we go to press, speaking unofficially through his controlled press, Hitler has already replied in the negative to the President's message and has shown how neatly the shoe fits by launching a new campaign against Roosevelt which has already reached the lowest depths of vituperation and calumny. And Mussolini in his arrogant speech of April 20 has already semi-officially rejected the President's plea for peace, and parallels the Nazi frenzied press attacks against Roosevelt and the American people with renewed vilification, as well as with new war threats of "pyramidal geographical" expansion. If Hitler has found it necessary to convene his dummy Reichstag to hear a formal reply to our President's proposals, it is because the peace message has found a ready and favorable response among the people of Germany and Italy, and because the Nazis may endeavor, in connivance with Chamberlain and Daladier, to counter the President's peace message with a proposal for another Munich pact.

How effectively Roosevelt expressed the sentiments of all the peoples is shown by the hearty and enthusiastic support given him by practically all the democratic governments of the world. This in itself is something to make

Hitler pause, for the response has shown that all the peace-loving nations are willing to follow the American initiative in setting up a world-wide collective wall against aggression.

The first to give authoritative endorsement to the President's stand was President Kalinin, speaking officially for the Soviet Government. The immediate and enthusiastic support by the Soviet Union again emphasizes the fact that from the beginning the U.S.S.R. has been the mainstay of universal peace and concerted resistance to aggression. It was the consistent and effective Soviet peace policy and advocacy of the proposition that peace is indivisible and that collective security can stop aggression that make it possible for President Roosevelt to speak out so effectively today.

President Kalinin's response has also underlined the decisive factor in world affairs—the parallel position of the Soviet Union and the United States on all the principal questions affecting the maintenance of world peace. There can be no doubt that these, the two most powerful countries in the world today, acting together and jointly taking the initiative can rally all the peace-loving peoples of the world in a system of concerted peace action which alone can stop the aggressors.

Not many among the democratic peoples of the world would today attach an iota of confidence to any promises made by the fascists. Even Chamberlain, the father of appeasement, has had to admit this much. However, we must not discount the fact that after Roosevelt's message any promises which may be forthcoming from Hitler, hypocritical and cunning as they will be, take on a new light; they are given by a Hitler on the defensive, standing in the criminal's dock before the tribunal of the world.

Can even such promises be taken seriously? Clearly not, because despite any words of Hitler and Mussolini, the policy of the fascist states remains and is based on aggression and international banditry. Only on one condition can any promises from Berlin and Rome be enforced. This condition is that the forty-odd countries mentioned by Roosevelt, together with the United States, the American republics, and China, enter into a worldwide alliance, pledged to put a stop to any act of international lawlessness, no matter against whom and where it should occur, by acting collectively. Such a powerful country as ours, acting by itself, can influence the preservation of peace, though within prescribed limits. But we, together with all the democracies of the world, acting as one, can establish really effective guarantees for the maintenance of peace.

The apologists for fascist aggression in our own country—the Hoovers, Tafts, Nyes, Georges and Reynolds—have been indirectly exposed by the President's message as effectively as Hitler and Mussolini. Again they look to Berlin for a lead, in the meantime repeating their pro-fascist chatter about "foreign entanglements" and imitating Hitler's jibes at Roosevelt as war-maker. But even they can-

not fail to notice that the American people are heartily in back of the President and that the stocks of the tory-isolationists are rapidly sinking to rock-bottom.

By the same token, it is about time for Congress to realize that it is lagging far behind the President and the people on the most critical issue which has faced our country and people in modern times. Congress cannot permit the aggression-encouraging Neutrality Law to remain for a moment longer on our statute books. We need immediately a clear legislative formulation of foreign policy, and consistent governmental action which will name and brand the aggressors, embargo the shipments of all materials to them and at the same time permit the fullest economic and politi-

cal assistance to the victims of international lawlessness. In this way Congress can *now* put teeth into President Roosevelt's peace message.

The President has gone a long way in the direction of helping clear the international atmosphere. He has shown again the pivotal position of the United States in world affairs and revealed our potentialities as a world force for the maintenance of peace. There can be no question but that Congress and the people should support to the fullest all positive steps towards participation in collective actions to stop aggression. Together with all the peace-loving peoples, we can and must protect our national security by helping isolate and quarantine the fascist war-makers.

The Anti-Alien Drive

BY PEGGY DUANE

Inspired and tutored by the un-American Dies Committee, a number of Senators and Congressmen have introduced over ninety anti-alien bills at this session of Congress. Most of these measures are ostensibly aimed against the liberties of aliens. But all of them involve the political rights of all Americans—citizens as well as non-citizens.

Heading the infamous list of ninety bills, which are promoted by the Garner-Vandenberg-anti-New Deal coalition, are the measures introduced into Congress by the pro-fascist quintuplets: Dempsey, Hobbs, Reynolds, Starnes, and Dies.

The Dempsey Bill (H.R. 4860) provides for the deportation of any non-citizen who believes in, or belongs to, any organization which advocates, "any change in the American form of government." *This bill has passed through the House and is now before the Senate Committee on Immigration.* Under this bill, any non-citizen who favors an amendment to the Constitution or supports the President's Reorganization Plan or the Supreme Court Reform could be deported. Such organizations as the C.I.O., A. F. of L., innumerable church, peace and civic groups would thus be threatened with deportation moves against a large section of their memberships if these organizations did not practically withdraw from all progressive activity in public affairs. The Dempsey Bill thereby would serve to gag these and similar organizations and to reduce their free participation in the political life of the country.

The Hobbs Bill (H.R. 4768) would establish concentration camps upon American soil for all aliens non-deportable due to refusal of their governments to accept them. *This Hitler-like measure has been approved by the powerful House Judiciary Committee.* Not only would this bill mean the herding of anti-fascist political refugees into a system of concentration camps of the kind from which they fled,

but it would also open the way for similar action to be taken against native-born anti-fascists as well.

Senator Reynolds of North Carolina and Congressman Starnes of Alabama are the authors of a number of vicious anti-alien bills which call for the deportation of all non-citizens who have been on relief for a total of six months out of any three year period (S. 410, H.R. 3030); deportation of "any alien or group of aliens whose presence in the United States is inimical to the public interest" (S. 411, H.R. 3031); suspension of all immigration for ten years (S. 409, H.R. 3032); permanent reduction of all immigration quotas (S. 407, H.R. 3033); registration and fingerprinting of all non-citizens and issuance of identification cards (S. 408, H.R. 3392).

Legislation to suspend or limit immigration at a time when the democratic world is faced with the problem of providing a haven for the victims of fascist aggression is openly pro-fascist and violates one of the fundamental traditions of our nation as an asylum for the oppressed. A measure to register and fingerprint the foreign-born would be, among other things, iniquitous in its hardships on the non-citizen. But more than that, such a vicious measure could only be forced upon the people if it were made compulsory and universal. This would require the establishment of a domestic passport system. What a fine weapon this would be in the hands of the Girdlers and Fords! Picket lines, union meetings, political gatherings could be raided and all those present held until they produced registration cards or proof of citizenship.

A series of Federal sedition bills are also pending in Congress which would enact on a national scale the vicious features of the infamous criminal syndicalism laws of California and other states. (These bills are entered as H.R. 938, 56, 282, 5000, and 5138.)

Congressman Smith of Virginia is the sponsor of H.R.

5138—an omnibus bill which is now in sub-committee of the House Judiciary Committee chairmaned by "Concentration Camp" Hobbs. *This Smith bill has definite prospects of being reported favorably out of Committee soon.* This measure combines within itself the sedition features of the bills listed above, the reactionary Dempsey proposals extended to include deportation of any alien who might accidentally make a street-corner conversation remark about local politics, the concentration camp measure, fingerprinting and registration of aliens, obstacles to naturalization, and a compendium of the worst anti-civil rights bills ever introduced into Congress within the past twenty years.

The three bills introduced personally by Mr. Dies boldly and brazenly say what all the others imply. H.R. 4905 provides "for the exclusion and deportation of alien fascists and Communists." Mr. Dies elaborates in bill that "the platform, and the objectives of the Third International, the Communist International, the Fascist Grand Council, or the National-Socialist Party of Germany shall be held to embrace the said doctrines" belief in which, or support of which, make non-citizens deportable.

H.R. 4907 requires the registration of all "Communist, Fascist, anti-racial, or anti-religious organizations." And H.R. 4909 would make "Communists and Fascists" ineligible for employment by the Government of the United States.

The all too recent Red-baiting attacks conducted by Mr. Dies and his Hoover-Garner sponsors against the New Deal, labor, and all real democrats give the key to what is behind Mr. Dies and his bills.

Branding as "Communist" all those who disagree with his pro-fascist distortion of the term Americanism, Mr. Dies would deport, persecute and discriminate against those Americans who believe in the Americanism of Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and President Roosevelt. By affixing the words "and fascist" to every phrase which includes the word Communist, Mr. Dies hopes to deceive the American people by exploiting their genuine hatred of fascism for his own purpose of combating American progressivism.

Those Congressmen who have been swayed by Mr. Dies' oratory, or intimidated by his Red-smearing blackmail, would do well to examine the outcome of the now well-known Strecker case. Joseph Strecker was set free, by U. S. Supreme Court decision, from deportation action sought by the Department of Labor on the grounds that he formerly belonged to the Communist Party. Although the Supreme Court limited its decision largely to technical grounds and evaded the chief political issues involved in the case, *it did not reverse* the Strecker decision handed down by Federal Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson in the circuit court on April 8, 1938. This memorable decision of Judge Hutcheson, which remains effective after the Supreme Court decision, stated:

"It seems to me to be a kind of Pecksniffian righteousness,

savoring strongly of hypocrisy and party bigotry, to assume and find that merely because Strecker joined the Communist Party of America, he is an advocate of, or belongs to, a party which advocates the overthrow by force and violence of the Government of the United States.

"It seems to me too that the cause of liberalism is more retarded than advanced by forays for deportation on evidence like this. But whatever may be thought propriety, from the standpoint of tolerance and liberalism of this proceeding, it may not be doubted that from the standpoint of its legality, a deportation order requires more than mere fiat.

"There must be evidence in the record supporting the finding on which the order rests. Such evidence is wanting here."

It might also be well to remind those Congressmen who may be vacillating before Mr. Dies' high-pressure attacks upon progressive Americans, native and foreign-born, of the words of President Roosevelt who, while speaking before the Daughters of the American Revolution said in effect: "You and I are all descendants of immigrants and revolutionists."

It might be of value likewise to call to the attention of these Congressmen that this "alien" population whom they would depict as "undesirable," a "menace" and "material for concentration camps," constitute a large percentage of the American nation of working people who have created the wealth, culture and traditions of liberty which is America. Of the total United States population of 122,775,046 (1930 Census), over 17,000,000 are of foreign parentage; more than 8,500,000 are of mixed parentage; and over 14,000,000 are foreign-born. And since 1930, the immigrants are, in the main, the flower of the pre-fascist countries; progressives who bring to America their hatred of reaction and their strong beliefs in democracy and political liberty. It is these people, together with the more than 40,000,000 (1930 Census) Americans of foreign and mixed parentage and foreign-born, that Mr. Dies and his entourage of sponsors would immediately strike at in their anti-alien measures.

Even were this the only aim of the anti-alien bills, it would be sufficient to rouse the nation in protest. But these attacks on the foreign-born are but the forerunner of extended attacks on the social objectives of the New Deal and the whole labor and progressive movements. It is this which the reactionaries are aiming at. They would, through Congressional legislation, pave the way for the Nazi-like destruction of the civil and democratic rights of all the people—native and foreign-born, citizen and non-citizen.

On the other side of the legislative ledger, however, are numerous bills aimed to implement the Bill of Rights, to facilitate naturalization, to grant asylum in the United States to refugees. The Wagner-Dingall Bill (S.J. Res. 64, H. J. Res. 165) which would permit the entry of a quota of Germany refugee children above the regular quota should win widespread support. The bills introduced by Congressman Celler (H.R. 221), d'Allesandro (H.R. 5228), and others, to facilitate naturalization and to grant political asylum give answer to key needs today.

The Thomas-LaFollette Oppressive Labor Practices Act which would outlaw industrial espionage, employer-owned munitions, thug-hiring, etc., by the employers is one of the most important civil-rights bills now pending in Congress. The bill to curb the use of the National Guard in labor disputes, introduced by Congressman Coffee of Washington, can well be considered a companion bill to the LaFollette measure. Both of these bills should have the active support of all labor organizations—C.I.O., A. F. of L. and the Railroad Brotherhoods, as well as of all other progressive groups.

New Deal Congressmen and Senators, as well as all progressives should be on guard against tendencies to consider the anti-alien bills as "just some more alien measures," which "don't affect voters," which may "die in Committee," etc. The Dies clique exploits these attitudes to the maximum, as was witnessed in the passage of the Hobbs Concentration Camp Bill through the Judiciary Committee without a hearing. Also, this situation helped put across the Dempsey Bill which was allowed to be introduced in the House as a "non-controversial item" with only 26 Congressmen present, none of whom were progressives.

The sponsors of these reactionary measures also rely upon the form of "blackmail" which makes a Congressman fear to be branded as "Communist" if he should oppose

such bills. Congress must hear from the "folks at home" and be made to realize that the people view these anti-alien bills as measures inimical to the interests of the entire nation. A steady campaign of letters and telegrams on these measures should reach the Senators and Representatives, as well as both the House and Senate Immigration Committees.

Above all, progressives in Congress and the people as a whole must be politically alert to see the fascist dangers behind the drive for the anti-alien bills. The Garner-Hoover forces attack the non-citizen for direct anti-labor purposes and hide behind these attacks a frontal assault on the civil rights of all Americans. The Dies Hitler-like method of Red-baiting and fomenting national and racial strife and divisions is an essential part of the whole pro-fascist onslaught on the New Deal and the people. Its threat and importance must not for a moment be minimized by the true defenders of democracy.

Never were the words "Vigilance is the price of liberty" so true as today when the forces of reaction seek to foist their contraband, un-American policies upon the country through the medium of Congressional action. Only the greatest political vigilance, coupled with unity of action of the labor and progressive movements, can unmask, combat and repel this pro-fascist offensive.

The Neutrality Hearings

BY ADAM LAPIN

The crucial problem of foreign policy was subjected to prolonged discussion before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the hearings on the present Neutrality Act which expires May 1.

It cannot have escaped the notice of the political observer that these hearings have revealed a powerful and rising popular support for President Roosevelt's foreign policy. If among the small but exceedingly vocal and active "isolationist" groups the delusions of isolation die hard (not to speak of those whose isolationist arguments conceal a definitely pro-fascist policy), the American people have learned much from the recent events following the Munich betrayal.

The Gallup Polls have only distortedly reflected this sentiment thus far. The form of the Gallup questions has not permitted the problem to be squarely put—does the advance of fascist aggression require that the United States protect its own safety and peace by taking a leading role in the world defense of the independence of nations and peoples and universal peace?

Nevertheless, the overwhelming sentiment of the people for the struggle of the Chinese people against Japanese

invasion, and the alarm at fascist war-making has broken through even Dr. Gallup's limited queries. But from the demonstrations of the tory-isolationist group around Senators Nye, Taft, George, Reynolds, Vandenberg and Clarke it would appear that the strong anti-fascist opinions of the American people are viewed by the reactionaries in Congress as an obstacle to be overcome, not as a guide for legislative and governmental action.

Yet the preponderance of testimony on "neutrality" legislation before the Senate Committee swept across all party lines and political affiliation in affirming the nation's belief that American national safety required a basic revision in Congressional legislation aimed fundamentally at providing the Executive with the means of bringing American economic power to bear against aggression.

The case for the repeal of the un-neutral Neutrality Act was not better put than by Mr. Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of State, by Dr. Charles Fenwick, eminent Catholic layman, testifying on behalf of the American Union for Concerted Peace Efforts, as well as by James Carey, speaking for the C.I.O. The efforts of the tory and isolationist Senators to make any dent in the arguments of

these authorities favoring a policy of withdrawing American economic support from aggressor nations proved wholly futile.

Testimony on the Pittman "cash-and-carry" plan revealed its inadequacy to the present needs of American foreign policy. It not only avoids making the vitally necessary distinction between aggressor and victim, but it actually would work out to favor the aggressive designs of Japan in the Far East. "There ain't no such animal as neutrality," remarked Bernard Baruch in testifying in favor of the "come-and-get-it" principle of the Pittman bill. He could not disentangle himself, however, from the delusion that economic pressure constitutes an incitement to further aggression. As if the very essence of the fascist policy is not a program of international lawlessness and military conquest already decided upon and proved in deeds!

The fundamental recognition of fascist policy as uninterrupted aggression marked the views represented by Stimson and Fenwick. No isolationist was able to adduce an iota of evidence to gainsay it. This left the isolationist and pro-fascist Senators with the only alternative—collaboration in the "appeasement" policy of surrendering to the Hitler-Mussolini-Mikado alliance new territorial possessions and bases for further military expansion and attacks against the democracies. That the United States is already included in such proposed payments to the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis has been indicated quite boldly by Senator Reynolds and Congressman Fish of New York: the Philippines have been mentioned, and the resistance to the vital Guam fortifications dramatized the temper lurking behind "isolationism."

The testimony of the eminent Catholic layman, Dr. Fenwick, unquestionably spoke for a large body of Catholic opinion which remains unheard amid the din of Coughlinism and pro-Franco circles of the hierarchy. His testimony was offered in refutation of Dr. Thomas Healy, also a Catholic. Dr. Fenwick cited impressive evidence to confirm his declaration that the Catholic Church has firmly supported the idea of economic sanctions against aggressors. "I take it the gentleman has turned his back on this ideal," he said, turning to Dr. Healy.

The efforts of such isolationists as Senators Johnson of California and Shipstead of Minnesota to pervert Mr. Stimson's plain position into "meddling" and "punishing" met cool rebuffs at Mr. Stimson's hands.

Senator Shipstead: "There has been a good deal of talk about punishing the aggressor. How would you punish a nation without going to war?"

Mr. Stimson: "I have not said anything about punishing them. What I said was that I would cease to assist it [fascism] in its aggression. . . ."

The whole windbag of isolationism is punctured in this brief exchange.

The statement issued on April 20 by James Carey, na-

tional secretary of the C.I.O., is of the greatest significance because it shows that labor is now turning its attention seriously to assuring immediate action on basic revision of the Neutrality Act, to preserve American and world peace. Citing the resolution passed by the Pittsburgh convention of the C.I.O. for cooperation with other democratic nations, Mr. Carey called for the realization of a program whose essentials were:

"That our government and our people should not aid the aggressor nations by any material or moral means; that our government and our people should lend the powerful aid of this country to the victims of the aggressor nations."

It is a significant fact that the arguments of President Roosevelt's opponents, and the supporters of a continued false "neutrality," are now no longer distinguishable from the official apologetics of the fascist powers. Mr. William Castle, feverish supporter of isolationism, has received the blessings of the Nazi press; Mr. Norman Thomas but poorly conceals his readiness to serve new victims to fascism under pseudo-radical phraseology. The monotonous drone of "we don't want war" remains the sole argument of "isolationism," without its offering a single positive solution. Where this does not conceal simple-mindedness, it is the cloak for a definite pro-Hitler policy engaging the United States as a silent accomplice in further fascist seizures in Europe, Asia and the Far East.

Outside the Senate Committee rooms, Senator Taft of Ohio took up the cudgels for the reactionary Republicans in his onslaught on the New Deal, including President Roosevelt's peace message to the fascist dictators. The Hooverites had in general met Roosevelt's message either with apologetic repetition, distinctly in the minor key, of their outworn shibboleths, or maintained silence, awaiting their cue from the axis capitals. The cue came from Mussolini, particularly in his attack against Roosevelt for his "attempt to place the nations of the axis on the seat of the accused." Senator Taft echoed the same sentiment by accusing the President of "trying to stir up prejudice against this country or that."

Moreover, Taft, following in the footsteps of Hoover and Hitler, insolently charged that the President's efforts for peace were so much "ballyhoo" designed to divert American public opinion away from "domestic issues." Once again Mr. Taft reiterates the political philosophy and line of his party—reactionary Republican opposition to national and social security, pro-fascist attacks upon the President's foreign policy for "quarantining the aggressors," and upon the New Deal's progressive program for necessary social and labor legislation.

In the upsurge of American opinion supporting the President's policies, Congressional opinion remains singularly backward. Only in recent days has the pressure of the people wrought discernible change. This gap must be closed.

Clearly emerging from the "neutrality" hearings is the fact that the Thomas-Geyer amendments to the Neutrality Act offer a serious step forward towards penalizing the fascist war-makers. It is true, the Thomas plan has some very distinct weaknesses, of which the most important is that the President must declare an embargo on all belligerents alike before asking Congress to distinguish between aggressor and victim. While Congress debates, precious days and weeks may pass. But this proposal *does* put on the statute books the proposition that the United States will side with the democratic nations against fascist aggression. Because of the clear-cut issue of principle involved, many members of Congress have hesitated to express their support of the amendments.

But the vigorous campaign on behalf of the Thomas amendments, given a new impetus by the Conference of 100, convened in Washington April 15-16 by the American Union for Concerted Peace Efforts, will undoubtedly have practical results in convincing Senator Pittman and other administration leaders that the people want something more than "cash and carry," or "come-and-get-it" as Mr. Baruch calls it. Senator Pittman has apparently been stung by the lack of support for his proposal in the peace movement, as well as by the pointed criticism of the effect his bill would have on China. As a result, he has announced that he would support a separate measure for an embargo on Japan. And he has also stated repeatedly that there is nothing "incompatible" between his bill and the Thomas amendments.

Taking advantage of the realization that the Pittman bill did not receive warm public support, Dr. Charles Fenwick proposed that the principle of the Thomas amendments be

included as a concluding paragraph to the Pittman bill. Senator Pittman has not yet committed himself on this proposal, but it may be effected if sufficient public support is forthcoming.

Of course the new plan would have the weakness of the Thomas amendments. The victim of aggression would be able to get supplies only on a cash and carry basis. This would still not be very much help to China, but it would mean an embargo on Japan. At least the proposal made by Dr. Fenwick does open the possibility of converting the Pittman bill into an acceptable compromise for the peace forces of the country if outright repeal or the Thomas amendment cannot be passed.

These proposals and counter-proposals indicate plainly that there is a real problem facing the Administration and the peace movement now. The pro-fascist-isolationist clique are in a decided minority. But they know what they want. The advocates of repeal and amending the Neutrality Act have not yet united their forces. With the need for enacting legislation as soon as possible after May 1 when the cash and carry provision of the present Act expires, there is a genuine danger that a hasty and unsatisfactory compromise may be reached.

The hope for an effective peace measure which will express the peace sentiments of the country lies with the Administration, the progressive New Dealers and especially with the people "back home." But then the people will have to choose a more direct medium than the Gallup Poll for making their views known to Congress. Public opinion for peace and halting aggression must be harnessed more effectively into active mass public pressure upon Congress.

Coughlin and the Axis

BY ALAN MAX

There is hardly a piece of legislation or national policy which Father Coughlin does not try to shape. With his network of radio broadcasts, his apparently costly publication, *Social Justice*, his ability to flood Congressmen on occasion with letters and telegrams, and with his personal lobbyist, Louis B. Ward, at work in the nation's capital, Father Coughlin is clearly a factor to be reckoned with.

What is Coughlin driving at? And whom does he represent?

These questions naturally are of concern to every Congressman and to the voters to whom Coughlin speaks. This article will attempt to answer with respect to one phase of Father Coughlin's activity: the crucial field of foreign policy.

Father Coughlin has openly cast his lot with the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis as against the democracies. As world

opinion has mounted against the fascist axis, Coughlin has come out more and more clearly in support of it. When the overwhelming majority of Americans stood aghast at the Nazi invasion of Prague, Coughlin devoted the entire back cover of *Social Justice* (April 3, 1939) to a paean of praise for Hitler. "Rome-Berlin-Axis is the Great Political Rampart Against Communism," he wrote, in practically the words of Hitler himself.

The American people and government have denounced fascist aggression and war as international lawlessness and banditry. But Coughlin gives voice to the propaganda of Goebbels and Gayda, and raises the cry of "a Communist menace" to exonerate the annihilation of whole nations and peoples by the axis, and to wage his own war against democracy here in the United States.

The same issue of *Social Justice* (in an article by Anthony Ashley) brazenly proclaimed the superiority of the fascist form of government over the democratic; derided the idea that "Fascism must at all cost be first of all kept from our shores," and claimed that the resentment of the democracies against the fascists springs from the fact that the latter have shown up the "supposed" superiority of the democratic form of government.

As a supporter of the axis, Father Coughlin has followed a clear-cut course. He is opposed to every anti-fascist step in the foreign policy of President Roosevelt (whom he calls "War-maker No. 1," while the war-makers Hitler and Mussolini are designated as men of peace). He fights a policy of collective security on the part of the democracies. He opposes the United States giving help of any kind to any democracy (under the cry of "neutrality") while urging the active aid of the fascist aggressors which he would deny to the democracies. And he seeks to weaken the defenses of the United States because he sees that this country is an obstacle to the aggressions of the axis.

Coughlin carefully examines each piece of legislation, every action of the State Department and all foreign developments from one point of view: will it hurt or help the axis? If it hurts, he opposes it. If it helps, he calls upon his readers and listeners to support it.

The record speaks for itself:

Coughlin cheered the invasion of China, Ethiopia and Spain. He heralded the invasion of Austria and the Sudetenland as a "triumph of justice." The invasion of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia was followed by the "axis-a-rampart" cover described above. The invasion of Albania by Mussolini, *Social Justice* declared, was regrettably "necessary."

In pursuit of the same pro-fascist policy, Coughlin opposed the credit loan by the United States to China on the ground that it would "offend" Japan. But he was not worried about China being "offended" by the huge quantities of scrap iron regularly shipped to Tokyo from the United States and destined to end up in the mutilated bodies of Chinese babies, women and men.

To hamper cooperation between the United States on one hand and France and England, on the other, Father Coughlin declared that the real direction for American trade lay with Brazil and the other countries of South America (*Social Justice*, Feb. 13, 1939). But when the State Department actually consummated a trade pact with Brazil a few weeks later, Coughlin howled with rage. A headline in *Social Justice* (March 27, 1939) declared that this meant the "financial enslavement" of Brazil. But elsewhere in the same issue, Coughlin revealed what he really had in mind. This second article attacked the pact with Brazil on the ground that it would result in that nation "discontinuing much of its trade with Germany."

Coughlin was furious when the State Department placed

the 25 per cent penalty on Nazi goods following the invasion of Prague. And while he had always condemned Secretary of State Hull's policy of reciprocal trade treaties with the democracies, he immediately called upon the State Department to negotiate such treaties now with Germany and Italy (*Social Justice*, March 21 and 27).

Just as it was becoming increasingly clear to a large section of the Americas that the real hope of world peace lay in the collaboration of this country and the Soviet Union, Coughlin urged the government to break off relations with and withdraw recognition from the Soviet Union (*Social Justice*, Feb. 13, 1939). In a similar desire to weaken the position of the United States, Coughlin hailed the refusal of the Senate to fortify the island of Guam. And while he had opposed the sale of planes to France on the ground that it was depleting sorely needed stocks at home, a few weeks later he opposed the President's defense bill as "unnecessarily large." Coughlin obviously is opposed to both France and the United States having planes. He wants only the fascist axis to have them.

Coughlin has violently opposed the foreign policy of President Roosevelt, with one exception. This was where the President made a serious and what may prove costly mistake—at complete variance with the rest of his policy. In *Social Justice* of March 13, Coughlin bewailed the fact that the United States had refused to recognize Franco, the puppet of the axis. Two weeks later, on April 1, Coughlin saw his wish fulfilled. The United States recognized the Franco regime despite the fact that it had been brought to power on Italian and Nazi bayonets and although such recognition clearly opened the way for fascist penetration of South America. An appeal for recognition coming from a pro-fascist like Coughlin should have been sufficient to put the government on guard.

Coughlin's position on revision of the Neutrality Law is exactly what you would expect of a supporter of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis. He has been conducting a campaign for the Nye Amendment, which would prevent the United States from shipping any armaments or munitions at any time. The chief effect of such an amendment would be seriously to cripple the democracies in the event of an attack upon them by the fascist powers.

On the other hand, Coughlin is bitterly opposed to the Pittman "cash-and-carry" Amendment, since its intention is to aid the democracies of France and Britain, although it definitely is not an effective step in that direction. But the full force of Coughlin's fury is reserved for the Thomas Amendment since, despite its shortcomings, it opens the way for a distinction between aggressor and victim and is therefore the best of the amendments submitted.

* * *

With telegrams and petitions coming into Washington after blasts by Coughlin against the shameful embargo on

Loyalist Spain, Coughlin has claimed to speak for a large section of Americans. It will be recalled, however, that in both of these campaigns a number of cases were discovered of signatures being attached to wires and petitions without the knowledge of the "signer." Just what percentage were faked in this way will never, of course, be known. The Gallup Poll, however, offers an indication of how little Coughlin represents the views of the great mass of Americans in general and of the Catholics in particular.

Coughlin heralds the Rome-Berlin axis as a "rampart against Communism." But according to a Gallup Poll of December 11, 1938, the American people line up as follows on the question of whom they would favor in a war between the Nazis and the Soviet Union:

Favor the Soviet Union 83%
 Favor the Nazis 17%

Coughlin favors the Nye Amendment to the Neutrality Act in order to bar aid to the democracies in case of an attack by the Nazis. But 82 per cent of the American people, according to a Gallup Poll of April 8, 1939, want to see the United States supply England and France with food in the event of a war with the Nazis, and 66 per cent want the U. S. to supply them with arms. (In this connection only 1 out of 100 said they favored the Nazis in the event of such a war. So it may be said that about 1 per cent of the country agrees with Coughlin on this vast issue.)

Coughlin condemned the action of the U. S. State Department in placing penalty duties on Nazi goods after the invasion of Prague. But according to the Gallup Poll, 78 per cent of the people approved the action.

Coughlin has been a rabid supporter of Franco as against the Spanish Loyalists. But according to a Gallup Poll of December 30, of last year, 76 per cent of the American people favored the Loyalists. And despite the position taken by a large part of the Catholic hierarchy, 42 per cent of American Catholics declared themselves to be behind the Loyalists.

While Coughlin tries to conceal the fact that the Nazis are trying to wipe out Catholicism, American Catholics, naturally, are 100 per cent opposed to the persecution of Catholics in Germany, according to a Gallup Poll of Dec. 9, 1938. And whereas Coughlin himself is one of the leading anti-Semites in this country, 93 per cent of American Catholics condemned the Nazi persecution of Jews.

* * *

The American people, including, of course, American Catholics, are on the side of democracy, tolerance and peace. Those who do support Coughlin—and it would be foolish and dangerous to fail to see that there are many—undoubtedly do so because they are misled by his demagoguery, or because they agree with him on a single issue, or because they are motivated by some backward prejudice. It can probably be assumed that the vast majority of Coughlin's followers do not understand the full implication of his activities as an agent of fascism, and would leave him the moment their eyes are opened.

For whom, then, does Coughlin speak?

At the Nazi Bund rally in Madison Square Garden in New York City, Coughlin's name received the loudest cheers—even louder than the cheers for Hitler and Mussolini. It can be said that Coughlin truly speaks for the Nazi Bund. He also speaks for and represents the interests of men like Henry Ford, Herbert Hoover, and the other Wall Street foes of the New Deal, the labor movement and the people generally.

Those Catholics and others who have come under Coughlin's influence would do well to examine his position and activities with the greatest soberness. If they do this, they are bound to see that Coughlin is leading them, against their will, into the arms of Hitler and war, against the interests of all Catholics, and toward the destruction of American democracy.

A Republican Preview

BY MILTON HOWARD

A swift survey of the home territory of Senator Taft of Ohio, Senator Vandenberg of Michigan and Mr. Thomas Dewey of New York reveals a preview of Republican national policy as projected if the G.O.P. should triumph in 1940. It foreshadows the real policy, the Hoover line that would dominate in national as well as foreign affairs, if Messrs. the Republicans were to emerge victorious in the approaching presidential elections.

Republican victories in the several state elections in November in which the party of Hoover, Taft, Vandenberg

and Dewey came forward as a "liberal" party and out-promised the New Dealers have been followed by a characteristic series of reactionary acts in every case. These take on a standardized form: action to hamper the trade unions; wide-swinging slashes in relief; bold efforts to shift tax burdens to the poorest of the poor through sales taxes; special anti-democratic legislation aimed at curbing the political rights of the lower income groups; stubborn opposition to improving, or even maintaining, old-age pensions, all social agencies, unemployment insurance, health pro-

grams; conspiracy to insure party control by attacking Civil Service; and similar measures adapted to the locality. Along with this there goes of necessity the smokescreen of "Red-baiting," witch-hunts, "little Dies" committees, and vicious attacks against the foreign-born.

On a state scale this program spells intensified suffering and restricted liberties; on a national scale, it would involve a reign of Hitler-like political reaction and economic disaster; on the world arena, it would make the United States a partner of the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis.

A glimpse at the operation of the Republican state administrations in Ohio and Michigan, and the action of the Republican legislature in New York will illustrate the point.

The Taft-Bricker machine in Ohio has two outstanding "achievements" since it took office in November: it is responsible for the introduction of a bill for the incorporation of trade unions, and it has sponsored a statewide relief program which will reduce the present seven cents a meal standard closer to sheer hunger. Senator Taft's colleague in Cleveland, Mayor Burton, has been inspired by the Senator's stubborn raids on President Roosevelt's requests for emergency relief appropriations to establish a \$5.70 week budget to "care" for all the needs of a family of four. Neither Senator Taft, nor Mayor Burton nor Governor Bricker is affected by the fact that among these families there are 22,000 school children sharing in the 80 cents a day family budget.

The anti-union bill of the Taft-Bricker machine is of the type which has appeared like a rash in a number of states where Republican forces wield influence. Seeking to incorporate trade unions is the weapon used to make labor organizations the victims of financial and criminal persecutions. Along with it, the Taft-Bricker machine seeks to cut off the national bonds of the Ohio unions in order to weaken their defenses; this is proposed through the Act requiring a three years' residence requirement of all trade union officials. Under this proviso, collaboration between Ohio local unions and their international officials would be restricted.

Along with this frontal attack on labor goes a whole series of subsidiary raids: the Ripper Bill substantially wiping out unemployment compensation; drastic slashing of the old-age pension rolls; a "little Dies" committee proposed for Ohio State University; barring "subversive" parties from the ballot; censorship of anti-fascist films, etc.

Seeking to entice the Negro vote by unscrupulous demagoguery, the Taft-Bricker machine in action, however, uses its power to smother the political rights of the Negroes. It was this machine which killed a Congressional redistricting plan which would have given added strength to the Negro districts in Cleveland.

The Taft-Bricker cynicism is most clearly observed in use of the "crime" issue. Having introduced an "anti-crime bill" against the Tory Democrat, former Governor Davey, prior to the November elections in order to impress the elec-

torate with the Taft-Bricker aversion to crime and graft, it was the Taft-Bricker forces in the state legislature which led the fight to kill this very bill when it was reintroduced after the November elections. An election victory had, apparently, caused the Republicans to "suddenly" lose their interest in "crime."

This concentration of Taft-Bricker reaction has, naturally, not gone without opposition. It has aroused a sense of alarm and has spurred a feeling for unity among labor and progressive forces greater than in years. Leading officials of the A. F. of L., the Railroad Brotherhoods, and the C.I.O. have signed a petition against the deceitful "anti-injunction bill" of Governor Bricker which is aimed at narrowing labor's rights in labor disputes. The attack on unemployment compensation has stirred similar united action. The Taft-Bricker "union incorporation" scheme has been balked in the House Committee, the "little Dies" committee has been withdrawn by its sponsor who fears the storm of protest which surprised him.

In these "back home" acts, the Taft idea of how to run the United States is easily glimpsed, making the sharpest contrast to the needs and aspirations of the American people. The contrast, it is true, is somewhat obscured by the activities of the Garner Democrats headed by ex-Governor Davey, whose dominant emotion is envy at the success of the Taft-Bricker machine in effecting greater reaction than he himself dared to execute. The basic cleavage, however, between Taft's callousness to the people's needs and the progressive forces in the state, not even Davey's Toryism can obscure.

The experience in Michigan has been parallel with only minor changes for local conditions. Immediately upon his election, the late Governor Fitzgerald (now succeeded by Loren Dickenson, Lieutenant-Governor) launched the first blow as per schedule—an Act proposing to take the strike power out of the hands of the trade unions by mandatory arbitration and by prescribing the conditions under which a strike vote could be taken in any union. This constituted the most sweeping anti-labor Act ever proposed in Michigan.

This was followed by the passage in the House of an Act to remove 14,000 state positions from Civil Service, while all efforts to remove 2,400 useless political jobs were unavailing. Slashes in relief were followed by a torrent of sales tax proposals on gasoline, cigarettes and other articles of consumption. Large corporate incomes are strictly exempt.

The policy of "let them hang themselves" pursued by certain Democratic Party forces in these circumstances, under the influence of Farley, is a dangerous error. A clear labor-progressive-New Deal counter-program and unity of action to defend the interests of the people in both urban and rural areas is urgently needed. The people cannot make clear choices if the issues are not clearly placed.

That the people of Michigan are restless under the grow-

ing disillusion with the Republican promises is evidenced among other things, by the defeat of a Tory in the bailiwick of Father Coughlin, notorious pro-fascist demagogue, and especially by the consolidation and strengthening of the United Automobile Workers of America (U.A.W.A.) behind the C.I.O. The spring elections in the townships of Michigan also do not indicate any trend to the Republican Tories; they do indicate, however, a decisive need for far greater activity by the New Deal, labor and progressive forces so that the alternatives to the Tory program of the Republicans will be clearer than they are now.

The New York story is brief, but no less pregnant with political meaning. A coalition of anti-New Deal Republicans and Tammany Democrats have swept roughshod over vital measures with almost hooligan lack of restraint. The power trust has been protected from state purchase of crucial power sites; sales taxes have been simmering in the committees under Republican sponsorship. Republican majorities in committees have strangled a host of labor bills, refused protection for small home-owners, spiked a state wages-hours bill, killed a measure to extend workers' compensation, blocked a health program, protected the milk monopoly, and halted the effort of progressives to punish anti-Negro discrimination by employers, especially the utilities.

Congress and the Small Business Man

BY ROGER BACON

It would not be far from the truth to say that Hitler rode to power through the division in labor's ranks, on the shoulders of the German small business men, retailers, artisans, and other middle-class people. He promised them that if they would join his gangs to destroy the labor movement, he would reward them by eliminating chain stores and department stores and by destroying the monopolies which were driving them out of business. Instead, the trusts which run Hitler have been enormously strengthened, the small artisans have been decimated by recent decrees, small business men in every field have gone bankrupt at an unprecedented rate, while the survivors, without raw materials and with impoverished customers, also face ruin.

American reaction is attempting a similar maneuver. The Girdlers, Fords and du Ponts say to the corner grocer: "We have common interests. If you will help us to defeat the New Deal, to eliminate the Wagner Act, to reduce our taxes, to stop work relief, everything will be fine for you. Your labor cost will be reduced, your taxes slashed, you will get more business and, with returning 'confidence,' plenty of credit."

Common interests indeed! Does collective bargaining

Where was Mr. Dewey during this barrage against the people? Silent as a grave. Where was he when the anti-crime bills sponsored by Governor Lehman were knifed by the Republican Party leadership which controls the Legislature? Silent. The "crime" issue here, as in the Taft-Bricker strategy, is for vote-getting only, not for constructive action.

Mr. Herbert Hoover could embrace with real ardor Messrs. Taft, Dewey and Vandenberg, the brightest stars in the present roll-call of possible Republican presidential nominees—except of course as the leader views them as competitors for the coveted nomination so greatly wooed by himself.

Deeds speak louder than words. And Republican policy in the states, as well as in Congress, speaks volumes. It unmasks the fake "liberalism" of the Republican Party for what it is: pre-election demagoguery for ushering in pro-fascist political reaction.

To visualize the consequences of a Republican victory in 1940, one need but look today at Ohio, Michigan, and New York, as well as at Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Wisconsin. And to prevent such a national disaster, labor and progressive unity of action is needed *now* to halt the offensive of Republican and anti-New Deal Democratic reaction in the states and Congress.

mean the same to the monopolists with their hundreds of thousands of workers as to the small retailers with an average of one employee for every three stores? Do wage increases mean the same, when they represent dollars out of pocket for Wall Street, and a larger volume of business to the corner grocer? Does the work relief program mean the same, when it has been the margin of survival to thousands of small business men in recent years? Does credit mean the same, when the economic royalists and the Wall Street banks refuse credit to small business in order to strengthen their monopolies?

The Republican and anti-New Deal Democratic spokesmen of big business have talked long enough about the "community of interests among business men." But when it comes to the point of doing something for small business, they are against it just as much as they are against measures in the interests of workers and farmers. Their position is rationalized by the Scripps-Howard economist John T. Flynn in an article attacking Harry Hopkins' plan for aiding small business:

"One of the things which seems to disturb Mr. Hopkins is the number of failures among little business men. . . . Every

man who is ambitious to succeed does not have these talents. And some do not have the necessary money. Therefore, a large number of men who go into business without the qualities of management or funds fail. It must be so. It will always be so. And any attempt of the government to bolster up incompetent managers or moneyless enterprisers will be nothing less than a calamity for the system itself."

While attacking the New Deal, Mr. Flynn also slanders the small business man. The small merchant, usually with members of his family, works long hours and renders a necessary service to his community. In return, the little business man's family receives a meager income, typically resides in a second-rate dwelling over the store, and, generally speaking, enjoys a standard of living little if any better than its working-class neighbors.

Certainly, there are incompetent fly-by-nights. But is the merchant "incompetent" because big business destroys his markets, on the one hand by monopolistic trade practices, and on the other, by economic sabotage which destroys mass purchasing power? Is he "incompetent" because the bankocracy, regardless of the merchant's reputation and "soundness," refuses him credit, which—to use a turn of phrase in which Mr. Flynn delights—always has been, is, and always will be necessary for capitalistic enterprise?

Measures to help small and medium-sized business are not petty political expedients, subsidies to inefficiency at the expense of the people. What good is the efficient machinery of large-scale industry, when the monopolists who own it leave a large portion idle, and charge exorbitant prices for the output of the remainder? All measures which strengthen the position of small and medium-sized enterprises relative to the big trusts will help curtail the power of big business interests to abuse their efficient machinery, to charge high prices, and to sabotage economic recovery. *The real community of interest is between small business men and other working people against Wall Street.*

But big business propaganda has not been without effect. In the 1938 elections, Republican reaction made substantial gains among small and medium-sized business men. One reason was the previous failure of Congress and the Administration adequately to tackle *specific* needs of little business—more credit, less taxation, protection against monopoly.

This does not mean that the New Deal has not helped small business men. On the contrary, the work relief and public works program, farm relief, the growth of the labor movement assisted by New Deal legislation, have all increased the purchasing power of the masses. These measures have been the margin between bankruptcy and a modest living to tens of thousands of small business men, who, for the most part, are proprietors in the trade and service fields, small manufacturers in consumers' goods industries, people who depend directly on the welfare of the masses of workers and farmers for their livelihood.

In recent months the Administration has taken steps directly to help small business men. An example was the

W.P.A. purchase of \$10,000,000 of clothing from manufacturers—most of them comparatively small—providing needed clothing to the unemployed, and providing a market for unwieldy stocks to the manufacturers. This month six cities will witness the beginning of Secretary Wallace's food-stamp scheme, whereby the inadequate diets of unemployed workers will be increased by 50 per cent and the small merchants' trade with these workers will be correspondingly increased.

Recent revival of Justice Department anti-trust activities under Frank Murphy and Thurman Arnold is also beginning to bring results. Thus, in Detroit, a business man named Johnson entered the milk business, selling milk to workers at five cents under the milk trust price while paying the farmers as much as any other dairy. Big distributors working through the reactionary City Council attempted to force him out of business. A hearing before the Monopoly Investigating Committee followed by action by the Justice Department have so far protected Johnson, likely paving the way for rapid growth of independent low-price milk distribution in other industrial centers.

These latest Administration activities clearly underline the common interests of small business men and workers. But there are vital fields in which the New Deal has done little for small business men *as such*. Many progressives, including certain of the organizations of small business men, and a number of Congressmen, have recently attempted to work out helpful legislative proposals in the field of taxation and credit.

One of the most pressing needs of small business men is credit. A survey of credit problems of "small" manufacturers, with 21 to 250 employees, was conducted by the Census Bureau in 1935. In spite of the fact that many of these firms are not particularly "small," it was found that 45 per cent of them had credit difficulties, including large numbers with good Dun and Bradstreet ratings. Even of those who reported no credit difficulties, 40 per cent had no sources of long-term credit, necessary for expansion or plant improvement. Within this group, the greatest difficulties were experienced by the smallest firms. Needless to say, credit difficulties of still smaller manufacturers, and of the great majority of merchants, are more severe. Commercial banks are usually closed to these small business men, or available only for scanty short-term loans. In growing numbers, small business men have been forced to resort to the usurious small-loan companies.

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation has not met the situation. Organized by Hoover in 1932, this agency poured billions into the railroads, banks and other big business firms. Not only did this fail to help the small business man, but it injured him, by providing the large trusts with funds with which to drive him out of business and to absorb him. Although, as a result of recent legislation, there has been some improvement in the activities of

the R.F.C., it still lends little to small business men, and will continue to cause injury so long as Garner's man, Jesse Jones, remains in charge.

Even the small business men's conference held in Washington, Feb. 8, 1938, which was captured by big business stooges and converted into an anti-New Deal demonstration, recognized credit as the primary need of small business. As a result of popular pressure, the conference made two important recommendations, typical of proposals being made on this problem:

- a. Enable the American banking system to make insured loans for all necessary purposes.
- b. Set up a government agency to render this service wherever financial institutions are unable or unwilling to function.

A bill containing the first recommendation has been introduced by Senator Mead (S 1482). Insurance of bank loans cannot be a fundamental solution of the problem. Essentially, it is not because there are no good small business risks that banks refuse to make such loans, but because many banks, especially the most powerful banks and those most directly tied up with Wall Street, are interested in stifling the competition of small firms. Inability of small business to obtain bank credit is thus a logical result of the merger of banking and industrial capital into a small monopolistic group dominating the entire economy.

Of course, Wall Street banking monopoly is not complete, nor is the motive of stifling competition completely dominant over assurances of a safe profit on business loans. So, federal insurance undoubtedly would lead to a certain increase in the amount of credit facilities available to small business, just as federal insurance of housing mortgages under the Federal Housing Administration led to a certain increase in home construction. The Mead Bill contains heavy collateral requirements, equal to 125 per cent of the loan, so that only firms already in a strong financial position will be helped. Nobody will be saved from bankruptcy in an emergency by this law, which excludes working capital loans. Loans, which would be long term, would be restricted to the following purposes: to increase production, extend operations, modernize plant.

According to press reports, this bill is supported by Commerce Secretary Hopkins. On the whole, the bill deserves progressive support, with amendments reducing the collateral requirement, increasing coverage to include working capital loans and loans for new enterprises, and reducing the rate of interest, which is set at 4 per cent in the bill, plus service charges and insurance premiums which would bring the effective rate up to 6 per cent or more.

To really solve the credit problem, under present social conditions, control of credit sources must be taken out of the hands of finance capital by nationalizing the banking system. While this Communist Party proposal has not

received much open support, plans to cut under the Wall Street credit monopoly with a new Federal-controlled banking system have considerable support from small and medium-sized business men.

One version of this scheme is the carefully-planned Logan-Voorhees bill (S 1743 and H.R. 4857). Under its provisions, local small business men would organize "Federal investment associations" structurally similar to Federal Savings and Loan Associations in the home mortgage field. These "Federal Investment Associations" would have the exclusive function of making loans to small business men. Capital would be supplied by the members—themselves small business men, with opportunities for federal participation up to 80 per cent. In addition, Federal discount banks would be organized, which would enable the associations to make loans up to ten times their capital. The whole set-up would be controlled by a Federal Board appointed by the President.

The bill is well drafted, with a good definition of a "small, independent business man," with an effective interest maximum of 5 per cent, and with a deposit insurance feature. This bill provides a credit base of about \$1,500,000,000 for small business. If progressively administered, it could be a real factor for recovery and against monopoly. If Wall Street men control it, as they do the R.F.C. and the Federal Home Loan Bank System, it would mean very little.

In the sphere of taxation, Congress, under the New Deal, has slightly helped small business men by reducing the corporation income tax on small corporations, and increasing it for the large firms. Other measures plugged a few of the tax loopholes used by big business. Yet Wall Street with the aid of the Garner-Glass-Vandenberg-Taft Congressional coalition, posing as the defender of small business, succeeded in getting considerable support among small and medium business in its attack on the undistributed profits tax.

Now that the monopolies have made gains through demagogic "sympathy" with the small business man's problems, they are coming forward with their real corporation tax program, directed exclusively *against* the small business man, other middle-class people, the farmers and labor. The current tax proposal supported by reactionaries would substitute for the present corporation taxes a single flat rate income tax, with a "broader base." This would destroy all the gains to small business men under the New Deal and restore the discriminatory Hoover corporation tax at a higher tax rate on small and medium business.

Small business requires a positive anti-monopoly tax program, including an increase in the normal and undistributed profits tax on the largest firms, trust and monopolies; a steeper income tax on the higher brackets; elimination of numerous tax exemptions, and a reduction of the tax rate on small corporations. President Roosevelt's tax

proposals are along this line, and deserve support from small business groups.

Closely allied with the problem of taxation is the burning question of improving the competitive position of independent retailers, of protecting small business from the powerful national chains.

It is true that while chain stores have gained rapidly, they do not yet dominate the retail field. If, however, they continue to displace the independents it will be only a matter of time before the people shall have to pay for all staples prices fully as outrageous as prices now paid for milk. During the recent decades of rapid chain store expansion, distributive price margins on perishable consumers goods have increased, according to a recent study of the National Bureau of Economic Research, from 27.9 per cent in 1919 to 35.6 per cent in 1929, to 40.3 per cent in 1933. As the independents are driven to the wall and their unit costs increased, the chains increase their prices though still further undercutting the independents.

Thus, the enactment of progressive legislation to curb and restrict the monopolistic national chain stores would be no bonus to inefficiency at the expense of the people. By helping the million independent retailers fight off the Wall Street-dominated chains, it would bring gains to working people as a whole through lower prices. Sound anti-chain store legislation, therefore, should be supported which would provide heavy taxation against the national chains, as well as provisions that the tax revenues derived from its operation be reserved to first reimburse chain-store employees laid off by stores which might close as a result of the law—at their regular salaries until they succeed in getting another job.

However, such a proposal as the Patman anti-chain store tax bill (H.R. 1) should not be supported. For this bill is sponsored by the McKesson & Robbins drug corporation and other large corporate interests (though supported by many sections of small business which have been misled by the alleged objectives of the bill). Its exorbitant tax features are designed solely to aid one section of big business against another. Moreover, its provisions in no way safeguard either the interests of small business, labor or the consumers.

Measures can be taken to help the small business man keep in operation, to give him an opportunity to increase his business, to expand and modernize. Just as the small business man benefits by measures primarily directed toward helping workers and farmers, so do the people as a whole benefit from anti-monopoly measures directed primarily toward helping small business.

Action by Congress is necessary in the fields of taxation and credit along the lines indicated in this article. The success of such schemes as W.P.A. purchases of clothing, and Secretary Wallace's stamp-purchase plan also depends on Congress, on the appropriations for W.P.A. and for the

Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation. More substantial progress against monopolies will be possible if Congress doubles the pitiful Anti-Trust Division appropriation. Harry Hopkins' request that Congress appropriate funds for research into small business problems should also be passed, although it is to be hoped that Mr. Hopkins will come forward with some projects having more immediate value.

Finally, no measures will help small business if the people have no money, if their purchasing power is lowered. Reactionary Republican and Tory Democrat proposals to abolish W.P.A. and return relief to the states mean more than a reduction in the federal works program and in retail trade because of lower incomes. They mean among other things, the substitution of doles for cash wages, virtually the complete elimination of the unemployed as customers. If Congress is to help small business, it will vote increased appropriations for W.P.A. and all public works, defeat the Woodrum-Vandenberg scheme for a return to the dole, as well as defeat amendments to the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Such actions are as vital to small business men as specific measures aimed primarily to aid them.

The direction of Congressional action in behalf of small business depends partly—if not considerably—on the small business men themselves. Certainly, no progress will be made if small business men are disorganized and only "represented" by big-business-dominated Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturers Associations, etc. Recent actions of neighborhood business groups supporting the full W.P.A. appropriation indicate the only road that can be successful—independent organization and unity of small business men, acting in cooperation with farmer and labor groups for mutually beneficial legislation. Labor organizations can play an influential role in building such cooperation, by stimulating small business organization, by advancing and supporting progressive measures in the interests of little business men, by establishing a common front of the common people against the reactionary monopolies for national and social security.

IN THE JUNE ISSUE

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A PROGRAM FOR MONOPOLY CONTROL

POLITICS AND W.P.A.

Reaction Attacks the Wages-Hours Act

BY GEORGE MORRIS

In line with their reactionary assault upon the National Labor Relations Act, the National Association of Manufacturers and their spokesman in Congress have been quietly at work to undermine the Fair Labor Standards Act.

This reactionary pressure campaign has already borne fruit in the form of a bill (House Bill 5435 and Senate Bill 2008) to which the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor has unfortunately given its approval.

Although the measure is offered ostensibly to correct defects which have appeared in the administration of the Act, its real purpose is to make concessions to certain employers who have found the Act irksome.

The principal changes which the bill seeks to make are: (1) to deprive all workers who earn more than \$200 a month of the protection of the Act; (2) to permit minimum wages of less than 25 cents an hour to be fixed for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands; (3) to permit processors of agricultural commodities to maintain a twelve-hour day and a fifty-six-hour week; (4) to exempt small telephone exchanges from the provisions of the Act; and (5) to permit employers (with the consent of the Administrator) to give their workers compensatory time off instead of paying them one and a half times their regular wages for overtime.

The effect of these amendments is to continue the policy of business "appeasement" which, it must be stated with regret, Administrator Andrews has been following in administering the Act. As a review of its history will show, this policy has resulted in depriving the workers of a large measure of even the inadequate benefits which it is possible to realize under the Act.

The Act was passed in June, 1938, after more than a year of bitter opposition from a coalition of Republicans and reactionary Democrats, assisted by unprincipled sabotage from a section of the top leadership of the A. F. of L. As a result, it emerged from Congress as a watered-down version of the President's original proposal. When first introduced, it provided for a forty-hour week and a minimum wage of 40 cents an hour, with power in a government board to raise this level to \$1,200 a year. As finally enacted, it sets maximum hours at forty-four for the first year, forty-two for the second and forty for the third. It fixes a 25-cent minimum for the first year, 30 cents for the second and 40 cents only in 1945. Industry committees with equal representation from labor, employers and the public are empowered to recommend, and the Administrator to adopt, minimum wages up to 40 cents an hour for particular industries, "as rapidly as possible without substantially curtailing employment." The Act excludes from its benefits both agricultural labor, the largest single group of low-wage earners, and retail and domestic workers who are not subject to regulation because not engaged in interstate commerce.

Despite its obvious shortcomings, the Act in its final form had the united support of the labor movement. It was this joint support that achieved the passage of the measure. The Act for the first time asserted the important principle that the Federal government has the power and duty to set limits on the exploitation of labor by placing a floor under wages and a ceiling on hours. In addition, although the standards which it fixes are pitifully inadequate, the possibility of immediately realizing a 40-cent minimum in important industries gave promise that the Act might make a contribution toward improving the living conditions and increas-

ing the purchasing power of the lowest-paid workers, and thereby aid the economic recovery of the country.

But if the Act was to be of maximum effectiveness in this direction, it was necessary that steps be taken at once to raise wages to the uppermost limit permitted under it. Although the Act was passed in June, Administrator Andrews did not arrive on the job until late in August. From the moment he took office, he made it his policy to court the "cooperation" of industry by issuing reassuring statements. On certain notable occasions he has resisted employer pressure, as in his refusal to exempt telegraph messengers from the minimum wage and in defining the term "area of production" in such a way as to bring the maximum number of workers in the food industries under the Act. But these instances are notable chiefly for their rarity.

In his interim report submitted to Congress last January, Andrews gave a clear indication of the limits within which he expected industry committees to increase the 25-cent minimum when he wrote: "In view of the design of the statute itself, soundness can well take precedence over haste, because the basic statutory minimum wage will automatically rise to 30 cents per hour on October 24, 1939."

While business was giving what Andrews termed "an appreciative response" to these assurances, the appointment and work of industry committees lagged. When committees were appointed, public and employer representatives were selected unfortunately with an eye to avoid giving offense to industry. Known advocates of high wages were carefully excluded. Public representatives were chosen in large part from employers in other industries, many from the retail and distribution trade—i.e., the customers of the industry for which wages were to be fixed. Some of these so-called "public" representatives turned out to be special pleaders for the section of the industry located in their home territory for which they sought to obtain wage differentials.

As a result of the character of Andrews' appointments and his repeated assurances of moderation, industry committees have moved slowly and those which have proceeded to the point of making wage recommendations have fixed low minimum scales. Although labor representatives on the committees (both A. F. of L. and C.I.O.) have consistently fought for an immediate 40-cent minimum, they have been outvoted by the combination of employer and "public" representatives.

The textile committee (with jurisdiction over cotton, rayon and silk) has recommended a 32½-cent minimum. It is true that mainly as a result of the persistence and firmness of the labor representatives, the committee's recommendation breaks with the harmful N.R.A. practice of recognizing the North-South differential (although a 32½-cent wage will do little toward narrowing it) and avoids the even more dangerous N.R.A. device of establishing a special differential against Negroes through a sub-minimum wage for sweepers and cleaners.

However, when Andrews hailed the 32½-cent recommendation as increasing the wages of 130,000 workers in cotton textiles alone, his statement, although statistically correct, is considerably misleading. For almost half of the cotton textile workers affected are now earning between 30 and 32.4 cents, and for them the new minimum will increase weekly wages from only a few cents to a maximum of a dollar, on the present forty-hour work-week in the industry. The other half, who now earn less than 30 cents an hour, will be entitled to this wage on October 24 when the minimum is automatically increased to that amount without any

industry committee action. Thus, the direct effect of the wage recommendation will be to increase the wages of cotton textile workers by a total of not more than \$100,000 a week over the amount which they will receive after October 24. This increase represents only 2 per cent of the present weekly payroll, and is concentrated almost wholly in the South.

The figures of the Wage and Hour Division itself, which give effect both to the direct increase in wages now below the minimum and to the sympathetic increase which they assume will occur in the higher brackets, show that the total increase in the industry's present wage bill (without giving effect to the 30-cent minimum which goes into force on October 24) will not exceed 4 per cent. This is considerably less than one-half of the amount by which textile wages were decreased when the industry imposed more than a 10 per cent cut last spring and summer. Thus, the recommended minimum will not even begin to restore wages to the 1938 level. It is no wonder that the union representatives on the committee put up a bitter though losing fight for a 40-cent minimum.

The 36-cent minimum recommended by the wool industry committee is even more glaringly inadequate. It will directly affect only 8 per cent of the workers employed in the industry and will result in a negligible increase in the total wage bill. It should be compared with the 42.5-cent minimum which prevailed generally in 1938 before the wage cut. A 40-cent minimum would not have increased the present wage bill of the industry (directly and indirectly) by more than 2 per cent and this increase would have been confined to a few plants, most of them in the South.

Even these wholly inadequate minimum scales have not yet become effective. Further hearings must first be held by the Administrator and a period of notice given to the industry. Appeals to the courts offer the possibility of further delay, and it is becoming clear that we cannot expect an increase in textile minimum scales as a result of industry committee action before the fall. Meanwhile it is well to inquire what has been the effect of the 25-cent minimum wage and the 44-hour week established by the Act itself.

In its interim report to Congress in January, the Wage and Hour Division noted that more than 10,000,000 workers (one-third of all those gainfully employed) are excluded from the protection of the Act because employed in agriculture, retail trade or domestic service. The report notes that a "large proportion" of these earn less than 25 cents an hour. Of the workers covered by the Act, Andrews estimates that only 300,000 (less than 1 per cent of all those gainfully employed) would benefit from the 25-cent minimum if it were full enforced.

Some 40,000 of these reside in Puerto Rico where no real effort has been made to enforce the Act, and where such benefits as have resulted from it have been brought about mainly by strike action of the workers. Yielding to pressure from American corporations with interests in Puerto Rico, who are now seeking to rob the Puerto Rican workers of such victories as they have won, Andrews now proposes amending the Act to exempt them from the 25-cent minimum.

Another 25,000 workers, the report estimates, are home-workers. The Act does not prohibit home-work, and as Andrews points out, it is impossible to enforce the payment of an hourly minimum to them. Although the proposed amendments seek to empower Andrews to "regulate" home-work, they do not (as they should) abolish it entirely.

It is impossible to estimate the extent to which the minimum wage provisions are being enforced as to the remaining 235,000 workers or to determine how many are being underpaid either outright or on the pretext that they are learners or handicapped, or through such devices as raising the rent on company houses, raising the prices in company stores, and the like. It would probably

be a most liberal assumption to suppose that the 25-cent minimum has benefited 200,000 workers. This is a negligible accomplishment when laid alongside the estimate of the National Resources Committee that 1,700,000 clerical and wage-earning families not on relief earn less than \$500 a year.

Andrew's report estimates that 1,300,000 workers were employed in excess of 44 hours a week at the time the Act became effective. Thus the maximum hour provisions theoretically benefit a considerably greater number of workers than those who are helped by the minimum wage. But there is grave doubt as to the extent to which these benefits are being realized in practice in unorganized shops and offices where there is no trade union to police them. The Act requires employers to compensate their workers for overtime at one and a half times their "regular rate of pay." But it does not prohibit them from cutting "regular pay" which is above the minimum to a point where the weekly wage for hours in excess of the maximum is no greater than it was before the Act took effect. A number of employers' associations have urged their members to adopt this device, and there is no doubt that it is widespread. Because the Wage and Hour Division questions the effectiveness of this section of the law, it has not even attempted to enforce the payment of overtime wages, and knowledge of this attitude has undoubtedly encouraged violations. In his proposed amendments, Andrews asks for the power to define "regular rate of pay" in the professed hope that he can thus put teeth in the overtime provisions. But the fact is that the only way in which the maximum hour limitation can be made effective (short of freezing wages at their present level by prohibiting wage cuts for any purpose) is to exact an absolute prohibition on overtime employment except where the existence of collective bargaining agreements insures the enforcement of overtime pay.

This review of the operation of the Act clearly reveals that it needs administration far more vigorous than Andrews has given in the past, and amendments radically different from those which he now proposes. The amendments which are required to strengthen the Act include the following:

1. An immediate increase in the minimum wage from 25 to 40 cents an hour, with power in the Wage and Hour Division (without regard to any industry committee recommendation) to raise the minimum above this level in all industries where higher minima are practical.
2. An immediate reduction in the working week from 44 to 40 hours, with power in the Wage and Hour Division to fix shorter hours for particular industries.
3. An absolute prohibition on hours in excess of 40 a week except where a collective bargaining agreement with a bona fide labor union permits longer hours upon payment of time and a half for overtime.
4. A prohibition against reducing weekly earnings when hours are shortened.
5. The extension of the full benefits of the Act to workers in the food industries and to all agricultural labor.
6. Abolition of home-work.

In the face of the need for the foregoing program which would transform the Act into a powerful instrument for raising the living standards of the workers and increasing the national purchasing power, Andrews has yielded to employer pressure and has proposed amendments which do nothing but weaken the Act by extending further exemptions to employers. Not only are these amendments harmful in themselves, but they indicate an unfortunate readiness to yield to reactionary pressure which will make the Act a target for further attack in committee and on the floor of Congress. Every high-pressure employer lobby in Washington will seize the opportunity offered by these amendments for a field day at the expense of the workers, in line with the Wall Street

drive to amend the National Labor Relations Act out of existence. Thus, if the bill is permitted to be given consideration in its present form, there is every chance that the Act will emerge from Congress completely emasculated.

It is time that the Wages-Hours Administration be firmly told by the unions that its job is not to appease employers but to improve the wages and hours of workers, whether the reactionaries are willing to cooperate graciously in such a program or not.

Farm Tenancy Legislation

BY EDWARD T. ALLEN

After six years of writing and talking about farm tenancy,* the time for realistic action is now at hand, and New Dealers can ill afford to let the "economy bloc" of Southern Bourbons and Republicans again sabotage tenancy legislation. Spokesmen for "economy" like Cotton Ed Smith do not hesitate to bring in \$600,000,000 bills for the benefit of the large cotton planters, who could then evict half a million croppers and tenants. As against such extravagant demands, which are boosted each year and solve nothing, *true economy* for promoting the national welfare surely requires an adequate tenancy program that will cut the ground from under proposals like Cotton Ed's and improve the well-being of impoverished, debt-ridden farm families.

By passing the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act in 1937, Congress, under pressure of the New Dealers, recognized tenancy as a national problem requiring federal action. This step was significant, but the promise implied in the acceptance of this principle is yet to be fulfilled. Many Congressmen have correctly pointed out that the money appropriated for carrying out the Act is "only a drop in the bucket." Last year, \$25,000,000 were appropriated for the purchase of farms under the tenancy program. This sum could cover only 5,000 families out of the total number of 2,865,155 tenant families. For every family rescued from tenancy, 572 are denied aid—and these 572 families cannot be expected to show much gratitude for the New Deal at election time simply because Congress has endorsed tenancy aid in principle.

The present program is so limited that it does not even keep pace with the annual increase in tenancy. For every family rescued from tenancy this year, eight other families are being forced to join the tenantry ranks. Already 58 per cent of the farm land is being operated by tenants, and unless swift and effective action, such as that proposed by Senator Lee's Tenancy Bill, is taken, America will soon become a nation of tenant farmers.

In his Tenancy Bill (S. 1836), Senator Lee has proposed a sorely-needed amendment to the Bankhead-Jones Act. Lee's Bill calls for a marked expansion of tenancy aid and has already been signed by fifty-two Senators. It would enable farmers to become owners on an easy-payment plan with the government insuring the mortgage, both as to principal and as to interest. In its present form, the Lee Bill would allow the government to insure as much as a billion dollars' worth of farm mortgages.

Among the other provisions of the Lee Bill, are:

1. *Amortization*—Forty years allowed.
2. *Interest charges*—3 per cent maximum.
3. *Down payment*—None.
4. *Approval*—Farm Security Administration County Com-

* "The Commission records with dismay its belief that the survival of independent farming by farmers who own their own farms and maintain an American standard of living is in jeopardy." *Federal Trade Commission* in its study of the food trusts, *Agricultural Income Inquiry, 1937*.

Andrews should be urged to request the withdrawal of his proposed amendments and the substitution of a bill of the kind outlined above. Chairman Thomas of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor and Chairman Mary Norton of the House Labor Committee should be informed of labor's opposition to the Andrews proposal and told that until a bill putting real teeth in the Act is introduced with administration support, no amendments should be considered or reported out by their committees.

mittees to pass on all farms and their purchase price.

5. *Eligibility*—Any farm laborer, tenant or sharecropper whose major income has come from farming operations.

These provisions incorporate the recommendations worked out by the President's Committee on Tenancy in 1937. However, moves are already being discussed for changing the Lee Bill, and most of the changes being proposed are unfortunately for the worse. One change being vigorously pushed is to insert Section 5 (A) of Senator Bankhead's amendment (S. 1365) to his own Tenancy Act.

Substitution of Bankhead's amendment for Lee's billion-dollar insurance plan would afford tenancy aid amounting to only \$50,000,000 next year, enough to cover less than 10,000 tenant families.

This is the same sum originally promised for the next fiscal year (1939-40), by the present Bankhead-Jones Act but cut in half by the Treasury in drawing up the current budget. Section 5 (A) proposes a graduated increase in the tenancy program, starting with \$50,000,000 the first year and rising to \$350,000,000 by 1944, but of course the trouble with such long-range promises is that they are all too frequently ignored. The promise of action in the future is no adequate substitute for a meaningful appropriation for the coming year.

As against the insurance principle, the Bankhead amendment calls for outright purchase of land by the Federal government and direct sale to the purchaser. The advantage of the insurance method is that the government is not required to advance any money; it simply guarantees payment to the mortgage holder and is not required to make any payments unless the buyer fails to meet his obligations. With the insurance method, a larger volume of financing would be possible on a smaller amount of Federal money. If, however, the lending agencies persist in their campaign to raise the interest rate provided in Lee's Bill from 3 per cent to 4 per cent or even higher, it may be necessary for Congress to substitute the direct purchase plan, financed by the issuance of bonds. There is absolutely no reason why holders of insured mortgages should be paid a higher rate of interest than holders of U. S. bonds. And, despite the claims of some legislators, there is no possible justification for making these bonds tax-exempt. The Treasury has repeatedly pointed out that such bond issues need not be made tax-exempt in order to find purchasers at current interest rates.

Two additions should be made to strengthen the Lee Bill:

1. In order to safeguard the rights of Negro croppers and tenants, a provision such as that in the Harrison-Thomas-Larabee Education Bill (S. 1305) should be included to assure the equitable distribution of funds.

2. Priority of aid should be given on the basis of need; the present Bankhead-Jones Act is so phrased that preference is

given to the tenants most likely to succeed, which in actual practice becomes those having the best economic status and least in need of immediate rescue.

While some Congressmen are worried lest a large tenancy program result in a spree of land speculation, it should be pointed out that even a billion-dollar program would amount to only one-thirty-sixth of the present value of farm lands and buildings. Effective, vigilant action on the part of the appraisers and county committees, and above all by the organized action of the tenants, sharecroppers and working farmers, is the best safeguard against speculation and inflated land values. Legislation alone cannot prevent such practices; these must be dealt with by the agency administering the Act and by the organizations of the tenants.

Farm families are, at present, excluded from the benefits of the social security program, yet so great is the insecurity of farm tenants that their average occupancy per farm is less than two years. The adoption of an adequate tenancy program would be one of the most effective means of extending security to the tenant farmers. By protecting the security of our farm families, we can do much to lay a firm foundation for our national security and social welfare.

Anti-Lynching

The Wagner-Van Nuys-Gavagan anti-lynching bill has been placed "on ice" in the House Rules Committee and it is the strategy of the reactionary Republicans and tory anti-New Deal Democrats to keep it there.

In the February issue of this magazine we warned that: "The Senate mouthpieces of the Southern monopolists already threaten another filibuster to hold up all work of Congress in an attempt to kill the Wagner Anti-Lynch Bill."

The House mouthpieces of Southern bourbonism evidently hope to cap the infamous Senate filibuster of the 75th Congress by killing the bill in Committee and not allow it onto the House floor at all.

Representative Gavagan has obtained, to date, only 82 of the 218 signatures from House members necessary to bring the bill to the floor by petition.

Emboldened by the successful maneuver of the reactionaries to heads off favorable action until now on the anti-lynching bill, the instigators of lynch terror have struck with renewed force in the last months. Five men (four Negro, one white) have been lynched during the four months of this year, while two other Negroes have been severely flogged by lynching parties. Compare this record in the first four months of this year with that of eight lynchings in the whole of 1938 (admittedly kept down by the pending debate on the Wagner anti-lynching measure in the 75th Congress).

The people want lynching stamped out by law. This is evidenced, in part, by the introduction of anti-lynching bills by some twenty Congressmen during the first two weeks in Congress. The Southern reactionary interests are deliberately ignoring the will of the people when they act to head off immediate action upon these bills—particularly the Wagner-Gavagan bill. Congressmen should be written to by all progressive Americans and demands made that these representatives sign the petition to bring the Wagner-Gavagan anti-lynching bill from Committee onto the House floor.

Meanwhile the labor and progressive movements should bring public pressure upon the House of Representatives to enact, by Congressional resolution, an investigation into such violations of the constitutional rights of the Negroes and other Americans as exemplified by the five lynchings and two floggings which took

place within the last four months. Such an investigation would bring before the attention of Congress and the nation as a whole the facts and conditions that give rise to such crimes which, so far have, in the main, gone unpunished.

But this alone is not enough. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, particularly through its newly established Civil Liberties Bureau, should be instructed to investigate and proceed immediately with prosecution measures against the instigators and perpetrators of lynching and other constitutional violations.

Civil Liberties

The following article by A. F. Whitney, President of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, appeared in the May issue of The Railroad Trainman:

If Congress is really bent on doing some "emasculating" during the present session, let it cease sniping at the National Labor Relations Act and train its guns instead on the labor spy racket and the aggressions of the industrial barons who hire armies of strikebreakers and gun-toters to wage war on organized labor.

"Emasculate" the arsenals of Tom Girdler, and the cause of industrial peace will be furthered.

After two years of intensive investigation, during which there were 98 days of public hearings with 485 witnesses examined and 18,000,000 words of testimony and exhibits received, the Senate Civil Liberties Committee, composed of Senator Robert M. LaFollette, chairman, and Senator Elbert D. Thomas, has introduced a bill (S. 1970) calculated to strike a mortal blow at the private armies of professional labor spies and strikebreakers employed by big business to curb the growth of unionism and the extension of collective bargaining. The bill is entitled the "Oppressive Labor Practices Act of 1939."

It forbids employers to engage in four "oppressive labor practices":

1. To employ or utilize labor spies.
2. To employ or utilize any strikebreaker or strikebreaking agency.
3. To employ private guards armed with guns or other dangerous weapons off company property, or to employ as guards men who have been convicted of violent crimes.
4. To possess or utilize industrial munitions in or about any place of employment, or to furnish industrial munitions to any person or to any law enforcement officer or agency of any state or political subdivision thereof . . . in connection with any industrial dispute.

The penalty for each violation shall be a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment of not more than six months, or both.

Now that the LaFollette Committee has "put the finger" on the vicious practices of labor-hating employers, it is high time that organized labor in America, together with the progressive groups of citizens throughout the land who are vitally concerned with the problem of protecting our civil liberties, took a bold stand against the fascist forces now plotting the destruction of collective bargaining. Unless Capitol Hill has completely surrendered to Wall Street, the United States Congress, with a little prodding on our part, cannot fail to act favorably on the LaFollette Bill, S. 1970.

The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen urges all other labor unions and all friends of labor to work energetically for the passage of this measure before the end of the present session of Congress. There can be no compromise with those who abridge our civil liberties.

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR AND DIGEST

May, 1939

FOREIGN POLICY

The hearings on "neutrality" legislation in both Houses of Congress are now in process. President Roosevelt's historic cable to the aggressors proved that to name them and lay the responsibility of war on their shoulders is to act for peace. Most experts have testified in the hearings that a foreign policy based on distinction between aggressors and their victims is not, as the isolationists charge, "an act of war." On the contrary, followed by economic penalties against the aggressors and aid to their victims, such a policy is one of the best guarantees of peace. President Roosevelt's challenge has enormously strengthened the peace forces both in and out of Congress. It must be followed by public pressure on Congress in order to assure that the principles he voiced become the law of our land. The only partially effective amendment so far introduced is that submitted by Senator Elbert Thomas for distinguishing between aggressor and victim.

The Conference of One Hundred, held in Washington on April 15 and 16, initiated a real mobilization for repeal or basic amendment of "neutrality" legislation. It promised to co-ordinate and unite all peace groups around the American Union for Concerted Peace Efforts. This organization has sponsored National Security Week, April 24 to May 1. The actions in your community during this week should become the springboard for building and broadening the American Union in your city, state and region. They should carry forward in letters and telegrams to Congress the movement to repeal or drastically amend the "neutrality law"—until it no longer cripples our foreign policy.

Congressman Coffey of Washington has introduced a bill (H.R. 5432) to embargo all trade and commerce with Japan. This bill is now being considered by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Write the Committee, expressing fullest support for this bill.

The grim censorship on all news leaving Spain cannot keep from the American people the dangerous consequences of the recognition by the United States of Franco. Even the President's magnificent challenge to Hitler and Mussolini cannot wipe out this stain on America's foreign policy. Under the fascist slogan of "political responsibility" Franco and the agents of Hitler and Mussolini are murdering the best and bravest defenders of world democracy. Our guilt is heavy, our responsibility great. Write

IN THE JUNE ISSUE

AFTER THE PRESIDENT'S
PEACE MESSAGE

President Roosevelt and the State Department urging that the United States intervene to stop these fascist massacres in Spain, extend to Spanish refugees the right of asylum in the United States and give them means of escape to other countries which have opened their frontiers.

Introduced in the Senate and the House under a variety of numbers, the so-called War Profits Bill is a smokescreen for the policy of national suicide by "isolation." Many honest progressives have lent their names to this crafty bill because they subscribed to its avowed purpose of taking the profits out of war. But—the real sponsors of the bill, like Vandenberg, Taft, Nye and Clark, have not changed their spots. Are these gentlemen sudden converts to ostensibly confiscatory legislation? Are these gentlemen robbing the pockets of their backers, the big monopolists and the munitions kings? Of course not! They show their hand by claiming that the bill is a "peace" bill because it will keep us out of war by making war "unpopular." Thus they seek to divert the vigilance of the people from the real war danger—from the fascist aggressors—and from the struggle to repeal or amend the "neutrality" act. Write your own Senator and Congressman, telling them you see through the war-profits trick. Say these are the ways drastically to curb war profiteering: government ownership of the munitions and armaments industry; full protection of the rights of labor in war industries working under government contract; higher wages and shorter hours in all industry; higher taxes on corporate surpluses, undistributed profits and incomes over \$25,000; legislation to curb all monopolies.

LAFOLLETTE COMMITTEE

Senators LaFollette and Thomas of Utah have introduced a bill (S. 1970), the Oppressive Labor Practices Act, to curb the use of spies and strikebreakers exposed by the Senate Civil Liberties Committee. Passage of this bill is vital to the protection of labor's fundamental rights. Write Senator Elbert Thomas, Chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, and your own Senator.

Senator Schwellenbach, it is reported, will introduce a resolution asking for funds to continue the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee. The focal point for an intensified campaign is Senator Byrnes, whose committee holds the purse strings. Western labor, threatened by the fascist Associated Farmers, should speak up. All progressives have a stake in democracy and should guarantee it by writing Senator Byrnes and their own Senator. And—just for a change—why not orchids to Senator Schwellenbach, the Oliver Twist who has courage to ask for more?

HOME OWNERS

A pilgrimage to Washington of 500 small home owners this month dramatized the need for extending and liberalizing the Home Owners' Loan Corporation. The homeowners urged that Congress approve a lowering of interest rates to 3 per cent, a two-year stoppage of all principal payments, and the extension of time allowed for amortization to thirty years. Support S. 2098, introduced by Senator Wagner, with appropriate amendments. Write your own Senator.

(Continued on next page)

CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR AND DIGEST

May, 1939

(Continued from page 23)

RELIEF AND W.P.A.

Authorized to investigate relief needs and administration and how the W.P.A. was operating, the sub-committee of the House Appropriations Committee has ignored its mission and instead launched a witch-hunt against the Workers Alliance, as part of its preparations to slash the 1940 W.P.A. appropriation. The inquisition of the Alliance leaders was followed by a proposal in *The New York Times*, supposedly emanating from an anonymous member of the Committee, to compel the W.P.A. to refuse to recognize the Alliance any longer, and if the W.P.A. persisted in dealing with the elected representatives of the unemployed, to break the Alliance by denying relief to any of its members. This attack on the right of the unemployed to elect leaders of their own choosing—and without the approval of the “economy” bloc—is aimed clearly at drastically curtailing essential relief appropriations and at breaking up the struggle for jobs and recovery generally.

The proposal also carried with it a threat against the right of labor unions to function democratically and to be recognized for collective bargaining. The attack of the Alliance brought an immediate response from W.P.A. Administrator Harrington, who declared that he did not consider the Alliance a “subversive” organization and would continue to recognize it for collective bargaining purposes. “It speaks for its membership as far as I’m concerned,” Harrington declared.

Republican leader McNary has come out openly for a program of turning relief back to the states. But the most serious danger at the moment comes from the Democratic side of the Senate in the form of the Byrnes Bill (see April issue). Protest against the Byrnes Bill, S. 1265. Demand now that W.P.A. be improved and extended, not crippled, and that Congress appropriate enough funds to give every able-bodied American a job or adequate relief. *Support as a minimum the proposal of the Workers Alliance for a \$2,750,000,000 W.P.A. appropriation for the fiscal year 1940, which would provide three million jobs at 20 per cent wage increase over present W.P.A. rates.*

WAGES-HOURS

The Fair Labor Standards Act has been in force less than six months and already some twenty-five bills have been introduced to amend the law, itself a retreat from the measure originally proposed.

Most of these amendments continue the campaign waged against any legislation of this kind at the time the Fair Labor Standards Act was passed. Instead of plugging up the present loopholes for evasion, these proposals would create new ones.

The Thomas-Norton amendments (S. 2008 and H.R. 5434) are receiving the most serious consideration, because unfortunately they have the support of Administrator Andrews. And the House and Senate Labor Committees are considering them in secret sessions. Write Senator Thomas and Representative Norton demanding open hearings with full opportunity for the unions to express their views. Oppose amendment of the wages-hours law at this session of Congress.

WAGNER ACT

Senator Wagner opened the Senate hearing on proposals to amend the Wagner Act with a splendid defense of the Act’s accomplishments. He denied that it needs amendment, but expressed an open mind on the question of extending to employers the right to petition for elections in case of jurisdictional dispute. This change could be made in the present discretion of the Board, and without legislative action. But this change, which might open the way for the most dangerous practices, can be avoided if labor unitedly opposes it, and if labor establishes trade union unity.

Three reactionary members of Congress—Senators Burke and Holman and Representative Clare Hoffman—attacked the Act, the Board and labor, while testifying for their own bills to murder the Act.

It was significant that neither Senator Walsh nor Senator Logan dared to appear on behalf of the bills they introduced. Senator Walsh will let the A. F. of L.’s “Council of Capitulation” speak in its own name for the bill he introduced at their request. And for Senator Logan the ball will be carried by the Associated Farmers, certain Farm Bureau leaders, and the trustified farmers who alone would profit by his amendment exempting workers in the cannery and other processing industries from the provisions of the present law.

In speaking against proposed amendments, Chairman Madden did a fine job. He exposed the National Association of Manufacturers responsibility for the Burke amendments. And he showed how the Walsh amendments would hurt all labor.

Pressure against any and all amendments must continue as long as Congress is in session. And the key to victory is unity in the labor movement. Build labor unity in your own community! Work for unity on a national scale!

KEEP FIGHTING FOR THESE

“Sixty Dollars After Sixty.” See April issue. Write the House Ways and Means Committee.

Housing, S. 591. Senator Thomas and your own Senator.

Health, S. 1620. Senator Wagner and your own Senator.

Anti-Lynching, S. 845. Wagner, Van Nuys and your own Senator.

Education, S. 1305. Thomas of Utah.

Farm, S. 1098. Representative Jones.

Refugees, S. J. Res. 64. Senator Wagner.

KEEP THESE ON YOUR BLACK LIST

Anti-Alien. There are about 90 of these. See article in this issue by Peggy Duane.

Isolation, S. 203 and S.J. Res. 19, King; H.J. Res. 3 and H.J. Res. 89, Ludlow; S.J. Res. 71 and S.J. Res. 23, Nye. When you write your own Senator or Congressman urging repeal or revision of the neutrality act, put these on his black list.