

LABOR NEEDS ITS OWN OFFENSIVE!

The St. Louis Star-Times Lays a Rotten Egg:

Will a Frameup Whitewash a Lynching?

By MAX SHACHTMAN
National Secretary of the Workers Party

The lynching of the Negro, Cleo Wright, in Sikeston, Mo., last January 5 sent a shudder of horror and indignation through every person, black or white, whose brain is not rotten with the poison of Jim Crow thinking.

It caused the authorities a two-fold embarrassment:

First, it once more reminded the 15,000,000 Negroes in the United States of just what American "democracy" means for them, which doesn't fit in well with the appeal the government is making to the Negro people to "support and sacrifice for the war effort." That's for the Negro people in general.

Secondly, for the thousands of Negro sharecroppers and day laborers in the seven cotton counties of southeast Missouri, in which the lynching took place,

the mob-murder of Cleo Wright has only served to strengthen their determination to organize and fight against the kind of "democracy" that means a wage of \$1.25 a day working from sun-up to sun-down. And this worries even the thick-headed planters down there, especially as the crucial cotton chopping period which begins in May, comes closer and closer.

To overcome their embarrassment, a special grand jury has been empanelled in Scott County, Mo.—the first grand jury called in this county in five years—to investigate the lynching. It's all very legal and very dignified and very impressive. And Circuit Court Judge McDowell has already solemnly charged the jury to "follow the facts. If a man violates the law, it is your duty to indict him and uphold the dignity of the law. Do not be prejudiced against the good Negroes of the county because other people are trying to stir up race riots."

The judge has to admonish the jury not to be prejudiced against "the good Negroes." That he finds this admonition necessary is sufficiently indicative of who is on this grand jury and what it intends to do. (See story on page 1). The judge did not find it necessary to warn the jury not to be prejudiced against lynchings.

Why not?

Because, nine times out of ten, the juries in such cases in our lynch-law South are saturated to their ears with "prejudice" . . . in favor of the lynch mob. Because, nine times out of ten in such cases, the "investigation" is a brutal farce aimed at covering up the criminals, aimed at covering even their identity, which is usually a matter of common knowledge.

Now, this is precisely the case in the Sikeston lynching. The names of the lynch-mob leaders are fairly well known in and around Sikeston. A couple

(Continued on page 4)

Labor Must Protect 40-Hour Week and the Closed Shop!

In an orgy of venomous speeches, Congress last week continued the anti-labor offensive that has recently been unleashed by the capitalist class and its representatives by preparing to pass a bill which would abolish the 40-hour week and time and a half for overtime, as well as outlawing the closed shop.

This attack on the workers of America came at a time when there was hardly a strike in the country and when the workers were hog-tied by the no-strike agreement signed by the leaders of the AFL and CIO. But the anti-labor congressmen, who, though they have declared war on Germany, are determined to fight it against the American workers, continued their attacks on the labor movement with unprecedented fury and venom.

It was a lesson for every American workingman. Here Green and Murray had signed away labor's most powerful weapon—the right to strike; here the leaders of labor were doing practically nothing to get any wage increases to meet the rising cost of living; and yet Congress and the bosses were out to shackle labor with a new version of the Smith Slave Labor Bill. It was a lesson which proved once and for all that if labor is to improve its conditions, even if it is to maintain its present conditions, it cannot give up the fight against the bosses and their stooges. It must continue militant action, otherwise it is doomed to defeat.

Memo to Phil Murray

Phillip Murray,
CIO President,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir and Brother:

What's happened to our demands for a dollar-a-day increase and the union shop?

Are we just getting the royal run-around from the War Labor Board, and what are you going to do about it?

Do 175,000 of us in the "Little Steel" plants have to stand idly by while Bethlehem and the others keep reaping in the war profits, and we can't meet our bills?

You told us in a radio speech to produce, produce and produce! HOW ABOUT PRODUCING A LITTLE YOURSELF, BROTHER MURRAY?

A Steel Worker.

LABOR ACTION Distributors Freed In New Jersey

An attempt to railroad two LABOR ACTION distributors at Elizabeth, N. J., for one month in jail was smashed after twelve days of incessant pressure on the local cops and the judiciary by various organizations.

The distributors, John Petrelli and Jack Scott, were seized near the Phelps-Dodge plant and booked on "suspicious character" charges.

Without enabling the two victims to obtain proper legal counsel and without a real trial, a local judge ordered them held for 30 days.

When assistance from the American Civil Liberties Union and the Workers Defense League brought legal counsel, the judge and the cops stalled around, and it took four days' additional time to get a court record which indicated that the judge had sentenced them for "disorderly conduct," although the distributors had not been made cog-

(Continued on page 3)

Ominous Addition

And then, in his press conference, President Roosevelt ominously added: Yes, there may be a need for anti-strike and anti-labor legislation later on (if labor gets a little tough) but not right now. We have Hillman and Green and Murray dancing to our tune right now.

In Congress, the anti-labor blast was ignited by the sudden heavy anti-labor mail which was being received by certain Oklahoma congressmen. Presumably, over 40,000 letters came in from "Oklahoma citizens" against the 40-hour week. Most of them were obviously the result of anti-labor pressure groups, since they were printed form letters and many didn't even have signatures. Also, many of those who sent the letters were under the misimpression caused by lying newspaper propaganda—that the present law prohibits working over 40 hours a week, while in reality it merely makes payment of time and a half mandatory.

Nor did anyone take seriously the

(Continued on page 4)

Sales Tax May Be Added To Workers' Tax Burdens

Despite the fact that the original Treasury proposals of Secretary Morgenthau for a new tax bill would strike a terrific blow at the nation's poor—those least able to pay—it appears from the latest Washington reports that the Senate Finance Committee is seriously considering placing a general sales tax as part of the new tax program.

This would, of course, hit even more seriously at the workers, since a sales tax hits the poor four times as hard as it does the rich, according to a Treasury Department estimate.

The amenability of the Senate Finance Committee toward the sales tax proposal came after the bosses of the country, through the National Association of Manufacturers, issued a statement calling for a decrease in corporation taxes and for a general sales tax of 8 per cent instead.

The NAM proposal was so downright reactionary that it is unlikely that many congressmen—facing the prospect of re-election—will vote for it as it stands. What now appears

likely is that the Senate Finance Committee will bring in a tax bill somewhere in between the Morgenthau proposals and the NAM proposals. Which means that the workers will pay through the nose—until it bleeds!

Morgenthau's Proposals

The Morgenthau proposals suggested increasing corporation taxes by three billion dollars, increasing social security taxes by two billion and increasing excise taxes (mostly on essential products which workers have to buy) by one and a third billion. Also, Morgenthau suggested sharp income tax increases. Most of these cases, as can readily be seen, hit at the workers' pocketbooks. The NAM proposals hit at those pocketbooks even harder. And the Senate Finance Committee's bill is going to hit somewhere between very hard—and even harder!

Yet all the necessary funds could be raised—as LABOR ACTION has shown in the past few weeks—by placing taxes on those who can afford to pay: the rich capitalists. If, for instance, only two or three of the tax proposals in LABOR ACTION's tax program were put into effect, the taxes on the poor would not have to be increased by a nickel.

Ceylon Trotskyists Are Outlawed by British

The British appointed Governor-General of the Crown Colony of Ceylon has by dictatorial decree—without consulting the democratically elected State Council—dissolved the largest and most popular people's party of the country, the Lanka Sama Samaj Party.

Along with the dissolution of this party he outlawed the so-called United Socialist Party—the small group of Stalinists whose full-hearted support of the war did not prevent them from receiving the same rough treatment.

The Lanka Sama Samaj Party—a revolutionary socialist organization supporting the principles of Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International—has participated since its birth in 1935 in a struggle for full national independence for the 6,000,000 people of the island. No reason is given by foreign Dictator-Governor Caldecott for the arbitrary outlawing of this socialist organization, but it is not difficult to guess.

The imperialists of Great Britain, struggling desperately to preserve what remains of their empire, are anxious to fight the Japanese—but with their own methods. Just as the Japanese militarists cannot tolerate democratic movements on the part of the people but must ruthlessly suppress them, so the British too attempt to destroy those organizations of the colonial people that are leading the fight for national freedom.

The British will undoubtedly claim that they passed this decree for the sake of insuring a "unified" defense of the island against the approaching Japanese. Nothing is more remote from the truth because the Lanka Sama Samaj Party represented the will of the people of Ceylon, who were EQUALLY opposed to British and Japanese (or any foreign) rule. This fascist-like act will only arouse the fury of the masses and serve as further proof of the hypocritical nature of United Na-

tions democracy. In actuality, the Lanka Sama Samaj Party has been illegal ever since the war began. The Governor's decree only makes "legal" what has actually existed in reality. Several of the party's leaders are just completing two years—without charges or trial—in a British jail on the island. The party has been slandered, hunted down and persecuted without end by the British police and secret service. But British tyranny has failed till now to daunt the courageous leadership furnished by the

British Rule In India

Reuter's News Agency reports from Madras, India, that eight people were killed and 21 seriously injured when police opened fire on workers during labor disputes at two textile mills last week.

party and we doubt that any decree by a reactionary Governor will affect its influence among the workers and poor people of the island. The party will keep alive and keep up its struggle because it represents the will and desires of the people of Ceylon—freedom from all forms of foreign imperialist rule; the right of democratic self-government for the people.

We print below some extracts from a recent manifesto to the Ceylonese people issued by the party. This makes it crystal clear that this nationalist and socialist organization stands opposed to Japanese imperialism, as well as present British imperialist rule.

LABOR'S OWN OFFENSIVE!



Grand Jury Covers Up The Sikeston Lynchers

ST. LOUIS, Mar. 17—The grand jury of Scott County, after a farcical investigation which lasted 10 hours, has returned a "no bill"—that is, a decision not to further investigate—on the Cleo Wright lynching which took place in Sikeston on January 25.

The only comment forthcoming from the jury was the hope that "this would put an end to discussion and agitation about the Sikeston business."

The Scott County grand jury was composed of white business men and it was expected that they would drop the whole matter like a hot potato. It appears now that so far as the governmental authorities of "law and order" are concerned, nothing will be done to further investigate the matter.

In Sikeston itself, everyone knows who the lynchers were. Only, on the part of the business elements that participated in the lynching, there is a compact to keep quiet for purposes of mutual protection and among the Negroes there is a justifiable fear that if they talk they are liable to meet a fate similar to Cleo Wright's on some dark night.

That the lynch leaders are known can be seen by quoting from a special dispatch which appeared in LABOR ACTION of February 9. This dispatch said:

"And who led the lynch mob?"

Were they wild men, ignorant and uneducated? Some of the participants undoubtedly were, but the leaders were among the most 'respectable' business men and middle class citizens in town.

"Among the prominent citizens of Sikeston seen in the lynch mob and alleged to be the actual leaders by various persons in Sikeston afraid to speak openly, were Patrolman Dace, driver of state highway car No. 84.

"The man at the wheel of the car that dragged the victim's body was Joe Rimes, a druggist, according to these same sources.

"Lon Noll was identified by our informants as the man who lit the victim's gasoline soaked body. An

Retail Prices Go Up 18%

The average housewife paid 63 per cent more for potatoes in January, 1942, than she did in January, 1941, the Agricultural Department said last week in reporting on 18 per cent rise in retail food costs in that period.

Fork products, including lard, were up 5 per cent, dairy products 1 per cent, flour 4 per cent, rice 9 per cent and potatoes 15 per cent above December, 1941 levels, indicating a continued rise.

other prominent person seen in the third car of the gruesome 'parade' was identified as Pete Medley, a theater owner.

"Obviously the names of many more participants in this horrible outrage are known to others in the mob and to those who watched or were terrorized by the lynching."

When the issue of LABOR ACTION, dated February 9, which carried the article in which the quoted paragraphs appeared, it created a sensation in Sikeston. It was rapidly gobbled up by the Negro section of the town and created an equal sensation among the "leading citizens," some of whom were named as participating in the lynching. A conclave of these "leading citizens" was held to discuss what to do now that the beans had been spilled by LABOR ACTION's correspondent on the character of the lynch mob.

These facts only accentuate the legal farce that has just now been played in Scott County. Everyone in Sikeston knows who the lynchers are. It is a commentary on "justice" in the South when the Scott County grand jury dares return a "no bill."

And it underscores once more the need for effective, militant union organization if the Negro and white workers and sharecroppers of Missouri are to win their rights and liberties.

Ceylon Trotskyists Say:

We Support Neither Side Of the Imperialist War!

(We print below a manifesto issued by the Lanka Sama Samaj Party, the Trotskyist organization of Ceylon, issued to the workers of Ceylon. This manifesto exposes in burning words the fraudulent slanders which the British imperialists have spread about the character of the revolutionary movement of Ceylon. As our readers will observe, this manifesto has more than local significance—Editor.)

Nobody needs to be told today that the war between British imperialism on the one side and fascist Germany, Italy and Japan on the other side is an imperialist war whose object is the redistribution of colonies.

To pay for this war the imperialists resort to ruthlessly increased exploitation and taxation in the colonies. The signal for this rule of terror in Ceylon has been given by the arrest of our leaders—by which act the imperialists hope to stifle the inevitable protest of the toiling masses against their intolerable burdens. While they bleed the colonies dry to pay for their war, the British imperialists cynically ask the colonial peoples themselves to throw in voluntarily their weight with their rulers and thus perpetuate their slavery. . . .

The British government . . . regales us with propaganda about fascist brutality. Yet it was the British government that backed Hitler against the German workers and against the Spanish, Austrian and Czecho-Slovakian workers as well. But German brutality is not unequalled. Brutal oppression

(Continued on page 2)

Europe in Revolt

News from the Socialist Third Camp

SOME LESSONS OF THE RIOM TRIALS

Since the fall of France, the American boss press has never stopped shouting that this fall was due primarily to the "greed of labor." The press steadily insisted that the strikes, the 40-hour week and other social benefits enjoyed by French labor after the general strike of 1936 were responsible for the fall in production which eventually led to the military defeat of France.

Now for the first time some first-hand data has been made available on this question by the very men who were responsible for the French governmental policies during those crucial years. This information is of the utmost importance to the American working class not only because it leads to a clearer understanding of the events in France but even more so because it shows that what happened in France is today being repeated in America. The testimony of the Riom defendants reveals that the chief reason why the production program of France was hampered was the resistance of the big capitalist monopolies, the profiteering and greed of the big armament manufacturers.

Daladier and his co-accused point out that they were continually hampered by the resistance of the armament firms which did not want to expand their facilities of production because they feared that after the war they might either lose these facilities or be unable to utilize them profitably. Again and again the accused declare that they were unable to impose their will on the big manufacturers, who were unwilling to abandon their big profits. They point out that even the timid step toward nationalization of war production after 1936 was completely unsuccessful because of the outright sabotage of the big concerns. Almost unbelievable stories about this sabotage are told, stories about how one big firm secretly stored at night all its documents and plans for war production so that the government might not get hold of them, how another firm surrounded part of its property with high stone walls in order that no communication would be possible with another part of the same company's properties, which had been seized by the government. They told how the Renault Tank Works charged prohibitive prices for its tanks to the government, only to lower its price considerably when a competitor entered the market. They told how another big armament concern approached the Stalin government, asking it to intervene with Blum so that he would adopt a policy more favorable to the claims of the munition makers. Every attempt of the Popular Front to step up the armament production program—in the interests of French capitalism as a whole—was hampered by the profiteering of the big trusts and their resistance to any attempt of the government to interfere in their private business domain.

WHO WANTED THE DEFEAT?

Of course, it is ridiculous to believe that these big bosses wanted Hitler to win against France; they were not at all willing to surrender their claim for independent imperialist domination.

In order for a capitalist government to fight an imperialist war effectively, it finds it necessary, from its reactionary point of view, to organize its production machine and civil life along totalitarian lines. But the internal disunity within the French capitalist class made such organization impossible.

The Popular Front government, trying to appease the militant working class with sops while maintaining the basic capitalist system (Blum even boasted that he had been instrumental in preserving capitalism in France!) worked under the fatal delusion that under imperialism it is possible to wage totalitarian war while having both guns and butter, as well as increased production. But the whole history of recent years has shown that, under imperialism war, when you try to have guns and butter, you have neither guns nor butter—nor trade unions.

A war against the powerful totalitarian fascist states can be waged in two ways only. Either cannons without butter, totalitarian economy and tremendously lowered standards of living for the masses; or abandonment of all compromising with the bosses and the creation of a workers' government. There is no middle road. Failure to see this—or lack of desire to see it—was the reason for the defeat of Popular Frontism. Blum could neither effectively organize capitalist totalitarian war, nor unleash the tremendous potential energies of a free workers' government. That is why he failed.

The lesson of the Riom trial is that it is suicide for the working class to believe that there is a possibility of reaching an agreement with capitalism on the basis of "defense against common foes." The road of class collaboration is the road of defeat for the workers.

France did not fall because of "labor's greed." France fell because it was demoralized and disorganized by a situation wherein the proletariat was in a position to seize power and organize a revolutionary crusade against internal and external fascism, but failed to do so because of the Popular Frontist treachery of its reformist leadership.

Europaeus.

Chicago Crane Worker Discusses Case for Union Organization

By JIM LAMBERT

CHICAGO—Some of the workers at the Crane Company here believe that the UAW-CIO will never organize the shop. Their reasons are many, among which... "the company is too slick," "there are too many stooges here," "you can't strike now." Those obstacles are undoubtedly real, nevertheless they can be overcome.

Of course, the company is slick. It hires stooges to mingle among the workers and spread disunity in their ranks. It gives an occasional wage increase, never really enough, as a sop to keep the workers from organizing for real wage increases. It has foisted an oily system of paternalism upon the workers. Above all, the Crane Company, like all the other bosses, uses the war, first to make tremendous profits and then, in order to hold on to those profits, tries to keep the workers unorganized.

Whenever the subject of stooges is brought up, one immediately thinks of Henry Ford. Ford really had the stooge system down pat. He made a practice of keeping one stooge for every fifteen men. The stooges worked with the other men, like any ordinary worker. But besides their regular wages, they were paid extra for squealing on the other workers.

With a set-up like that it seemed that the men would never be able to organize in a thousand years. Yet the Ford workers cracked Ford's system wide open. Today they have a real functioning union.

Last fall when the Crane workers were moving fast toward a union organization, the company, as fast as lightning, sprang an eight cent per hour raise. Then the stooges started chanting "the company is making money, they want to share it so we don't need a union." That was to some extent effective in fighting the union. For the workers naturally became a little confused.

However, when one stops to think about it, you realize that the company is in business to make money. Therefore, when it pays out money it expects a return on its investment. When the company gave an eight cent raise it did so in order to keep the union away from the door, because it knew that if the plant were

unionized, then it would have to shell out some real raises and improvements in working conditions. And from Crane's point of view it was a worthwhile investment.

But still the company wasn't satisfied. Fighting unions costs money... of course not as much as it would if there were a union, but at any rate it costs a little money. So wouldn't it be much better to let somebody else pay the cost?

Of course! And wouldn't the worker be the logical sucker? Again, of course! So the company cut the piece work rates 50 per cent, thus nullifying the raise it previously gave.

A few workers are inclined to think that the unions should refrain from organizing during the war. Those workers don't go deep enough into the problem. If we consider that workers organize into a union in order to protect their living standards, then we must conclude that war conditions greatly increase the need for unions. The reason is obvious. War, for the workers, means high prices for food and clothing. If the wages of the workmen remain stationary it means that they can't buy as much as before, hence the decline in their standard of living. Well, then, if the both ends meet, there is only one working people are going to make thing they can do. ORGANIZE!

MAKE THE BOSS PAY FOR EVERY INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING!

Family Food Bill Up 25% Since War

WASHINGTON—The food bill of the average family has risen 25 per cent since the war began, according to a report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. How sharp the rate of increase is at present can be seen from the fact that the food bill of the average family rose 0.5 per cent from January 15 to February 15.

Most of these increases, according to the report, took place in the vital foods which form the majority of a family's food budget: meats, potatoes, bread, milk, vegetables, etc.

Gene Debs Speaks on Labor Organization During Wartime

There's a lot of talk these days about surrendering the right to strike "for the duration." A lot of congressional blowhards seem to think that workers enjoy going on strike, that they view strikes as a lark. They fail to understand—or, more accurately, deliberately ignore—the fact that strikes are a great sacrifice that workers make because they have to. Workers strike because it is the ONLY way, in most cases, for them to improve their conditions. And workers will be forced to strike,

by the very conditions of life itself, so long as capitalist oppression, low wages, long hours, poor conditions continue to exist.

That is why the labor leaders commit such terrible treachery against labor when they sign away labor's right to strike. Not only do they deprive labor of its most powerful weapon, but they even hurt labor in arbitration proceedings because labor can no longer use the THREAT of a strike as a weapon in those proceedings.

During the last war, too, there were the Greens and Hillmans who told labor not to even think of strikes. But there was one man who stood against the tide. He said labor should retain its right to strike, that labor should retain its right to organize. Listen to what Gene Debs said:

"Organize," he said. "Get together. United, very often your power becomes invincible. Organize to get up to your fullest capacity. Organize. Act together. And when you organize industrially you will soon learn that you can manage industry as well as operate industry. You can soon find that you don't need the idle for your masters. They are simply parasites. They don't give you work. You give them jobs taking what you produce. You can dispose of them. You don't need them to depend upon for your jobs. You ought to own your own tools; you ought to control your own jobs; you ought to be industrial free men instead of industrial slaves. ORGANIZE INDUSTRIALLY."

Debs got prison for his troubles, but is there a word in this that was not true then, or is false now? No. Did the government of the boss class jail him because it thought these words were lies? Hardly. The ruling class knew every word of Debs' lesson to be true, and that if too many people heard these words their profits might be torn from them and put to work to build something that sounded like socialism.

That is why they feared the voice of Gene Debs. That is why they put him in prison. But Debs' voice could not be stilled. It rang out the message of truth, of socialism. Listen again to what Gene Debs said:

"Through the history of the ages you have been oppressed, you have been degraded. When you go for a job to the master class, you work under conditions they prescribe. You depend upon them for tools, you work for their benefit. Do you like this? This is capitalism.

"The system in which you enrich your masters and impoverish yourselves, the system under which 5 per cent of the people own the wealth of the country and the great body of the people struggle through all the years for an existence and pass away without ever having enjoyed one hour of real life. How pathetic and tragic it is that in our land, with its boundless resources and treasures, its machinery, its workers, everything for production for every man, we have in the midst of these benefits the great body of the people struggling for existence."

Those are the words of Gene Debs, one of the greatest men in American history, a man who wasn't afraid to speak the truth. That was his program then; it is our program today; it must become the program of every worker tomorrow.

Some Light on Burma's U. Saw

A recent issue of the London New Statesman would appear to throw some light on the mysterious case of the arrest of the nationalist Premier of Burma, U. Saw, on unsubstantiated charges of being in league with the Japanese after he had gone to Britain and there had his request for Burma's independence rejected.

The New Statesman, a liberal journal, writes:

"To call this man [U. Saw] a Quisling is to invert the facts. On the evidence he is one of the least pro-Japanese of Burman politicians. He appears to be a Burman patriot who offered on terms to forget that we conquered his country. We rejected his very modest conditions and he has presumably decided to ask whether Japan would do more. What is Britain's title to his loyalty? That we drain away the natural riches of his country, tea, tin and oil? We owe the assurances he sought in vain to ourselves, his countrymen and all our allies. What we owe to Burma we owe in even ampler measure to India. By refusing to free dependencies, we feed the arsenals of Japan with political fuel as for years we fed them with aviation spirit [gasoline]. Not so can Hitler be destroyed."

PRESS ACTION

Fears Unemployment "Too Attractive" For Workers!

Special to LABOR ACTION

LOS ANGELES—We'll bet that 100 out of every 100 workers think it's pretty tough to be unemployed and have to subsist (or try to) on unemployment insurance. But these 100 out of every 100 are all wrong. Yes, sir!

We say this on the authority of none other than State Senator Clarence Wood of Santa Barbara (who manages to struggle along on a little bit more than \$18 a week), who has suggested that unemployment "be made less attractive" by cutting down the amount of relief given to those who have been fired from their jobs.

You never knew it before, did you, that you can get rich quick on \$18 or, in most cases, less than \$18 a week? You never knew before that it's a temptation to stop working?

As a matter of fact, Senator Wood isn't as ignorant as all that. He knows that you can't live on \$18 a week, especially if you have a family and even if you haven't. What he's really worried about is seen when he mentions the fact that after the war, there'll be a large demand on the insurance funds since millions of workers will lose their jobs.

So this great-hearted senator is preparing now in advance to slice into the unemployment insurance funds. He isn't worried about what is going to happen to the workers after the war. He isn't worried about those who lose their jobs because of priorities unemployment. All he's worried about is that life isn't made "too attractive" for the workers.

Fat chance of that happening so long as capitalism continues!

Say, Fellow!

What do you think of this paper? Interesting? Agree with it?

Make sure you get it regularly, every single week, by getting a special combination sub to LABOR ACTION and The New International for six months for \$1.00 (\$1.25 in New York City).

Ceylon Trotskyist Manifesto On the Imperialist War

(Continued from page 1)

is the unvarying method of all imperialisms. Shootings, concentration camps, oppression of the press, falsification of news are British methods as well as German....

In Ceylon the police have broken up workers' meetings, framed up and beaten up militant workers, baton-charged peaceful public meetings and thrown the leaders of the people into jail without charge or trial. The governor has used his emergency powers to throttle trade union activity and imprison the only politicians he could not bribe. He has closed our press. And this is only the beginning; the future is bound to be worse.

...the British have to resort to increasingly severe oppression to suppress the growing anti-imperialist movements in the colonies in order to maintain their system. Neither a victorious nor a defeated Britain can any longer make "concessions" to the colonial peoples. Only fascist methods, be they British or German or Japanese, can any longer maintain decrepit capitalism.

...And what about the economic degradation and destitution to which British imperialism has reduced the vast masses of the Ceylonese population? Can German or Japanese rulers depress our starving farmers any further, when today, stricken by flood, drought and fever, they have to be subsidized permanently to maintain life at all? And the working class, chronically affected by unemployment and starvation wages, whose attempts at organization are met with brutal oppression—how can their conditions be worsened by any new rulers? They are just as badly off whether the government is British or German or Japanese. A change of masters will bring no change essentially in the abject poverty of their lives.

But a change of masters—is this the only prospect before us? We understand the defeat of the British imperialists in Ceylon only as part of the world-wide overthrow of the imperialist system, as a blow to the world-wide capitalist class, as a blow aimed equally at British, German and Japanese imperialism.... In the struggle of the masses of Ceylon against imperialism we see not an isolated endeavor, but a connected part of a world-wide struggle against world capitalism.

...in Ceylon our fight against British rule is not "fifth column" activity for Hitler... but a revolutionary struggle for political and economic emancipation of our people. The cries about "fifth columnists" made by the British government... deceive nobody. Their aim is to disguise every act of savage suppression and to sabotage the anti-imperialist movement.

Today the imperialists at war are increasing the burdens of the oppressed and exploited masses. Mounting prices and taxes increase the cost of living as never before. The war is a curse, inevitable under imperialism.

But the war, which must weaken the ruling class as well, is also an opportunity. The war of 1914-18 set free the workers of Russia. Who can say but that the revolt of India and Ceylon against the British during this war may be the match to set alight the world revolution in which alone lies the security of all oppressed peoples? Only this will end war for all time and prepare the way for the construction of socialism.

This is the real solution of the question: On whose side are we? We stand uncompromisingly for the fight for independence on the part of the toiling masses of Ceylon. We are therefore neither on the British, nor on the German or Japanese side, but on the side of the international workers' revolution. Our party does not suggest a change in imperialist masters nor is it deceived by the illusory rights of British "democracy." We say boldly to the workers of Ceylon and to the people under their banner: "You have nothing to lose but your chains. Strike out for your freedom in alliance with the revolutionary workers of the world."

Lanka Sama Samaj Party.

THE WORLD AT WAR

Hitler's Speech Goads the German People to Sacrifice For a Long, Murderous War

By SENTINEL

We here are familiar with the mood that has spread over the Allied camp in the war. The victories of Japan have underlined the practically unanimous feeling that this is going to be a long war. We know also what the state of morale is among the peoples in the Allied countries. Lack of enthusiasm, pessimism and no faith in the Allied slogans characterizes the common man. Justifiably he senses that this war is just a continuation of the imperialist struggle of 1914-18. He sees how in the East East the aspirations of the colonial peoples for freedom and a better life are totally ignored by those who claim to be fighting for democracy. The stakes revolve around much cruder objects—such as oil, tin, rubber, markets and the terrific exploitation of native labor.

At the same time at home the most crushing burdens are increasingly heaped on the backs of the wage earners and the totalitarian vise is tightened more and more. On the other hand, morale is not improved by the tremendous profit accumulations by the bosses. In the armed forces the millions of youth are certainly no more inspired than the rest of the population. They feel that they are only at the beginning of a terrible slaughter.

That this feeling is not confined to the Allied side of the war is one of the things that is striking about Hitler's latest memorial speech. No longer does Hitler give the German people a date for the final victory. The Axis camp agrees with the Allied camp that the war will be long. Hitler too goads the people on to ever greater sacrifices, holding always before them the nightmare of a super-Versailles. He is frank enough to admit that the present war is but a continuation of the First World War. He calls the Axis powers, in which he includes his new ally, Japan, the have-not nations who are fighting for "lebensraum" at the expense of the "have" nations.

A New Versailles

Hitler knows how shocked the German people were by the entrance of the United States into the war. Still he can turn this feeling into hatred against America because he can show that the American ruling class plans to put the German people into a new Versailles straight-jacket. Again and again Hitler emphasizes this point. It is the main factor of German morale and assumes decisive importance as the easy victories of the German military machine fade into the past. Yet none among the United Nations—not even Russia—is capable of offering the German people any other alternative than the bitterness of another such "peace."

Hitler can therefore reveal to the German people that there were at least 1,500,000 German casualties on the Russian front, that Russian reserves are apparently limitless and

that the spring and summer will be the seasons of new unparalleled battles.

Winter's Trials

Hitler described to the German people the terrible trials during the winter of the German armies in Russia. Only the fear of what an Allied victory would cost them can explain the fanaticism with which the Germans have held on to four-fifths of the territory in Russia conquered by them in their sweeping offensives of last summer and fall. Since no attempts to undermine Hitler politically are or can be made by the imperialist Allied camp, the German people have no alternative but to put their faith in Hitler's new promise to them of Russian annihilation by next summer.

By the same token Stalin cannot avoid the dangers confronting him when the German offensive unfolds. Since he has no political program for the German masses he seeks to prevent the preparation of the coming German offensive by hurling mass upon mass of Russian troops against the strategically held German positions. On the Ukrainian sector alone Timoshenko has lately thrown a force of 1,500,000 Russian troops in an effort to loosen the hold of the German armies on the jumping-off places for a drive against the Caucasus.

One can be sure that when the German armies start their offensive their strength in mechanized equipment will be no less than when they invaded Russia. It is extremely doubtful that the Russians will be as equally well supplied despite the aid given them by their Allies and despite the reports of enthusiastic Russian supporters. The arsenal of Germany has been going full blast all these months. Russian industry at the same time was minus the great industrial areas which were in the hands of the German invaders. Russian production can hardly escape this fact.

Favorable as is the German position in Russia, the German people cannot fail to see the new tremendous dimensions of the war. They realize that the entry of the United States into the war has postponed a final German victory, regardless of the new battles that may be won in Russia. All that Hitler can promise them is a compensating "permanent" peace after years of terrible struggle. Hitler's "peace" can be no more permanent than the "peace" purchased by an Allied victory in 1918.

In both imperialist camps the peoples have no real hope. Whatever they have is conditions by the fear of something worse in case of defeat. Soon the war will be entering on its fourth year. Hunger, disease, death are already taking their enormous toll. The promises of Hitler, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin are finding less and less of a response in the peoples of both imperialist camps.

CIO Teamsters Lick AFL Rival in Boston Election

BOSTON—The CIO Teamsters & Warehousemen's Local (URWSEA) emerged victors this week over Dan Tobin of the AFL Teamsters Union and the R. H. White Co.

In 1938 the 234 workers in the warehouse and on the trucks of the R. H. White Co. joined the AFL Teamsters Union. They affiliated with this union only after they had been promised an industrial and democratic set-up. In time other drivers and warehousemen were organized into this local and it grew into one of the most militant locals in this area.

Tobin's agents in Boston, realizing that they would lose control over the Teamsters Joint Council if this militant local were permitted to develop, decided to break it up and send the members into three "controlled" locals. The workers rebelled, refused to pay dues, and joined the CIO.

The CIO immediately notified the company and Massachusetts Labor Relations Board that the AFL agreement was expiring and that it wished an election to prove that the workers wanted the CIO as its collective bargaining agent. Every single worker signed a statement to this effect and it was presented as evidence to the State Board.

While hearings were being held by the State Board, the company renewed its agreement with the AFL and Commissioner Moriarty, chairman of the State Department of Labor and Industries, left on a hurried trip to Florida.

Demand Election

The workers refused to take it lying down. One hundred and fifty of them, instead of going to work, the very next day invaded the State House and demanded an election to prove their choice. The situation was so full of dynamite that Moriarty

returned from Florida on the same plane that had brought him there.

Moriarty suggested mediation of the entire problem. This would have meant delay, demoralization. Once again the workers stormed the State House and this time forced Moriarty to grant them an election.

In the election the AFL Teamsters received only THREE votes. But the AFL insisted that whereas they had a signed closed shop agreement, the company fire every single worker who did not immediately rejoin them. The company found itself in a well deserved mess. It had signed an agreement with a union that the workers did not want. Now because of the election it was forced to recognize the CIO, as the legitimate union of the workers. Thereupon the AFL began picketing until it was stopped by an injunction.

The workers began their negotiations, the company tried to stall, and the workers, in their habitually militant way, went on a couple of sit-downs (and forced the company to pay them for the time lost) and the result was a signed union agreement.

The agreement provides for a 44-hour week, time and a half for all overtime, 10 per cent general wage increase, seven paid holidays, two full days' pay for two half-day holidays, vacations, cost of living clause and a closed shop. Uniforms must be purchased and mended by the company and the uniforms must bear the union label; safety of vehicles must be guaranteed by the company; if a worker is injured on the job and must interrupt his work to visit a hospital or doctor he shall not lose any of his salary; all traveling expenses shall be paid by the company; whoever is drafted shall receive three weeks' full salary plus vacation benefits; checkoff, seniority, etc.

In Philadelphia, Hear:
'Who Will Pay for the War?'
 A Lecture by PAUL TEMPLE
 Philadelphia Organizer, Workers Party
SUNDAY, MARCH 29 at 8:15
810 LOCUST STREET
 ADMISSION FREE

Of Special Interest To Women

By Susan Green

The Gallup Poll has conducted a survey and discovered that one half of the housewives of the country are willing to take jobs in plants doing war work.

In taking this poll, however, the Gallup people did not acquaint the women canvassed with one very pertinent fact—which undoubtedly would have influenced the vote.

How do you think women would react to a question about their willingness to take jobs in war production if at the same time they were told that in November, 1941, the hourly wages of women in manufacturing plants were THIRTY-FIVE PER CENT LOWER than those of men? This is the figure of the National Industrial Conference Board.

Women intelligent enough to understand the relation between profits and wages would certainly not see why they should "contribute to the national emergency" if their "contribution" goes into the bursting pockets of the bosses.

Gallons of ink and tons of paper are being wasted in agitating women to go into war industries. Women will be forced into factories by the gastronomic and other needs of themselves and their families in the bitter times ahead.

The important thing is that these working women should not be exploited because of their sex.

How about agitating Congress—always so full of proposals to curb labor—to pass a law making the bosses pay equal wages for equal work regardless of the sex of the worker?

But don't suppose for one minute the boss press will do this. The only agitation for equalization of wages will come from the unions. Every working man out of his swaddling clothes understands that as more women enter industry at lower wages, the wage levels of all workers are increasingly threatened.

Workers' standards won't be blood and sweat can be preserved only by an intensified drive to organize all women workers—and the unions must make the equalization of wages a reality.

The war has forced upon Americans a new glory. The masterminds of racketeering in this country are being emulated abroad.

According to sundry reports, the Black Market of England is run on the same lines as the booze racket here during prohibition days. Several writers declare that Black Market operators have learned many valuable lessons in business organization from our own racketeers. The result of their efficiency is that today in England there are no shortages and there is no rationing for those who can pay Black Market prices—just as in prohibition days the wealthy could guzzle excellent liquor to their hearts' content.

It is a foregone conclusion that, as shortages and rationing become more and more felt in this country—the home of the masterminds of racketeering—the boys will get on the job. The methods of prohibition days will become as modernized as a flying fortress—but much more noiseless. As a result no dollar-a-year man, nor his kid and kin, will want for anything. The war profiteer and the war racketeer will be united in wedlock by the law of supply and demand.

As in England, the family of the American worker—who creates the wealth the war profiteer will partly share with the war racketeer—will of course, lack many things.

There is an old tradition in England that an officer is more or less helpless without a servant. This is not exactly democratic, but a British officer is still waited on hand and foot. He is brought his tea in the morning, his shoes are shined, his uniform is kept trim, his buttons polished—he is even guided into his jacket.

All this used to be done for the big stiff by a manservant. With the shortage of manpower, however, instead of shifting for himself, as most people do, girls from the various services have been assigned as "maids" to his royal highness, the officer.

Came a day when a big stink about this arrangement was let loose in the House of Commons. As reported by William D. Bayles in the Saturday Evening Post, a violent debate raged back and forth, in the course of which charges were made of universal immorality in the services, of the spread of disease, and of the constant increase of pregnancies. Many members became very indignant and shouted their denials of the charges.

Nevertheless matter-of-fact arrangements for the care and confinement of girls who become pregnant in the services have been secretly made. A girl is granted leave from her contingent, and all details are easily and efficiently attended to. All, of course, on the quiet.

In Nazi Germany, a similar situation was jubilantly welcomed as a solution to the population problem. Every girl was urged, as a patriotic duty, to have a baby by a soldier—but preferably by an officer.

However, neither the secrecy of the British nor the blatancy of the Germans can hide a nasty fact. In every country alike, this useless imperialist war has broken down norms that civilization has found necessary and desirable.

There is already plenty of evidence to the same effect in our own country.

Have you noticed how the volunteer salesmen of Defense Savings Stamps combine business with patriotic duty?

The following advertisement is typical: "FANNIE HURST, Author of 'Lonely Parade,' will sell Defense Savings Stamps from 4 to 5 p.m. this afternoon at BONWIT TELLER, Fifth Avenue, New York."

What do you think happened to the sales of 'Lonely Parade' in the book department of Bonwit Teller that afternoon?

Both Miss Hurst and the department store unquestionably found it pays to advertise—Defense Savings Stamps!

So also Miss Glamora, lovely star of "A Kiss for Liberty," that amazing new film you just must not miss, will sell Defense Savings Stamps to you—but hold onto the price of admission to the movie.

We Caught You!

Imagine, you, a big he-man, reading Susan Green's women's column! But, just between ourselves, wasn't it pretty interesting? Why not bring it home to the wife?

And why not make sure of getting LABOR ACTION and its sister magazine, The New International, regularly by filling in the blank on this page?

Edgar Snow Writes on the Far East:

Will Britain Give Freedom to India?

Out of the mass of written material on the problem of Asia in the war, one article stands out—though we cannot agree with it—as comparatively intelligent. That is an article by Edgar Snow in the Saturday Evening Post of March 14, which is mistitled for circulation purposes as "How to Blockade Japan," but really discusses the situation of the Asiatic colonial people in relation to the present war.

Snow writes with a certain kind of realism. Not the realism that involves a genuine understanding of the social, economic and political forces involved in the Far East, but at least with a certain realism. The theme of his article is that, for purposes of military expediency, it is essential for the Allied camp to immediately free the Asiatic colonial peoples in India, Burma, Ceylon, etc.

Snow is not impressed, as he says, with the "ethical or moral questions" involved; he writes from the point of view: How can Allied imperialism win the war?

He therefore begins by surveying the military situation. His conclusions are extremely pessimistic from the point of view of Allied imperialism. Japan has six million men under arms in the Far East; it is doubtful if the total Allied force of white soldiers comes to a small fraction of that. Snow writes: "Through her seizure of Indo-China, the Philippines, Thailand and parts of Malaya, Borneo and the Celebes, Japan has for the first time got adequate sources of chrome, wood pulp, hemp, coal, iron, rubber, tin and many other essentials."

And again, "Conceded adequate oil, the only remaining unknown factor would be the tempo with which

Japan could exploit this and other captured raw materials of war and convert them to military production on the scale required."

In other words, Snow informs us, Japan is now sitting on the top of the Far East pile. How, he asks, can the Allies dislodge the Japanese?

In one of two ways. Either they launch a tremendous expeditionary force numbering in the millions—certainly considerably outnumbering the Japanese if military success is to be obtained—or mobilize the millions of Asiatic peoples who are now colonial under Allied rule and pretty much indifferent to the outcome of the war.

The first course involves a tremendous sacrifice of American manpower, since that is the only possible source. It cannot be immediately ef-

fect and the delay in bringing a large expeditionary force also allows Japan to exploit its newly-won resources and consolidate its new military bastions.

The second course, Snow tells us, is possible only if the Allies free colonies—which means, first of all, India.

Snow paints a vivid picture of the tremendous resources India possesses. Potentially, India could build up an economy more powerful and richer than that of the United States. But that has not taken place, mainly because British imperialism prevented it, fearing competition for its own industries.

India has the resources to smash Japan, provided the Indian people want to utilize them against Japan. Therefore, Snow says: Free India.

Things are not quite as simple as all that, however. Does Snow—who knows what the score is—really believe that British imperialism would give up that "truly most precious jewel in the empire" voluntarily? Of course, such a step might help Britain win the war militarily; but in reality it would mean the defeat of British imperialism even before it joined battle with Germany, because such a step would mean the destruction of the British Empire—the main stake in the war.

"What do a few hundred millions matter when we are throwing away billions into the furnaces of war and millions of men are dying?" Snow asks.

Yes, what do they mean? But that is the tragedy of the war: that millions of men are dying and billions in wealth are being destroyed in order to preserve imperialism.

What we can learn from Snow is this: the resources of the Asiatic colonial world are truly tremendous. Japanese imperialism could be wiped off the earth if India were a free nation. But the prerequisite for that is the removal of British imperialism from India.

Snow's article is complete confirmation of LABOR ACTION'S position on the war. He himself does not once attempt to guess what the possibilities are of the Allies following his suggestion. Because he probably knows well enough that no imperialist power will voluntarily surrender its possessions and wealth.

The resources are there. The man power is there. All that is needed is the revolutionary leadership which can crystallize the desires of the colonial people into an aggressive program of freedom and wipe imperialism off the face of the earth.

Atlantic Charter Not for Africa...

Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave his reply last week to the 20,000,000 natives of Nigeria, West Africa, who had requested a clarification of the Atlantic Charter. They wanted to know if the section of the declaration that states that the "right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live shall be respected" applied to them.

Mr. Churchill replied:

"President Roosevelt and the Prime Minister had primarily in mind the restoration of the sovereignty, self-government and national life to the states and nations of Europe now under Nazi rule.

"The declared policy of His Majesty's government with regard to the people of the British Empire is

already in harmony with the high conception of freedom and justice which inspired the joint declaration, and the Prime Minister does not consider that any fresh statement of policy is called for in relation to Nigeria, or West African colonies, generally."

What Churchill is saying in these pompous sentences is that the Atlantic Charter's promises do not apply to the colonials of Africa (it is much easier for Britain to promise freedom to people ruled by another imperialist power, Germany, than to give freedom to those ruled by itself).

The statement that the British colonial policy is in harmony with a "high conception of freedom and justice" will be accepted by the African people for the bitter farce it is.

Polish "Free Government" Takes Two Open Anti-Semites Into Its Cabinet

The Polish "Free Government in Exile," whose Premier is General V. Sikorski, has recently added to its cabinet two open fascists, notorious for their anti-Semitic backgrounds, despite the fact that it poses as a "democratic" government interested in "restoring" liberty to Poland.

The two leaders of the Polish Fascist Party, the "Endeks" Party, who have been added to the cabinet are Marion Saidu and Prof. V. Kamarnitski, the latter having been promoted to the post of Minister of Justice.

Behind this open alignment of the Polish "Free Government" with the anti-Semitic "Endeks" there lies a long story of intrigue in Polish refugee circles, part of which is revealed in an interesting article by Menashe Unger, published in The Day, a Jewish language daily, of March 14.

The "Free Government" of Sikorski at its very inception was an outright reactionary government. It was composed of a number of Polish right-wing nationalists, of the

Sikorski type, who had been leaders in the anti-Semitic, semi-fascist regime which had existed in Poland prior to its joint occupation by Hitler and Stalin. In addition there were representatives of various liberal and conservative bourgeois groups. Finally there were the Polish social-democrats, who provided, as usual, a "left" covering for this group of disreputable politicians trying to re-establish themselves in power.

For a period of time there was a considerable scandal in England when it was disclosed that the papers of and around the Sikorski government were including subtle and at times not so subtle anti-Semitic propaganda.

At the time of the signing of the Polish-Soviet pact, which came after Hitler blew up his love feast with Stalin and when Stalin now needed the very Poles he had helped Hitler subdue, three members of the Sikorski government resigned in protest at the signing of this pact. They included the aforementioned Marion Saidu, the anti-Semitic fascist who has now once again been added to the Polish "government in exile."

Fascists Campaign

The fascist wing of the Sikorski government having withdrawn, it then began a sharp campaign against the Sikorski government. These Polish fascists, whose program is to substitute their brand of totalitarianism for the Hitler variety, attacked the Sikorski government for its rainbow composition and for its failure to adopt an intransigent totalitarian stand. Under the leadership of their Polish fuhrer, Dr. Belitsky, they began a propaganda campaign in Polish circles in England and America.

In America, Unger informs us, this campaign was conducted by a former member of the Pilsudski cabinet, Ignazi Matchevski.

While there was of course no prin-

ciple political difference between Sikorski and these fascists, they had considerable tactical differences.

Sikorski was in favor of collaboration with Stalin while they were cool to that idea. They still were obsessed with the fear of Stalin taking their political porridge after the war was over. When Sikorski returned from Russia, he announced, however, that Stalin had promised him that he would respect a post-war independent Poland and that he (Stalin) had no intention of stimulating revolutions. This appears to have taken the wind out of the "Endeks" sails since two of their leaders subsequently joined the Sikorski cabinet.

Attitude Toward Jews

Another tactical disagreement which was resolved in practice was the question of what attitude to take toward the Jews. The fascist "Endeks" were for open anti-Semitism while the Sikorski government, facing the need of posing as a "democratic" government in order to gain the support of the people in the Allied countries, as well as the Polish people and the Polish social-democrats, issued a statement disavowing anti-Semitism. That this statement is not worth the paper on which it is written can be seen from the three following facts:

1) The reactionary, anti-Semitic record of the Sikorski crowd in pre-Hitler Poland.

2) The record of Prof. V. Kamarnitski, latest "Endek" addition to the Sikorski cabinet, who, when he was a professor in Vilno University, forced his Jewish students to sit on separate Ghetto benches. This is the new Minister of... Justice!

3) At the recent conference of governments in exile held in London, each government presented a dossier listing the crimes which the Nazi invaders had committed against its people. When the Pol-

ish Foreign Minister, Ratchinski, listed his victims he did not have a word to say about the Nazi bestialities against the Polish Jews. This cannot be interpreted as deliberate disdain for the Polish Jews when one is further informed that previous to his speech, Ratchinski was handed a detailed list of Nazi atrocities against Polish Jews which was drawn up by the "Board of Deputies of British Jews" and which Ratchinski refused to use.

This, then, is a picture of the Polish "Free Government" led by militarists, reactionaries, anti-Semites and fascists. This is the government which deals officially in the name of the Polish people with Washington and London.

What will the "democratic" propagandists have to say about this? What will the Jewish nationalist defenders of Allied imperialism have to say?

How can they possibly whitewash this latest evidence as to the anti-Semitic and pro-fascist government of "Free Poland"?

William Pickens On the Carpet

Ignoring and possibly sanctioning one of the most livid blots on the war scene today, the segregation of white and colored in the armed forces, William E. Pickens, syndicated columnist in the Associated Negro Press and member of the NAACP, was called down by the latter organization for his attitude in recent columns.

A member in good standing of the NAACP, Pickens has been abandoning the principles of the group in his articles, emphasizing "national defense" and forgetting the fight for racial equality.

Significant excerpts from Pickens' column have been quoted to justify the stand of the NAACP: "...It (the Army) is planning to win a war, in spite of segregation or of those who oppose segregation. This is the Army's business. If the Army were led by fools, they might decide to settle the 'race question' first—and then try to win this war afterward." In other words, Pickens virtually okays the Jim Crow policy.

Government Workers Are Jim Crowed

Negro government workers are feeling the oppression of segregation more and more in the nation's capital as the latest report crops up from the Railroad Retirement Building in Washington. Girls working there for the quartermaster corps have been very politely requested to make use of the downstairs dining room for their own "comfort." Most of them have stuck to their guns, though, and are still using the main dining room, refusing to be embroiled in the vicious discriminatory practices notorious in Washington.

A Program For Indian Independence

By Henry Judd

"India, the largest, the longest dominated and exploited of British conquests, the richest field of investment, the source of incalculable plunder and profit, the base of Asiatic expansion, the inexhaustible reservoir of material and human resources for British wars, the focus of all British strategic aims, the pivot of the empire and bulwark of British world domination..."

This statement, taken from an analysis of the problem of India written by the Indian Section of the Fourth International, sums up the importance of that vast country for Great Britain and its finance-imperialist rulers. What would the empire on which the sun is now rapidly setting, be without India? An empty, lifeless shell; a small, highly industrialized group of islands; the white cliffs of Dover surrounded by the bleak seas of the North Atlantic.

Now the hordes of Japanese militarism and imperialism stand at the frontier of India. The Japanese Navy—having admittedly wiped out in a single action the entire Asiatic fleet of the United Nations—rules the monsoon-swept waters of the Indian Ocean. Premier Tojo, spokesman for the feudal-military-capitalist rulers of the Japanese Empire, boldly informs the people of India that "their turn is next."

What is the situation in India, from the standpoint of that nation's defense?

(1) Britain has deliberately sabotaged the expansion and building of Indian industry because it did not want it to compete with British manufactures. Result—India manufactures ONLY small arms and light munitions; no airplanes, tanks, autos, trucks, anti-aircraft guns, etc.

(2) All of India's fortified defenses face (like the famous naval guns of Singapore!) in the wrong direction. The seacoasts on the East and West are defenseless and unfortified. All the forts are in the North, facing Afghanistan and Soviet Russia.

(3) There is no Indian Navy—only a few minesweepers, patrol boats and ferries.

(4) The Indian Army (restricted rigidly to Moslem and Sikh soldiers in pursuance of typical British divide-and-rule policy) numbers a mere million; has little or no training in modern forms of warfare and, most important of all, is dominated by reactionary and narrow-minded British officers. It is primarily an army of paid soldiers, organized to do Britain's work. It is NOT a mass army of the Indian people.

(5) Britain has refused to give a single real concession to the people of India, designed to rally their support. How Emperor Hirohito must have rejoiced when he learned of Churchill's refusal of nationalist demands for freedom and proposal, instead, "Dominion Status" years after the war!

(6) Britain has raised a storm of indignation over India by its criminal massacre of 10 Madras textile workers who had gone on strike. Churchill, by this act, sealed in blood his declaration to the effect that India shall not go free, so long as British imperialism lives and breathes.

THE REAL "FIFTH COLUMN"

Given these circumstances, the probability of a successful military defense of India from Axis attack appears remote indeed. The British—the REAL "fifth column" in India—have, by their actions, cleared the way for an easy march of the Axis troops from Calcutta to Bombay. Certainly the numerous fiascos of the United Nations in the defense of their other ill-gotten colonial possessions in Asia would hardly stand up as encouragement for what will happen in India.

In our opinion, if the defense of India is conducted on a purely military basis, without the aid of the 385 million people (and this is what British policy means) then the Japanese-German forces will conquer India with comparative ease—unless the Allies are able to reinforce India with tremendous reserves.

But such a victory over India by Japan and its Axis partners would constitute a DISASTER for the people of the country. The Axis imperialists march not as "liberators" of the colonial slaves, but as imperialists who desire to make themselves the new masters of the present British rule.

How can this disaster be prevented, even at this terribly late hour? Will the people of India have to pay with their lives and their blood for the two centuries of criminal British action? What is necessary is to find a way of shaking off the hand of British rule, and at the same time rallying the people of India in their own defense. The people of India must defend themselves through their own independent action and initiative against the power that rules them today and against the approaching Japanese bandits!

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL'S PROGRAM

This is the message being broadcast throughout India today by the revolutionary nationalists and socialists of the Fourth International. Going beyond generalizations, they offer to the people a program of action and policy in defense of their interests.

(1) No political support to their present rulers, the British; no political support to their would-be rulers, the Japanese.

(2) We, the people, the workers and peasants of India, must arm ourselves by any means for our own defense. We must organize an army based not upon the British-dominated "Indian Army," but our own People's Militia of defense.

(3) Reject any attempt on the part of "our" native capitalists and politicians or British agents (like Gandhi, Nehru or Chiang Kai-shek) to line India up behind the United Nations in exchange for fake promises.

(4) We must organize our mass committees of defense; councils of workers, poor farmers and soldiers who will conduct the defense of the country. To rally the great peasantry of India behind us we must urge them to take the land denied them by British landlords and rich rajahs kept in power by British bayonets. We must wipe out, by our action, the debts and burdens of these peasants. In the cities the Indian workers must seek control of the factories and run them for the country's defense, not for British profits.

(5) We must struggle for a Constituent Assembly of the People, based upon universal suffrage—an Assembly whose first act should be to draft and proclaim the People's Declaration of Independence from British and all foreign rule.

(6) We must organize our own self-government, based upon the broad and democratic organizations of the workers and poor people; a Workers and Peasants Government.

This is the program urged upon the people by the revolutionists of India. It demands that they take their fate in their own hands, instead of leaving it in the bloody and blundering hands of their present rulers. Does this mean they advocate revolution? Absolutely, for only a social revolution will give India something worth fighting for. The people as a whole will gain national liberation and independence; the peasantry will gain the land they hunger for; the workers will have won freedom from capitalist exploitation.

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Editorials

LABOR ACTION'S PLATFORM

Against Both Imperialist War Camps! For the Victory of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples! For the Victory of the Third Camp of Socialism!

LABOR MUST DEFEND ITSELF!

1. Hands off the right to strike! For the defense of civil rights and all workers' rights! Against any wartime dictatorship measures!
2. Thirty hours a week; thirty dollars the minimum wage; time and a half for overtime! Rehire the jobless millions by a six-hour shift!
3. Wage increases which meet rising costs! No sales tax on consumer goods; no taxes on wages! Freeze rents and food and clothing prices at the 1940 level to stop the rise in the cost of living!
4. No government contract without a union contract! The closed shop in all war industries!
5. Maintain and increase all government social services!

SOAK THE RICH—LET THEM PAY FOR THEIR WAR!

6. A government levy on capital to cover the costs of the imperialist war! Confiscate all war profits!
7. Conscript all war industries under workers' control!
8. Expropriate the "Sixty Families"—the 3 per cent of the people who own 96 per cent of the national wealth!

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO THE DRAFTEES!

9. The right of free speech, free press and free assembly for the men in the armed forces!
10. Sixty dollars a month minimum for draftees!

SMASH JIM CROW!

11. Down with Jim Crow and anti-Semitism! All discrimination against Negroes in the Army and Navy, or by employers in industry, must be made a criminal offense!

BE PREPARED!

12. For Workers' Defense Guards, trained and controlled by the unions, against vigilantes and fascist attacks!
13. For an Independent Labor Party and a Workers' Government! No political support to the Roosevelt government!
14. For Peace Through Socialism! For immediate independence of all colonies! Only a socialist world will destroy capitalist imperialism and fascist barbarism. For a League of Socialist Nations!

Will a Frameup Whitewash The Sikeston Lynching?

(Continued from page 1)

of Negro papers in St. Louis have even published them. As the readers of LABOR ACTION know, this paper was the only periodical of national circulation which printed the full true story of the Sikeston lynching and printed, likewise, the names of the mob's ringleaders, that is, the criminals.

That issue of LABOR ACTION was circulated by the hundreds of copies in and around Sikeston. If the Negro people there didn't know the very individuals responsible for Cleo Wright's murder before LABOR ACTION printed their names, they learned them from its pages. So did the white workers and sharecroppers. And so did the planters and their thugs and tools.

That worries them! That makes it harder for them to cover up the criminals in this lynching, as criminals have been covered up in scores of lynchings before this time.

That makes it harder for them to pull the wool over anybody's eyes.

They don't like a working-class paper to be read by the white and Negro croppers and laborers, whom they still regard pretty much as their slaves. And they especially dislike a working-class paper that tells the truth, simply and courageously and always—a paper like LABOR ACTION.

And because they are people—these Bourbon planters and their Jim Crow brethren—who don't sleep, but ACT, it seems that they are playing with the idea of white-

washing the lynching by perpetrating a frame-up against those who fight lynchings!

That's all that can be made out of the report of the grand jury session sent from Benton, Mo., to the St. Louis Star-Times and printed in its issue of March 10.

Judge's Warning

The correspondent quotes Judge J. C. McDowell as warning the grand jury that "It is your duty to investigate this matter and not be influenced by what is going on outside the county, putting a lot of names in the paper and having mass meetings—you should not be intimidated by it."

What is the honorable judge talking about? The report in the Star-Times gives us a hint. Read it carefully, just as it is written:

"The grand jury is meeting at a time when the community atmosphere of southeast Missouri is tense.

"Reports are current that Japanese agents have been promoting the pro-Japanese Pacific Movement among Negroes of this area.

"In New Madrid County meetings of Negroes have been held in recent weeks in Negro schools and churches. Reports are that representatives of the Social Workers Party arranged and spoke at the meetings. The Socialist Workers Party is the American branch of the Fourth International which was founded by the late Leon Trotsky after his break with the regular Communist movement.

"In Sikeston copies of a special

Labor Needs Its Own Offensive To Protect the 40-Hour Week

(Continued from page 1)

provision in the Smith Bill which would limit war profits to 6 per cent of contracts. The joker is that, as has been shown by the Truman investigation, companies may make only 6 per cent profit on the total amount of a war contract—and yet make as much as 200 per cent profit on their invested capital, which is the real way to calculate profits.

In the meantime, the labor leaders were playing a pretty miserable role. Instead of launching an all-out offensive for improvement of labor's rights (what has happened to Little Steel negotiations for a dollar a day raise?) they were caught short and, according to the New York Times of March 18, even agreed to suspend double time for Sunday work if it did not come as the seventh consecutive day in a work week. Thus, by a flick of the wrist, they surrendered one of labor's most hard-won rights.

What is necessary now is for the labor movement to launch an offensive of its own:

Against the anti-strike bills, for the right to closed shops, for wage increases to meet the rising cost of living.

Labor is on the spot. It's being attacked by every reactionary good-for-nothing in the country. The only

way to answer is to show these so and so's what the labor movement really means in this country—

FOR AN ALL-OUT OFFENSIVE IN DEFENSE OF LABOR'S RIGHTS!

CIO PRESIDENT



PHILLIP MURRAY

LABOR ACTION Distributors Freed In New Jersey

(Continued from page 1)

nizant of this fact, having been thrown back into the jail without being permitted to call anyone!

In an amazing series of run-arounds, the judge and his colleagues stalled having an appeal introduced, and also reneged on their promise to set bail and finally said that the FBI was the one keeping them in jail!

A check by the American Civil Liberties Union with Washington revealed that the FBI had dropped all interest in the case after a very brief and cursory examination of the LABOR ACTION distributors.

This fact, combined with a threat of habeas corpus, brought the full release of the two victims.

The boys were in good spirits after they got out. What they had to say about the state of civil liberties in New Jersey our readers can readily imagine.

"Our only worry in jail was the fact that we hoped it wouldn't cost LABOR ACTION too much money to get us out," the victims said, adding that they were ready to continue their duties as distributors.

Discrimination by The Red Cross

Red Cross discrimination became particularly obnoxious in Philadelphia recently when a colored teacher was denied the instruction of a first aid class on the grounds that "the people in the class had to be satisfied." The woman, Mrs. Gladys Thomas, mentioned that she had not stated she was Negro on the application and so her services were gladly received—until she made her appearance in the office.

Profits Keep Soaring

NEW YORK—Soaring profits among the nation's big corporations were reported by The Exchange, monthly publication of the New York Stock Exchange.

It noted that the first 248 companies whose stock are listed on the Exchange showed a 30.3 per cent increase in profits for 1941 over 1940.

Here are some of the figures:

Industry	Pct. Rise in Profits
79 Railroads	128.1
37 Oil Firms	92.3
61 Auto Firms	62.7

War Comes to the People—On Both Sides

"Italians suffered a shock today, reports from Rome said, when they learned their bread ration had been reduced beginning tomorrow, from 200 grams to 150 grams, or about 5½ ounces a day. The hardest hit will be the poorest families....

"The scarcity of bread most directly strikes the people of Italy, and the Italian press was at pains to 'explain' the situation...."

—From a Swiss despatch to the New York Times of March 15.

"The diet of the bulk of the families in these islands (Great Britain) is all too meager, with the meat allow-

ance down to one shilling and two pence weekly, and likely soon to be reduced further, but those with sufficient cash may dine sumptuously, comparatively speaking, in restaurants without giving up a single coupon.

"This was the subject of considerable bitter complaint more than a year ago, but nothing has been done about it yet. The result is that as rationing grows stiffer, restaurants enjoy a boom, and while their patrons gorge themselves on Black Market commodities, they indulge in an orgy of profiteering."

—From a London despatch by Raymond Daniels in the New York Times of March 15.

POLL TAX

Pepper Bill a Step Toward Abolition

AN EDITORIAL

Public hearings are now being held on the Pepper Bill, which would outlaw the poll tax in federal elections in eight Southern states. In these states, voters have to pay a special accumulative tax in order to vote, and as a result in none of these states does a majority of the population vote. As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of the white and Negro poor farmers and workers are thus disfranchised.

A citizen of the poll tax states pays \$1.50 in Alabama, \$1.00 in Georgia, \$2.00 in Mississippi, \$1.00 in Arkansas, \$1.50 in Virginia, \$2.00 in Tennessee, \$1.00 in Texas and \$1.00 in South Carolina in order to vote.

In some states he must pay his back poll taxes, too, before he can vote. In Georgia, it is calculated that this back tax can amount to as much as \$47.47.

As a result, only 27 per cent of the entire voting population voted in the poll tax states, in contrast to the 76 per cent who voted in the other states, using the 1940 election as an illustration.

In Florida the total vote increased 140 per cent, in North Carolina 70 per cent and in Louisiana 90 per cent, once the poll tax was abolished in these states.

It may seem incredible that a tax of a dollar or two prevents the overwhelming majority of the people from voting. But such is the poverty under which both white and Negro workers and sharecroppers live in the South that a tax of one or two dollars represents a tremendous sum—a sum often the equivalent of a day's wages.

INSTRUCTIVE ILLUSTRATION

No more instructive illustration of the need for unity between Southern white and Negro workers could be given than by this situation. Here we can see that the basic oppression in modern society is the domination of the capitalist class; that this oppression is exerted against both the white and Negro workers. The Negro worker, of course, faces the additional burden of racial oppression, but the road to the abolition of that racial oppression lies in unity with his white class brothers for joint struggle against the capitalists and planters who inflict such measures as the poll tax upon them.

We are in favor of the Pepper Bill because we stand for complete social, political and economic equality for the Negro people and because the abolition of the poll tax, even if only in federal elections, is an important step toward that goal. We are in favor of the Pepper Bill because we are for the extension of all democratic rights to the most oppressed sections of the population.

A "WAR MEASURE"?

We have nothing but contempt, however, for those witnesses at the open hearing in Congress who ask for the passage of the bill on the grounds that it is necessary as a measure to win the support of the Negro people for the imperialist war. Such undoubtedly are also the motives of the sponsor of the bill, Senator Pepper of Florida.

We are against the poll tax because it is iniquitous and unjust during both peace and war. We are for its abolition, not as a sop to entice the Negro people to support of the imperialist war, but because it deprives a large section of the population of its democratic rights.

It should, of course, be pointed out that the Pepper Bill suffers from serious limitations. If affects only federal elections and would not abolish the poll tax in state elections. Nor does it do away with the necessity for a continued intransigent struggle against Jim Crowism and segregation.

The political fakers and opportunists—who never gave a damn for the Negro people until they needed them for cannon fodder—would give this concession to the Negro people in the hope that it will thereby quiet the voice of Negro protests against the indignities which the Negro people have recently had to suffer (Sojourner Truth, Sikeston, Fort Bragg, etc.).

But the Negro people will know what attitude to take toward these political opportunists and imperialist apologists—ranging from Senator Pepper to the Stalinist Communist Party—who favor abolition of the poll tax as a "war measure." They will continue to struggle for full political, economic and social equality no matter who their enemies in that struggle may be.

Justified contempt for the reactionary motives of the sponsors and spokesmen for this bill, both inside and outside of Congress, as well as recognition of its limitations, should not deter us from supporting the actual passage of the bill. Every step toward the extension of democratic rights and liberties is supported by LABOR ACTION; the abolition of the poll tax in federal elections is such a step.

A Series of Vital Articles:

The American Fascists

By SUSAN GREEN

What Are the Native Fascists Doing Now?

What Is Their Program?

How Can Labor Combat Them?

Beginning Next Week. Don't Miss Them!

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Some More of Hitler's Demagogy

The resources of Hitler's demagogy and lying are apparently endless. His latest propaganda trick is to put one Subhas Bose, so-called "Indian leader," on his short wave radio to convince the Indian people that they should fight against British imperialism and for Hitler's "new order."

The Indian people hardly need Hitler's advice on how to fight against British imperialism, and they will understand exactly what the "new order" which Hitler and his latest would-be Quisling, Bose, promise them, means, when they take a glance at the manner in which this "new order" enslaves all of occupied Europe.

The Indian people have been fighting British tyranny now for hundreds of years. Does Hitler really believe that if they succeeded in removing the British yoke from their backs they would voluntarily substitute Hitler's slavery for it?

"The Masters of Our Destiny"

Seventy-one years ago this week—on March 18, 1871, to be exact—the working class, for the first time in history, seized its destiny in its own hands. When the invading armies of Bismarck were at the very gates of Paris, the proletariat of the French capital rose and took power, thereby establishing the first working class state in history. For a brief but glorious seventy-two days it held power and moved gropingly toward a regime of freedom, toward a socialist society.

Thiers, head of the capitalist government of Versailles, had planned to open the city to the Prussian invaders in the hope that they would crush the insurrectionary workers, grown desperate under intense exploitation and oppression. The Paris workers, by their firm revolutionary action, forestalled the plot of Thiers. In power, they organized the defense of Paris while attempting to execute their social program.

This did not, of course, prevent their class enemies from charging them with facilitating the advance of the Prussians just as forty-six years later the Russian capitalist class and its foreign allies charged the Bolsheviks with working for the German general staff, just as today the genuine, revolutionary, militant workers are sometimes tarred with the "fifth column" brush.

The Paris Commune was defeated only by the cooperation of the reactionary French government headed by Thiers, which had its headquarters at Versailles, and Bismarck's victorious German army. At the pleading of Thiers, Bismarck released thousands of French prisoners so that they could fight in Thiers' army against the Paris Commune.

Bismarck, wily agent of German reaction, understood full well that whatever his

differences with Thiers, it was necessary, from his class point of view, to help crush the Paris workers—since revolutions are notoriously contagious.

When the Commune was crushed there took place a blood bath without parallel in history. Let those old hens who shriek about "red terrors" look at the real terror—the terror of reaction—which was unleashed in Paris after the defeat of the workers, the terror unleashed after every working class defeat.

Yet in the hearts and minds of militant workers everywhere the Commune is cherished with fondness and admiration. It points the road to freedom and liberation.

And the workers of Paris today, suffering under the joint tyranny of Hitler and Petain, think also of the Paris Commune—where, for the first time in history, the working class stood up and said: "We are the masters of our destiny."

What About Mussolini?

Those observers who have been carefully following the propaganda of the Allied spokesmen cannot fail to be struck by its one remarkable omission: the constant omission of Mussolini and Italian fascism as an enemy of the Allies. While Hirohito and Hitler are assailed in bitterest terms—often by people who only yesterday thought that Hitler wouldn't be "so bad if only he weren't anti-Semitic"—there is a conspicuous failure to attack Mussolini.

The most sensational incident along these lines was the suppression of the last four of a series of anti-Mussolini articles written by Michael Chinigo in the New York Daily Mirror after six of them had already been published.

This policy of silence in regard to Mussolini is not accidental. It flows from the hope which certain elements in the State Department together with many newspapers and "public spokesmen" have long had: to win Mussolini over to the Allied side.

Presumably the present silence with regard to Mussolini is in preparation for the hoped-for happy day when the Allies will conduct their "anti-fascist war" with the original fascist, Mussolini, as their partner. Certainly Mussolini would find plenty of people in the Allied camp in whose company he would be comfortable—the anti-Semitic Sikorsky of the "Free Polish" government; the royalist de Gaulle of the "Free French," etc.

Stranger things have happened.

To Our Readers

You have been reading, in recent issues of LABOR ACTION, of our special six month combination offer which gives you six months of LABOR ACTION and The New International for \$1.00 (\$1.25 in New York City).

We believe that you realize the importance of building the socialist press.

These publications deserve your support. Get a special combination offer now.