

## UAW Chiefs Doublecross Militant Chevy Union

By MARTIN HARVEY

DETROIT—The International Executive Board of the United Auto Workers, CIO, has removed from office the executive board of Chevrolet Local 235. This action, resulting from an eleven-day strike, is the second time in recent months that the top UAW leadership has deliberately ignored the vote of the rank and file and dictatorially removed the elected representatives of the workers. They succeeded at the same time in giving the Chevrolet workers the neatest double-cross that has been seen in a long time.

The strike of 7,000 workers in five plants of the Chevrolet gear and axle division of General Motors Corporation began when the company tried to put over a speed-up on a job. The men involved did not meet the new production rate and were removed by the company. The other workers walked out in solidarity with these men.

### SPEEDY SELL-OUT

The International Executive Board, meeting in Milwaukee at the time, immediately went into action—much quicker, it must be noted, than they ever do in protecting the interests of their members. Local President Nestor B. Dessey informed the board that the local officers could not get the men back to work. The board thereupon removed the local officers and placed Melvin Bishop, regional director, over the local as administrator.

At a mass meeting called by the international officers to end the strike the union members voted overwhelmingly to remain out. At the same time the company added an additional provocation by announcing that six union leaders, including Dessey and Anthony Karabacz, chairman of the shop committee, were fired for leading the strike. Dessey and the other local leaders stated that they would abide by the decision of the membership and support the strike.

To make breaking the strike more palatable, the War Labor Board announced the six men who were fired were back on the company rolls. Then another meeting was called by the international for Sunday, August 6. Walter Reuther, an international vice-president, and Melvin Bishop flew in from Milwaukee to address the meeting. Their job was not an easy one. The local had refused to turn its hall over to representatives of the international and had added to their own grievances the betrayal by their international officers. But by the conclusion of the stormy meeting, Reuther and Bishop had succeeded in getting a vote to return to work.

### LEARN OF DOUBLE-CROSS

Bishop later admitted that he had stalled on taking the vote for as long as he could so that the men would "cool down." It is clear that the men came to the meeting prepared to continue the walkout until all their demands had been met. Going back to work without a settlement of their grievances, however, was not the last

pill that the Chevrolet workers had to swallow. After the first shift had reported for work Monday morning, it was learned that the company had removed seven men from the payroll, including the six that had been previously reported rehired.

Amid mounting tension in the plant, Bishop protested the discharges to the regional WLB. What the final disposition of this double-cross will be is not known as yet.

With the UAW convention only a month away, the action of the Thomas-Ades-Reuther leadership in the Chevrolet strike and in the recent strike at Chrysler Highland Park must be understood by every auto and aircraft worker. Two things stand out. First, it is clear that the rank and file is opposed to the sell-out policies of the top bureaucrats and to their no-strike pledge. Whenever they have been given the chance to make their position known, the workers in the UAW have shown their complete opposition to the official policy.

In Chrysler Local 490 the officers and executive board who had been removed by the international board were swept back into office by an overwhelming vote when the sixty-day period of control by Administrator Lamotte was ended. One could not wish for a more decisive repudiation of the policies of Thomas-Ades-Reuther.

### EAGER TO STRIKE

In the Chevrolet strike and in auto plants throughout the country, union members have not hesitated to vote strike when they felt that only a strike could result in a favorable settlement of their grievances. And in other cases they "voted with their feet" by walking out of plants when their leadership did not give them the opportunity to make their decision known by a formal vote.

The fact of the matter is that there is a vast opposition of the rank and file of the UAW to the practices and policies of the top leadership—most important of which is the no-strike pledge.

The second thing that must be understood is that the policies and leadership of Thomas, Ades and Reuther can only result in further retreat, further breakdown of collective bargaining—which even Reuther admits is closer to "collective begging"—and a lower standard of living for the auto workers.

The double-cross in the Chevrolet strike is only one example of what happens when the corporations know that the unions are hog-tied by the no-strike pledge, kept in check by their own leaders and further restricted by the infamous WLB. The no-strike pledge serves only the interests of the corporations.

### THOMAS—A GM ECHO?

Let any worker compare the arguments presented in large paid advertisements published in the Detroit daily papers by the General Motors Corporation with the speeches of Thomas in the Chevrolet and Chrysler strikes. It is difficult to detect any disagreement. Both shed crocodile tears about hurting the war effort. Both talk of "irresponsibility" and violation of the no-strike pledge. The only difference between the arguments of R. J. Thomas and the General Motors is that Thomas blames the workers while GM blames the union as a whole—including the leadership.

# LABOR ACTION

AUGUST 14, 1944

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR

ONE CENT

## Congress Talks Dole -- Says Nothing on Jobs

### Bust CIO Union, Aim In Philly Race Strike

PHILADELPHIA—The six-day-long strike that tied up the local transportation system is directly traceable to the efforts of the Philadelphia Transportation Company to use the race question as a means of breaking up the CIO Transport Workers Union.

It was not a strike of labor against capital. It was an action that appealed to fear and prejudice and had as its aim the denial of the right to work to fellow workers because of the color of their skin. The strike was sponsored by the company and its old company-union henchman. It was opposed by the CIO union. The strike was applauded by every reactionary, hate-mongering, Ku Klux Klan-minded element. It was condemned by all union-conscious workers who stand for class solidarity against capital regardless of race, nationality or religion.

The PTC has a record of over fifty years of undying opposition to both union organization and to employing Negroes on trolley cars and buses. Its hatred of labor has in the past led to some five serious strikes, one of which alone cost twenty-nine lives and millions of dollars in property damage. Its refusal to employ Negroes as operators and conductors led to the company's defiance of the Fair Employment Practices Commission ruling and a long-drawn-out court procedure.

When reporters sought to interview the officials of the PTC, they had trouble locating one of them, the secretary of the board of directors. After inquiries, they were informed that he was in New York City on business—at the office of J. P. Morgan & Co.

This year the PTC suffered a defeat on both questions. The CIO union won an election over both the old company union and the AFL and thereby became the bargaining agent for the workers. The fifty years of open shop and company union rule were about to come to an end with the signing of a contract with the CIO. Meanwhile, the company, act-

ing under the camouflage of the company union, lost its legal battle to cancel the FEPC ruling that ordered it to hire Negroes without discrimination.

The company, having been licked in its fight against the CIO and also against the FEPC, now turned to a new strategy. This was supposed to

The Philadelphia Record, a paper which expresses the liberal capitalist point of view, received an argument it couldn't handle from the anti-Negro strike committee. In the course of a letter to the Record, the committee, in answer to a Record editorial denouncing the strike, said:

"The Record cites General Eisenhower's praise of Negro troops in action. Will the Record cite or identify any company of mixed white and Negro soldiers of the U. S. Army now actively fighting on the battlefield?"

Needless to say, the "liberal" Record has never protested Jim Crow in the armed forces and had no answer to this one.

be a master stroke that would both smash the CIO and keep Negroes off the trolley jobs. The company began acting through its old stooges among the men, the former leaders of the company union. Using the framework of the old company union, with its company stooges in every car barn, they began whipping up a race feeling against the Negroes. The key men in this were, no doubt, the old company union stewards or barn representatives who lost their soft jobs when the CIO came in.

### COMPANY SPREADS LIES

The word was passed around that the new CIO contract and the FEPC ruling would lead to Negroes who had worked as maintenance men becoming operators and conductors, with seniority dating back to their original date of employment. The maintenance department has always been considered a completely separate set-up from the operating departments and was so recognized by the National Labor Relations Board

when it ordered separate elections for maintenance men and for operational men.

Granting maintenance men the right of carrying over their seniority seemed very unjust to most of the men. This feeling was strengthened by the fact that many of the operators and conductors have been employed only since the beginning of the war, while many Negroes in the maintenance department are old-time employees of the company. The anti-Negro agitators cleverly used the fear of post-war unemployment to whip up a heated race feeling among the men. Their theme was, "When the layoffs come after the war, the Negroes from the track repair gangs will be put in our jobs."

This agitation, of course, was based upon a lie. The CIO contract did not propose transfer of seniority from one department to another. Yet all efforts to make this clear to the men seemed to fail. The prejudices had been whipped up and argument that rested on fact and reason made little headway.

One of the factors that contributed to this situation was the CIO union's own pussy-footing of the race question during the Labor Relations Board elections. While the company union came out and opposed upgrading of Negroes and while the AFL's Amalgamated Union of Street Railwaymen permitted its lily-white policy to

The strike to keep Negroes from working on trolleys is not the first time such a question has troubled Philadelphia. In the early 1900's there was much agitation over a similar question. Only then it concerned the hiring of Italians and Irish, who had until then only been permitted to work on track repairs.

speaking for itself, the CIO Transport Workers Union, under Communist domination, deserted its principles and side-stepped the issue. Fearing to buck up against the race question, it preferred to win the election with weasel-worded statements and much

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Belying the optimistic drivel peddled about by the press agents of American big business about the bright future of the nation's sixty-three million workers in the post-war heaven of "free enterprise," Washington last week was hit by a case of jumping jitters on the problems of reconversion to peacetime industry.

Emerging from partial obscurity to take its place as the issue overshadowing all others in political and economic importance, the prospect of twenty million unemployed workers and returned servicemen, the conservative estimate of labor and the franker business leaders alike) sent congressional legislators into a minor flurry of activity.

Two measures dealing with reconversion have been reported out of committees and are now vying for support and passage

### WLB Stalls; 2,500 Strike At Houde's

The four-day rank and file strike of 2,500 workers of Local 850, UAW-CIO, at the Houde Corporation gave the workers in the Buffalo area an excellent example of union solidarity and determination but won nothing for the local membership thus far.

The "unauthorized" walkout began Saturday, July 29, when second shift workers left the larger of the two Houde plants in the city. The first shift refused to report the following Monday and picket lines, although unneeded, were out. After a mass meeting that night the workers agreed to go back on the promise that an NLRB arbitrator would meet with union and company officials Tuesday afternoon to begin settlement of the dispute.

When the three parties met and the company representative stated he was not ready or prepared for settlement, the arbitrator cancelled the hearing and returned immediately to New York. Although the membership had tentatively agreed to allow the arbitrator one week to furnish evidence of progress, the baiting attitude of the company, coupled with the obvious sympathies of the arbitrator, caused wholesale resentment and anger in the plant.

Another mass meeting was held Wednesday morning and it was unanimously agreed to follow the only union recourse—the strike. By Thursday, both Houde plants were out 100 per cent.

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by Congress. One of them is the so-called "liberal" Kilgore bill, which proposes to provide for the "human element in demobilization." The other, much more conservative and typical of its poll-taxer proponent, is the George bill.

Both of these bills are really inadequate. Both of them merely scratch the surface of the gigantic problem that confronts the economic well-being of the nation's workers. But, as will be seen, the George bill, supported by the more conservative congressmen, is a throwback to Hooverism and states' rights.

The main features of the Kilgore bill may be summarized as follows:

1. Unemployment benefits of the states are to be supplemented by federal funds in order to extend compensation for unemployment over a period of two years. Payments are to be based on the highest yearly earnings during any of the last three years, up to a maximum of \$35 per week.

2. Transportation expenses of moving a worker, his family and household effects from one locality to another, if that is required for obtaining a job, are to be paid by the government.

3. Educational or vocational training for a period of six months for jobless men and women, with maintenance allowances to be paid by the government.

The provisions of the George bill, which have been attacked by the CIO, AFL and Railway Brotherhoods, do not alter either the amounts or waiting rules of existing state laws governing unemployment compensation, but merely suggest that the states borrow federal funds if the states are depleted or insufficient.

In its basic approach to the problem of finding jobs and providing a

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## The Michigan Commonwealth Federation Is Founded!

By MARY SCOTT

The first constitutional convention of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation, held in Lansing on July 28, 29 and 30 and attended by some seventy delegates from thirty-one Commonwealth Clubs representing about eight hundred members, unionists by a large majority, adopted a constitution, platform and declaration of principles, and elected its state officers for the coming year.

Although the original convention call provided for direct affiliation and representation to unions and other mass organizations, the temporary state committee reversed itself in a last minute decision, and agreed to eliminate all bloc representation. The most important Commonwealth Clubs represented at the convention, however, were those organized in various local unions.

At no time at any of the sessions of the convention was there a single speech calling for support to Roosevelt or urging sacrifice to "Win the War," demonstrating that the delegates had come to Lansing, not for a flag-waving carnival but for the serious business of building an independent political party of the working people.

Many of the delegates were left-wing unionists who had participated in the rank and file caucus formed at the state CIO convention two weeks previously to combat the Reuther and Ades group in the UAW. These militants, while dissatisfied with many decisions of the MCF convention and in favor of more aggressive policies, remained silent or abstained from voting during most of the discussions and permitted the convention to be dominated by a conservative wing headed by Matthew Hammond, president of Local 157, UAW, and newly re-elected chairman of the MCF, and Paul Silver, president of Local 351, UAW.

A large bloc of socialist-liberals, headed by Tucker P. Smith of the Socialist Party, confused and evasive on every important issue, was especially noted for its eagerness to turn the control of the convention over to Hammond and Silver.

### "LABOR PARTY"

Three disputes arose in connection with the report of the Constitutional Committee by Smith at the first sessions of the convention: (1) the name of the party, (2) the question of bloc affiliation by unions and other organizations, and (3) the definition of rival parties.

The committee report proposed the name finally adopted by a two-to-one vote—"Michigan Commonwealth Federation." Roy Snowden, left-wing unionist from Club 16, the largest single club with a membership of one hundred in Briggs Local 212, opened the fight with a motion to adopt the name "Michigan Labor Party."

The conservatives and Socialists, uniting against the proposed change, argued that they did not want a party "dominated" by labor and that the name "Labor Party" would scare off the farmers and common people." Smith said that if "MCF" were voted down he would prefer the name "Michigan Socialist Party."

### MCF Born Out of Militant Traditions

The formation of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation cannot be understood apart from its background in what is the most advanced and militant section of the labor movement in the United States—the United Auto Workers Union, CIO, centered in and around Detroit.

Here American labor fought its greatest battles of the Thirties. Here the electrifying mass sit-down strikes cracked one industrial empire after another in the center of American mass production, leading to the complete organization of the automobile industry. Despite inexperience and factional strife, the young UAW went on to build a powerful union of over a million auto, aircraft and agricultural implement workers.

With the advent of the Second World War, however, the big corporations, aided by the War Labor Board, the Roosevelt Administration and the union's no-strike pledge, have launched a deliberate union-busting drive. Never having been reconciled to the workers' right of collective bargaining, the auto magnates have beaten down many of the hard-won gains wrested from them by years of active struggle.

The reply of the union membership to this has been expressed in hundreds of "unauthorized" walkouts, stoppages and demonstrations. The most advanced elements in the ranks see the need to translate their militancy from the industrial field to the po-

-In reply to these arguments, the left-wingers who supported Snowden's motion pointed out that the MCF from its birth five months before was based upon and dependent upon the labor movement. The labor movement alone could present a clear and decisive program to unite the "common people" against the capitalists.

The real issues underlying this first discussion became clearer in the later debates.

The Smith report omitted all references to bloc affiliates and based the party exclusively upon membership clubs. A counter-motion proposed to continue the MCF policy of bloc affiliation as well as affiliation by clubs.

An attempt to build a slightly enlarged edition of the Socialist Party would doom the MCF to sterility, said the maker of the motion, Herman Benson of Club 10. To build the MCF, it was necessary to fight within the unions to involve the mass of organized labor, now misdirected by the PAC into support of the Democratic

litical, where the real decisions affecting their lives and unions are made.

Therefore, on March 4 and 5 of this year, 250 delegates, most of them from UAW locals, convened in Detroit to form a political party of their own. They named it, tentatively (but just reaffirmed), the Michigan Commonwealth Federation. It declared then that "the party shall never endorse a candidate of a rival party." This statement, excluding support to the Democrats and Republicans, was a giant step forward toward independent working class political action. The MCF was promptly denounced by both the UAW tops and the Communist Party.

The MCF leadership itself, lodged in the second-rank leadership of the UAW, has since backtracked and retreated from some of its original statements of aims and purposes. It has yielded to one degree or another to the pressure of the pro-Roosevelt politicians in the UAW and the national CIO.

The recently concluded founding convention of the party, which was held in Lansing during the last days of July, is analyzed in the article presented herewith and reveals to what extent this compromise damages the prospects for real independent political action and to what degree its formation on more solid foundations represents a signal advance for the labor movement of the whole country.

Party, in independent working class politics.

A barrage of speeches against bloc affiliation followed, including leading ones by Smith, Hammond and Silver. They are, above all, anxious to avoid any conflict with R. J. Thomas and the CIO tops, and they hope to build a party without a fight within the unions. Smith declared that he was "not eager" to have the big union leaders in the party.

In a pitiful speech, Irwin Bauer, delegate from Detroit, announced that while he himself was in favor of bloc affiliation, he would not vote for it. The Smith-Connelly Act made it illegal, he contended, and we must beware of running afoul of the law. In his

timidity, Bauer seemed unaware that Sidney Hillman and the PAC had successfully fought off this argument and have gone ahead with building the PAC without concern for the Smith-Connelly Act.

The provisional constitution of the MCF adopted at this conference in March provided for bloc affiliation. But only a handful of votes, including that of Adrian Jensen, left-wing unionist from Jackson, were cast in favor of bloc affiliation at the convention. This is a serious setback and makes it more difficult to rally mass support for independent, working class politics.

The defeat is somewhat offset by the fact that the most important clubs now in the MCF are in unions, although the old state committee discouraged the formation of union clubs and urged neighborhood clubs instead. It is doubly necessary NOW to build clubs within the unions.

The Constitution proposed by Smith, like the old Constitution, excluded members of rival parties, defining a rival party as one "whose policies or platform are contrary to MCF principles and policy, or a party that runs candidates in opposition to MCF candidates."

In an unexpected move, Willard Martinson of Detroit, former educational director of Local 50, UAW, and in the extreme right wing of the MCF, moved an amendment to these rules providing that a rival party is "any party that legally certifies any candidate for public office."

Silver, who himself lends one hand to Democratic Party candidates through his position as executive board member of the Wayne County PAC, vigorously seconded Martinson, declaring that no one can have one foot in the MCF and the other in another party.

This was an entirely unprovoked and unjustified thrust at the Socialist Party. Ample provision exists in the Constitution without Martinson's amendment to exclude the enemies of the MCF who are to be found in the Democratic, Republican and Communist Parties. The SP had already expressed its support of MCF and had publicly announced that it would withdraw its candidates wherever the MCF took the field.

One delegate pointed out that the MCF was organized not against the Socialist Party and other small groups, but against the Democratic and Republican Parties, and any measures necessary were further steps to prevent support to these two old parties. No mass working class party exists now and the MCF is organized to fill that need. Martinson's amendment could therefore in no way help to build the MCF and was aimed to cut off some of its friends and therefore to weaken it.

Tucker P. Smith, Socialist Party leader, and reporter for the constitutional committee, apparently anxious to pacify the Silver-

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NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Pedro Ship Repair Workers Take Strike Vote

SAN PEDRO—Fifteen hundred repair workers from the shipyards of Los Angeles harbor voted to request permission of the national office of the IUMSWA to file notice of intention to strike, as required under the Smith-Connally Act.

by Local 9 in over two years, was called by a rank and file committee elected to formulate a plan of action in view of the WLB decision. While men in the yards were showing their temper by fighting grievances vigorously on the job, the committee decided to call a meeting of all yards and all shifts at four o'clock in the afternoon, a time that would impinge slightly on the regular working time of both the day and swing shifts.

LIARS AT BETHLEHEM The worst display of treachery to the union, which took place at Bethlehem, one of the two largest repair yards under Local 9 jurisdiction, succeeded in convincing the shop stewards that the meeting had been called off. That they lied, deliberately was shown when, after spending two days convincing their union brothers there was no meeting scheduled, these self-same people showed up at the meeting to try to continue to confuse and disrupt the meeting.

cerning some sort of differential between new and old work. What this amounts to is an invitation from the WLB to resume the old run-around that has kept the repair workers dangling for the past two years. If negotiations are carried on as they have been in the recent past, with the union placidly accepting every adverse ruling and patiently appealing it to higher bodies, which are numberless, the repair workers can be sure that they will wait another two years and still not get a thing. But if negotiations can be carried out with direct action pressure always present, both in and out of the yards, real gains can be won.

pay equal wages throughout the Pacific Coast when they thought the men would take anything. FIGHT FOR 11.6—OR... The repair committee is prepared to fight vigorously for 11.6, but if that fails, to insist on the restoration of every bit of penalty time, overtime and other repair conditions that were given up two years ago on the promise of the blanket differential. Already the men in the yards are asserting their rights.

No-Strike Pledge Keeps Wages Frozen

The AFL survey on corporation profiteering, contained in "Labor's Monthly Review," and reported on in last week's issue of LABOR ACTION, should stir the labor movement into a concerted offensive against the rank injustice of the wage-freezing Little Steel formula. It should stir it into a definitive showdown with the War Labor Board on the latter's persistent refusal to make necessary wage adjustments in the light of the indisputable statistical reports of both national labor bodies, which show a 43.5 jump in the cost of living since January, 1941.

Murray Hears Dalrymple's SOS; URW Dictator Off to France

By BILL FORD AKRON, Aug. 7—Dictator Sherman H. Dalrymple, president of the United Rubber Workers of America, was appointed by Philip Murray last week as one of three CIO labor leaders to visit England and tour the French battlefields. He will return in time to appear at the rubber workers convention, September 18.

URWA's no-strike pledge, whereby he has expelled militant workers without trial from the union, has aroused the ranks throughout the international. This policy and the no-strike pledge itself are at stake at the coming convention in New York City. All signs have been pointing recently to a big victory for the anti-Dalrymple forces, with expulsion from the union movement being Dalrymple's fate.

Houde - Buffalo Walkout - - -

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Some of the causes of the walkout are violations of the union contract by the company, such as deduction of pay for time spent in discussion with management on seniority rank and layoff. Also the War Labor Board's refusal to decide on over sixty disputes between the union and the company, some dating as far as December, 1942.

where ever received a finer reception and a more enthusiastic and whole-hearted pledge of support. The workers left the hall that night confident that action was on the way at last. They all realized that the major test was still ahead but that as the rank and file they had done all that was required of them to insure victory.

ceived from the Houde labor relations director asking the local president what action the local contemplated taking against fifteen known strike instigators. In answer to this direct threat, Hilger, master politician and bureaucrat, suggested that the local reply that since the local knew of no fifteen instigators there could be no action taken, but that the local would investigate the matter! This from an international representative whose salary is paid by the rank and file.

India in Revolt

By Henry Judd 25 Cents Postpaid WORKERS PARTY 114 W. 14th St., New York 11, N. Y.

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Sub-Regional UAW Director Hilger urged the workers from the very beginning to return to work. He could offer no solution of the workers' problems, of course, but relied solely on flag-waving and the "I am an old hand and know what's best for you" technique. In meetings he was booted continuously and commanded no attention from the workers.

BACKTRACKING The Friday morning meeting, attended by 1,000 workers, saw the membership attacked by the Army and the international officer, Hilger, and saw the leaders they had backed put on a weak display of jingoism mixed with a wild, senseless harangue that ended in an impassioned plea for the help of President Roosevelt.

They should organize an alert, progressive group within the local which will forward a progressive program and which will serve as an organized rank and file leadership.

Program Adopted by New MCF Compromises on Many Vital Issues--

(Continued from page 1) Martinson right wing, kept quiet all through the discussions, while several socialist-liberals made half-hearted objections to the amendment. At the same time, a volley of right wing speakers rallied behind Martinson. Nevertheless, the vote on the amendment was 22 to 22. Silver proposed that a roll call vote be taken after the credentials report was completed and this was agreed to.

Martinson translated this abracadabra into English, explaining that he meant "the right to strike." But of course simple English would not sound professorial or profound enough. Martinson further explained to those interested in following his gyrations even more closely that instead of "economic hardship" the committee at first had considered the phrase "sub-standard living." But no doubt the latter sounded just a trifle too simple.

Moreover, any concrete statement belongs in the platform, not in the declaration of principles. Walter Hardin, a Negro himself, who is now an international representative for the UAW, in a typical "Uncle Tom" performance, spoke against the amendment, arguing that the Negro needs no special consideration. The conservative bloc, aided by Hardin, might have dodged the entire issue, but were stymied by Dr. Edgar Keemer, a Negro delegate from Detroit, who insisted on a clear and firm statement against discrim-

penalties against the practice of discrimination and denouncing segregation of Negroes in the armed forces. "WORKERS GOVERNMENT" The constitution committee, through Smith, reported on the "object" of the MCF. Repeating the vague ambiguities of the declaration of principles, it favored "democratic economic planning," "economic justice" and a "new type of public servant."

While the conservative wing of the MCF will be able to interpret the above section as leaving the door open to support to the war, the sentiment of the delegates was overwhelmingly on the other side, and not one delegate rose to make a pro-war speech.

of the Smith-Connally Act. One delegate suggested that an addition be made to "guarantee the legal right to strike." This time Silver employed his demagogic talents in the guise of a super-radical. In a speech "supported 100 per cent" by Frank Rudolph of Flint, he declared: "I am against Congress legislating for or against labor's right to strike."

Silver used his time on the floor to slander those who favored running a gubernatorial candidate as "stooges of the bosses" out to "wreck the MCF." Tucker P. Smith, in a masterpiece of confusion and evasion, spoke at length, insisting that he could not decide for himself either for or against running a candidate for governor. He warned the delegates not to raise their hopes too high for victory in the '44 campaign. There are disadvantages and advantages on both sides, he said.

Between Friday and Sunday a series of behind-the-scenes conferences were held, with the net result, as reported by the Detroit News, that the dispute "was settled without a roll call vote when a Socialist Party bloc, led by Tucker P. Smith, capitulated to the right wing."

The High point in the declaration is the proclamation of "economic democracy." What does this mean? This ambiguous phrase is explained in a series of other ambiguous phrases as the reader is dazzled with "control by majority," "publicly planned production," "earned abundance" and "public interest." The only saving grace of the report was Martinson's statement, in reply to a question, that the declaration would not be distributed on a mass scale, and in fact might not be available for distribution at all for some time. If this is true, the declaration will occupy its proper niche.

Carper, delegate from Club No. 2, Detroit, but was defeated, receiving only a handful of votes. The statement of purposes as it now stands can mean all things to all men: Smith can go to his liberal-socialist followers and claim a victory for "socialism," while Silver can go to more conservative elements and champion left-wing New Dealism.

point on platform While the platform is not free of the florid phraseology of the declaration of principles, on the whole it is more concrete, containing sections on housing, taxation, veterans' rights and labor's rights, which provide the basis for a fighting political campaign in 1944.

Several amendments to the platform section on taxation were made by Benson of Detroit and supported by John Zupan, left-wing unionist of Willow Run, including proposals to place a 100 per cent tax on all war profits over five per cent on invested capital, a \$25,000 ceiling on income, a graduated capital levy on accumulated wealth and abolition of all taxes on wages and incomes below \$5,000. These were aimed at putting the war burden on the profiteers.

CANDIDATES IN 1944 ELECTIONS The last disputed question related to the 1944 elections. Silver, recommending that the MCF run a small slate of candidates for several minor posts and not contest the governorship, proposed that candidates be run in two legislative districts where the Democratic candidates are now under indictment for graft, in the 17th Congressional District, where the PAC-supported Democrat was defeated in the primaries by a reactionary, pro-poll-tax Democrat, and in a few other minor spots. Delegate Jensen, later elected one of the party's three trustees, opened the fight with a motion to discuss running candidates for governor and lieutenant-governor. He pointed out that the MCF could rally all its forces in the elections and win the greatest support to its program by a state-wide contest for governor.

Observers at the convention were amazed at the performance of a group of silent weasels politicians of the Socialist Workers Party, who could speak in very solemn and statesman-like tones on trivial matters but who remained silent on every crucial issue. These people, fairly well represented, at best rose to a few point-less and scattered remarks.

"DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES" The "declaration of principles," reported out by Martinson and adopted without important changes after three more readings, is a masterpiece of confusion and contradiction where flamboyant euphemisms are substituted for simple English in a vain effort to appear profound, and a plethora of vague phrases employed to conceal a complete absence of any clear program.

THE NEGRO QUESTION One serious discussion took place in the course of the report on the declaration—on the Negro question. At no point does the declaration mention the Negro by name or deal with the Negro question. To remedy this omission, a motion was made that a section be included which would condemn all forms of discrimination against Negroes, Jews and other minorities, and propose the principle of full economic, political and social rights for Negroes. An amazing array of arguments against this amendment followed.

Carper, delegate from Club No. 2, Detroit, but was defeated, receiving only a handful of votes. The statement of purposes as it now stands can mean all things to all men: Smith can go to his liberal-socialist followers and claim a victory for "socialism," while Silver can go to more conservative elements and champion left-wing New Dealism.

point on platform While the platform is not free of the florid phraseology of the declaration of principles, on the whole it is more concrete, containing sections on housing, taxation, veterans' rights and labor's rights, which provide the basis for a fighting political campaign in 1944.

Several amendments to the platform section on taxation were made by Benson of Detroit and supported by John Zupan, left-wing unionist of Willow Run, including proposals to place a 100 per cent tax on all war profits over five per cent on invested capital, a \$25,000 ceiling on income, a graduated capital levy on accumulated wealth and abolition of all taxes on wages and incomes below \$5,000. These were aimed at putting the war burden on the profiteers.

SUPPORT AND BUILD THE MCF The first convention of the MCF is over and left-wing militants must now support it and build it into a mass force for effective and independent labor political action. Although many of its decisions, especially the elimination of bloc affiliation, are characterized by a conservatism that must sooner or later be abandoned if success is to be achieved, the MCF represents a powerful idea that can rally thousands toward progressive action on the basis of its platform and election campaign.

The delegates themselves look upon the convention as only the first step forward. The thousands of unionists, deserted by the trade union tops in the CIO, who fight as best they can against employer provocations, are in no mood to remain satisfied with "diplomatic" half-measures. In this lies the hope for building a strong, fighting MCF.

# \$100 Billions - - Leftovers for Profit Feast

By Mary Bell

How good the war has been to U. S. capitalism, the readers of LABOR ACTION already know, because we have been indeed scrupulous in keeping tab and informing our readers of the runaway profits of big business. We now wish to call attention to some left-overs of this great profiteering feast.

The OWI (Office of War Information) reports that surplus war production will amount to FIFTY TO ONE HUNDRED BILLION DOLLARS! There is already half a BILLION surplus in the hands of manufacturers today. Included in this excess property are the huge, government-built, gratis-to-manufacturers, plants. It covers the multitude of things that have been produced and built for war—food, clothing, air fields, camp sites, motor trucks, shoes, razor blades, medicines, adhesive tape, etc.

The Surplus War Property Administration has divided the list of expected surpluses at the end of the war into the following categories: (1) industrial facilities, (2) merchant ships, (3) military construction, such as air fields, camps and Navy yards and bases, (4) war housing, including living accommodations for workers, hospitals and community facilities built as federal projects, (5) finished goods, such as blankets, shoes, airplanes, (6) stock piles, such as tin, copper and other controlled materials, and (7) inventories in the hands of war contractors, including raw materials, goods in process and equipment.

## NO "CHAOS"—THEY PROMISE

Now, these fifty to one hundred billions in leftovers of war belong to the "free enterprisers" and their enterprising government. How will they handle what the OWI describes as "a major peace problem"? The Surplus War Property Administration says it does not look for the "chaos" which developed early in 1919, following the First World War. The milestones of this period were: Armistice, termination of war contracts with large inventories piled up, unemployment due to shutting down of war industries, consequent lack of purchasing power, no stimulus for business to produce. This was the last post-war depression, which occurred not only in the U. S., but on a world scale.

The SWPA says that plans are being perfected now to taper off war production gradually as military requirements decrease. But military requirements do not necessarily decrease gradually, but depend upon the fortunes of war. The Brewster workers in New York were not eased out gradually, but several thousand were fired at a clip, when that war contract expired. Too many other workers have experienced dis-employment in the midst of the war for us to have any faith in the "plans" of the capitalists for gradual reconversion.

And what will they do with the excess munitions and war facilities? Some of these will undoubtedly be used in the post-war policing of Europe to assure the Four Freedoms—for the "free enterprisers," of course. The rest will be utterly useless—save to put down popular rebellions of the discontented peoples of Europe, or till the period of the next world war. But even then they are quite likely to be obsolete, since the advent of the robot bomb has caused U. S. specialists in the technology of mass murder to perfect this and newer military instruments.

It is estimated that there will be several million tons of food in government stores at the war's end. The OWI hints of aiding 30,000,000 stranded people in Europe. But despite this abundance of food in the U. S., LABOR ACTION has pointed out previously the low-calory diet planned for starving Italy. This is not to mention the past record and probable future role of U. S. food as being a weapon of politics.

## EXCESS GOODS ABROAD

Surpluses of American goods have also accumulated abroad, in northwest European countries from France to Norway; in Mediterranean countries; in India, Burma, South Pacific islands, the East Indies and in many countries in South America. The OWI report states that the sale of surplus property abroad will be "regulated to support American foreign policy and the interests of American business and take into consideration the probable effect on future export markets." In other words, the sale of these surpluses of food, machinery, ships, etc., will NOT be undertaken to satisfy the needs of the people of the world—who have been taxed, starved and bled white by the war—but their sale will be subordinated to the profit-lust of American capitalists who will export and sell according to the profits they can make.

The American workers will have no surplus at the end of the war. They will be lucky if they have shirts on their backs and a roof over their heads. They have worked on the farms and in the mills to produce the material with which the war is being fought. They are paying for the war—by reduced wages, higher prices, overwhelmingly large taxes, purchases of war bonds. Far from having a surplus at the war's end, the workers will be treated as a part of the surplus commodities, no longer useful to the capitalists, who are even now emptying them out into the streets.

(Continued in last column of this page)

# Albert Joseph Liebig (Ted Lyons)

We have just received the sad news that Al (Ted Lyons) Liebig, U. S. Navy (Purple Heart, Bronze Star), was killed in action on June 23 in the attack on Saipan. Abe, as he was popularly called, was one of the youngest members of the Workers Party and one of LABOR ACTION's most promising writers. His loss to our movement is all the greater when one considers the many years that were before him when the Second Imperialist World War dragged him in and made him one of its victims.

Many of our readers are not familiar with our young comrade, who wrote for LABOR ACTION under the name of Ted Lyons. He was born in Chicago and raised on its famous West Side, growing up in a neighborhood that had its share of workers and middle class people: young intellectuals, radicals of all stripes, boxers and ball players, high ranking gangsters and minor league bullies and poolroom loafers. He knew them all. And they knew him, too; they knew him as a young socialist who was always trying to ex-

plain things to them, explain their own lives to them, why they were so shallow and hopeless and why socialism was their hope, too, as well as the hope for the hundreds of millions of people in the world.

They liked Abe. They liked him because he was one of the boys, and grew up and played with them, because he understood them, because he was young, enthusiastic, full of optimism. Yes, he was a little queer, talking about socialism, the future of man, about peace and security and the rotten system of capitalism. But, in their own way, they understood him.

Abe was only twenty-three when his life was taken from him. Yet he was a veteran of the revolutionary socialist movement. He joined it when he was sixteen. He belonged to the "locked-out generation" of youth which grew up in the crisis years of the Thirties. Thus, he came to know the meaning of capitalism, the hopeless future it held out for his generation, a future of unemployment, poverty and war.

When he joined the Young People's Socialist League (Fourth International) and thereafter the Workers Party, it was with the fullest conviction that this was his life: to be a fighter for humanity, for a new social order, for the freedom and security of socialism.

And while he lived in a period in which the workers' movement was at a low ebb, his confidence was the confidence of youth. There was never any doubt in his mind about the future. He knew the workers of the world must abolish the capitalist system of exploitation, and he was prepared to do his share. His one great hope was to be able to participate in the rebuilding of a decent world. But the capitalism which held out no hope for his future, but which promised unemployment and poverty and war, kept its promise. It took him into military service, put a uniform on him, gave him a few fundamentals in military "science," and finally took his life. Abe had a suspicion that he might be killed. He was in the thick of the fighting. He had al-

ready been awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received during the Marshall Islands engagements. He had also received the Bronze Star for aiding his buddies under fire. The latter was characteristic of Abe.

Now, Abe is gone. He didn't live very long. He won't see the future world he fought for in our ranks. He didn't get much chance to do all the things he wanted to do and felt had to be done. He didn't get the chance to write all the things he wanted to write for his generation in order to help them understand what it was he was fighting for in the ranks of our revolutionary socialist movement.

Young Liebig did leave a few things in writing which tell more about him than anything we can write, and that is why we are re-printing a story he wrote for LABOR ACTION on the occasion of Christmas, 1941. There was nothing "put on" in this story; it reflected everything he felt deep in his heart. Good-bye, Abe! We're certainly going to miss you!

# This is Sure a Helluva Christmas

By TED LYONS

This is a helluva Christmas. The whole world's being shot up like the grand finale in a Buck Jones horse opera. Everybody's glum. The olde Yuletide spirit just ain't what she used to be. A smile on the average person's pan is as brief as a Tommy Manville marriage. And about the only guy that's really lettin' loose with some belly laughs is the mechanical Santa Claus in the department store window.

It isn't the weather that has everyone down; and it isn't mass constipation, as the evil-eyed, omnipresent "doctor" with the warning, pointing finger in the car ads tries to bulldoze people into believing. Whether the average person drinks "Scrutan" (read it backwards) or bock beer, the same blue feeling prevails. For unless "Scrutan" has more to it than advertised, it can't erase the fact that there's a gigantic WORLD WAR going on—and that today the singing of "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Man" is as out of place as Gypsy Rose Lee in the Vatican!

Everyone's trying hard to be merry. But how can they, when all around the globe are death, destruction and misery—with larger and greater portions of them on the horizon. The prospective corpses in the Army and Navy—what've they to be merry about? The sight of an undersized sweater, a gift of some women's knitting club, isn't going to send a soldier or sailor into whoops of delicious joy. And the advertising agent who thought up the campaign stunt for that soap company, stating that what the boys in the service want FIRST above everything else is soap (!!!), must've been having a nightmare in a Bowery flop house when he came up with that gem.

The home front can't even begin to make this the "Merriest Christmas of them all." The war has thrown families apart. Some of the families and some of the sweethearts and friends are already mourning the dead. The working man who's been handed a SEVEN-DAY WEEK for a Christmas pres-

ent is wishing his boss something more than a Merry Christmas—and it's not a Happy New Year!

One thing, you can't blame the gloom on the bosses. They're trying hard enough to make the country happy. The movies are coming out from Hollywood assembly lines like hell on greased wheels. Happy movies, hilarious movies: The hero's in the Army... boy, is it fun!... Good lookin' babes swarmin' all over the battleship... still brushin' 'em off like flies... Now the two buck private comedians are beatin' the livin' hell out of a major who seems to be having more fun out of it than his tormentors... Now the two comedians are playing sail- or and giving the same treatment to an admiral, who in the next scene is going to decorate the boys with the highest honors 'cause they've just saved the fleet from destruction by finding a fifth columnist posing as a 16-inch gun... All kinds of plots... All kinds of jokes... All kinds of girls... Just enough leg art to get by the Hays office and

the Legion of Decency... And just enough brevity of dress in the right places so that the boys can forget their troubles. Hollywood covers all the angles—and leaves the curves bare.

For the more elite with troubles on their minds, the stage is the thing. For the stay-at-homes it's the radio. Pressure on all sides, everywhere you go. "BE HAPPY!"—the bosses command it.

But it's no go. Gloom and Joe Louis reign supreme. The store windows on Fifth Avenue are breath-taking. Broadway is all aglow. The Gay White Way is crowded with beautiful women.

But as the late French General Foch remarked after being asked how he enjoyed his first visit to the Follies: "I've never seen such gay behinds, nor such sad faces."

Yes, it's our helluva Christmas. And the only guy who's in a laughing mood is the department store Santa Claus. And the only reason he's laughing is 'cause he's such a damn dummy!

# Saving the Jews - - Allied Style

By V. KAAREN

An offer to release all those Hungarian Jews who can obtain visas for Palestine or Sweden and all Jewish children under ten who can obtain refuge among the United Nations has been made by the Horthy government in Budapest. The issue is a hot one in London and Washington, because here at last is an opportunity to make good a few of the noble promises repeated endlessly by Allied nations' statesmen. And yet, despite the fact that the offer was repeated several times and is obviously genuine (made through the International Red Cross), no acceptance has come from the capitals of the two leading "humanitarian" powers, England and the United States.

A statement was made last Friday in the House of Commons by George Hall, Under Secretary of the Foreign Office, who said that the British government has considered the advisability of granting British nationality to Jews in occupied territory but that it was worried that such verbal protection would not prevent the Hungarian government from continuing its mass slaughter of Jews. This mild and useless gesture of England's was branded by the Hungarian newspapers with the following comment:

"The British strike a very humble and unassuming note as soon as it is a question of providing real help, and not of merely broadcasting propaganda phrases. They prefer that the Swedes should look after the Jews."

Another "kind" offer was made by the British, namely, that they would send additional supplies of goods through the Allied blockade to any neutral country which would accept Jewish refugee children from Hungary.

To date, very little has been done to bring the Jews out of Hungary has been done. In fact, eight hundred Hungarian Jews who do have Palestinian visas are in danger of having their visas lapse because they have to depend on Allied shipping to bring them out of the country.

Under the conditions laid down by the British White Paper restricting immigration to Palestine to a thin trickle, the remaining certificates (if Great Britain permitted them to be used immediately) would only cover about four per cent of the Jews in Hungary.

Here in the United States, the "free ports" advocated by the War Refugee Board have not become a reality despite the fact that President Roosevelt has come out in favor of the

idea and has announced the setting up of a single camp for one thousand refugees at Oswego, N. Y. Also, that fact that there has been practically no immigration to the United States in the past five years does not incline this government to permit Europeans to enter here, not even on a temporary basis.

Meanwhile the deportation of Jews from Hungary to Poland has already taken a terrific toll. It is estimated that about 400,000 Jews have already been sent to the "liquidation" centers of Birkenau and Oswiacien.

There is more than the question of the Hungarian Jews involved. As the tides of war turn against the satellite nations of the Axis and as the German army is pushed back more and more, the plight of over one million Jewish refugees camped in Axis dominated countries is revealed and is crying out for a solution.

## CONFERENCES—NO ACTION

Rumania has offered to release its Jews. Other Balkan countries are following suit. The refugees who managed to reach Southern Italy, North Africa and other places need homes. The concentration camps of France will soon be in the hands of the Al-

lies instead of in German hands. All these people will automatically become the wards of the Allies. Still the Allies are trying desperately to evade the problem. Conference after conference is held to find a formula but so far the refugee question remains a football to be passed back and forth between England and the United States.

Another "intergovernmental committee for refugees," a body which was reorganized after the failure of the Bermuda Conference last year, is to meet on August 15. This committee, which was originally established in 1938 as a result of the Evian Conference, called at the initiative of President Roosevelt to rescue Jews from Germany and find places of refuge for them, has not one single accomplishment to its credit.

Now that the war has gone beyond the "ideological state," as Prime Minister Churchill puts it, the fact that between one and two million Jews managed to keep a spark of human life in their bodies and now need a place of refuge is a source of extreme embarrassment to the Allies. It is far easier to express noble regret for the six million who have already died. (Since this writing the Oswego camp has opened.—Ed.)

# Jobless Future For Women After the War

By John Stuart

A major factor in the problem of reconversion and post-war unemployment is the question of women workers. Nearly five million out of eighteen million working women have been drawn into the labor force of the U. S. since the war began.

Some of these women, an estimated two million, will permanently leave off working in factories and on farms, leaving, however, a net addition of three million women workers to the labor market.

## DARK FUTURE FOR WOMEN WORKERS

Now, under a decent economic system, which would guarantee jobs for everyone and plenty for all, there would be no reason for concern at this augmenting of the available labor force. But our big business, "free enterprise" system means millions of unemployed in normal times, and the post-war breakdown is expected to result in twenty million unemployed. Therefore, the competition for jobs will again be rife. The veteran-soldier will be pitted against the civilian, youth against age, Negro against white, men against women. The outlook for women workers, according to conservative business analysts, does not look bright.

There is no question of the value of the skills of employed women, their talents or their efficiency. In a survey of 146 plants, company officials said the production record of the women was as good or better than that of men on the same or similar work. Lack of ability cannot be honestly offered as the reason for throwing women out of work.

Employers have found the rate of absenteeism among women greater than that of men. However, the reasons for this are also to be found in our faulty economic system, which places a double burden on women workers. Most of those who have gone to work have a dual burden—the care of the house and family in addition to the eight or ten hours a day on the outside job. Despite promises, no adequate provision has been made in the form of nurseries for children or communal facilities for cleaning and meals. Hence the high rate of absenteeism among women. This is not a fundamental reason why they will be turned out into the streets in the concluding days of the war and after.

The women who will be seeking jobs after the war need work. The Women's Department of the Bureau of Labor Statistics has shown conclusively that the overwhelming majority of working women do not work merely for luxuries, pin money and the like. They work out of economic necessity, because they have to support themselves, families and dependents. But most of these women will be the first prey of unemployment. They entered last into the labor market, are not well organized, receive lower pay for equal work, and will be the first to be fired.

As occurs in every period of tense economic crisis and depression, the cry will be raised: "Fire the married women workers!" But again our figures show the vast majority of married working women in the shops and fields work because they have to. This is to omit all arguments concerning the rights of women to economic independence and a career for its own sake, or the contribution working women might make to society.

Women will be fired in droves because there will not be enough jobs to go around. That is the way capitalism functions. No contracts, no possibility of profits. No profits, no production. No production, no jobs.

## PLENTY FOR ALL

Only a society run by the labor movement, controlling government and industry, can assure permanent employment and prosperity for all. Working people are the majority of society, consequently they are interested in the prosperity of society, not the wealth of a few, the principle on which capitalism is presently based.

There are now some four million women members of unions. All CIO unions are open to women, and the necessities of war production have caused some AFL unions to open their hitherto closed doors. It is the responsibility of these women unionists, and even more, of the union leaderships, to work for a labor government. This will provide not only the social legislation necessary to safeguard women workers, communal facilities to remove household drudgery and aid in the caring of children, but jobs and plenty for all.

# \$100 Billions Pork Barrel - -

The war surplus, as well as the entire productive plant of the country, should be managed by their creators, the working people. Then there would be no chaos, "planned" or unplanned. The distribution of surplus war goods would not be dependent on the profit motive, but the genuine needs of the people. War industry would not await the caprice of profiteers to reconvert to needed civilian goods, but would change over immediately to meet civilian needs for goods and jobs.

OPERATE ALL BIG INDUSTRY FOR THE WELFARE OF THE PLAIN PEOPLE, WITH WORKERS' CONTROL OF PRODUCTION THROUGH THE UNIONS AND PLANT COMMITTEES!

# Company Union-Wrecking Behind Philly Strike on Negro Upgrading

(Continued from page 1)

talk about standing behind the "war effort" and "our commander-in-chief." This did not contribute to building up understanding and unity between Negro and white union men. The TWU's experience in the recent strike proves that such playing of politics and desertion of principles is a weak foundation upon which to build a union. The first serious crisis and it caves in.

## INCITING PREJUDICE

There were other factors that led the men to listen to the strike agitation. One of them was the feeling that "driving a trolley is a white man's job." This feeling is based on the fact that under capitalism the Negro has always been given the dirty and lowly jobs. The trolley men felt that since Negroes were not treated as equals in our economic system and even the government discriminated against them in the armed forces, it would lower their occupation in the eyes of the public if Negroes worked on trolleys. They considered it a "loss of face" and lowering of dignity.

When one of the Philadelphia Record reporters argued with some of the strikers about the right of Negroes to equal opportunities on the job, one of the strikers asked: "Tell

me, how many Negroes are employed in the pressroom of the Record and how many drive delivery wagons for your paper?"

Another of the factors that led to the support of the strike was the fact that most of the men and women operating cars and buses were on extremely long schedules. Some complained about working seventy-two hours and more a week! Others complained about the low hourly pay rate compared with what was paid in industry. One showed a weekly check of \$61.05 for 61½ hours. This included 8½ hours a day for six days and 9½ hours on Sunday. Though supporting a strike against employment of Negroes would continue the manpower shortage and, therefore, continue the long hours, the strikers did not stop to reason out their own contradictions but welcomed the opportunity to give air to their feelings of discontent and disgust.

It was the strategy of the company to play upon these feelings of the men and provoke a strike that would discredit the TWU and force the FEPC to cancel or suspend its ruling. The strike took place suddenly and with marvelous efficiency. Squads of men in automobiles began cruising the streets and telling the men to turn in cars and buses. This took

place on Tuesday morning, the day upon which the first Negro trainee was to take a car out on the streets with an instructor.

The PTC had dramatized this incident by releasing a story on it the previous day. The story appeared in

A train pulled in with a woman operator at the controls. She refused at first to quit because a union steward (the CIO Transport Workers Union) had told her to stay on the job.

"But I think you're right," she said.

"We don't hate Negroes," one of the men declared, "but they ought to stay in their place."

"The CIO has a no-discrimination clause in their constitution," said another. "They took the Negroes on in New York City and they have to take them on here."

"What we ought to do," one suggested, "is start our own independent union and put in a clause to keep the Negroes out. The United States Constitution has a no-discrimination clause in it and if some of the states can violate that clause we ought to be able to do the same thing."—Philadelphia Record.

the daily press along with a picture of the Negro, Thomas Allen, who transferred to the operator's job after many years as a maintenance employee. Within a few hours most of the trolleys and buses were returned to the barns and the company shut off the power, making sure that the rest, particularly the Market Street elevated and Broad Street subway, could not operate.

## COMPANY UNIONISTS GET AID

The complete company co-operation was further seen in the fact that the strike headquarters was established in the barn at Tenth and Luzerne. The barns were used for mass meetings of strikers, for committee meetings, for headquarters for roving picket cars, and the company telephones were at the disposal of the strikers. Despite the first-class emergency that confronted the PTC in the 100 per cent tie-up, there was no meeting either of the company board of directors or of the executive committee of the board.

On Tuesday night, the first day of the strike, there were widespread rumors of race rioting running through the city. However, most of these, when tracked down, proved to be vastly exaggerated. There was con-

siderable violence in one area where young Negroes gave vent to their justified rage by smashing store windows owned by whites. The tense race feeling also led to considerable minor clashes between Negroes and whites. Yet the absence of any hysteria among the mass of the people limited such violence to individuals and small groups.

On the whole, the reports from the shops indicate that the mass of the workers tried to judge the issue on its merits. There was widespread sympathy for the strikers among the workers based on a feeling that the trolley men were fighting to protect their jobs.

The only note of unreasoned hate entered the discussions with the circulation of rumors about "Negroes stopping cars driven by whites and dragging them out, including women," and about Negroes having "slit a sailor's throat on Broad Street." Few people stopped to inquire whether it was true. However, when nothing appeared in the papers about these alleged incidents, they were soon quickly forgotten. However, in most shops, small groups of the more informed union men argued heatedly on behalf of the rights of Negroes to equal employment opportunity. Wherever such arguments were put

forward and firmly defended, the concepts that based themselves upon prejudice made little headway.

After a long delay, the government stepped in and ordered the Army to take over the system. Five days after the service had stopped, troops

Thousands of Philadelphia workers walking to work during the strike to keep Negroes from operating trolleys and buses, saw an interesting sight. Not only interesting, but very educational.

The repair crews, working on the trolley tracks, kept right on working. They were not bothered by the strike or the race issue. They did not stop work in arguments over who was black or who was white. One held the spike and the other swung the sledge hammer. At lunch time they sat down, as track crews always do, to eat their lunch together. There was evident the feeling of understanding and respect for each other always evident between men who work closely together.

It is almost needless to add that half of them are white and half of them are colored.

marched in and took over. This is in stark contrast to what would have happened had this been a legitimate strike for better working conditions led by a union. Though there were enough man-hours lost in defense plants to have built a light cruiser (some 5,000,000, it is estimated), the strike was permitted to go through a leisurely process of referral from one agency to another and then to the White House and back to the Army. The latter first appealed to the patriotism of the men. Only as the strike was entering its sixth day did the government invoke the Smith-Connally Act to arrest the strike leaders, all of them former company union "big shots."

Just where the restoration of service under Army rule leaves the Negroes is difficult to say. The reports from all sources ominously omit reference to this, the key question. Yet there will be little peace if it is straddled. If some formula is found whereby the PTC will win its point and keep Negroes out of the trolley jobs, no self-respecting Negro in Philadelphia will sit by and accept defeat lying down. On the other hand, the fascist-minded agitators in the strike leadership will in all likelihood seek measures to prevent the operation of cars by Negroes.

# Editorials

## A Labor Slush Fund for Boss Politicians IS Scandalous!

It should be clear by now to all readers of LABOR ACTION where we stand on the question of political action by the workers. We stand for genuine independent political action by labor. That means building an independent Labor Party! It does not mean playing capitalist politics. It does not mean supporting two parties of the bosses like the Democratic and Republican Parties, no matter what differences they may have among themselves on this or that practical and specific question.

It would be foolish to deny that there are many obstacles in the way of labor's participation in independent political action. The Republican and Democratic Parties have fought and will continue to fight with any and all means to prevent action by the labor movement. Special election laws are passed to make it difficult for new parties to enter the field of competition with the capitalist parties. The yellow press becomes absolutely furious and vile in its attacks on any efforts made in the direction of independent labor political action. But the labor movement has the strength to do it; it has the manpower and the resources. But it does not yet have a good and correct policy.

The top leadership of the labor movement stands like a high wall blocking the way toward a genuine Labor Party. This leadership is playing boss politics. It is messing around in the camp of labor's enemies. It is dividing its great power in support of outright capitalists running on the tickets of the Democrats and Republican Parties; of professional politicians, of small-time ward-healers and bell-pushers. The CIO and AFL are equally guilty. There is only one difference between them: the AFL throws its support equally to the two rotten, machine-bossed parties, while the CIO has earned the title of auxiliary to the Roosevelt machine in the Democratic Party.

Recently, Sidney Hillman set up still another body, the Citizens National Political Action Committee, to support Roosevelt. Now he announces a program for raising \$6,000,000 as a campaign fund for Roosevelt, to be divided equally between the CIO Political Action Committee and the new body just formed. Each will raise \$3,000,000! He proposes further to freeze the \$700,000 which the PAC has in its treasury.

Just think of it, fellow workers, \$6,000,000 as a slush fund to elect an outstanding representative of the capitalist class! \$6,000,000 to be raised from the union movement, from workers who are saddled with a no-strike pledge while the bosses campaign to bust the union movement, who are held back from fighting for genuine collective bargaining, and whose wages are frozen by the very man Hillman (and Murray and Thomas and the whole CIO leadership) wants to re-elect as President for the fourth time!

The anti-Roosevelt press is crying out loud at labor's "intervention" in elections, at Hillman's slush fund. As if the Republican Party of big business is an innocent bystander or newcomer to this game of capitalist politics. We hold no brief for the outcries of Hillman's political opponents inside and outside the labor movement. We believe labor has every right to engage in political activity. But we believe that Hillman's action, and the top leadership of the CIO, are a disgrace to the labor movement.

These are the same gentlemen who always lament when confronted with proposals to build a party of labor: We do not have the resources, the manpower, the funds for such an enterprise. But they find the resources, the manpower, the money and the energies to engage in the foul game of boss politics. The disgrace is that with all the energies and moneys spent in electing cheap capitalist politicians who always stab labor in the back, with all the manpower in the labor movement, with the great dissatisfaction of the workers, a Labor Party would be a cinch for the union movement. It would open a new period in the political life of the American working class. It would separate them once and for all from the dirty anti-labor politics of the Democratic and Republican political machines.

"Labor," official organ of the railway unions, calls Hillman's proposal to raise a \$6,000,000 slush fund a "fantastic proposal." There is nothing really fantastic about it. The railway unions, on their own admission, have raised funds to support one or the other of the two major parties. Their only difference with Hillman is on "how much." Hillman is raising more money than they did—but it is for the same purpose.

Hillman's proposal is not fantastic; it is a scandal. It is a scandal, not because the labor movement is raising money for political purposes. It is a scandal because the labor movement will be contributing its hard-earned money to support a capitalist party and capitalist candidates.

### LABOR ACTION

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## TWEEDLEDEE AND TWEEDLEDUM

(Reprinted from the Labor Herald, Baltimore, July 26)

The great big Democratic convention met in Chicago last week and the great big Republican convention met in the same place a month ago. Their deliberations are now history. There was plenty of viewing with alarm and pointing with pride, but if one lays the platforms of the parties side by side along with the declarations of the leading candidates the inescapable conclusion is that the big difference between the parties and the candidates is that one set is in office and the other set wants to get in.

There was plenty of equivocation. The big issues—the main things that occupy the attention of the public—were either not mentioned or were glossed over with meaningless phrases. Both parties agreed on many things, the most outstanding being the winning of the war.

The Labor Herald does not have space to show exactly how closely both parties agree on many subjects, but we shall devote a few words to show how labor was treated. We challenge anyone to show that either party or either candidate did anything or promised anything for labor—anything of major proportions.

What are the big topics discussed by working people? The present Administration has put a ceiling over wages. Neither the Republicans nor the Democrats mentioned it. It is there to stay and will not be removed.

Every worker, every housewife, knows the cost of living has soared beyond computation and that black markets flourish. Neither party mentioned these matters. Nothing will be done about them. The great GOP had nothing to say about the full dinner pail or a chicken in every pot or a car in every garage. There was plenty of room for such issues, because the people do not have them, chickens or cars.

These are most important things in the lives of the workers. Wages and the cost of things workers must buy are of immediate importance.

Dewey said the Democrats had the worker bound to his job, but he made no promise to untie him. He denounced bureaucracy in the federal government, but he has done nothing about it in Albany. As Governor of New York he has signally failed to drive crooks out of high places. How, then, can we expect him to punish the profiteers so amiably protected by the Attorney-General and the Truman Committee?

These things are talked over every day everywhere. In shops and in offices, in homes and on the way to work people discuss the growing failure of the pay envelope to catch up with the increasing cost of living.

A lot was said about taxes, but no one promised to lift the twenty per cent levy at its source—on the payroll of the workers.

In other words, there was a lot of hypocritical flag waving. There was a lot of cant about the worker. The soldier was promised a job. He is to be guaranteed one. Does this mean the guarantee will stop there?

The worker is going to be "kept in his place." International officers in the labor unions are aiding the government to do this. Men can be fired but they cannot quit work. Both Republicans and Democrats approve the enslavement of the working people; and neither proposes doing anything about giving him enough in his pay envelope to buy the things he needs for himself and his family.

(Editor's Note: We agree substantially with this editorial from the Labor Herald, organ of the trade unions in the Baltimore area. But the editorial is unfinished. Having said all these true things, what should labor do? The editorial does not answer the question, although the answer suggests itself at once. Where labor has only the choice of Tweedledee and Tweedledum, as is the case in American politics, labor should branch out on its own: organize its own political party, a Labor Party, run its own candidates on a fighting labor program, such as advocated by LABOR ACTION. There is no other course open!)

## A Report From Lilbourn, U.S.A.

Lilbourn, Mo., is a small community in the southeastern part of the state in one of the seven cotton-growing counties. Lilbourn might be called a one-street village and this street is only a few blocks long. Outside the town are two federal housing projects, one for Negroes and one for white people. Nearly all the Negroes in Lilbourn live in the Jim Crow housing project.

In Lilbourn, on July 29, a disturbance occurred between some white people and some Negroes which resulted in the death of one man and the wounding of three other men and a woman. Lilbourn has a whiskey house arranged so that the white patrons are served in the front and on one side and the Negroes are served in the back and part of the other side. On Saturday, July 29, some of the white patrons went around to the side used by Negroes and began to swear at a Negro woman. The woman resented this abuse and was joined by a Negro man. This was the signal for other white men to join in. The Negroes were chased; two men were thrown into jail and the Negroes were informed that they must be off the streets before dark.

### THE ATTACKS SPREAD

Many of the Negroes of the town were at the moving pictures and did not know about the trouble that was taking place. One Negro was attacked as he was leaving the show with his wife and knocked unconscious. There were cries of "Let's kill him," but the man's wife fought off his attackers and dragged her husband into a grocery store.

Other Negro women had outrun the mob and had taken refuge in the same store. The storekeeper hid them and used an axe handle to keep the crowd off. Other Negroes remained in the theater for safety. It was reported that the town marshal had been robbed of his gun and could not

give any protection to the Negroes. Later the county sheriff and the state police arrived and the people in the store and in the theater were escorted to their homes.

Some of the Negroes were surprised to learn that many of the business men of Lilbourn, with whom Negroes spend their money, came out of their stores and joined the white mob. Some of the leading men of the town said that they tried to stop the mob but they were not listened to. Whiskey of course isn't a very good drink to produce peace and reason.

This disturbance took place only a few days before the primary election. On Sunday, the day following the trouble, Republican and Democratic politicians were out trying to round up the Negroes' votes. These politicians claimed that they did not know why or how the trouble had started. The Republicans want the Negroes' votes but they had no more to offer in the way of democratic rights and equality of treatment for the Negroes than they get from the

Democrats. Understanding this, many of the Negroes of Lilbourn did not vote in the primary.

### MORE DISCRIMINATION

A report was spread that all Negroes must be out of town by twelve o'clock on Saturdays. Many of the Negroes living in town and on the government project do not have ice boxes. If the Negroes abide by this "order" this means that they will have to buy their fresh meat Saturday morning and take a chance on eating spoiled meat on Sunday.

This is what the Negroes are facing in Lilbourn and other places. While Negro boys are fighting in France and Italy, their brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers are being beaten up by white mobs at home. The Negroes are not afraid to fight for their rights and to protect themselves and their homes but it is difficult to fight off the mob without protection from the county and state. It is far harder when the police join in with the crowd that is attacking the Negroes.

## NEGRO VIEWPOINT...

### Does Cheap Patronage Cancel Oppression?

By W. F. CARLTON

LABOR ACTION has for years insisted that the Democratic Party was no friend of the Negro people. LABOR ACTION has pointed out on innumerable occasions that whatever gains the Negro people made from the New Deal, they made as a part of the working class. We have pointed out also that the Roosevelt Administration, in order to fool the large majority of the Negro people, has made spectacular appointments of a few Negroes to administrative and advisory posts while leaving the masses of the Negro people to suffer the humiliations and degradations to which capitalist society has accustomed them.

Our enemies, and even some of the Negro people sympathetic to us, have, on the other hand, stood for Roosevelt as the "friend" of the Negro people. They have stated that Roosevelt has done more for the Negroes than any other President since Abraham Lincoln. They have argued that our policy of seeking to build a Labor Party was utopian, unrealistic and prejudiced.

Within the last few weeks, however, the ignoring of the Negro people by both the Republican and Democratic Parties has caused a sharp political awakening and questioning among the Negro people. The result is that among Negroes themselves there are beginning to appear some wonderful analyses of the two parties and their treatment of Negroes.

### A FEW EXTRACTS

We propose here to give a few extracts from one such article which has recently appeared in a Negro paper. It deals with the Democratic Party and Negroes, and it states:

"Our political and civic leadership has confused federal relief with actual economic gain. It has misconstrued WPA and other federal-financed public works projects as permanent advantages while in reality these projects have been but public doles masking under new names."

"Nothing could be more true. The Negroes gained a few advantages simply because, as workers and unemployed, they shared in these 'public doles.' We repeat: Roosevelt and the Democratic Party did little for Negroes as Negroes."

### STATING THE TRUTH

What they did do, however, is beautifully stated in this article.

"The Democratic Party has created a whole flock of 'Negro experts' and 'Negro advisers' and 'Negro assistants' who can be all grouped together under a \$6,000 a year salary ceiling and rated as glorified lackeys, errand and call boys by the Democratic high command."

"The Roosevelt Administration has tried to wash its face, put on a clean shirt and be at least respectable on the Negro question, but the effort has been mournful and incongruous with its actual desires."

"In the midst of the world's greatest war, the Democratic Party has shown its consistency of anti-Negro viewpoints by denying the Negro the right to vote; by tolerating shameful, Jim Crow and shooting and murdering of the Negroes who wear the uniform of the nation's armed forces. It has closed its eyes to race riots in principal cities. It has played around with the fundamental, constitution-guaranteed right of Negroes to earn a decent livelihood. It has accepted as its credit the continual denial of manhood to America's 15,000,000 Negro citizens and even now, on the eve of its national convention, plans to avoid speaking about the matter as a cover-up for its pursuance of its anti-Negro policies."

"That is quite perfect. And where does all this wisdom come from? It comes from the Amsterdam News of July 22. Powell, the editor, was recently appointed by Governor Dewey as a member of the New York State Boxing Commission."

For the moment we shall say here that we can predict with confidence one thing that Governor Dewey will do if he becomes President. He has been doing it already on a small scale in New York State. It can be expressed precisely thus:

"The Republican Party will create a whole flock of 'Negro experts' and 'Negro advisers' and 'Negro assistants' who can be all grouped together under a \$6,000 a year salary ceiling and rated as glorified lackeys, errand and call boys by the Republican high command."

"That the Negro masses are beginning to see this, is one of the most hopeful signs of the times and we hope that the day is not too far off when the Negro people and the people of the United States as a whole will get rid of a lot of political baggage, including the Negro errand boys and lackeys of both the Republican and Democratic Parties."

## Congress Blank on Post-War Jobs, Debates Unemployed Dole - - -

(Continued from page 1)

decent standard of living for displaced workers, the Kilgore bill is an extension of old New Deal measures proposed in the past twelve years, which is to say that it is a sop and a stop-gap for a pressing problem that cries out for a basic and fundamental solution.

In view of this it is difficult to conceive, except on the usual grounds of the "lesser evil" conception, why the leading national labor organizations have gone overboard in support of the Kilgore bill. Certainly the Kilgore bill is better than the George bill. But is that all that can be done? The ferocity with which they call for its passage would make it appear that the economic salvation of the working class depended upon it, while in actuality the bill doesn't even come near their own stated programs on post-war planning for full production and full employment.

How can the CIO News, for instance, state that "the Kilgore bill is the only approach so far made to the problem of putting our war industries back on a peacetime footing, without dislocation and without mass unemployment."

Not a single leader of the CIO can show how, what, where or when the

Kilgore bill will accomplish this absurd claim made for it.

If it can be boasted that this is labor's aggressive year on the political front, there can certainly be no denial that this is labor's bashful year on the economic front—or so it is to the top leadership of the CIO and its large affiliates.

For what purpose did the International Executive Board of the United Auto Workers of America propose a comprehensive post-war program in July, 1943? So it could boost up the sagging morale of the rank and file concerning their post-war prospects under the capitalist system? Because the phrases looked good on paper? Why, in this crucial period, does the UAW-CIO campaign so furiously for the limited Kilgore bill, BUT REMAIN SILENT ON THE PROGRAM IT ADOPTED AND ASKED ITS MEMBERS TO SUPPORT IN 1943?

For the benefit of bashful UAW executive board members with failing memories, we should like to recount a little what they proposed to the workers and soldiers of the United States:

### UAW POST-WAR PROGRAM

"Millions of workers must not again be thrown out of employment in the midst of empty factories, unworked mines and untilled fields. In-

sofar as private industry is unable to utilize the productive resources of the nation, the government must undertake this responsibility.

"Maintenance of labor standards during the reconversion period against any attempt by industry to lengthen hours, reduce wages or lower the standard of living of the American worker.

"Industry should now establish reserve funds to be paid out to its present employees or those who have been inducted into the armed forces, during any post-war unemployment period.

"Every able-bodied person in America must be given the opportunity for useful work. The following proposals are made to achieve this objective:

"Government or municipal ownership and operation of monopolistic industries and of industries strategically essential to the national safety.

"Government control and regulation of other industries, to prevent the abuses of monopoly and to assure the production in the national interest.

"A gigantic planned national construction program involving:

"Housing. Slum clearance accompanied by government low-cost projects. Schools—particularly in rural areas. Highway, grade crossings and subways. Hospitals and clinics. Recreational and cultural facilities. De-

velopment of power projects such as TVA.

"Reduction of working week to thirty hours without reduction in pay, as a result of a full production program."

### BETTER THAN KILGORE BILL

We could go on quoting more of same to prove that the program then proposed and since ignored, inadequate as many of its portions are, is a thousand times more substantial, more applicable to the current needs of the working class than the Kilgore bill.

But this is an election year and the labor leaders must be as "practical" in what they propose on the economic front as they are on the political. As a result, we see an abandonment of labor's interests on both.

In place of a forthright, bold program for erasing prospective widespread unemployment, insecurity and mass suffering, we get instead timidity, retreat and tail-ending to capitalist schemes which avoid the central issues.

The rank and file of labor should not allow itself to be tricked or blinded by highly publicized "liberal" bills, introduced in Congress by political hacks who have one eye on the rising demands of the people for real post-war security and the other on the ballot box.



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