

HANDS OFF GREECE!

High Wage Myth: 40% Get Under 65c Hourly

By SUSAN GREEN

The "forgotten man" has again been pushed into public view. The hearings on Senator Pepper's sixty-five-cent minimum wage bill have done the trick. And, lo and behold! we discover a curious phenomenon. Whereas, when the big white father, FDR, came into power some twelve years ago he spoke of a mere one-third of the nation being forgotten men, the hearings in Congress reveal that this unfortunate group now constitutes TWO-FIFTHS of the workers of the nation.

Yes, you read that right. Forty per cent of America's workers make less than sixty-five cents an hour during this so-called war boom when workers are supposed to be rolling in money.

A breakdown of the situation shows that these substandard workers are found in large numbers in every branch of industry and agriculture.

To illustrate: In the manufacturing trades, one out of every four workers makes less than sixty-five cents an hour. In the retail trades, EIGHTY-SIX PER CENT of the workers are so poorly rewarded for their labor. Three hundred thousand railroad workers are in the same boat!

What does such miserable pay mean in the bread-and-butter equivalent?

A sixty-five-cent-an-hour minimum would equal a weekly wage of \$26 on the forty-hour basis. If luck holds for fifty-two weeks a year, at sixty-five cents an hour wages would add up to \$1,352 a year.

Many reliable estimates from labor and other sources show that today it takes about \$3,000 a year for a family of four just to maintain itself on the ragged edge of decency. Put \$1,352 up against \$3,000, and what does it look like! Yet forty per cent of America's workers get LESS than what that looks like because they earn less than sixty-five cents an hour.

But here is still another way of estimating how substandard are the substandard workers of the country. The cost of living budget of the Works Progress Administration is fixed at \$1,730 a year for a family of four. Furthermore, this is admittedly "an emergency standard which may be necessary under depressed conditions." It is also admitted that this WPA budget might prove to be "harmful to both health and morale" if continued for any length of time. Of this there is indeed no doubt. For this figure of the WPA is so shockingly inadequate that it allows a pitance of only \$16 a month for rent for a family of four!

"AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE"
Bad enough, isn't it? But still a sixty-five cent minimum wage adds up to only \$1,352 a year—which is \$378 less than the miserable WPA budget. And keep on remembering the FORTY PER CENT of America's workers get EVEN LESS than that!

Such is the American way of life! Philip Murray, president of the CIO, testified at the hearings on Senator Pepper's sixty-five-cent minimum wage bill that in 1943 THIRTY PER CENT of the families and other consumer units of this country re-

ceived less than \$1,500 a year. He stated that 7,093,000 consumer units got below \$1,000 in that year, while 5,120,000 got along on between \$1,000 and \$1,500 for the whole year. Thus we see that some 12,213,000 families and other consumer units are worse off by over \$230 to \$730 per year than people on WPA. In the same year, 1943, war profits of industry were 303 per cent over the 1936-39 peace levels! Such is the American way of life.

These congressional hearings made very graphic the plight of the forgotten men and women of this country. Many of them were there in person. Mrs. Christine Gardner, Piedmont, N. C., a cannery worker, broke down when she testified that one of her children died because she was unable to afford proper medical care. Mrs. Ruth Decker, another cannery worker, stated that her fellow workers had to take up a collection to get her some clothes so she could get to the hearings in Washington. John Vernon, textile worker, father of seven, testified to receiving the munificent wage of 51½ cents an hour. There were laundry workers, shoe workers clothing workers at the hearings, all victims of substandard wages, wages below sixty-five cents an hour.

There was likewise produced in evidence an advertisement by the Postal Telegraph Co., which speaks for itself. The ad is for a manager

for its Atchison, Kan., office. Here it is: "Qualifications — combination Morse and Teletype operator. Must have knowledge of operating routine and ability to turn out satisfactory copies in both Morse and Teletype. Must be able to make up payrolls, to rate messages, speedily and accurately. Also experience in handling foreign and domestic money orders and special collections necessary. Must have knowledge of accounting practices, daily statements, call and delivery desk. Must have past successful record on both productive and developing selling in an office of this size. Must be neat in appearance and work. Must be aggressive, persistent, resourceful and industrious. WAGES \$30 AN HOUR."

Are there any words in the dictionary to describe the gall of this big business company! Presumably the \$30 is written with the dollar sign instead of just 30c to make it look like more. But it is still only twelve dollars a week!

Above, in brief outline, is the shameful exploitation to which forty per cent of America's workers are subjected. It is time for a full stop. THE MINIMUM WAGE MUST BE RAISED!

But should labor fall on its knees in thanks and adoration before Senator Pepper and the advocates of his sixty-five-cent minimum wage bill—as the CIO and AFL seem to be doing?

A DOLLAR AN HOUR MINIMUM!

True the sixty-five cents an hour minimum is better than the forty-cent minimum now on the statute books. True, sixty-five cents is better than fifty cents, below which regional boards of the WLB now consider wages substandard, acknowledging to that meager extent that there has been a rise in the cost of living since the passage of the Wagner law. True, sixty-five cents is more than fifty-six cents, the figure conceded by the WLB to the Textile Workers Union when it asked that wages below sixty cents be considered substandard. But the following is also true:

A sixty-five-cent minimum wage still leaves the income of forty-five per cent of the workers of this country so low that it is \$378 per year less than the emergency budget allowed by the Works Progress Administration!

Is this all that the workers who have made this land the richest in the world are entitled to?

At the above mentioned hearings the representatives of the railroad unions demanded A ONE DOLLAR MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE. Answering the bosses' false argument that this will add to the cost of living, these railroad union men pointed out that there are "spreads" of more than 100 per cent between the cost of production and prices demanded of consumers leaving ample room to raise wages without raising prices.

The Workers Party has a demand in its platform reading: "For a \$1.00-an-hour minimum wage law, with time and a half for overtime, double time for Sunday and holiday work, and equal pay for equal work for all industrial and agricultural workers."

BULLETIN—As we go to press, fighting in Greece between the armed people and the British forces continues unabated. Reports are inconclusive on the progress of the battles around Athens, but it is clear by Churchill's order that reinforcements be sent to General Scobie that the British have not been making much headway in their efforts to force an unwanted regime upon the Greek masses. In the meantime, Field Marshal Alexander and the British Resident Minister for the Middle East, Harold MacMillan, have reached Greece for the purpose of arranging an armistice between the ELAS armies and the British. General Scobie, commander of the British army, has demanded immediate disarmament of the ELAS as a condition for peace. Representatives of the ELAS have already met with the British.

By MAX SHACHTMAN, National Secretary, Workers Party

A terrible and shameful crime is being committed in Greece. Hundreds of Greek people, men, women and even children, have already been shot or bombed to death.

Who slaughtered them? The Nazis? No, the fascist hordes were driven out of Greece by the very people who have just been martyred.

The chief criminal in the Athens slaughter is Winston Churchill, presiding officer of the British Empire. His accomplices are the heads of the other Allied empires, the American and the Russian.

It is not the Hitlerite Stukas, Messerschmitts, Panzers and SS troops that our pouring a hail of terror and destruction into the people of Greece. It is Wellington bombers, Spitfires, General Sherman tanks and British parachutists that have taken over this bloody role.



CHURCHILL

Union Printers Lick Scab Shop at Donnelley's Plant in Chicago

CHICAGO — The R. R. Donnelley printing concern got another in a long series of setbacks when, in the last week of November, some 1,600 of 2,100 eligible employees voted in NLRB elections. Four out of five participating unions have already been declared winners.

The largest voting unit was in the pressrooms, where the employees chose the International Printing Pressmen & Assistants Union as their bargaining representative. Rotogravure employees voted for the International Photo Engravers Union by a majority of better than three to one. Other winners were the Amalgamated Lithographers of America in the offset department, and the International Association of Machinists in the maintenance department.

Officials of the printing trades unions expressed themselves as de-

lighted with the fine showing made by the union employees. The Donnelley company used almost every known scheme to intimidate the voters, leading them to believe that unionism would lower their wages and would further impoverish them with "high" dues. "Vote No—Save Your Dough" was the heading on a last-minute circular signed by the concern. Numerous other false stories were printed, too late to be refuted.

Donnelley has been nonunion since 1907, when the plant completed a series of lockouts. In the intervening years it has fought unionism with such weapons as injunctions, yellow-dog contracts, espionage, intimidation and discrimination. Donnelley's prints Time, Life, Reader's Digest and Pathfinder, catalogs for Montgomery Ward and other mail-order houses, and scores of telephone directories.



F. D. R.

What Hitlerite fascism did to the peoples of the European countries sickened the world with the deepest revulsion, infused it with hatred and with a determination to put an end to this gruesome plague.

The leaders of the Allied nations exploited this universal feeling to the utmost.

"Work like slaves to turn out Wellington bombers and Spitfire fighters," cried Churchill. "We must have them to defend England's sovereignty and freedom, and to restore these precious treasures to the peoples of Holland, France, Belgium, Yugoslavia and Greece, who have been deprived of them."

"All-out production for war, and forget about wages and working conditions," cried Roosevelt. "This is no time to strike—we need more and more Sherman tanks to beat the Germans who have robbed the peoples of Europe of their national independence, of the right to self-determination which we sacredly enjoy in America."

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Presto! No Shell Shortage Now —

By WALTER WEISS

Surely you have heard about the great shell shortage by now. The story goes that ammunition has had to be rationed and that American doughboys have needlessly shed their blood as a result.

Many workers don't realize that this story has the blessing of President Roosevelt himself. He brought the subject up at his news conference of November 21 without waiting for any reporter to ask him.

To quote the New York Times of November 22, he "asserted that the case was perfectly clear: we were not sending enough shells over to the other side at the present time, with the result that they have to be rationed. That is costly to lives, he declared with emphasis, and it comes in part from people in the ship and shell industries quitting their jobs in this country."

After elaborating on the crime of job desertion for several minutes, he

made some vague promises that there would be jobs for everybody after the war, that take-home pay would not be cut, that reconversion would not cause unemployment for more than a few weeks.

WHO IS LYING?

Two weeks LATER, on December 7, General Somervell, top chief of supply for the Army, told the National Association of Manufacturers:

"Make no mistake about our situation! They have supplies at the front right now. It's the future we must provide for—"

"To date we've had 500,000 casualties. Thank God, NOT ONE has been because of short production."

Not quite the same story as the President's, is it?

In fact, Somervell and a host of other government officials have changed their tune a little recently. As recently as December, 1 Somervell told a meeting of the Associated

Industries of Massachusetts that Aachen would have fallen sooner "and with a saving of lives, had there been a greater rate of fire." (New York Times, December 2.)

Roosevelt, with the aid of the Army chiefs, has conducted several scare campaigns of this kind in the past year. Did a railroad strike and a steel strike threaten a year ago? The solution: just wave the bloody shirt. Now, as LABOR ACTION pointed out in the last issue, the automobile workers are about to take a referendum on the no-strike pledge. Roosevelt's ferocious statement was timed to coincide with the conventions of the CIO and AFL. The one great purpose of Murray and other CIO leaders in their convention was to influence the auto referendum, to make sure that the no-strike pledge, so helpful to the capitalists, would be preserved.

Why have the military leaders been talking out of the other side of

their mouths in the last week? Why do they now say no lives have yet been sacrificed? Why are their warnings all about the future?

Evidently the Army high command has seen that they themselves would be severely criticized for opening a big offensive without enough ammunition. So presto! there is enough ammunition. Casualties have indeed been heavy, and the generals want no part of the blame. Of course, the stories now go, there have been a few local shortages, but they have been caused by transportation problems.

Another point came up to trouble the generals. Why did they cut back production—and not so long ago—of several items that are now "critical"? Workers thrown out of their jobs in small arms ammunition plants as recently as last June have not forgotten this.

The present line of talk is that nobody is responsible. Modern war is

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Let the Peoples of Europe Choose Their Own Governments!

NEW YORK
WORKERS PARTY
PROTEST MEETING

Hands Off Greece, Belgium and Italy

Speaker: **MAX SHACHTMAN** National Secretary Workers Party
IRVING PLAZA SUNDAY, DEC. 17, 8:15 P. M.
15th St. & Irving Place **ADMISSION 25c**

MASS ACTION

By David Coolidge Nat'l Labor Sec'y, Workers Party

AFL Convention Retains Jim Crow

The AFL convention once again has rejected a resolution by A. Philip Randolph calling for the elimination of discrimination against Negroes by AFL internationals. This time the performance of many of the top bureaucrats was just as disgraceful and brazen as in past years. The convention told Randolph and all Negroes in and outside the AFL that Jim Crow is to remain a standing policy of the organization.

Randolph's resolution called on the convention to condemn and abolish Jim Crow and all Jim Crow auxiliaries organized by internationals. Randolph named the Boilermakers, the Machinists and the Electricians. He accused these internationals of establishing "dual memberships in the AFL under which first-class membership is given to white workers and second-class membership to Negroes."

One would think that the AFL leaders would at least refrain from denying the truth of Randolph's charges. The facts are established beyond dispute or refutation. Negroes are Jim Crowed in the AFL. But facts mean nothing to a blundering ignoramus like MacGowan, president of the Boilermakers. He had never listened before to a "more offensive address." Randolph's remarks were "arrogant and insolent." That is, the remarks of a Negro president of an AFL international were "offensive, arrogant and insolent" if they condemn a white president of an AFL international for maintaining separate locals for its Negro members.

KU KLUX KLAN MENTALITY

MacGowan is "getting a bit tired of being kicked around by professional agitators." That's Randolph, who only insisted that the AFL repudiate Jim Crow inside its ranks. MacGowan perhaps feels that Randolph and the Negro boilermakers should be thankful that they are permitted in the union under any conditions, Jim Crow or otherwise. MacGowan is "tired." What does he plan to do? Break up the Jim Crow auxiliaries and take the Negroes into the regular locals? Not MacGowan. He's too ignorant, stupid and cocky to take that course.

What will he do in the next convention? Will he organize a goon squad to throw Randolph out? Or will he organize a lynching bee outside the convention hall? We have an idea that Randolph, with his superior intelligence, especially in comparison with the intellectual incapacity of the MacGowans, will continue to prove more than a match for the AFL Jim Crowers.

Loring of the Tennessee Federation of Labor also is for suppressing "this professional agitation." He is also a very bright man; just like MacGowan. Loring got off the following gem: "The white people aren't raising these problems; it's the Negroes." The white workers aren't kicking against Jim Crow, says this intellectual giant. That's all we need to say about Loring.

Strike-breaker Frey got in his mouthful also. He also has a complaint against the Negroes. They are not thankful "for what the AFL has done for Negroes." That is, Negroes are not thankful for Jim Crow locals. They ought to be glad that the AFL does not exclude them completely.

Randolph wasn't thankful. In reply he told MacGowan, Frey and Loring: "Get as mad as you like, but the Negroes are going to fight for their rights no matter how mad you get."

Earlier MacGowan had questioned if Randolph was in the right organization. It is our opinion that MacGowan is in the wrong organization. He doesn't belong in a labor organization. We recommend the Ku Klux Klan.

Goodrich Progressives Fight Back

The progressive forces in Goodrich Local No. 5 at Akron, who recently suffered a setback in the local elections, are not taking it lying down. They are fighting back. This is as it should be. Bass was defeated for president by a reactionary bloc acting under the inspiration of the labor-baiting Akron Beacon Journal. Progressives must fight back. They must stand prepared always to put their program and their case before the whole rank and file. They must keep their roots in the rank and file and depend on the rank and file for whatever strength they hope to achieve. This is the way to wipe out the innuence of reactionary and anti-union elements.

It would be an excellent thing if Bass would get back in the shop and participate once again in the day-to-day activities of the workers in the ranks. This should be the perspective of every progressive who meets defeat at the hands of reactionaries.

The progressives in the local are taking the correct course. They are exposing the lies and slanders of the Beacon Journal. They are giving the facts in the local in answer to the slanders, distortions and lies of the reactionaries in the local. This is one way to educate the membership. Let them know the truth. Give them all the facts. This is the way to maintain a democratic local. Union reactionaries and their outside masters can't thrive for long if the membership knows the facts and understands them.

Workers Party Notes: New York Runs Lectures, School

On the first two Fridays of this month, the Workers Party School sponsored two lectures. One was delivered by Comrade Max Shachtman, national secretary of the party; the other by Comrade Albert Gates, editor of LABOR ACTION.

On December 1st, Comrade Shachtman spoke on The Future of American Labor Politics. In a talk which analyzed the results of the November elections and the role played by organized labor, primarily through the PAC, he pointed out that labor's "declaration of political independence" will be made only when it declares its intention of forming a party of its own, separate and opposed to the two capitalist political parties and their candidates. Comrade Shachtman pointed out how the campaign of the PAC differed from the old-line political tactics of the AFL, in which labor was merely advised to vote for its "friends" and punish its "enemies." The activity of the PAC demonstrates that labor can organize itself politically, and because of that, Shachtman declared, labor should organize itself independently on a program of and for labor's interests, that is in a Labor Party based on the trade unions.

On Friday, December 8th, Comrade Gates spoke on the present situation in the "liberated" countries of Europe. Originally this lecture was to be on the situation in France, but the limelight in Europe in the past week had been shifted to Belgium, Italy and Greece.

WORKERS PARTY PREDICTIONS

Comrade Gates went back to the resolution of the Workers Party entitled "The National Question in Europe," in which the current events on the European continent were forecast. That resolution stated that the ousting of the German occupation troops would open up great struggles in the occupied countries. The people who had lived and suffered under the Nazi yoke and struggled against it in the underground movements had not done so in order that once the Nazis were driven out, the old reactionary rulers and collaborators might take over. They want something different, something that will guarantee them some peace,

liberty and security. And today the masses are resisting the forcible installation of the old monarchs and rulers by the Allies. They want to choose their own governments now.

Finally, Comrade Gates discussed what was the most outstanding lack in the European situation today, namely, a bold, courageous, outspoken leadership that would enable the peoples of Europe to achieve what they desire, that is, a revolutionary socialist party capable of influencing the great masses of workers. The role and activity of the Communist Parties, the Socialist Parties, and the liberals were also taken up.

As usual at the conclusion of both lectures, there was a period of questions and discussion by the audience.

The second series of classes in the Workers Party School starts on Friday, December 15, at 8:15 p.m. and will run for six weeks. The school is held at the Labor Temple, 14th Street near Second Avenue, Manhattan. The fee is \$1.00 per class.

Comrade Carter's class on "Crisis of World Capitalism" is an advanced course in Marxian economics. In this class, the students will apply the principles of Marxian economics, studied last semester, to actual events in the world of today. Comrade Carter will take up the operation of the laws of capitalism during the years 1914-44. This course promises to be a very lively one, with active participation of the students themselves.

The class on "The State" by Comrade Seachtman will take up the functions of government, the various types of government and the position of the state will be discussed, the operation of the democratic capitalist state, the fascist state, the present Russian state, and how the workers' state will be organized. Mimeographed outlines for this class have been prepared and will be made available to the students.

For further information about the activities of the Workers Party School in New York, write to:

WORKERS PARTY SCHOOL
114 W. 14th St., New York 11, N. Y.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

Apology, Bombast, Jingoism at CIO Convention

By DAVID COOLIDGE

A highlight of the CIO convention was the speech of R. J. Thomas on the WLB. Thomas began his speech as follows:

"I want to make an apology to the convention due to the fact that I am a member of the National War Labor Board. I think I was appointed to that board under false pretenses. We were told when we were appointed to that board that we would have some voice at least in determining the wage policy of the workers in America. I assure you that labor has not gotten that sort of recognition. ... I don't think that the CIO has made many mistakes in its history, but it has made one that I know of. A week or two ago, when the resignations of three public members of the NWLB were given to the President... I think the mistake we made was that every member of the CIO should have sent those three members of the WLB a wire of congratulation on their resignation."

Thomas then goes on to explain why these telegrams should have been sent. The public members "have certainly been very weak in the present situation," and "it is impossible to get them to take a position any more." This is certainly sad.

One might be excused for thinking that before Thomas sat down he would propose that the labor members get off the WLB. He is ashamed to be a member of the WLB and apologizes for his past sins or stupidity—as the case might be. For Thomas supported the resolution on the WLB which contained the following: "For the duration of the war there must be an agency such as the WLB to adjust all disputes between labor and management which cannot be resolved in collective bargaining. The CIO reaffirms the need for a NWLB that will provide the forum for a peaceful and equitable disposition of all disputes that may arise between labor and management which cannot be resolved through collective bargaining."

Yet in his speech Thomas said that the WLB is "breaking down collective bargaining." He has sympathy for the regular labor members who sit there day after day "pounding their heads against stone walls, and are able to accomplish nothing." ... In discussing the WLB, Murray said "In too many instances... the operation of the collective bargaining contract and the grievance machinery for all practical purposes has been suspended."

Any worker who can make sense out of all this is truly a wise man. Thomas beats his breast and apologizes. The labor members of the WLB beat, not their breasts, but their heads, against stone walls. They "accomplish nothing" on the WLB. The WLB is "breaking down collective bargaining." "Grievance machinery... has been suspended." And what will Murray, Thomas and Green do? They will pass a resolution supporting a WLB. They will not get off the board. Obviously they want a stone wall to beat their heads against. They may be all right for Murray, Thomas and the rest of the

labor bureaucrats, but how about the men and women in the factories? How about the unions? Shall they be beaten to pieces?

These labor leaders don't have the guts to get off the WLB. Roosevelt has them in his hip pocket. They can't breathe. They writhe, gasp and gulp. They are chained to their no-strike pledge, to the WLB, to war-mongering, solicitude for the welfare of business, and to "Our Commander-in-Chief."

They want to organize, but labor can't get very far in an organizing drive, especially in the South, with a no-strike pledge hung around its neck. They want collective bargaining, but collective bargaining, they say, has been blighted by the government through its WLB. They call for the repeal of the Smith-Connally Act, but this act was passed by the Democratic Party, which they supported in the election. They want homes built for workers, but the money for the homes must come from the government and the government is controlled by people who protect the interests of private real estate dealers and banks. A resolution is passed on education demanding federal aid to the states. But the Southern states, wherein there is the most ignorance, don't want federal aid unless the money is controlled by the states. These states fear that they

may be forced to give equal educational advantages to Negroes. Furthermore, more money for education means higher taxes on business and the rich. The rich fight today for a lowering of taxes.



R. J. THOMAS

They are against the poll-tax but the party they just got through returning to office is heavily influenced by men who are elected because

there is a poll-tax. These leaders want jobs for all and an "Economic Bill of Rights." But where will this come from? Surely not from the capitalist employers and their capitalist government. Certainly not from the Democratic or Republican Parties. The CIO wages a good fight against racial discrimination. There should be no question about this. But racial discrimination in the United States is part of the lifeblood of capitalism. Capitalism thrives on the division between Negro and white workers, native and foreign born, Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant. The CIO leaders call for international solidarity of labor. Good, but do they know that capitalist employers and capitalist governments cannot be depended on to give any aid to the development of international labor solidarity? On the contrary, capitalist governments will do all in their power to keep the working class in every country tied to its own capitalists, all the easier to exploit them.

Every good and correct resolution which we have mentioned above as passed by the CIO convention can be made to work; can be put into operation by labor if, when and only when labor is organized politically; only when labor resolves to "take over control in Washington."

The low point of the CIO convention was reached in one sentence in

the resolution on "international security and complete destruction of Nazism and Japanese militarism." The resolution calls for the "right of self-determination" for "India, Ireland, Africa and Asia." These countries "should be provided the maximum opportunity to manage their own affairs with a view toward achieving self-government." This is excellent and as it should be, but before this we read the following sentence in the resolution: "The German people must be taught that they shall atone for the crimes and horrors which they have visited upon this earth."

What crimes have the "German people" committed? Are the German workers a part of the criminal "German people"? Are the thousands of workers and anti-fascist little people in Germany a part of the criminal "German people"? How about the German workers and other anti-fascists in Hitler's concentration camps? Are they criminals, too? How shall they atone? After the fascist oppressors have been forced off the backs of the German workers and the concentration camps have given up their thousands of emaciated victims, what new tortures would the leaders of the CIO propose? Starvation? Forced labor? If not, what?

Every decent human being who reads this sentence should spit and cast it from him lest he be contaminated. Will the leaders of the CIO say that the British PEOPLE should atone for the crimes of the British RULING CLASS in India, Africa and China? Who will atone for the massacre of Indians, for the bombing of Hottentot villages, for the forcing of the opium traffic on the Chinese people? The British people—or the British ruling class? Is there no difference in the minds of the self-righteous and pious Murrays?

Who will atone for the crimes against the Negro in the United States? The white workers in the CIO, who fight day in and day out against these crimes? They are a part of the white people in the United States. Or shall we place these crimes where they primarily belong—on the backs of the ruling class: the planters, the mine operators, the manufacturers and bankers?

We do not care what happens to the German ruling class; they can atone for their crimes. We want to see the German working class destroyed. We should extend the helping hand to the German workers. They have nothing to atone for; and only a fool could make any such demand.

The labor members of the WLB beat their heads against a figurative stone wall. The German anti-fascist workers beat their heads against the real barbed wire of the concentration camp. Murray & Co. don't have the courage to get off a WLB, but they demand that the helpless and betrayed German workers, with no help from the outside world, escape from their concentration camps and prisons and destroy Hitler.

We say again that every decent human being who reads this sentence should spit.

Behind Social Security Fight

A bill is now before Congress to freeze payments of employee-employer contributions to the old age Social Security fund at one per cent of wages. The CIO has declared itself against the bill on the ground that it would undermine the Social Security program.

In order for the program to be self-sustaining, payments from employers and employees must rise to three and a half per cent each. If the present one per cent contribution is not raised the program will be bankrupt in ten to twenty years. The CIO in appealing to congressmen to vote against the bill, stated that its members were willing to "pay their fair share" of the cost of a Social Security program.

For example, a worker who has earned \$100 a month and made payments for twenty years, can collect \$30 a month after his sixty-fifth birthday. If there are any workers in America who have earned \$250 a month for forty years, they can look forward to enjoying all the luxuries that a \$56 a month benefit will buy.

Obviously the present Social Security plan provides very little security for old age. An adequate Social Security program would provide enough benefits to insure a comfortable and secure old age for the men and women who have given their health and most of their waking hours to industry, without reducing the wages of the worker during his working life by taxing him for it. It is NOT fair that the worker "pay his fair share," as the CIO spokesmen stated. The entire burden of Social Security should fall on the shoulders of the employers.

This apparently radical statement will seem more valid upon examination. The employers howl with righteous indignation when the workers

through their unions attempt in any way to intervene in production. The sacred rights of private property, the duties of management are invoked against such intervention.

Well, then, the employers, as owners and managers of the means of production, should be held responsible for their own system, and its consequences. One of the most appalling consequences of the present system of production is the way in which it condemns to misery and insecurity its wage-slaves who have grown old and weak in the factories.

If the employers are unable or unwilling to maintain their worn-out wage-slaves, then their system of production must be replaced by one that can provide a comfortable and dignified old age to everyone who has worked for society.

The capitalist system of production for profits is less and less able to provide solutions for the problems which it has brought into being. At the same time, the tremendous production and natural resources of this country, if organized on a socialist basis, can give plenty to all who work and security when old age has made work impossible.

When production is organized for use instead of for profit, when the wealth that labor creates is used for the benefit of all, the insecurity of life under capitalism will vanish—the night-mare of a decaying society will give place to the planned, secure and plentiful life of the socialist future.

ful prospect of old-age insecurity which is the lot of tens of millions of Americans. The retiring age is sixty-five, although the speed-up methods of modern industry make workers useless at a much earlier age. Agricultural, domestic and government workers are excluded from the act. The benefits, for which the worker has paid half during his working years, are almost meaningless.

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owners can be expected to stall at every opportunity.

BRIDGES' PARTY LINE

Bridges and those who follow the Communist Party policy of appeasement with capital, "cooperation with the ship owners," hope to get a wage raise on the basis of their new company-union line. They are good boys now. But so far they are getting what bootlickers always get—A KICK IN THE FACE.

Ever since Hitler invaded Russia, Bridges and the Stalinists have been super-patriots. Speed-up and production to win the war for Kremlin Joe were and are their main interests. But once it was a different story. All the longshoremen remember the "Yankee Are Not Comin'." Even Bridges can't forget it. As recently as September 22 he had an article in The Dispatcher trying to "explain how the war was a 'phony war' until the Soviet Union was attacked. During the Stalin-Hitler pact the Communists not only called the war a 'phony,' but correctly characterized it as an imperialist war." Roosevelt was then a "war-monger." Great Britain and the United States were rank imperialists. Explaining how

they changed to pillars of democracy overnight is a feat that only a Communist Party member or party line can perform.

What the longshoremen men realize is that the so-called communists are now supporters of capitalism. In plain words, the communists are now company men and will remain so as long as Stalin's foreign policy does not come into conflict with the United States. The correct name for the Communies is not communists or reds but Stalinists stooges of Stalin. They no longer have anything in common with communism, and the old-time communists would turn over in their graves if they were to hear Bridges and Browder, defending private enterprise.

It is immaterial whether Bridges is a Communist Party member or not, because it is evident to every trade unionist who has watched Bridges for any length of time that he has followed the party line without variation. The same is true of Goldblatt, Schmitt, Jackman, Robertson, Watson and many of the other longshore officials. They are Stalinists or stooges of the reactionary Stalinist Communist Party. This is the root and the explanation of Bridges present company union policy.

However, Bridges is still being persecuted on deportation charges for the fact that he was once a militant and helped organize the present longshoremen's union. The case now before the Supreme Court will not likely be heard from until the war is over unless there is a change in Kremlin Joe's foreign policy. It will be a blessing to the labor movement if Bridges finally beats the charges. Once the halo of martyrdom is removed he will lose his last hold on the rank and file.

(Another article will appear next week.)

Bridges Leads Union to Company Collaboration

LOS ANGELES—Hearings on the reopened coastwise longshoremen's contract between the ILWU, CIO, and the Waterfront Employers Association have been started in San Francisco before a special three-man panel designated by the War Labor Board.

In October the contract was certified to the War Labor Board after two months of fruitless negotiations with the shipowners, who turned down every proposal of the union.

Many more months will be wasted before the longshoremen get a decision from the board. Judging from the latest decision in the Steel Workers' case there is little to be expected in the form of a basic wage increase from the board when the hearings are finally over.

Last July at San Francisco a conference of longshoremen delegates from the West Coast locals voted to reopen the contract and drew up provisions for a new one. At this conference, Harry Bridges, longshoremen's president, and his followers pushed through the reactionary Communist Party policy of a permanent no-strike pledge. However, a third of the delegates voted against it. There was little of the traditional discussion among the membership that accompanies the opening of the contract, and only one delegation came instructed on the permanent no-strike pledge. Portland was instructed to vote against it.

The delegates drew up a new contract, which calls for:

1. A fifteen cent wage raise in the basic rate of \$1.10 to \$1.25 an hour.
2. A week's vacation with pay once a year.
3. A thirty-six-hour guaranteed wage week. The old contract had

a clause in it which allowed for a wage review on the basis of the introduction of any new labor-saving devices. This clause was dropped for the thirty-six-hour guaranteed wage week. We fail to see why the old clause, a protection in case of the introduction of labor-saving devices was not kept and the new one just added.

4. One day's sick leave per month with pay.

5. Increased penalty rates for ammunition and dangerous cargo.

The old contract dates away back to September 30, 1938. It was automatically renewed every year unless either party gave notice thirty days before termination of intention to negotiate a new contract. The last wage raise was in February, 1942, when an arbitrator's award of ten cents an hour brought the wages up to \$1.10 an hour. The longshore day is six hours with time and a half for overtime and all night work is overtime. Longshoremen usually work ten hours a day.

Last year Bridges asked the ship owners for a wage raise after he had allowed the contract to be automatically renewed. Foise, for the ship owners, asked Bridges why he didn't raise the question of a wage raise

when the time for renewing the contract came up. He refused to consider the request. The request for a raise then went to the War Labor Board and was turned down as the contract had not been opened.

The contract should have been opened in 1943. Under the provisions of the "Little Steel" formula, the longshoremen are not entitled to a straight wage raise. But a good case could have been made for a readjustment in the penalty rates especially in regard to ammunition. Also a good case for a straight wage raise certainly could have been made on the basis of the rise in the cost of living. There was no reason for the longshoremen tail-ending the rest of the CIO and waiting for the Steel Workers to say the cost of living has gone up, before they opened their contract. By opening the contract a year ago the longshoremen would have had the advantage of having been before the War Labor Board many months. Now there will be a long wait for the board decision. There is the further possibility of the war ending before the longshoremen get a new contract. This would be to the liking of the ship owners and would be an unhealthy situation for the union, especially since the ship

owners can be expected to stall at every opportunity.

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No Space - - L.A. Drive Will Return Next Week; Less Than 500 to Go!

Lack of space prevents the appearance of the article on LABOR ACTION's drive for 4,000 new subscriptions. It will appear next week. All we can say is that the subs keep coming in. We are less than 500 subs from our goal. In the next two weeks we have a big chance to go over the top. Let's go, friends!

Editorials

WLB Steel Award: Frozen Wages

Not a great deal of discussion appeared in the Labor press following the decision of the WLB which granted the United Steel Workers certain of their fringe demands while rejecting their main wage demand of seventeen cents an hour increase.

Philip Murray, president of the Steel Workers Union, hailed the decision of the WLB but added that the fight for the seventeen cents an hour increase would still go on. The CIO, as a whole, is jubilant over what it regards as a great victory when the WLB granted a four to six cents an hour night shift differential increase, compelled correction of interplant inequalities, pay for six holidays at time and a half, paid vacations, etc.

If we take into consideration the actions of the WLB over the matter of the cost of living, revision of the Little Steel formula and its conduct in other cases, it is clear that the steel decision, while it is a partial victory for the union, is really an evasion of the fundamental problem of the wage freeze.

THE CASE FOR REVISION

The Steel Workers presented a powerful case to the board. It was known too, that the steel industry has been getting away with murder, enjoying the greatest profits in history. The case came up at a time when the WLB was in a sharp dispute with its labor members over figures indicating the extent of the rise in the cost of living. By its own figures, the board admitted a thirty per cent rise, or fifteen per cent above wage increases permitted by its Little Steel formula.

The struggle against the Little Steel formula, however is the important struggle of the labor movement. The AFL is correct when it takes this position. Its members boycotted the board for a

time when they took the stand that labor could rightfully consider individual cases so long as the principle of Little Steel revision was not dealt with and accepted. But the CIO refused to join the AFL board members and remained to consider the Steel Workers case in the absence of the AFL members. This division among the labor members of the board weakened their fight and eventually the AFL rejoined its sessions.

In characterizing the WLB decision on steel, George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the AFL and its spokesman on the board, said that not much more than a "few crumbs" had been won by the Steel Workers. Then he added:

"The main conclusion to be drawn from the decision is that if the Administration is determined to uphold a rigid over-all wage freeze, then this may be the method by which the War Labor Board will offer something better for workers in individual cases."

WLB WON'T TOUCH WAGE FREEZE

This is exactly the course being followed by the board. It refuses to consider the question of the wage freeze itself, grants a concession here and there while it rejects the thousands of demands that are before it for wage increases. Chairman Davis of the WLB is quite right when he says that the formula "was not even bent" in the steel decision. The board made sure to see that nothing changed in that respect.

The course for labor, however, should be clear, since it is emphasized by the steel decision: organized a more vigorous struggle against the wage freeze by a revision of the Little Steel formula up to labor's figures on the rise in the cost of living.

The War Labor Board has convicted itself as an anti-labor body, as the "graveyard of labor's wage demands." Labor has no place on this body, which has done little else than uphold employers' interests. Labor must get off the WLB, instead of apologizing for its membership (R. J. Thomas), while it continues to serve, hands bound, the interests of the bosses.

London Trade Union Parley

The British Trade Union Council initiated a call for a preliminary international labor conference to be held in London this month and a final world conference scheduled for February in the same city. Both the AFL and CIO were invited to attend the gathering where representatives will be confined to countries representing the United Nations. The conference is purportedly convened to reestablish international trade union relations since the old International Federation of Trade Unions is regarded by the initiators of the present conference to be inactive because of the war, and therefore non-existent.

The CIO, of course, accepted the invitation to attend. The AFL rejected it. The CIO accepted on the purely formal ground that it is in favor of the international unity of labor; the AFL rejected the invitation because of the presence of the Russian unions, which, in the opinion of the AFL, are not real trade unions but government organizations. Despite the sharp criticism which we have of the AFL—in many important respects it is less progressive than the CIO—on this one question the AFL has a correct position as opposed to the CIO.

RUSSIAN "UNIONS" TODAY

The Russian "trade unions" are not free labor organizations in the same sense as trade unions in the democratic-capitalist countries. They do not have the functions of trade unions, not even those of the most bureaucratized unions in the United States. Russian unions under Stalin are state organizations, directed from above, bureaucratically controlled, existing for the sole purpose of putting through government labor policies more effectively. They exist to prevent resistance of the workers to the inhuman exploitation at the hands of the Russian bureaucratic state.

In Lenin's time, that great leader of the workers insisted on the maintenance of the Russian trade unions even though the country really had a workers' state, because, said Lenin, it was necessary for the workers to defend themselves from their own government, which even then had a big but controlled bureaucracy.

The trade unions in Russia twenty years ago were truly free. They are not today. It is impossible to explain away the fact that Russian labor toils twelve hours a day on a piecework system without a wage increase since the war began, without the slightest struggle manifested against such conditions. The explanation lies in the fact that the Russian workers live under a police régime in which the trade unions, as instruments of a totalitarian régime, help to keep the workers weak, disorganized and unable to fight for their basic interests.

The London conference has another reason for

being called. The facts are that the strongest influence upon the British Trade Union Council for the calling of this conference has been the representatives of the Russian "trade unions." The purpose of the international conference is political. It is to tie the workers even closer to the capitalist governments of the United Nations, to curb their struggle and to mobilize their support to the political decisions of the Allies and to support Stalin's Russia in the event of an inter-Allied conflict.

Thus, for the Russians this conference would serve as an instrument for extending the influence of Stalinism in England and America, where the native Communist Parties are not very strong. For Stalin, the London conference is a means of establishing new international bases. And too to the British and American labor movements if such bases are established.

The conference, as is already indicated by the announcements of its initiators will have little in common with international labor solidarity founded on the basis of the common struggle of all workers against their common exploiters in all countries. On the contrary, it is prepared to follow the road of class collaboration. This doesn't mean that the AFL understands all this and is ready to abandon its own policies of class collaboration. But on this single point it is correct. The London conference is not a genuine international labor meeting; it is a means of consolidating the influence of Stalinism in the world labor movement.

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One-Tenth of the Nation

by J. R. Johnson

The question of discrimination against Negroes in employment in New York is now boiling. The State Legislature has held a series of investigations up-state and is now considering a bill to curb race, creed or color discrimination in industry.

In Washington, the House Labor Committee favorably reported a bill for a permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee. The voting was nine to five. A similar bill has been reported by the Senate some weeks but is not likely to reach the floor of that body before adjournment.

Now in principle and in practice LABOR ACTION supports that type of legislation. It has to be scrutinized very carefully, because bills passed by capitalist politicians, ostensibly to help workers, frequently turn out to have clauses which are aimed against working people as a whole. What we wish to refer to here is the agitation which is being carried on around this proposed legislation.

The reason for the legislation is clear. Congress is scared and the House Committee on Labor stated openly that unless the rights of minorities were safeguarded there was a possibility of post-war race riots. Furthermore, the labor movement as a whole, particularly the CIO, is concerned and active about this question. And, most important of all, the Negro people, however they may have voted in the recent election, have publicly declared their deep suspicion of the insincerity of both capitalist parties in regard to the Negro question.

This is why you get this kind of loud talk at the New York State hearing in Buffalo. Former Court of Appeals Justice Charles Sears, who gave evidence, wanted an order which would compel the employers to desist in the discrimination or to rehire workers fired for Jim Crow reasons, and give compensation for the time lost. This was to be immediately enforceable, "subject, of course, to court review."

The whole business has a history, too. Governor Dewey, a candidate

for the presidency, made a great gesture toward Negroes. He appointed a "non-partisan" committee to investigate and make proposals on discrimination. When the committee blissfully ignored its evidence and proposals, postponing any action and asking for further investigations! There is also involved interstate politics, represented by the struggle between the Republican and the Democrats and their efforts to form blocs and counter-blocs with the Liberal Party and the ALP.

A WORD OF WARNING

I wish to sound a note of warning. This can easily mean interference by the government in the affairs of labor, which can prove a very dangerous weapon against the labor movement as a whole. Both the Negro people and the labor movement must be on the alert and not be carried away by the avowed intentions of these bills. If a workers' government were doing it, that is one thing. A capitalist government is something else.

For instance, A. Philip Randolph has just informed us that what we require is a new party. He has now issued a statement on behalf of the National Council for a Permanent FEPC in which he says:

"Recommendation of the bill for a permanent FEPC by the House Labor Committee soon after the election campaign is a reason for confidence in campaign pledges."

Now this is nonsense and dangerous nonsense. Randolph, more than anyone else, knows why the present FEPC was formed at all. It was formed as the only means of checking a militant mass movement of Negroes. The present bills are aimed at nothing else. They have nothing whatever to do with faithful keeping of campaign pledges by capitalist parties. To preach that doctrine is to deceive the people.

The People's Voice seizes the opportunity to boost the liberals. It writes an article entitled: "Liberals Hail House Group Action on FEPC."

This is directed against the labor movement as a labor movement and is in harmony with the Stalinist line of teaching the workers to look to the Roosevelt government and the liberals instead of to the organized workers.

The Stalinists are in the same game. Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., notorious member of the Communist Party and notorious deliverer of the Negro people on behalf of the Stalinist bureaucracy, introduced a resolution last February in the New York City Council calling for a permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee. Recently the New York City Council took over this resolution adopted last February and unanimously sponsors it.

What is the result of all this? Both the Negro people and the labor movement are being encouraged to believe that the FEPC will be their greatest guarantee for job rights and job equality in the post-war world.

That this is exactly what they are thinking is proved by the result of a poll which was carried out among a cross-section of Negro workers in Chicago, New York, Philadelphia and Atlanta. The poll was carried out by the National Non-Partisan League in cooperation with the Chicago Defenders and the workers were asked: "Do you think that a strongly enforced FEPC can guarantee Negro job rights after the war?"

Eighty-five per cent of those who replied said, yes.

They were asked another question: "Do you think a permanent FEPC can eliminate race discrimination?"

Eighty per cent who replied said, yes.

Now, as we say, we are in favor of such bills, carefully scrutinized to rid them of clauses which will place anti-labor powers in the hands of the government. But we protest most strongly against any agitation which leads Negroes to believe that race discrimination can be abolished by any kind of government bill introduced by capitalist parties and administered by a capitalist government. Race discrimination has its deepest roots in the insecurity and unemployment inseparable from capitalist society.

If, after the war a great wave of unemployment strikes this country, no kind of FEPC can prevent the most savage racial tensions developing. Whatever bills the government may pass, the solution of discrimination in employment lies in the labor movement itself, in its handling of the race problem in the unions, and in its taking over the productive system and organizing it in such a way as to abolish unemployment.

A NOTE ON MORALS

Stalin's Spirit in the Fourth International

Members of the Workers Party and friends and readers of LABOR ACTION may judge for themselves, on the basis of the material published by the Socialist Workers Party on their recently concluded convention (we shall make this material available), just how far the comrades of the SWP itself are disturbed by the above question. The case before us right now is one that forces us to say: Yes, Stalin's spirit has gained access to the Fourth International and is already at work with falsifications and political calumny. In The Militant of November 25 we read in an editorial announcement under the heading "Latest Issue of FI Features Articles on Soviet Union":

"The first of two installments of 'Problems of the European Revolution,' by a group of European comrades, appears in this issue. Replying to revisionists of Marxism who see in the European upheavals only a struggle for restoration of the national states on bourgeois-democratic foundations, these comrades pose the necessity for socialist revolution: 'He who wants first to liquidate the 'main enemy' or the 'main obstacle,' i.e., fascism or national oppression, and only then to think of modifying capitalist conditions, is unlikely to witness any changes in the bourgeois system, and still less to see the advent of socialism. That would be the road toward the victory of reaction.'"

In so far as it is the "European" comrades who speak here, all we can do is pardon their reckless stupidity. But in so far as it is The Militant speaking, and calling the comrades involved in the polemic "revisionists of Marxism," etc., we must say that EVERY WORD is a conscious and deliberately disseminated calumny in the style of Stalin the well-poisoner.

But this is not yet the whole story. If The Militant had even a breath of the spirit of Trotsky, Lenin and Marxism in general, it would not only aim at showing the greatest scrupulousness in the criticism of the views of its foe as well as friend and at repeating them as they really are—but would decidedly guard against planting a garland of calumny upon the grave of a comrade who, impelled by the desire to escape his isolation in Sweden and return to political activity, fell into Stalin's hands and lost his life for the movement.

BESMIRCHING REVOLUTIONARIES

The polemic of the "European" comrades is directed at the authors of the "Three Theses" (which appeared in the December, 1942, Fourth International and in the theoretical organ of the English section), against the German, Comrade Brink, and against Comrade Walter Held. It is precisely to Comrade Held (one of the most talented in the entire International) that the Fourth International owes many outstanding contributions. It made an abundant to-do over him. This comrade did not go off for a year to prison, after a comparatively pleasant and long life, and accompanied by the revolting music of a miserable Joseph Hansen, but Stalin KILLED him according to the "approved standard." To supply the memory of Comrade Walter Held in such an unscrupulous manner for factional requirements is not only political baseness, but personal swinishness and indecency that well becomes the direct supporters of the celebrated "Socialist No. 1."

As to the authors of the "Three Theses" (they have already informed us of an answer they have prepared to the polemic of the English comrades, and will undoubtedly have their say to the Fourth International themselves), the SWP had the opportunity for more than three years to learn what their real views are. Out of many other facts, we name here only the study on "Capitalist Barbarism or Socialism?" which we published in The New Internationalist, which was handed to the SWP more than a year ago. In view of the fact that this study was published in full in the October issue of The New Internationalist, the repetition of the old intrigues against the authors of the "Three Theses" in The Militant of November 25 is doubly characterized.

Where the abstentionist policy of the SWP and its complete helplessness especially in the warmly-contested "national question" leads, is shown with particular crassness in the report on "The Real Situation in France" (Fourth International, October, 1944). We refer our readers to the detailed analysis of this report made in the November issue of The New Internationalist, now off the press. Regardless of what the authors of the "Three Theses" have to say, this analysis alone will provide a clear enough picture of the nature of the SWP slanders against Comrades Brink, Walter Held, Max Shachtman, etc.

A HOPELESS MALADY

In order to avoid misunderstandings: what we oppose is deliberate political calumny, falsification of obvious facts; we would have no objection against any polemic made in the interests of the truth even if it were "super-sharp" and "super-ironical." On the contrary! We regard the SWP's lack of qualified polemists (the petty brawlers it sends into the ring are a pain for all concerned!), their absolute humorlessness, etc., as an infallible sign of their hopeless malady. It is no accident that one of Trotsky's closest comrades just wrote one of the SWP members, on the Russian question: "The evolution of the tendencies of political events must take into account, analyze, discuss from different standpoints right up to sharp polemics, right up to differences of opinion—in this consists the living creative work of the organization, its preparation for the impending events; otherwise it is doomed to inaction."

We can only admire these fine words. If they are not realized in life, then, for example, a "group of European comrades" must be brought in, for that gives the thing the air of the so bitterly required "unanimous" opposition of Europe against the wicked "revisionists." Stalin makes everything "unanimous," too. Then it becomes so easy to conceal the fact that the English organization, in publishing the Internal Bulletin, which contains the polemic against the "Three Theses," etc., wrote an introduction which reads:

"These documents on European problems are published by the RCP as an Internal Discussion Bulletin. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the party."

In other words: up to now the spirit of Stalin has not yet completely conquered Europe. This may be a painful thing to the SWP, but it has richly deserved it.

Greek Events Testify

WORKERS PARTY FORESAW EVENTS

by Reva Craine

The policy and activity of the British in Greece must rouse the indignation of every thinking worker, every person who believes that the people of a country must have the right to choose their own government, without interference from foreign imperialists.

The events in Greece today, criminal and shameless as they are on the part of England's rulers, and justified and right as they are on the part of the Greek people, have not taken us by surprise.

Nearly two years ago, the Workers Party forecast in general what would happen in the European countries under Nazi occupation. In its resolution, "The National Question in Europe" (published in The New Internationalist of February, 1943), the Workers Party outlined the main course of events to come. The actual events are every day verifying what we wrote at that time. The power to predict—and to prepare—is based on the thorough-going analysis which the Workers Party made of the war, the role of the belligerents, and the position of the working class.

What are the majority of the workers and peasants, fighting in the resistance organizations in Greece and Belgium, demanding now that the Nazis have been driven out? Why are they refusing to give up their arms and surrender to the Allied military forces?

WHAT THE GREEKS FIGHT FOR

These workers are fighting for something which is vital to their very existence. During the Nazi occupation, they fought to drive the invaders from their soil. They did not surrender to the fascists; they did not collaborate with them. On the contrary, under the most difficult conditions, risking their lives and the lives of their friends and families, they organized in underground resistance movements to fight the fascists. But the fighters in the resistance movements did not risk capture, imprisonment, torture and death to make way for another oppressor in place of the Germans when the latter were finally ousted. The people who did not run away, they who stayed and fought fascism, did so because they wished to be able to reorganize their countries in the way they thought best to prevent another war, another surrender and another occupation, with the attendant sufferings.

Today the resistance fighters in ELAS, for example, are fighting for the right to elect their own government, to get rid of the Greek King and his agents, who are really agents

of fascism and foreign imperialism. The Greek people do not wish to be told by Mr. Churchill when and under what conditions they may hold an election; the Italian people do not wish to be told by Mr. Eden who shall represent them in the government or what form of government they shall have; the Belgian people do not wish to be told to leave the punishment of pro-Nazi collaborators in the hands of those who were responsible for the debacle of the war.

The people of the "liberated" countries want to liberate themselves. They want the right to elect their governments democratically; they are demanding the right to punish the collaborators; they want to put an end to the black market; they want food; they are demanding higher wages. In short, they are fighting for the right to live as free human beings. And they want to keep the arms they used in getting rid of the Nazis until some of these things are attained.

THE WP RESOLUTION

"To overthrow the régime of national oppression (the rule of the Nazis), armed struggle was needed. Even assuming that the burden of this struggle is borne by advancing Allied imperialist troops, a good deal of it will have been accomplished by armed, organized workers who have not been incorporated into regular imperialist formations. There, at the very outset, is the core of the future proletarian army. Despite all democratic illusions, experience has shown that this popular armed force will regard with suspicion and meet with resistance any attempts by the new capitalist government (Pierlot, Papandreou—R. C.) to disarm it in favor of 'regular' troops.

The workers who helped rid their countries of Nazi occupation have every right to be suspicious of the

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In Reply to a Reader's Question on Socialism

HOW CAN THIS SYSTEM BE CHANGED?

by T. R. Cobb

Recently we received the following letter from a worker in Summit, Ill., who signs himself "A. S.":

"I am interested in your paper, the LABOR ACTION. I read in your paper that the capitalist system isn't any good. But it doesn't tell the working man how this system can be changed. I would like you to send me your platform or ideas of how this system can be changed. Thank you."

I don't know your name, A. S., so I shall address you as American Smith.

I don't know where you were born, American Smith, or what the color of your skin happens to be, or whether you are a churchgoer or an atheist—and what's more, I don't care at all.

All that matters to me, American Smith, is that you work with your hands or brains to produce the nation's wealth, that you are a member of the gyped class, the clipped class, the cajoled, rolled and exploited class.

All that matters to me is that YOU are ready, American Smith, ready for progress, ready for a CHANGE—for all progress involves CHANGE.

What kind of a change shall it be? The change of the New Ordeal, the kind that amuses the rich and confuses the poor, the kind that secretly fattens the economic and political power of the greedy few, the kind that sterilizes the multitude with piffle about a "modest living" in a land that can provide everybody with ABUNDANCE—ABUNDANCE of food, leisure, culture, education and happiness?

No, fellow workers, let us no longer temporize with poverty, insecurity, sickness, ignorance, boss war, squalor, fear—the hellish rules, laws and customs of this cannibalistic capitalist system!

Let's make it a REVOLUTIONARY change, a swift and FUNDAMENTAL alteration of the methods and social institutions that doom the many to their present condition.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Let's GET TOGETHER AND ORGANIZE!

Organize to force the legalized leeches, looters, chiselers, profiteers, fakery, Democratic and Republican gravy-seekers, parasites and wealth-hoarders off the backs of the workers and working farmers!

Let's GET TOGETHER AND ORGANIZE. American Smith, organize a national, independent Labor Party, organize for the WORKERS PARTY AND FOR "LABOR ACTION," which leads the fight for the kind of CHANGE that is necessary.

Can it be done? Yes, it CAN BE DONE!

Tell your friend, neighbor, fellow worker the FACTS about this country of ours, this country which we have built with our very lives, but which is the private property of the banks, the corporations and the holding companies.

Tell your friend, neighbor and fellow worker that a WORKERS' GOVERNMENT, aided and supported by the small farmers, white collar slaves and little store keepers CAN NEVER, NEVER NEVER DO WORSE THAN THE CAPITALISTS HAVE DONE!

Tell them what is READY, American Smith, ready as soon as we get together and organize POLITICALLY in the WORKERS PARTY and in an independent Labor Party, just as thirteen million of us have organized ECONOMICALLY in the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the American Federation of Labor.

HERE IS WHAT IS READY

This is what is ready, brother:

Raw Materials and Power—soil, metals, coal, oil, forests, rushing rivers—all in abundance—plenty to produce plenty of everything for everybody—and more if we want it.

Mechanical Equipment—countless millions of machines and tools, factories, power plants, machines to make other machines make almost anything and everything in any amount for all of us—plenty to produce plenty of everything for everybody—and much more if we want it!

Transportation Equipment—railways, trucks, roads, ships, terminals, docks, all the motive power to haul and handle finished products—plenty to bring the plenty we can produce to everybody!

Skills—adeptness of hand and brain in a thousand and one different shapes and forms, engineers and technicians, laboratory researchers and inventors, workers, farmers, miners, tool makers, clerks, school teachers—almost all of them ready and eager to help produce plenty of everything for everybody—and many millions more will be needed!

Etcetera and Soforth—fill them in yourself, American Smith, add or subtract, divide or multiply—and there will still remain enough to provide PLENTY FOR ALL!

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY, because only ONE THING IS NOT READY—the working class.

Let us be frank—your brothers and mine are still too duped by the vast propaganda machinery of our masters—their school books, their press, their movies, their radio, their government.

Your brothers and mine are still too humble, too shy, too dulled, too confused to ask for, to strike for, to fight for plenty for all.

But your brothers and mine are far from hopeless. When pushed to the wall they have fought, bled, died, won and lost on picket lines and in strikes. And the great majority of them are generous and good-hearted and only the dog-eat-dog philosophy of the ruling class has corrupted some of them so that they ape the greediness and selfishness of their masters.

Let us not mourn them, American Smith, but only for those who, in the words of the great working class poet, Ralph Chaplin, are

"...the apathetic throng—the cowed and meek—who see the world's great anguish and wrong and dare not speak!"

Join the WORKERS PARTY, where you will find comradeship in a great, fighting cause, American Smith, for only the WORKERS PARTY IS READY to partake in the training and leadership of the BEST sections of our class, READY to free the miseducated and even the smug of their fetters and illusions.

The Workers Party DARES TO SPEAK OUT "against the world's great anguish and its wrong," against injustice, capitalist wars, want in the midst of plenty.

Join with us, learn with us, lead with us, fight with us, and soon hundreds and thousands of others will join hands with us. Then at last our whole class shall get up off its knees and see that the master class is not so tall. Then not all the law or guns in the world will be able to stop us, for "the people will have arrived."

Here's What Will Happen to Wages When Cutbacks Come

What earnings does the post-war world offer to American workers? We are reprinting two charts from the CIO's Economic Outlook to give you some idea.

The first shows how total payrolls, outside of farming, may fall. The second explains why.

Look at the first. Total yearly earnings in 1943 were ninety billions of dollars. IF wage rates hold up and IF all present workers continue to be employed, the expected drop in earnings is fourteen billions, over fifteen per cent.

If you are now earning \$40 a week, you may expect a cut to \$34. If \$50, a cut to \$42.50. Of course, the decreases will not be the same for all workers. They will be MUCH GREATER in some cases, much less in others. A factory worker can expect much bigger cut than a clerk, whose earnings haven't gone up so much during the war.

What is the explanation for this prediction? The second chart explains that. A great part of present earnings comes from longer hours, overtime pay, the wage rates in "high paying" war industries, which will disappear, etc.

So far we have been optimistic, supposing full employment. If the 1939 level of employment returns (see bottom figure on first chart), total earnings will drop by thirty-three billions, or thirty-seven per cent. This doesn't mean a cut of thirty-seven per cent for all workers, but it does mean that many workers will be cut from the payrolls altogether.

IF WE GO BACK...



1943 payrolls in nonagricultural civilian industries



Full employment but 1939 hours and employment pattern



1939 hours, employment pattern and level

PAYROLLS WILL DROP \$33 BILLION

Economic Outlook Chart

If we consider manufacturing alone, leaving aside such fields as transportation and clerical work, the drop will be no less than fifty-eight per cent.

Several warnings need to be added about these charts. First, there have been far worse years in recent history than 1939. Second, the chart assumes present wage rates in all industries. But if employment falls sharply and there results a great excess of labor, wage rates "are not safe from employer pressure," as the Economic Outlook so mildly puts it.

The CIO has offered these figures

in support of the drive to break the Little Steel formula. Higher hourly wage rates are an absolute necessity to offset loss in hours, overtime premiums, upgrading, etc.

The capitalists and their government have not been impressed by these arguments of the unions. Naturally not. Their main aim has been and is to keep down basic wage rates. Now, as in the past, they can be impressed only by a more forceful kind of argument—strikes or the danger of strikes. We therefore repeat: Repeat the no-strike pledge!

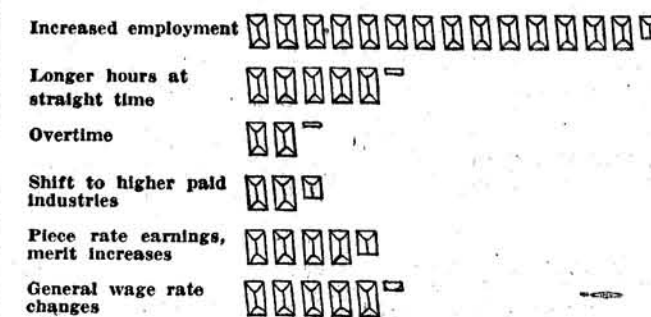
There is one more thing we want to say about the first chart. Compare its top and bottom figures. Will workers allow their total earnings as a class to be cut almost in half—or worse?

We all know now that the American productive machine, if fully turned to peacetime uses, could easily give every family \$100 a week. Returning veterans would not be a menace to workers now employed but would furnish the manpower to make possible a sharp cut in hours. This would make it possible to enjoy the high earnings.

But this will not happen under the system of monopoly capitalism, under the system of low production for high profits. It can happen if workers use their political strength to establish a workers' government that will use American productive capacity fully, that will plan and produce for plenty and for use.

FACTORS IN \$344 MILLION INCREASE IN WEEKLY PAYROLLS

January 1941 to April 1944



Each Envelope Represents \$10 Million Economic Outlook Chart

No Shell Shortage, After All--

(Continued from page 1)

unpredictable. Since, however, things have got into a bad state, the workers will have to save the situation. So there are promises—jobs for everybody after the war (even the National Association of Manufacturers has changed its line and is promising fifty-five million jobs, maybe) good pay, smooth reconversion. And there are threats, threats that have been heard before: the draft of men from twenty-six to thirty-eight years of age will be renewed.

We don't have the space to quote even a small fraction of the enlightening material that has appeared in the papers and the magazines about

the shell question, but McNutt, chief of the War Manpower Commission, had some interesting things to tell the AFL convention on November 21, the very day of Roosevelt's sensational anti-labor blast.

First, he attacked labor-haters (Roosevelt?—Ed.) who said that "labor was responsible for these shortages." He proceeded to blame low wages in textile factories and foundries for some shortages—wages that Roosevelt and the War Labor Board refuse to raise. Then he attacked discrimination, which excluded Negro workers from vital jobs. He forgot to mention that some months back Byrnes, Roosevelt's

right-hand man, ruled that "critical" plants must be given labor, even if they practiced discrimination. Finally he mentioned (and this is nothing new) that some foundries are still producing non-essential products.

There is much, much more to be found in the press. But, for reasons of space, we must conclude with just a few sentences from the authoritative capitalist magazine, Business Week (December 9):

"The net result of all the somewhat muddled news on war production is that the Army has won its year-long war...on reconversion planning..."

"There have been no munitions shortages at the front, for all the talk, other than those caused by bogged roads and enemy action..."

"Today there is questioning of whether the Army has overstated its needs—intentionally or inadvertently..."

Business Week ends with a tip to its readers, that is the industrialists. When Germany is conquered there will be loads of supplies on hand, because the Army is now playing safe. Therefore, cutbacks will surely be much higher than the mere fifteen to twenty-five per cent now being predicted in Washington.

GREEK MASSES FIGHT ALLIED ARMS FOR FREEDOM--

(Continued from page 1)

Now the same bombers and fighters and tanks and munitions and troops are pouring death into the heart of the people of Greece who fought for democracy and national freedom against the Nazis, and who are still fighting for it.

The signers of the Atlantic Charter, Roosevelt and Churchill, wrote down as their third "common principle" that—

"...They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

Churchill, the reactionary monster who we still remember as the British Minister of War who was the would-be assassin of the Russian Revolution and the Russian people in 1918-19, whom we have not forgotten as the man who sang the praises of Mussolini and Italian fascism, who is still the Lord High Protector of Francisco Franco in Spain and the fascist House of Savoy in Italy, must needs add the most infamous insults to the Greek people.



Yesterday, when the fate of the Empire was at stake, Churchill fell all over himself in praise of the revolutionary underground fighters in such countries as Greece. He lauded them as men of imperishable exploits, heroes, idealists, martyrs.

Now that he has his own troops in Greece, and now that these underground fighters have shown that they had no intention whatsoever of exchanging British oppression for German, Churchill speaks a different language. The fighting people of Greece are now referred to as "bands of gangsters forcing their way into Greek cities, seizing police stations and key points of government, and endeavoring to introduce a totalitarian régime." The same people are accused by this cynical servant of British imperialism of "a carefully planned coup d'état by murder gangs and by the iron rule of ruffians seeking to climb into the seats of power without a vote ever having been cast in their favor."

In the first place, these "bands of gangsters" were originally armed by Britain (and the U. S. A.) precisely for the purpose of "forcing their way into Greek cities, seizing police stations and key points of government." To be sure, they were not meant to "introduce a totalitarian régime," but only a puppet régime subservient to British control. This is what the Greek masses do not want, however. They have suffered long enough under foreign puppet régimes. They want the freedom of their country. They want to rule themselves. They want to take care in their own way of their own enemies at home. That's why Wellington bombers, Spitfire fighters, Sherman tanks, cruiser fire and mortar shells are moving them down today!

Churchill is against murder gangs and "the iron rule of ruffians seeking to climb into the seats of power without a vote ever having been cast in their favor." Four hundred million Indians

know Churchill as the outstanding ruffian in the world who has already climbed "into the seat of power without a vote ever having been cast in his favor."

WHAT GREEK MASSES WANT

And Papandreou—by what "vote ever having been cast in his favor" did this British puppet "climb into the seats of power"? When was he elected and by whom? Whom does this assassin of his own people represent? Papandreou's "party" is a joke in Greece and always has been. He represents NOBODY among the people, except for the handful of ultra-reactionary elements who have now rallied around him and who were the tools of the Nazis during the German occupation. His own ministers have quit his ludicrous "government"; he himself has offered to resign, an offer he withdrew only under pressure of the British. What makes this marionette, in Churchill's words, "the authority of the constitutional Greek government"? Nothing but British bayonets, British bullets and British bombs.

The Greek masses are represented, in their vast majority, not by Churchill or the "Greek" King or Papandreou, but by the national revolutionary resistance movement, the EAM and its armed forces, the ELAS.

ROLE OF THE STALINISTS

The first thing to note is that the Stalinists in the ELAS, and the Communist Party itself, voted repeatedly to disarm the fighting forces of the people and to give all armed power to the British military forces.

The second thing to note is that the masses of the people follow, or look with sympathy to, the Communist Party ONLY to the extent that it appeared in their eyes as the most forthright and unyielding and consistent champion of their fight for national freedom.

Following the expulsion of the Germans, however the Stalinists faced an exceptionally difficult problem: How to keep their influence with the Greek people who want real democracy, and at the same time protect the interests of Russian imperialism, which has no more in common with democracy or the right of self-determination than Hitlerite Germany has.

This problem was aggravated by the fact that while everyone of the Greek politicians joined in the clamor for the disarming of the ELAS, not a move was made to disarm the reactionary and royalist military formations. On the contrary, they became increasingly prominent in the country and increasingly arrogant. What is more, not a single step was taken to clean out the Fascists and Nazi collaborators who made up the bulk of the police force and were taken over bodily by Papandreou and his British bosses as their own police force.

It appears quite clearly that the rank and file of the ELAS was more than hesitant, in the face of such alarming facts, to allow itself to be disarmed. The people of Europe have learned a great deal in the last five years, and one of the most important things they have learned is that nowadays an armed, self-controlled people is the only guarantee of liberty.

It appears also that the Papandreou government enjoyed no real popularity and that in Greece, as in all the "liberated" coun-

tries, the first thing the people want is a government they have themselves chosen freely, so that they can have a government which will protect their numerous interests. In Greece, however, as in Italy, France and Belgium, the bayonet-propped government promised "free elections"—but only in the distant and very hazy future. Meanwhile, the temper and the restlessness of the Greek people rose steadily.

RUSSIAN-BRITISH DIFFERENCES

The role of the Stalinists in the clashes that began with and followed the shooting down of demonstrators by Papandreou, is as unclear as it is suspect. Three surmises are in order:

One is that the Stalinists opposed the inevitable clash between the people and the Churchill-Papandreou vassal régime, but did not dare do so openly without losing every bit of influence it had with the people. Consequently, they went along with the people in the struggle, carefully maintaining all their leading positions in order, at the crucial moment, to betray the movement by capitulation or treacherous compromise—as they did in the case of Belgium.

The second is that the Stalinists utilized the sentiment of the masses to engineer a clash deliberately, to embarrass the British and to gain an extra concession for the Russians. It is true that the agreement between London and Moscow "leaves" Greece to Britain. But imperialist bandits are faithful only to those agreements which benefit them or which their strength does not permit them to alter or break. Stalin aims at a vassal confederation in the Balkans. Rumania and Bulgaria are already under his thumb. Tito of Yugoslavia is his bonded servant. Unostentatiously, a movement has developed for a "free Macedonia" as part of a "free Balkan confederation." If these ever developed under Stalin's rule, they would be just as free as Russia's own imprisoned peoples.

The third is that the role of the Stalinists may be based on a combination of elements noted above.

WASHINGTON'S "HANDS-OFF" HYPOCRISY

As for illusions about the benevolence of Washington, they are as current as they are unwarranted. The lofty "protest statement" of the new Secretary of State, Stettinius, is a typical piece of American imperialist hypocrisy. The American government, you see, deplores any interference from without into the life of other peoples. It would really like to see a "Hands Off" policy followed by the British in Greece and everywhere else in Europe.

Of course, you understand that there are exceptions to these shining principles as in the case of France and Italy. When WE interfere in the affairs of the people of Puerto Rico (and Latin America) and prevent them by force from governing themselves, why—that's one hundred percent okay, eminently democratic and preeminently American. When WE, through our chief commanding officer in the field, give orders to our American and British troops, under our General Erskine, to prop up the reactionary and super-unpopular government of M. Pierlot in Belgium, and to disarm or shoot down the Belgian people who really fought Fascism and who have no use for M. Pierlot and his super-reactionary patrons, why—that's one hundred percent okay and democratic and American, too. Ditto when we support and give vast arms supplies to the self-perpetuating totalitarian tyranny of Sr. Getulio Vargas in Brazil, who has a vast prison-building program to accom-

modate the army of people who dared open their lips in criticism of the Vargas despotism and the Vargas corruption.

Why, then, the lofty Washingtonian indignation over Greece, and Italy? Its hypocrisy matches Churchill's cynicism and Stalin's brutality. In the first place, it gives American imperialism an opportunity to present itself to the masses of Europe as their benevolent friend, in contrast to wicked British imperialism. But there is a deeper reason. Poor British imperialism! How is it to hold its own in the world? The war has all but wrecked it, especially financially. It is dependent for food on rich Uncle Sam, who doesn't give away anything for nothing. How is England to dominate a country like Italy or Greece? By the blackmail of food—"Do as I say or you get no food"? Not so easy a game to play, when your own food comes from—the United States! England must therefore resort more openly to direct physical force in these countries. A simple law of imperialism is in operation here: The weaker the imperialist power, the more openly it must resort to force and the less able it is to do its dirty work by "subtler" means.

Precisely because the United States is, relatively, so rich and powerful, it can more easily afford to proceed with "subtler" means. American imperialism does not plan to rip open the throats of the starving European people with a bayonet—at least not unless these people "get out of hand." Instead, it plans to choke them to death with a few dried-up crusts; to bind them to servitude with a chain of American dollar loans for "reconstruction" of the ruined lands.

HANDS OFF—LONDON—WASHINGTON—MOSCOW!

The people of Greece, and of every other country, have a sacred right to their own freedom. They have a sacred right to choose and have a government of their own, and to choose it freely. It is reactionary arrogance, typical of Nazi imperialism and of all others, to say that "we" will rule another people "for their own good" or "only for a little while." We were told—and still are told—that the war is being fought for democracy. That was a lie when it was first said, and it is an even more obvious lie today. But this democracy we nevertheless demand for Greece and its people. That is the position of our revolutionary socialists. It is the people's right.

And our duty, here in this country? A heinous crime is being committed under our very eyes. This massacre of a people is being organized this time not by the Nazis, but by "our" Ally, with the folded-hands consent of the other Allies who act likewise elsewhere. We have no right to be silent—we of the labor movement. We have the downright, elementary duty to speak up and act so clearly decisively and effectively that the bloodstained arms of imperialism are broken or shackled.

Hands off Greece and the people of Greece! That cry must resound from every labor organization in this country. And "Hands Off" applies not only to the Nazis, and not only to England, but to Washington and Moscow as well.

Let Churchill hear labor's voice until his ears burn and his oppressor's arm is paralyzed.

What is being done in Greece is a hideous criminal assault by imperialism upon a people and a nation.

The crime must be stopped and the criminals brought to justice.