

Devaluation of Franc And the Western Bloc

— See Page 3 —

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. XII.—No. 6

NEW YORK, N. Y., MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1913

PRICE: FIVE CENTS

AFL CHIEFS UPHOLD 2-PARTY MISRULE

Washington State Legislators Stage Local Witch Hunt

By Daniel Roberts

SEATTLE, Feb. 2 — An assortment of several dozen ex-Stalinists are currently parading before the Canwell Committee, created by the state legislature to investigate "un-American" activities in the state of Washington. The witness list includes Louis F. Budenz, former managing editor of the *Daily Worker*; Manning Johnson, former N. Y. State Organizer of the Communist Party; Jesse Fletcher, former Stalinist big shot in the Building Service Union; Nat Hong, former editor of the *International Woodworker*; Howard Costigan, former head of the Washington Commonwealth Federation and opportunists of lesser light.

The Canwell Committee is made up of the most reactionary legislators from the rural districts. When creation of the committee was in the discussion stage in the legislature, one of its present members, Blenz, proposed that the committee be given judicial and executive powers including the right of summary execution! While the committee did not receive the powers Blenz asked for, its attitude is one of virulent hatred toward anything connected with labor.

The Canwell Committee has been enjoined in the courts from acting for the State of Washington. Its hearings, which began on Jan. 24, therefore have no legal status. Nevertheless they are being held in the state armory in Seattle and receive full protection of the state police. Testimony by the renegade Stalinists is receiving full spread publicity in the local daily paper. The organization under current investigation is the Stalinist-led Washington Old Age Pension Union, an

WIPE OUT GAINS

Last year the legislature and Governor Wallgren, over the opposition of the WPU, moved to wipe out the gains made in prior years. The \$50 floor on pensions was removed, the escalator clause was eliminated, a modified form of the means test was instituted, liens were placed on the property of pension recipients and the overall appropriation reduced.

The Pension Union charges that it is being subjected to the "anti-red" investigation in preparation for even more drastic cuts in the pensions.

The only noteworthy testimony in the hearings was given by Budenz. He stated before the Canwell Committee what he has already disclosed elsewhere, namely, that he and other high-ranking Communist Party officials in this country participated, under instructions from the Kremlin, in the plans of the assassination of Leon Trotsky in 1940.

The rest of the testimony was only pathetic recanting on the part of former Stalinist hatchmen as well as fingering of present-day Stalinists.

In the eyes of class conscious workers the real indictment of the Communist Party is not contained in the testimony of the witnesses, but in the fact that the party should have had such a wretched crew of stool pigeons in its leadership.

BLFE Continues Jim Crow Policy In New Disguise

Negro Firemen Demand Full Union Membership

President Robertson, of the lily-white Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers, announced abandonment of the union's policy barring promotion and seniority to Negro firemen, following a Supreme Court decision upholding a lower court ruling that Negro firemen must not be discriminated against.

Robertson stated that the BLFE was serving notice on the 13 southern railroads involved that class 1-1000 must be dropped from the union contracts. This action was made necessary by the court decision, since these clauses endangered the validity of the existing union contracts.

A "NEGRO JOB"

For many years the job of fireman was the toughest and dirtiest in railroading. In the South it was a "Negro job." But as locomotives were improved, white men began to take firemen jobs.

The BLFE first negotiated in the 1920's "50-50" contracts under which the railroad companies replaced Negroes with whites until parity was achieved. But in 1941, the union put on a tighter squeeze and a great many Negro firemen lost their jobs. The Negroes, for whom the union bargained, were not—and still are not—permitted to become members of the union.

The Supreme Court decision does not solve the problem of the Negro railroad firemen, nor does it ensure equal rights. Archibald Bremsen, attorney for the Federation of Southern Colored Locomotive Firemen, pointed out that the BLFE is now attempting to deprive additional firemen of their jobs by means of a new subterfuge. He stated that the union is proposing new contract changes, ostensibly in line with the Supreme Court decision, requiring Negro firemen to take examinations for promotions and if they failed to pass, the men would have to be dismissed.

A. Philip Randolph, President of the AFL Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Chairman of the Provisional Committee to Organize Colored Locomotive Firemen, announced that Negro firemen on southern railroads will accept no compromise with the BLFE short of full union membership. He stated that the men would reject any Jim Crow union, and that the provision of a committee would be kept alive until they won full and equal union rights.

UAW Leader
Calls For
Sliding Scale
SEE PAGE 4

Auto Plants Shut Down



Thousands of auto workers stream from the Dodge plant in Detroit as management shut down the works during the last cold spell. Practically all plants in the area closed down following orders to curtail industrial gas for home consumption. George Edwards, Detroit City Council president stated, "The public is left with the assumption that Consolidated Gas desires a shortage as a propaganda basis for its proposed new pipe line."

Federated Pictures

CIO Packinghouse Locals To Vote on Wage Strike

The International Executive Board of the CIO United Packinghouse Workers has instructed the UPWA locals in the Armour and Swift plants to be prepared for a strike vote not later than Feb. 14.

This action followed the meat packing trusts' out-of-hand rejection of the union's demands for minimum decency and cost-of-living wage increases.

The UPWA leaders, during the last week of January, presented the following demands in opening negotiations with the companies:

1. A general wage increase of 29 cents per hour, retroactive to the reopening of the contract;
2. Pledge of future wage increases to bring minimum wages for all workers to the decency living standard set by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics — \$1.65 an hour for an average family at present price levels;
3. An escalator clause (sliding scale cost-of-living bonus) to provide automatic increases above the basic wage for price rises during the contract.

The UPWA, under the requirements of the Taft-Hartley Act, gave notice of intention to strike last Dec. 19. A strike may legally begin on Feb. 19. But the NLRB can intervene five days ahead of time under the "national welfare" clause of the Act to enforce an additional 80-day waiting period. During this period the NLRB is empowered to

take a vote among the workers to determine if they will accept the company's final offer.

The CIO Packinghouse Union's fight was made tougher by the undercutting agreement signed last week by the AFL Meatcutters' leaders with the big packers. After secret negotiations behind the backs of their members, they agreed to take a miserable 9-cent an hour increase. This has strengthened the hand of the profiteering packers against the CIO workers, the largest group in the industry.

An equal handicap to the UPWA negotiations are the policies of Murray Reuther and the other top leaders of the CIO. They have projected no unified wage strategy for the major CIO unions and made no preparations for a consolidated struggle against the big corporations, although most of the CIO unions are making wage demands this spring.

AVOID A FIGHT

The CIO Steelworkers Wage and Policy Committee meets Feb. 13 to take final action on wage demands. President Murray and his Executive Board have called for "substantial wage increases" without stating any specific amount as yet. Murray is already hinting around he will accept any "reasonable" crumbs the companies may offer in order to avoid a real fight.

Wage policy committees of other leading CIO unions are meeting next week. The CIO Rubber Workers

committee meets Feb. 8 and 9 to formulate demands on the "Big Four" corporations — Goodyear, Goodrich, Firestone and U. S. Rubber. The Oil Workers will launch its wage drive on Feb. 9.

The CIO United Automobile Workers, which is demanding a 25-cent increase, plus five cents in health and welfare benefits, has already felt the effects of Walter Reuther's weakening policies adopted at the recent General Motors delegates conference. Reuther put over the proposition of accepting a 10-cent cut in the wage demand in return for an "acceptable" pension plan.

Now GM is trying to put over a sub-standard group insurance plan, with a pay deduction, without negotiation with the union. This has brought a howl from Reuther and an NLRB complaint against the company.

Congressman And Cop Tangle

Representative Joseph Hendricks of Florida was driving home from Washington when he was caught in a speed trap in Darien, Georgia. After paying his fine Hendricks remarked "jokingly and facetiously" that it was a dirty trick to set up a speed trap.

The Congressman should have known Georgia cops better for here is his account of what happened. The Deputy Sheriff, one Poppell, "seized me by the arm and began pushing me and shoving and forcing me violently without reason. He shoved me up two flights of stairs to a cell."

All the while the Congressman tried to tell the sheriff who he was but the sheriff just wouldn't listen and locked the politician in the cell with the remark, "You will stay in there until you know you have been in Georgia." Then he told the desk clerk, "File another charge against him." Rep. Hendricks later asked for a physician. He never got one. The same with his request for a lawyer.

Some time later when the prisoner's identity was learned the sheriff's wife appeared and unlocked Hendricks' cell. The prisoner demanded to know the charges against him and a trial. Mrs. Deputy Sheriff told him nothing and began shoving him out of the jail to his car. They sure do a lot of shoving in Georgia.

But there is a moral to this story. If an influential Congressman, driving a good car can get shoved around for a "joking" remark, what sort of treatment can a poor white or Negro, or a union organizer expect from the "law" enforcement officers in Georgia?

Council Stages Political Farce at Miami Parley

By Art Preis

FEB. 3—While warming their senile hides and thin blood in Miami sunshine, the 15 "elder statesmen" of the AFL Executive Council have been disporting themselves since Jan. 26 in a shameless political farce.

They have decked themselves in the fetching costumes of "independent" politics. But their gestures and postures are those of solicitors for the two-party dive of Big Business.

On Feb. 2, the entire AFL Council lined up in chorus formation for the first act of their burlesque. This was their unanimous rejection of Henry Wallace and any third-party candidacy for the U. S. Presidency. Their theme song was "Do Not Split the Liberal Vote."

The next act, played the following day, was performed largely in the vein of low slapstick comedy. Here the cast of characters was seen trying to contrive their own political program and set-up.

FALLING APART

They were seated around a machine called Labor's League for Political Education, blue-printed at the San Francisco convention last October to be the AFL's political conveyance.

Then, right on the stage, one of the biggest parts of the machine dropped off — the carpenters' union led by William L. Hutchison. Daniel Tobin's teamsters' union, started coming loose. John L. Lewis had wrenched off — in technical parlance, "disaffiliated" — the miners' union a number of weeks ago.

But the denouement came in the attempts of the Council members to get a "reputable" driver for the machine. For months they had been hunting high and low for some old-line capitalist politician in need of a \$20,000 a year job, to take the steering wheel of LLPE.

They had reached a point of frustration and desperation when they were actually considering appointing one of their own number to keep the job from going begging. At the last moment, however, they dug up a likely candidate, ex-



Senator Burton K. Wheeler, and even announced his acceptance.

Then the farce got out of hand altogether. Wheeler advised them that he could only take the job on a "part-time" basis. If at all. Besides he could not accept without the understanding that he did not go along book-line-and-sinker with the Marshall Plan and did not subscribe to the AFL's position of opposition to all Congressional candidates who voted for the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Bill.

This led to a free-for-all among the Council members that did not appear to be in the original script of their show. A section of the Council, headed by David Dubinsky, "revolted." They said they would not accept Wheeler.

A THIN DISGUISE

Seldom has the American labor movement been so disgraced as by the Miami spectacle put on by the AFL big-wigs. In the very breath that they opposed Wallace for his "false liberalism," they revealed their own complete subservience to reaction. They complained that such

(Continued on Page 3)

AFL Chiefs Prepare Capitulation on UMT

Three crucial problems — inflation, the Taft-Hartley Act and war preparations — were the main topics of discussion at the opening week's sessions of the AFL Executive Council in Miami, Florida.

The results of the deliberations of the AFL top leaders can give no comfort to the seven million AFL members and American labor generally.

Against the Big Business and government attacks on labor's rights and living standards, their answer was only whining words of complaint. At the same time, they lined up like sheep behind the reactionary Truman Doctrine of American imperialism and its militarist program.

On the question of high prices, they pointed out the indisputable fact that prices are being pushed up by "greed and unbridled profiteering." They even expressed the fear — it was certainly no threat from these timorous souls — that unless prices come down, this spring will see the worst wave of strikes in the country's history.

NO PROGRAM

But the AFL Executive Council presented no program that could reasonably be expected to protect labor's living standards from inflation. They didn't even voice an explicit demand for higher wages. Their only positive proposal was endorsement of Truman's "anti-inflation" program: calling for presidential authority to "ration and impose selective price controls" on scarce commodities. Truman's program also includes a wage freeze.

On the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Law, the AFL chiefs had nothing new to offer since the time they voted to capitulate at the San Francisco convention in October. They made their now oft-repeated threat to oppose the re-election of every member of Congress who voted for the Taft-Hartley Act.

But they proposed to ride along with their wind-broken and spavined policy of "non-partisanship" as between Wall Street's Democratic Party and Wall Street's Republican Party. If Republican Senator Taft were nominated, AFL President William Green opined, the AFL leaders might go so far as to "be against Taft." He added: "But we would not necessarily be for his opponent."

Strictly non-partisan! Vote for anyone you like, so long as it isn't Taft, or Wallace — or, God forbid, a working class candidate.

WITH BOTH HANDS

There was one issue on which the AFL tops were not timid. They voted with both hands for Truman's full program of war preparations, militarism and imperialist adventures.

They even laid the basis for abandonment of the AFL's traditional opposition to peacetime military conscription and universal military training by calling for a revision of the country's traditional peacetime policies "in accordance with the requirements of common-sense national defense." They are for "common-sense defense." Green said, by means of huge increased appropriations for military preparations even if tax cuts are to be shelved indefinitely!

In a press conference, one AFL leader admitted that a majority of the Council is for supporting the Brass Hat program of compulsory military training, but they did not dare to go on record because of the strong sentiment against military regimentation among the AFL membership.

Meanwhile, they propose to sacrifice the needs of the workers to the wealth-devouring inflationary war budget.

Press Blackout On Plan for Pa. Secret Police

Another press conspiracy of silence about the creation of a secret political police has come to light. This conspiracy resembles the silence of the nation's press over the formation of a Mississippi Gestapo, reported in *The Militant*, Jan. 19.

The Pennsylvania Civil Air Patrol, an auxiliary of the U. S. Air Force, has applied to Pennsylvania industrialists and businessmen for aid in setting up a spy system that would include secret agents in every plant in the state.

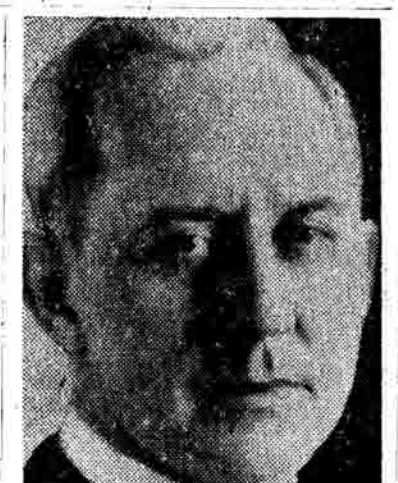
Industrialists have been asked to contribute financially to the support of the spy system. In addition, each businessman was urged to enroll at least one employee in the network. These would first be screened by the FBI and the State Police and then sent to intelligence schools. A "great number" would go on to the Army Counter Intelligence school at Holabird Signal depot in Baltimore.

After their indoctrination and training the secret agents would return to their jobs and report to the Civil Air Patrol all persons considered by their employers "to have communistic or subversive tendencies."

500 CAP letters outlining this scheme for a secret police, unsanctioned by state or federal law, were sent to newspapers in Pennsylvania, asking their co-operation. But only one paper broke the story, the *York Pa. Gazette* and *Daily*. All national press associations completely ignored this scandal.

As in the case of the secret police setup in Mississippi during the bus-drivers' strike, this Pennsylvania plot reveals the sinister collaboration of government officials and Big Business. Financed by industrialists and manned by their picked agents, such a secret police would not only engage in vicious witch hunts, but would be used for labor espionage and frame-ups.

No less sinister is the fact that the newspapers and powerful press associations join in the conspiracy against the democratic rights of labor.



President David B. Robertson of the lily-white Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers, whose union discriminates against Negro firemen, for whom it is supposed to be bargaining. Federated Pictures

OIL DICTATES U. S. ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST

Oil—the black, sticky, liquid gold so prized by the imperialists—is smeared all over Truman's aggressive moves in the Eastern Mediterranean and the conflict-torn Middle East.

Behind the war-like U. S. Naval maneuvers around the Balkan peninsula, the threat to send American troops to Palestine and the State Department's intrigues with the British and Arabian rulers, are the multi-billion dollar interests of Standard Oil and other giant American oil corporations.

If American boys die in a shooting war anywhere in the Balkans or Middle East, it will be in defense of the oil concessions and monumental profits that Standard Oil of California, Standard Oil of New Jersey, Socony Vacuum and Texas Co. are looting from the Middle East.

More and more facts are beginning to leak out about the decisive influence of the oil corporations on American foreign policy. Top government officials, like Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal, have given revealing testimony along these lines.

Forrestal informed the Senate War Investigating Committee on

Jan. 29 that the U. S. government has a "vital interest" in the Middle East oil reserves. This "vital interest" extends, in fact, from "Gibraltar to the Indian Ocean."

CRY OF "IMPERIALISM"

He declared that "some arrangement" must be made by the government to secure for American armed forces, in time of "emergency," the oil from the Middle East "depot." The protection of this "depot"—owned by private American oil companies—he conceded would raise a cry of "imperialism."

He suggested that the government could escape this charge by buying into the private companies—although he admitted this would be actively resisted by the capitalists and Congress. His alternative proposal was for long-term government contracts to buy up the oil from the private companies at a fixed price. In fact, he indicated the Navy is considering such contracts now.

Forrestal then went on to disclose that "high military authorities believe that far more fundamental actions may be needed to protect the vital interests of the Western World in that region (Mid-

dle East)," as the Jan. 30 N. Y. Times indirectly quoted him.

Forrestal added the proposition that "the Marshall Plan itself might be in serious jeopardy" unless the Middle East oil were available to supply America's Western European satellites and junior partners of the Western Bloc.

FANTASTIC "OVERCHARGE"

This testimony was brought out in connection with the Senate Committee's attempts to uncover the facts about a \$5 million dollar "overcharge" the Navy paid the Arabian-American Oil Company in a 1945 contract. Previous testimony had revealed that this Standard Oil-company had made 117 million dollars profit on which it did not have to pay a penny of taxes to the U. S.

Forrestal said that he had asked Attorney General Clark to look into the "overcharge" angle last April—but nothing has ever come of it. The Navy contracted to pay \$1.05 a barrel for oil originally offered by the company for 40 cents. But Forrestal informed the committee that he was not disposed to be "very critical" of the contract.

At a previous hearing on Jan. 24, it was revealed that outright oil

company agents had penetrated into the State Department. Senator Brewster directly accused the big oil companies of "placing or planting" their men in the State Department "to influence foreign policy."

Specifically named was Max W. Thornburg, former special assistant to the Under-Secretary of State from 1941 to 1943. While he was getting \$8,000 from the government, he was also getting \$29,000 from Standard Oil of California, one of the controlling interests in Arabian-American Oil Co.

Thornburg, it is claimed, helped secure a 30 million dollar "lend-lease" handout for King Ibn Saud, who thereupon gratefully granted oil concessions to the Arabian-American Oil Co. The committee is investigating the cases of at least 20 other oil men working in the State Department.

What has been brought out clearly in the testimony so far is that the American oil interests have a tremendous profits-stake in the Middle East; that the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan involve the protection of that stake; and that this country is being readied for war in part to ensure Standard Oil's control of Arabian oil resources.

Stalinists Plan to Build Wallace Movement—by United Front from Below

By George Breitman

The differences between independent labor political action and the Stalinist third party policy were clearly delineated in the speech made by Communist Party General Secretary Eugene Dennis at a mass meeting in New York on Jan. 15. This speech made it plain that while the CP is now attacking the two-party system, in line with the world-wide "left turn" ordered by the Kremlin, it is still fighting by every means at its command to prevent the mobilization of the workers as an independent class force in U. S. politics.

Any discussion of the CP's present policy naturally raises the question of its previous opposition to the formation of a new party. Dennis "disposes" of that embarrassing issue as follows:

"It is a matter of public record that for many years the Stalinists had been running up and down the country denouncing those workers who wanted a new party. They campaigned vigorously in 1944 for the election of Roosevelt and Truman; after that election, their members at the CIO convention reaffirmed their opposition to a third party as something that would divide the 'forces of progress' in the Democratic Party."

Even as late as the 1946 elections they backed Truman's candidates. At last month's CIO Executive Board meeting, Murray, whose opposition to the Wallace movement is wholly reactionary, reminded the Stalinists, with malicious glee, of their own extensive hatchet work on behalf of the two-party system. Dennis can't publicly explain the real reason why the CP line changed, but it is well known. Stalin

in wants a pact with Truman, like the one he had with Hitler. And he is trying to get it by political pressure and blackmail. Dennis can't admit this because to do so would be to admit that if a Stalin-Truman deal is worked out, the CP will again be waving the flag for the two-party system.

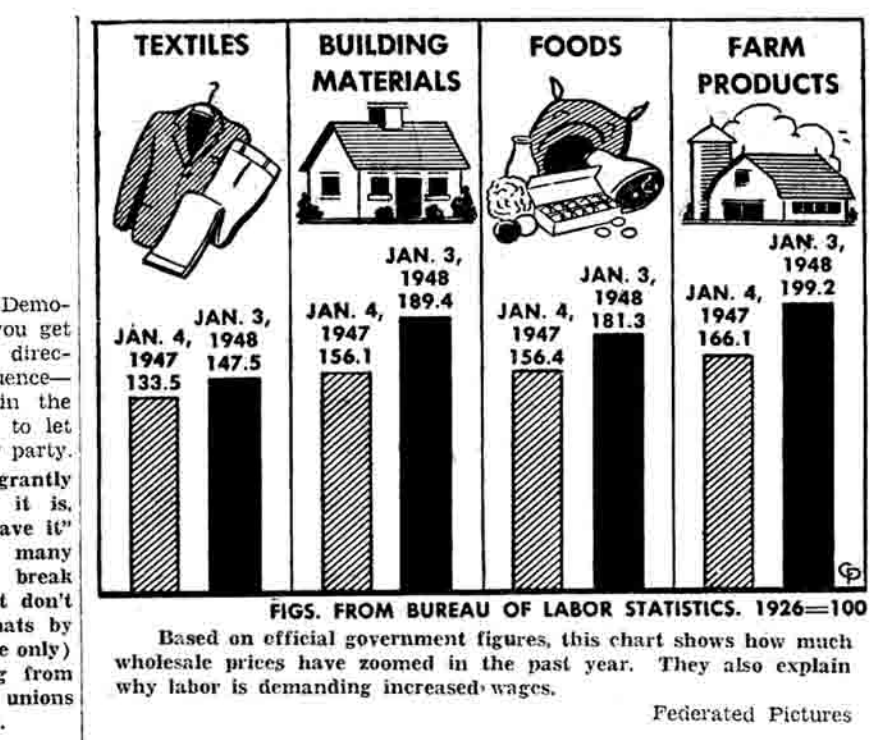
While the Stalinist line was thus changed and given a more radical appearance, its main function is still the bureaucratic manipulation of the American workers in the interests of the Kremlin's foreign policy. The crass character of this manipulation is evident in the very manner in which the new line is being carried out.

First of all, Wallace is given the real domination of the movement. That gives the party a leader—acceptable to the Stalinists, even though he is an avowed defender of capitalism, because he too wants a deal with Stalin. But, of course, the party needs more than a leader if it is to achieve the Stalinists' ends. So Dennis lays down the directive for the next steps:

"The Stalinists, he declares, 'must in the first place guarantee that the third party has a strong trade union base.' What does this mean—that the unions should get together in a conference, democratically discuss the ways and means to fight the two Wall Street parties, and strike out on the course of independent labor political action by setting up their own party? Not according to Dennis.

ENDORSE—NOT CONTROL

By a "strong trade union base" the Stalinists don't mean that the unions should control the party, have the deciding voice in determining policy, candidates, leaders, structure, etc. Oh no, what they actually mean is that as many unions as possible should be gotten to endorse the party, finance it, do the bell-ringing and Jimmy Higgins work—just as the Stalinist-dominated unions did for the Democratic Party. Of course, the unions should be given greater representation



Milwaukee Politicians Aid Gas Company Steal

MILWAUKEE, Jan. 29—Protests against the 10% "temporary" rate increase granted the Milwaukee Gas Light Co. on Jan. 15 by the state public service commission mounted as the company admitted today that it could not guarantee uncut service in the event of more cold weather. Indignation is increased because gas pressure is already so low that many families find it impossible to light more than one burner at meal time. On last Thanksgiving and Christmas days pressure dropped so low that thousands were unable to cook their holiday dinners at home.

In addition to many individual protests, Local 1111 of the CIO United Electrical Workers passed a resolution declaring the increase "a direct slap in the face to the consumer in view of the widely felt failure of the company to provide adequate gas pressure to the homes."

Although Milwaukee is in the midst of a mayoral campaign, only the Socialist Workers Party candidate, James E. Boulton, has offered a program to meet this situation. Boulton demanded that the city declare a gas emergency and seize the utility without compensation and operate it under the control of the gas workers. "Only in this way can we provide enough gas for everyone at reasonable rates. We must take steps to end the 'profits first' principle in utility operation."

In an attempt to justify the rate increase, the public service commission made the astounding statement that the utility's earnings "are so inadequate as to impair its finances with consequent jeopardy to its ability to render reasonably adequate service." However the commission has made no effort to force the company to provide decent service nor has the company even held out a hope of early improvement in service.

SECOND INCREASE

This increase was the second granted Milwaukee Gas Light in less than a year. In May 1947, the company was granted an increase calculated to yield an additional \$573,000 a year. This was not a flat increase; large (industrial) consumers actually had their rates reduced while those of workers were greatly raised.

The Milwaukee Gas Light Co. is part of a complicated utilities trust which drains profits from consumers in a great part of the mid-west.

The company is controlled by American Light and Traction Co., which in turn controls four other mid-western utilities.

American Light and Traction is part of the empire of United Light and Railways which controls two other holding companies that have a total of 14 operating subsidiaries in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri.

DRAIN PROFITS

Records show that Milwaukee Gas Light bonds and preferred stocks are selling well above par and that dividends have been paid regularly on both common (4%) and preferred (7%) stock. However the holding company overloads find, in addition to dividends, other ways to drain profits from Milwaukee workers. For example, Milwaukee Gas Light has a contract with United Light and Railways Service Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary, under which it pays fees for advice and assistance from the service corporation "in matters relating to management, operations and construction." This is a standard holding company device for draining off operating companies' revenues without its being shown as profit or dividends.

Then, too, Milwaukee Gas Light pays its executives and past executives huge salaries and pensions. Thus, Bruno Rahn, who was paid \$27,500 a year as president of the company, has been retired on a "pension" of \$7,500 a year.

The company's generosity in salaries does not extend to wages. In 1946 its employees were forced to strike to gain a modest wage increase. In order to prevent future strikes, Milwaukee Gas Light joined with other utilities in Wisconsin to push a compulsory arbitration law through the last session of the state legislature.

Philadelphia Offers Forum on the Civil War

The Philadelphia Branch of the Socialist Workers Party will present, Friday evening, Feb. 15, an open forum on **THE CIVIL WAR—THE SECOND AMERICAN REVOLUTION**. The discussion will cover the role of labor (slave and free), the First International, the unions, slave revolts, Negro leaders; and the real victims of the Civil War. The address is 1303 W. Girard Avenue, the time, 8 p.m.

Gandhi--His Role in Fight For India's Independence

By J. R. Johnson

The assassination of Gandhi was political news of the first importance, for Gandhi had become an international figure. His death has provided the capitalist press with an opportunity to wallow in hypocritical and sentimental outpourings of how extraordinary was the success of this religious personality in the hard brutal world of today. But this is nonsense. Gandhi was above all a political leader and it is this that explains his extraordinary career.

The least important thing about him was his theory of non-violence, his saintliness, his love of his fellow-man, etc. What is interesting to observe is how his political personality and methods fitted like a glove the economic and political needs of the Indian landlords and capitalists.

These two ruling classes were caught in a terrible dilemma. To ensure their exploitation of the peasants and workers, the Indian landlords and capitalists depended upon the British government. Yet to free themselves from the clutches of British exploitation, which was ruining India, they had no force except the same millions of downtrodden and oppressed.

POLITICAL GIFT

Gandhi opened a way for them. His political gift to the rising Indian bourgeoisie was his dramatization of the plight of India's hundreds of millions, and his use of these masses against British imperialism, without, at the same time, losing strict control over them. Thus he was able to torment and pressure the British and yet prevent a revolutionary outburst.

Let us grant, for the sake of argument, that Gandhi was personally sincere (that perpetual preoccupation of little minds). With that out of the way, let us see how Gandhi functioned politically.

The organization of the Indian masses by traditional political means was an impossible task. When Gandhi began his work before World War I, the union movement was insignificant. To unite peasants, as peasants, meant uniting them against the landlord. And that Gandhi would not do. His simplicity of life, however, and the way he dramatized it, caught the imagination of the Indian masses. His loin cloth, his spinning wheel, his skillfully timed fasts, his campaigns against the British—these were the

means by which he concentrated on himself, and himself alone, the attention and finally the political obedience of scores of millions.

It was this influence over the masses—and not spirituality and fasting—which gave him his enormous power among the hard-boiled politicians of the Indian National Congress.

Gandhi never alienated the Indian capitalists and landlords. Gandhi might talk against industrialization and spin his few yards of cloth. But every boycott he declared against British goods meant increased opportunities for Indian manufacturers. Gandhi, no doubt, sincerely hated industrialism, but he collaborated with it. Here spirituality capitulated to political expediency.

Gandhi, being against any revolutionary overturn in India, was compelled to be ultra-cautious in his opposition to British imperialism. When, after World War I, the British betrayed their promise of granting self-government to India, the country rose in revolt. The British regime found itself paralyzed. It was none other than Gandhi who came to the rescue. With his doctrine of non-violence he pacified India for Britain. Why? Because the violence he had unleashed threatened not only British rule but the native oppressing classes, as well.

Gandhi's non-violence is worth a little examination. When tens of millions practiced "civil disobedience," it could render the functioning of the British government impossible. It was an extraordinarily disruptive weapon, without, at the same time, being revolutionary. It was ideally suited, however, for the purposes and needs of Indian capitalism.

FORCE CONCESSIONS

World War II once again sharply brought out Gandhi's role. After the Japanese forces overran Burma, with the support of sections of the Burmese people, British power in India hung by a thread. Gandhi attempted to utilize Britain's desperation to force concessions. Under his leadership, the Congress Party inaugurated a new struggle against the British. And then again, true to form, the Congress leaders proceeded to quell the mass uprisings of 1942, because these threatened to sweep away not only the British but also the domination of the Indian capitalists and landlords.

Thus Congress again had to come to Britain's rescue and enable the British raj to weather the worst period.

The wholesale disintegration of British imperialism at the end of the war gave the Indian capitalists and landlords their long sought opportunity. The British were forced to arrive at some sort of settlement with the native ruling classes. Gandhi's influence among Congress leaders began declining as soon as the agreement with the British was consummated. They no longer had as much need of him as before. They began to act increasingly independently of him. They accepted partition against his bitter opposition. Patel is obviously determined to use strong measures against Pakistan. He is jailing Indian labor leaders. His government is at brutal against its working class opponents as were the British.

The death of Gandhi thus marks the end of a period.

Historically, Gandhi will have his due share of the credit for his struggles against British imperialism. He will also have his due share of discredit for having strengthened the native ruling class against the great masses of the people who alone can regenerate India.



Rebels in American History

EDWARD BELLAMY

By George Lavan

Julian West of Boston lay in a state of suspended animation from 1887 till the year 2000. When his subterranean chamber was discovered and he was brought out of his trance, he found himself in a Socialist America.

He compared the happy life of an economy of plenty with the capitalist world of 1887, in the following parable of the coach:

"... I cannot do better than to compare society as it then was to a prodigious coach which the masses of humanity were harnessed to and dragged toilsomely along a very hilly and sandy road. ... The top was covered with passengers who never got down, even to the steepest ascents. These seats on top were very breezy and comfortable. Well up out of the dust, their occupants could enjoy the scenery at their leisure, or critically discuss the merits of the straining team. Naturally such places were in great demand and the competition for them was keen. ... But did they think only of themselves? you ask. Was not their very luxury rendered intolerable to them by comparison with the lot of their brothers and sisters in the harness, and the knowledge that their own weight added to their toil? Had they no compassion for fellow beings from whom fortune only distinguished them? Oh, yes; compassion was frequently expressed by those who rode for those who had to pull the coach, especially when the vehicle came to a bad place in the road, as it was constantly doing, or to a particularly steep hill. At such times the desperate straining of the team, their agonized heaving and plunging under the pitiless lash of hunger, the many who fainted at the reins and were trampled in the mire, made a very distressing spectacle, which often called

for two years over 150 Nationalist Clubs were in existence, mostly in the West. In the 1892 Presidential election, they joined forces with the Populists and had an important influence on the farmers' movement and the western trade unions.

NO PROGRAM

The Nationalists looked to Bellamy for leadership. But this Bellamy could not provide. He was a shy, sickly person, and—what is more decisive—he had no program to achieve the socialist world he had so alluringly described. Bellamy had no understanding of the social forces of his time. He dissociated himself from the militant labor currents of the day. He denounced strike violence. His hostility toward the Haymarket frame-up victims is testimony to his political role. Essentially a middle class reformer preaching utopian socialism, he hoped to convince a large enough section of the ruling class that capitalism was not only unjust but inefficient. In this way he thought socialism could be introduced in easy stages.

To further this end and refute his critics in the universities, Bellamy wrote a sequel to *Looking Backward* entitled *Equality*. This book went into the inefficiency and undemocratic nature of capitalism. It also described in greater detail the working of the new society and how it could gradually come about through nationalization of key industries.

Equality appeared in 1897. By this time, the swelling tide of agrarian and proletarian unrest had been stopped by McKinley's defeat of Bryan the previous year. The Populist movement began to wane, and with it the Nationalist movement. The capitalists, with a firm grip on the state machinery, inaugurated a new, hectic period of industrial expansion.

Bellamy is still remembered today because he played an important part in popularizing the idea of socialism in America. He rejected Marxism, however. His own socialism was of a humanitarian variety, conjured up in his study, and unconnected with the struggles of the working people.

Although *Looking Backward* was not as important as the effect it produced, it retains its significance today as the first purely native socialist product in American literature. The sensation produced by the book disproves the spurious claim that Americans are basically hostile to the Socialist idea and have always plunked in favor of "free enterprise" and "rugged individualism." As a matter of fact, Bellamy's work and the movement it inspired are but a single example of the thread running through American history of the efforts of the working masses to shake off the shackles of enslaving capitalism and create a new socialist society of cooperation and plenty.

ed forth highly creditable displays of feeling on the top of the coach. At such times the passengers would call down encouragingly to the toilers of the rope, exhorting them to patience, and holding out hopes of possible compensation in another world for the hardness of their lot, while others contributed to buy salves and liniments for the crippled and injured."

This was the opening passage of the utopian socialist novel, *Looking Backward* by Edward Bellamy.

During the 90's, a million copies of this book were in circulation. Its influence and popularity can be compared only to that of Uncle Tom's Cabin in the period of anti-slavery agitation.

What led Bellamy to write this book and why did it achieve such great popularity?

CAPITALISM DISCREDITED

The years following the civil war had seen a tremendous industrial expansion. The capitalist class plundered and looted the nation. Political democracy, corrupted and perverted by Big Business, was becoming discredited. Long hours and low wages made the wage system a new form of slavery. Panics and depressions brought suffering to America on a scale hitherto unknown. Armies of unemployed roamed the country. Strikes against wage slashes were brutally suppressed.

To these exploited masses, the free and plentiful life described in *Looking Backward* seemed worth fighting for. A movement sprang up to attain the socialism portrayed by Bellamy, having as its purpose "to nationalize the functions of production and distribution." For this reason the movement adopted the name Nationalist. It proposed bringing "the entire business system of the country under the same popular government which now extends only to a few comparatively trifling functions called political."

The movement spread rapidly. In

WORKERS' FORUM

Proposes Solution For Unemployment

Editor:

Unemployment has begun in northern California, especially in the auto industry. General Motors in Oakland has laid off some 450 men. Fisher Body expects to lay off 180 more.

At the Jan. 15 meeting of the Fisher Body Unit of Local 76, UAW-CIO, the members passed a motion to give full powers to the Fisher Body Committee to negotiate with management so a plan could be set up to stave off the layoff. At the Jan. 16 meeting of the Chevrolet unit, the rank and file took a firm stand against the layoffs. The management of the plant was attacked on the floor by the seniority members of the union. The same motion was passed as in Fisher Body, to give the Committee full power to handle the unemployment situation. The first action was to cut the five day week to four days. This also means a cut in take home pay. At least the young workers would not have to carry the burden alone. If this fails then other actions would have to be taken.

Take heed Brother Reuther and UAW Executive Committee! Will this unemployment spread through all industries? Will the 30-cent increase solve unemployment?

There is only one way: Give the locals back to the rank and file. Eliminate the no-strike clause in the local contracts. With this out of our contract, I can assure you the management here would accept a four day week. Workers in all UAW plants, take notice what is happening here. We now know that the depression has started here and when it does come full blast it's going to hit all of us like a ton of atomic bombs. Many of us are young guys and some of us have taken a beating on all fronts. Thousands of us recently have bought cars and homes. (Count me out, I'm barely making ends meet.)

You do want to keep these little necessities of life. Well at least I have a solution. We all know when men are laid off, it's labor that carries the burden, not the bosses of Wall Street or the Chamber of Commerce, nor this grain speculating government of ours. They won't be the ones to come into your house to see if you have milk or bread on the table: butter, eggs, bacon; or whether the little guy has enough to eat. No, they don't give a damn if the whole family has pork and beans seven days a week!

There is only one solution:

1. Elimination of the no-strike clause in contracts.
2. A uniform contract for all UAW workers.
3. A guaranteed 30-hour week with the same take home pay as received in the 40-hour week.
4. Renew negotiations when layoffs begin, for a six-hour day and five-day week.
5. Limit all contracts to one year tops.
6. Eliminate the umpire system.
7. Hospitalization and sick benefits.
8. A retirement plan. Millions of government workers have this. Why not in the auto industry?
9. End discrimination in hiring of Negroes and other racial minorities. This is a must because the Negroes receive the lowest wages and have the worst conditions. We have to rally all the workers to our side. Let's not have the bosses start using one worker against another. They will use all four methods to beat us—religion, race and all other scab methods.

In Europe they have political kings and we think they're bad. But here in the U. S. we have money kings and they're the worst kind of kings in the world.

Bill K.
Oakland, Calif.

Al Lynn,
Los Angeles

How to Go Broke Scientifically

Editor:

For Marxists, statistics are very important things. We do not merely "theorize," as some opponents seem to think. Our theory is a direct reflection of reality and we constantly use statistics to confirm it. A proud accomplishment, about which Frederick Engels boasted many years ago and which still holds good today, is that not one single fact in Karl Marx's monumental economic work *Capital*, has ever been cast in doubt.

With this in mind we can approach some information released on Dec. 31, by the Los Angeles Credit Managers Association and given prominent attention in the local press.

The report states that the Association has on its books 205 voluntary cases of business liquidation today compared to 93 a year ago. The turnover for the year 1947 was \$13,000. A net increase of only 1,800 out of 15,000 new permits. While not every business "liquidation" was a bankruptcy, the percentage of definitive "failures" is on the increase. Nor does the report include the classification of "sunk-without-trace" concerns which city auditors don't bother about.

It goes without saying that a great proportion of these ill-fated business ventures represented the savings of veterans, and that we are witnessing the destruction of a portion of that purchasing power which is being counted upon by industry to "cushion" the approaching depression.

The analysis given by someone in the local Chamber of Commerce is that too many are attempting to go into business without adequate capital. What he doesn't discuss is just what is "adequate" capital. He hints at it when he points out that the days of the easy filling-station type enterprise have become outdated by the growth of chain stores. To complete it we add that all the small enterprises are gradually becoming either absorbed or eliminated by the big monopolies.

Because it is not expedient for the capitalists to tell this truth to the masses they have drawn up a series of pamphlets explaining what is required to go into various businesses. Sort of a manual on how to go broke scientifically.

Al Lynn,
Los Angeles

Fascism
• what it is • how to fight it
by LEON TROTSKY
A COMPILATION
48 pages 15c

Order from
PIONEER PUBLISHERS
116 University Pl., N. Y. 3, N. Y.

Mail this coupon with 50c for 6 months of

THE MILITANT

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER
116 University Place, New York 3, N. Y.

I enclose — (stamps, currency or money order).
Please enter my subscription as follows:
☐ Six months (26 issues) for 30 cents.
☐ One year (52 issues) for \$1.

Name _____ (Please Print)
Street _____ Apt. _____
City _____ Postal Zone _____
State _____

Sub Week Nets 428 Subscribers

Militant Sub Week had already produced 428 subscriptions with only incomplete returns available. In addition, New York Local of the Socialist Workers Party had sold more than 950 individual copies in two mobilizations. All this was accomplished in the record-breaking cold wave. Several branches will hold Sub Week later than the original Jan. 25 to Feb. 1 dates.

Individual readers also joined in the spirit of the campaign by turning in subs for friends and fellow workers.

A Minnesota railroad worker, who gets around, sent 10 subs from eight states, coast to coast. Three were from Minnesota and one each from New York, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Arizona, California and Washington.

Buffalo topped all the SWP branches in preliminary returns: 102 subs, nearly all from steel and aircraft workers. Three steel and steel fabricating workers accounted for 87 of the total. Sub-getting is part of their regular routine.

Newark reached 42 subs with 20 obtained on a second mobilization. D. Lessing reported more than 60% of former subscribers readily renewed.

San Francisco's first report was 14 subs, including one combination with Fourth International.

Six Detroit comrades — most and Bedford-Stuyvesant 9 subs.

THE MILITANT ARMY

others were tied up with union meetings—went out the first Sunday and obtained 18 subs in canvassing, with the mercury at zero.

Los Angeles reported 56 subs as a starter. Hy of West Side Branch sold six in half an hour. Branch scores were: East Side 18, West Side 17, South Side 12, Hollywood 5, San Pedro 4.

St. Paul sent 30 subs as a first report, including two combinations with Fourth International. A new campaign sold four Militant subs, one Fourth International sub and 45c of literature. P. C. leads the campaign with 12 subs, 10 obtained in his shop.

One St. Paul subscriber is in a far-away colony of American imperialism, but his wife renewed for him, saying she sends the paper to him regularly and "he couldn't get along without it."

First returns from Minneapolis were 20 subs, mostly renewals. Extreme cold and other activities had prevented greater work, but we agree with C. E. S., literature agent, it was "a good start."

Boston's first results were 10 subs from a housing project.

New York Local's second sales mobilization sold 503 individual copies and 23 subs. Branch returns were: East Side 240 copies and three subs, Bronx 132 copies, Brooklyn 82 copies, Central 49 copies, and one sub; Harlem 10 subs, and Bedford-Stuyvesant 9 subs.

Subscriptions: \$1 per year; 50c for 6 months. Foreign: \$2 per year; \$1 for 6 months.

"Entered as second class matter Mar. 7, 1944 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of Mar. 3, 1879."

Vol. XII.—No. 6

THE MILITANT

Published Weekly in the Interests of the Working People
THE MILITANT PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
116 University Pl., N. Y. 3, N. Y. (Phone: AL 4-9330)
FARRELL DOBBS, Editor

Bundle Orders (5 or more copies): 3c each in U.S., 4c each in foreign countries.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent The Militant's policies. These are expressed in its editorials.

Monday, February 9, 1948



TROTSKY

"A quarter of a century proved too brief a span for the revolutionary re-arming of the world proletarian vanguard, and too long a period for preserving the soviet system intact in an isolated backward country. Mankind is now paying for this with a new imperialist war; but the basic task of our epoch has not been changed, for the simple reason that it has not been solved."

Leon Trotsky, In Defense of Marxism, 1939.



LENIN

The Stalin-Hitler Documents And the Moscow Trials

There is a saying that a lie can travel half way round the world before the truth can put its shoes on. That is the theory that Stalin worked on twelve years ago when he launched the series of Moscow Frame-up Trials.

In these trials, begun in 1936, the Kremlin sought to besmirch the outstanding Bolshevik leaders, who, with Lenin organized and led the Russian Revolution in 1917. Lenin's closest co-workers—Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and a host of others—were accused of a traitorous conspiracy with the Nazis to destroy the Soviet Union.

Step by step, for twelve years, the truth has been catching up inexorably with this infamous lie. By now every brick in the elaborate structure of the Moscow Frame-up Trials has been ripped down, one by one.

The last bit of rubble was removed by the publication of the U.S. State Department of the documents and records from the German Foreign Office giving the complete details of Stalin's alliance with Hitler between Aug. 23, 1939 and June 22, 1941.

These documents show who was the criminal and traitor. They afford the final indisputable documentary proof of who in the Soviet Union plotted with Hitler. It was not those tortured defendants in the Moscow Trials who babbled the "confessions" put in their mouths by Stalin's GPU inquisitors. It was not Leon Trotsky, founder of the Red Army, who died under the pickaxe blow of Stalin's hired assassin.

IT WAS STALIN HIMSELF.

From the start of the Moscow Trials en-

lightened public opinion throughout the world rejected the accusations against the Old Bolsheviks. Leon Trotsky, from his exile in Mexico, subjected the testimony and "confessions" to a devastating analysis. In 1938, the Commission of Inquiry headed by the eminent Prof. John Dewey made a searching investigation of the trials and rendered its historic verdict, "Not Guilty!"

In the course of his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry, Trotsky pointed out that the Moscow Trials were a cover for Stalin's own plan to make a deal with Hitler. This was tragically confirmed a year later by the Stalin-Hitler Pact.

Added proof that the Moscow Trials were frame-ups was provided by the Nuremberg trial of Nazi leaders in 1946. During the course of this trial, Natalia Sedov Trotsky, widow of the Bolshevik leader, sent repeated appeals to the Allied prosecutors for permission to cross-examine the Nazi leaders on their alleged connections with Trotsky and others condemned in the Moscow Trials. These appeals were ignored.

Furthermore, Stalin's prosecutors could not produce one single piece of documentary evidence from the hundreds of tons of captured Nazi documents to confirm the charges of the Moscow Trials. Stalin's prosecutors remained discreetly silent. By this silence they confessed to the whole world the frame-up nature of the Moscow Trials.

The publication of hundreds of documents on Stalin's secret deal with Hitler to carve up Poland and the Balkans now dots the last i of Stalin's sordid conspiracy.

Sliding Scale of Wages

Glib-tongued Walter Reuther, president of the CIO auto workers union, condemned the proposal of the Flint delegates for a sliding scale cost-of-living bonus at the recent General Motors delegates conference. Reuther's arguments are worth taking up, as they constitute the chief stock-in-trade of all the labor bureaucrats, including the Stalinist variety, in opposing the program of a sliding scale of wages.

Reuther's contention was that the sliding scale of wages program does not provide for any improvement in workers' living standards, because, he claimed, it does not permit wages to rise above prices.

This argument does not sound too sincere, considering that workers are now taking one wage cut after another because their wages are not even keeping pace with rising prices. The UAW demand for a 25-cent an hour increase will, according to Reuther's own testimony, simply bring real wages up to the point where they were at the time of the last wage contracts.

But actually the argument is based upon

a misunderstanding of what the sliding scale of wages proposal is. Nothing in the sliding scale program prevents the workers from fighting for higher basic wage scales. All the cost-of-living bonus does is prevent real wages from being sliced by constantly rising prices.

The sliding scale cost-of-living bonus is not a substitute for the basic wage scale. It is an addition to it. Its whole purpose is to safeguard the wage scale during the life of the contract from indirect cuts due to price rises. If prices go up, the bonus is paid in addition to the regular wages and in proportion to the amount of rise in living costs. If prices go down, the bonus is reduced accordingly—but the basic wage remains inviolate.

The experience of labor struggles, especially since the war, has demonstrated that the unions are in dire need of a realistic and effective wage program to protect the workers' living standards from the ravages of inflation. The sliding scale of wages proposal is the only one that fits the bill.

The Power to Declare War

Who should have the power to declare war in this modern age when a new war may end in blasting civilization off the face of the earth? At present, the constitution gives that power to Congress. Now the brass hats, whose menacing influence in the government grows greater every day, are proposing to lodge this power in the hands of the president.

Here is the argument advanced by Col. Louis E. Coira of U.S. Air Force Headquarters, in the winter issue of Air University Quarterly Review, a magazine published by that branch of the service:

"... the president must be prepared to take whatever action is necessary to preserve national security. If commitment of the nation's armed forces in an offensive-defensive effort is required, he must be prepared to accept the responsibility for issuing the order. In no other way can the security of this nation be maintained in this age of advanced military technology."

This does not refer to the president's power to use the armed forces to repel attack, even without Congress declaring war, because the president already has that power. This cynical term, "offensive-defen-

sive effort" is brass hat language for war. As "justification" for this outrageous proposal, Coira points out that "by his handling of foreign relations a president can bring this nation to the brink of war and actually make hostilities, and a Congressional declaration of war, inevitable." That's true, and The Militant has called attention to it again and again.

But instead of being an argument to turn over this life-and-death power to the president, it is an argument against permitting it to be exercised even by Congress. In short, it is an argument to turn it over to the people themselves, who must do the fighting and dying.

Let the people, through a democratic referendum, decide the questions of war or peace! Take the war-making power out of the hands of Wall Street's Congress! Smash the plot to install a brass hat dictatorship!

Some people will say that "in this age of advanced technology" it will be impossible to let the people vote on this question. Our answer is that in this age above all, when war will determine the fate of every man, woman and child, it is necessary to take the war-making power out of the hands of the war-mad ruling class.

Franc Devaluation Undermines Scheme for West Europe Bloc

The ink was scarcely dry on the enthusiastic press reports of British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin's "plan" for a West-European customs union, when the French government announced the devaluation of the franc and the creation of a free gold market. The Schuman cabinet did not ask permission for this step of the International Monetary Fund, which is supposed to have strictest authority on all matters pertaining to changes in the currency of countries belonging to it. Nor was it deterred by the publicly declared British objections.

A hasty trip to Paris by Sir Stafford Cripps, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, proved of no avail. The two governments, which were allegedly going to enter into the closest economic co-operation short of a merger under the "Bevin Plan," could not even come to terms on the currency issue.

The French rulers moved to devalue the franc from 119 to 216 per dollar, and to permit free trading in gold as well as American currency. This is supposed to encourage French exports, which, under the devalued franc, will be made cheaper in dollar terms. The new franc is also supposed to encourage Frenchmen, who have been transforming savings into dollars and gold because of the low and unstable value of the present franc, to bring their hoards, amounting to nearly 3 billion dollars, to the free market. The government hopes to utilize this money in the form of credits for imports. Finally, the whole procedure is supposed to stimulate greater production which will help raise the value of French money.

THREATENS WHOLE SYSTEM

The British objection centers on two main points: The establishment of a free money market in France threatens the whole system of controlled European currencies. The English pound could not hold its present value in relation to the dollar without such control. More important, the devaluation of the franc and the consequent reduction in French export prices threatens to damage Britain's export drive to the dollar countries—upon which the whole economic policy of the Labor government rests.

Thus, the French capitalists hope to avert a major crisis—by means which tend to create one for Great Britain. The British, on the other hand, believe that they can save themselves from a crisis—but only by letting France fall into one. This is the real picture of Western Europe under decaying capitalism. It shows up all the plans for economic unity and co-operation as so many pipe dreams.

A macabre sidelight in this Franco-British chase for dollar credits is thrown upon the role of Wall Street. Its spokesmen are loudest in proclaiming the need for European economic unity as a step to recovery. But, as is well known, American statesmen have the final say in currency matters. Not only has the U. S. preponderant influence in the International Monetary Fund, but by the terms of the recent Interim Aid Agreement with France, Washington has been given a position "as a very special adviser to the French government." Yet

AFL Executive Council Upholds 2-Party Misrule

(Continued from Page 1)

porting Wallace "would play into the hands of Soviet Russia's expansionist policy" — but that's a thin disguise for their own slavish support of Wall Street's imperialist program.

They also claimed a third party would "split the liberal vote." We've heard that song before — at every election since 1932 and every time the workers demand their own political party. The last time we heard it was in 1946. The workers didn't "split the liberal vote" and got the most reactionary Congress in decades anyway.

If the AFL leaders don't go for Wallace's third-party movement — and they are correct when they say it does not spring from the labor movement — how do they propose to free the American workers from subjection to the two old political machines of Wall Street?

It was on this issue particularly that the AFL leaders in Miami staged an exhibition that would be comic — if it were not so serious for the life of the American labor movement, and such an insult to the more than 7 million hard-working AFL members who pay the salaries of the "fat and stately asses" of the Executive Council.

NOBODY IS FOOLED

The game of the Council majority is to swing labor's votes once more behind strikebreaker Truman and the Democratic Party. They haven't dared to say this in so many words, but nobody is fooled by their pretenses of "non-partisanship."

CIO Board Against Third Party



By a vote of 33 to 11, with two abstentions, the CIO executive board voted "against the establishment of a third political party." Here CIO President Philip Murray and Sec.-Treas. James E. Carey discuss the question as the executive board listens. President Emil Rieve of the Textile Union and President Joseph Curran of the National Maritime Union who voted with the majority are shown seated between Murray and Carey.

Federated Pictures

neither position was used by American capitalism to stop the French devaluation. Is it possible that Wall Street was not averse to seeing pressure exerted against the trend toward nationalization in England? Wall Street does not mind using the European "socialists," but it has no use for even their brand of "socialism."

But this has been the sole stock in trade by means of which the British Labor Party has been able to camouflage its reactionary role and prevent the restless working class from turning in a revolutionary direction. Right now, even with the present controls, demands for higher wages have reached tremendous proportions. The devaluation of the franc will further shake the British economy and can only make wage demands more urgent. That's why the statesmen in London were so excited over the French devaluation.

Nor is the devaluation of the franc more than a gamble for the French capitalists. At best, only a temporary increase in exports can result. Domestic price rises generally follow devaluation. And that means that corresponding increases in costs of export commodities must follow. As to the hoarders, a fall in the value of the franc has always induced them to hang on all the more tenaciously to gold and strong currencies. It will take more than monetary tricks to make them part with their savings.

It is certain, however, that the workers, who made only slight wage gains during the November-December strikes, will soon feel the pinch of rising prices. In fact, there are already reports that "Catholic and Socialist as well as Communist trade unions" have brought protests to the government against the devaluation. That spells new wage de-

mands, new strikes, and a new political crisis for the French government.

The American business magazines have good cause to moan about the European situation. "Decisions, firm policies, big plans of statesmen keep coming undone," writes U. S. News. European recovery, co-operation, unity are proving impossible—under capitalism.

The Meaning of Military Domination

"You know, my fellow citizens, what armaments mean: great standing armies, great stores of war materials. They do not mean burdensome taxation merely; they do not mean merely compulsory military service which saps the economic strength of the nation; but they mean also the building up of a military class..."

"So soon as you have a military class, it does not make any difference what your form of government is; if you are determined to be armed to the teeth, you must obey the orders and directions of the only men who can control the great machinery of war."

"Elections are of minor importance, because they determine the political policy, and back of that political policy is the constant pressure of the military class to arms, enormous bodies of disciplined men, wondering if they are never going to be allowed to use their education and their skill and ravage some great people with the force of arms. That is the meaning of armaments..."

(Woodrow Wilson, speaking at Kansas City on Sept. 6, 1919.)

Events on the International Scene

By Paul G. Stevens

FRENCH WORKERS' VIEW OF MARSHALL PLAN

Not everyone in France is waiting with bated breath for the salvation of the Marshall Plan. And not everyone who refuses it enthusiastic acclaim is an agent of the Kremlin. The way the thinking French worker looks at it is best expressed by an editorial in the current issue of the Trotskyist paper *La Verite*. Of the 17 billion requested from Congress for all European countries for four years, it says,

"The share provided for France in the course of 1948 is around 1.35 billion dollars, or 162 billion francs. ... Let us grant that the best figure will be 170 billion francs for the first year and compare it with a few others. It just about equals the loss in national revenue caused by the strikes last November and December, that is, by the bosses' and government's refusal to grant the workers a living wage. It only covers about half of the military budget, a totally unproductive drain. ... It covers, only on the surface, the deficit in the trade balance with the U.S."

The writer deduces from this that the figure cited can at best only serve to buy products which are indispensable to maintain the present low level of production, to prevent an immediate crash of French capitalism, to give Wall Street grasping hands greater control over the country's economy and — with the political stipulations attached — a say in the government's domestic and foreign policy. Above all, it aims to prop up the decrepit French capitalists against the threat of being overthrown by the restive working class.

SIDELIGHTS ON DEGAULLE

The latest mass demonstration of the de Gaulle movement in the city of St. Etienne, where the General proclaimed his "social" program which smacks of the Fascist corporate state, is reported to have cost some 300,000 to 400,000 dollars — a lot of money in France these days. "Delegations" were transported to it from the most distant corners of the country. It is reported that the General's eloquence did not get much of a response. After all the fanfare, only some 3,000 attended the indoor meeting that followed.

But the fact that he dared hold an open mobilization of his forces

TROTSKYISM IN CEYLON

Under the above title, the London weekly, *The Economist* of Jan. 3 devoted a full length article which gives an informed review of the development of the revolutionary movement in that far-off island. It starts out by calling attention to the "curious phenomenon that the chief stronghold of Trotskyism in the world today" should be there, noting that the Lanka Sama Samaj Party won 10 seats and the Bolshevik-Leninists 5 out of a total of 65 elective seats in the island's Parliament.

Intentionally or not, the writer creates a bit of confusion here. The Bolshevik-Leninist Party is the Trotskyist party of Ceylon, the official section of the Fourth International. The Lanka Sama Samaj Party is an organization formed by a group which last year split away from the Trotskyists.

The article recounts how the revolutionary workers' movement there was originally organized in 1935 by a group of young men who had come into contact with Marxist ideas while studying in England. The conditions produced by the world depression "for the first time (made) the people receptive to radical ideas. ... It must be appreciated, too, that there had never been any nationalist movement in Ceylon corresponding to the Indian National Congress, deriving its chief strength from the middle classes. There was a moderate reformist movement amongst landed and non-landed upper classes, whose interests then, as now, dovetailed fairly closely with those of the British, and a very weak labor movement which, when the depression came, founder-

ed on the rack of racialism and began to demand the repatriation of immigrant Indian labor." The article then recounts how the original movement, taking the name Lanka Sama Samaj, meaning Ceylon Equal Society, took root in this soil and how the majority in 1938 "adopted Trotskyism and adhered to the Fourth International." It goes on to tell of the arrests of the Trotskyist leaders by the British authorities in 1940 and of their escape in 1942 from prison in India, where they aided in creating the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, of which the former Lanka Sama Samaj became the Ceylon section. Then it tells of how differences in the leadership developed which led to a split and the reorganization of the Lanka Sama Samaj by the dissident leaders.

Recently the differences between the organizations came out sharply when the Bolshevik-Leninists in Parliament voted against a government motion, while the representatives of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party abstained on the vote. The government motion was as follows:

"This House rejoices that, after many years of subjection to foreign rule, the struggle of the people of Ceylon for freedom has culminated in the attainment of independence." The Fourth International Secretariat addressed a letter to the Lanka Sama Samaj Party on this issue, wherein it asks:

"What possible justification can there be for abstention on an issue which poses squarely genuine independence versus imperialism?"

Activities of 'Militant' Readers and the Socialist Workers Party

AKRON—4 So. Howard St., 2nd fl. Mon. through Fri., 7 to 9 p. m.; Branch meeting Sun. 8 p. m.; Socialist Youth Club meeting Sun. 3 p. m.
BOSTON—30 Stuart St., Sat., 1-5 p. m., Tues., 7:30-9:30 p. m.
BUFFALO—Militant Forum, 629 Main St., 2nd fl. Phone Madison 3960. Every afternoon except Sun.
CHICAGO—777 W. Adams (corner Halsted), Phone DEARBORN 4767. Daily except Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p. m. Library, bookstore.
CLEVELAND—Militant Forum, Sun., 8:30 p. m., Peck's Hall, 1446 E. 82nd St. (off Wade Park Ave.).
DETROIT—6108 Linwood Ave. Phone TY 7-6267. Mon. through Sat., 12-5 p. m. FLINT—215 E. Ninth St. Daily 7-9 p. m. Open house, Sat. eve. Forum, Sun. eve.
LOS ANGELES—Militant Publ. Assn., 216 1/2 W. Pico Blvd. Phone Richmond 4644. Daily, 12-5 p. m.
SAN PEDRO—Militant, 1008 E. Pacific Room 214.
WATTS—Militant, 1729 E. 97th St. LYNN (Mass.)—44 Central Sq., Rm. 11 Sat. 1-5 p. m. Discussion, Tues., 7:30 p. m.
MILWAUKEE—Militant Bookshop, 608 S. 5th St. Mon. through Fri., 7:30-9:30 p. m.
MINNEAPOLIS—10 So. 4th St. Phone Main 7781. Daily except Sun., 10 a.m.-6 p. m. Library, bookstore.
NEW HAVEN—Labor School, 855 Grand Ave., 3rd fl., Tues. 8:10-30 p. m. NEWARK—423 Springfield Ave. Phone BIGELOW 3-2574. Reading room, week nights, 7-10 p. m.
NEW YORK CITY (Hq.)—116 University Pl. Phone GR 5-8149.
EAST SIDE—251 E. Houston St. 1st fl.
HARLEM—103 W. 110 St., Rm. 23 Phone MO 2-1866. Open discussion, Thurs. 8 p. m.
BRONX—1084 Prospect Ave., 1st fl. Phone LI 5-0101.
BROOKLYN—635 Fulton St. Phone ST 3-7433.
CHELSEA—130 W. 23rd St. Phone CH 2-9134.
OAKLAND (Cal.)—Write P. O. Box 1351, Oakland 4.
PHILADELPHIA—1203-05 W. 4th Ave., 2nd fl. Phone Stevenson 4-5820. Open daily. Forum, Fri., 8 p. m.
PITTSBURGH—1418 Fifth Ave., 2nd fl. Open meetings, 1st & 3rd Sun., 3-5 p. m. Marxist Study Class, Thurs., 7-9 p. m. SAN DIEGO (Cal.)—Write P. O. Box 577.
SAN FRANCISCO—1739 Fillmore Ave., 4th fl. Phone FI 6-4410. Daily except Sun., 12-4:30 p. m.
SEATTLE—Maynard Bldg., 1st Ave. South & Washington. Phone MA 3-2778. Mon. through Sat., 12-5 p. m. Branch meeting, Fri., 8 p. m. Library, bookstore.
ST. LOUIS—1023 N. Grand Blvd., Rm. 312. Phone Jefferson 3642. Forum, Fri. 7:30-10 p. m.
ST. PAUL—510 Cedar St. Phone GAY field 1137. Daily except Sun., 2:30-5:30 p. m. Bookstore. Forum, 3rd Sun. of each month, 3:30 p. m.
TACOMA (Wash.)—Write P. O. Box 1075. Meeting, Wed., 8 p. m., Odd Fellow Hall, 6th & Fawcett.
TOLEDO—113 St. Clair St., 2nd fl. Open daily.
YOUNGSTOWN—115 E. Federal St. Rm. 302. Phone 3-1355. Mon. through Sat. 11 a.m.-4:30 p. m.

The Sky's The Limit

By Albert Parker

Listening to the speeches, messages, resolutions, documents and platform planks pouring out of the various campaign headquarters nowadays, you might get the impression that nothing is too good for the Negro people and other minorities. In that case, you will be surprised next December, when all the shouting is finished and the votes are counted, to find the minorities in pretty much the same position as before.

Of course, the battle of the demagogues is just getting started and you haven't seen anything yet. But already it is plain that in 1948 the sky will be the limit in campaign promises to the important Negro vote. Taft promises he will fight against segregation in the proposed peacetime conscription program. Wallace calls for the complete abolition of Jim Crow. Truman rushes off his civil rights message to Congress with a list of points long advocated by the Negro and labor movements.

There is an old saying: By their fruits ye shall know them. Taft never lifted a finger against segregation in the armed forces either in peace or war. Wallace never abolished Jim Crow in the cabinet departments he headed. And Truman's fruits are just as rotten.

To prove that, we call attention to just one aspect of his Feb. 3 message to Congress: "During the recent war and in the years since its close we have made much progress toward equality of opportunity in our armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin," he said. "I have instructed the

Secretary of Defense to take steps to have the remaining instances of discrimination in the armed services eliminated as rapidly as possible."

We won't go into a lengthy argument here about the falsity of Truman's remark about "progress toward equality" in the armed forces; every Negro who ever had anything to do with the armed forces knows that segregation (the foundation of discrimination) is the most rigidly enforced policy in the armed forces, and that instead of getting better, it is getting worse all the time.

But here is the main point: Truman tells Congress to act on the poll tax, lynching, FEPC, etc., because they are in its department. Correct—but what about the issues that are in his own department? As commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Truman has the power to issue an executive order outlawing segregation in the Army, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. He doesn't need the permission of Congress or anyone else to do this, and he could do it this very day if he wanted to. Instead, he makes a vague reference about instructing the Secretary of Defense to do something about discrimination—while he completely skirts around the crucial issue of segregation.

Some Negro leaders are going around saying that this is fine. Let the candidates keep on bidding against each other, they say, and then let the Negro people vote for the one who promises the most. But if the Negroes deliver their votes on this basis, it will be worse than selling their birthright for a mess of pottage. If worse comes to worst, you can always eat pottage, but you can't get any nourishment at all out of campaign demagoguery and claptrap.

Death in the Mayor's Office

By Grace Carlson

On Tuesday, Jan. 13, four-month old Arthur Jensen died in Minneapolis. The death of a small baby scarcely ever receives any space in the daily papers, but Baby Boy Jensen's death was blazoned in the headlines of all Minneapolis papers. Because it is news in any city when a baby dies in the Mayor's office.

Behind the screaming headlines is the all-too-familiar story of inadequate medical care for the children of the poor. Here is the pathetic report that the sorrowing young mother gave at the Public Welfare Board hearing on the case.

The baby had been at the Minneapolis General Hospital for about a week earlier in the month with an infected ear. He was discharged from the hospital on Jan. 10, but later developed a cold and fever. On Jan. 12, the child was taken to the hospital's baby clinic, where he was examined. The doctor advised the mother to take the baby home and keep him on

a liquid diet. Later in the day, the baby's condition became worse and Mrs. Jensen took him back to the hospital's receiving room. The baby was given a chest X-Ray and an injection of penicillin, with the advice that he be brought back to the clinic the following day.

(At the public hearing, the harassed and overworked young intern, who had examined the baby, pointed out that General Hospital is terribly overcrowded; a fact that all city officials know—and carefully ignore.)

Mrs. Jensen pleaded with the doctor to keep the baby in the hospital but was told that his condition did not warrant hospitalization. During the night, the baby became worse and cried a great deal. In the morning, the agitated parents brought the baby in a taxicab to Mayor Hubert Humphrey's office in the vain hope that he could arrange to have the baby admitted to the hospital immediately. And as he lay on the desk in the Mayor's office—waiting for the representatives of this rich, capitalist government to come to his aid—tiny Arthur Jensen drew his last breath.

To My Uncle in Italy

By John F. Petrone

Dear Uncle: Thanks for your letter about the Italian strikes. I hope that by this time you have received the CARE package we sent. As soon as our budget allows, we will send another. But that is not the purpose of this letter. I am writing this at the suggestion of a man with considerable power in our government, the Honorable Alexander Wiley of Wisconsin, a Republican member of the U. S. Senate who is noted for speeches extolling the quality of cheese produced in his state. Sometimes he discusses broader subjects in the Senate, as he did when he said recently:

"American citizens writing abroad should write about true conditions in America, stressing the many blessings that we enjoy in this land of freedom, the comforts, the conveniences, as well as stressing the fact that we have already extended abroad for the noblest of humanitarian purposes—both as individuals and as a nation." This strikes me as a good idea.

First, a word or two about that chief blessing, the high American standard of living. Of course, it is higher than the Italian standard, but it is nothing like what you see in the Hollywood films. Money wages are much higher than ever before, but that is true in Italy too, isn't it?

Last week a New Jersey mechanic told a Senate Committee he earns \$2,500 a year, but because of high prices he and his family do not have enough food, or milk, or money for medical care. "We are just existing, not living," he said.

And in Cleveland a post office worker earning \$2,700 a year, declared he and his family had been better off during the depression when he worked in a steel mill for 60c an hour, or less than \$1,300 a year. To be worse off than during the terrible depression my father used to write you about—such blessings we can well do without.

I think you have already had the chance to become familiar with some of the other blessings we enjoy in this land of freedom.

For example, President Truman has for the last

year been carrying on a "loyalty" campaign to terrorize and drive out of the government all employees holding ideas which he labels as "subversive." Mussolini, if I recall rightly, did the same.

Congress has passed a savage anti-labor law to discourage strikes and regiment the unions. You yourself have written us how the fascist government issued similar decrees. Truman broke a national strike to make the railroads run on time. Mussolini achieved some of his fame in a like manner.

In Oklahoma a girl has been denied admission to the state law school solely because of the color of her skin. Mussolini's fascist press also spouted "white supremacy" doctrines when his planes dropped bombs and gas on the helpless Ethiopians.

Generals and bankers are the undisputed lords and masters in Washington, even as they were in Italy after the First World War. One of their chief demands is peace-time conscription; evidently they were impressed by the successes it won for Mussolini and Hitler.

The people groan under the burden of heavy taxes, extorted in the name of preserving peace through a vast war preparation program.

I could continue indefinitely in this vein about the "true conditions" in this country. But I don't want you to get a wrong impression. I am not saying that America today is like fascist Italy in every respect, but that the capitalist class in America is like the capitalist class in fascist Italy—only more powerful and therefore more dangerous. If they have their way, an American Duce will put us all on a castor oil diet.

But we intend to see to it that they don't have their way. When the American workers get done correcting things, we'll take that atom bomb out of their hands and put them to work at useful labor. If they still want to make the railroads run on time, we'll give them honest jobs as firemen or ticket-punchers.

Your devoted nephew,

John.

Notes from the News

HUDSON FOREMEN WIN—A 9-day strike won for union foremen at the Hudson Motor Co. what 6 years of courtroom maneuvers failed to achieve—a promise of a contract within 30 days. Hudson foremen are members of the Foremen's Association of America. Carl Brown, National FAA president said, "If foremen are determined to have a voice in determining their job rights, they can have them despite all the Taft-Hartley laws the opponents of labor can devise."

POPULATION GROWING—The census bureau revealed that on Oct. 1 the U.S. population stood at 144,708,000. This is a gain of 13 million since 1940 and 18 million more than in the 1930-1940 decade.

STRIKES DOWN IN 1947—The Bureau of Labor Statistics released figures that strikes dropped to 8,500 in 1947 compared with 4,985 in 1946. The number of man-hours lost in 1947 was one-third less than the previous year.

GESTAPO RAID—Four agents of the Federal government swooped down on the Washington office of the CIO United Public Workers. Armed with blank subpoenas, they demanded the union's records, questioned union representatives regarding their "loyalty," and ordered the office workers around. This raid is an outgrowth of the strike of 1,500 poorly paid Negro workers, with whose union Government Service, Inc. officers have refused to negotiate a wage increase, because the union officers have refused to sign the Taft-Hartley affidavit. "To us—and to the CIO Executive Board which endorsed the strike—it looks like a clear case of Federal officials engaging in union-busting," states the Feb. 2 CIO News.

SPELLMAN ON RUSSIA—Cardinal Spellman turned up as a contributor to the Italian fascist monthly L'Europeo Qualeunque. "The menace of a Pax Sovietica," he writes, "descends on democratic nations like an icy fog—if tolerated, it would condemn our sons to slavery."

UKRAINE REVOLT—Radio Moscow quoted Nikita S. Khrushchev, Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee, as saying that an uprising of Ukrainian nationalists had been crushed.

CLASS JUSTICE—30 names were selected by lottery in Los Angeles for the county grand jury out of a list of 115 submitted by Superior Court judges. The list did not have the name of a single worker or union official. It did include 7 insurance brokers, 3 bankers, and numerous business executives.

NEW NAME—The Workers Socialist Party, an ultra-sectarian splinter group announced that it was changing its name to the World Socialist Party of the U.S. Reason? "Chief reason for the decision was the fact that a considerable confusion existed over the great similarity in titles between ours and certain professed socialist organizations."

WEST-GERMAN GOVERNMENT—Washington announced that on July 1, the War Department would turn the government of the American zone over to the State Department. Meanwhile the American and British military governments are to issue a charter establishing by Feb. 15 an "ersatz government"—a Bizonal German Economic Administration.

THE MILITANT

Detroit UAW Leader Calls for Sliding Scale Wage Program

Railroaders Win Strike in Akron

A six-day strike of railway trainmen against the Akron and Barberton Bell Line, reported in the Jan. 19 Militant, has been won, according to Trainmen News, official organ of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen.

The Bell Line is a small but very strategic road serving the industries of Akron and vicinity. It is owned jointly by the Pennsylvania, Erie, Baltimore and Ohio, and the Canton and Youngstown Railways. These companies used the Bell Line as a miniature testing ground for strikebreaking a la Taft-Hartley.

With the Pennsylvania Railroad paying 50%, and the other companies sharing the remainder of the costs, more money was spent to break the Bell Line strike than it would have cost to meet the demands of the strikers for the next ten years. Against the 22 striking trainmen, the company hired 70 armed guards. These, and scabs, cost the company over \$3,000 per day. The increased cost of changes in six working rules asked by the strikers would amount only to \$5,000 yearly.

Barberton witnessed an invasion of the city by "special police" hired by the company, who cruised the street. Finally the mayor ordered these company thugs to put on uniforms and badges or go to jail.

Despite this lavish spending on the part of the company, the strike was effective. Thousands of freight cars piled up in the Akron yards. Manufacturing concerns were faced with tremendous losses. The rail barons who were trying their union-busting technique on the small Barberton lodge with an eye to a future attempt to smash the railway unions, have learned that even 22 militant and determined union men are no push-over.

N.Y. Local Holds Lenin Meeting

NEW YORK, Jan. 28—A well attended Lenin Memorial Meeting, sponsored by the New York Local of the Socialist Workers Party, tonight heard Wm. F. Warde, SWP National Educational Director, analyze the Wallace third party movement.

"The Republican Party, in 1947, coined the slogan 'Had Enough?'" declared Warde. "The Wallace movement is a strong indication that the workers have had enough of both Wall Street parties."

"This movement, ruled so completely by one man," Warde pointed out, "is not the product of the need for a genuine Labor Party, but rather of the failure of the union leaders to organize such a party. A conference in Washington of all labor to launch a new party based on, and controlled by the unions, is the need of the hour."

The meeting also heard a detailed analysis of the struggle of the European workers today by Paul G. Stevens, Militant staff correspondent.

In response to an appeal from George Clarke, chairman of the meeting, the audience contributed \$143 to aid the Party's work.

Auto Local Takes '48 Election Poll

DETROIT — At the General Membership meeting of Briggs Local 212 of the auto union, held on Feb. 1, the Political Action Committee of that local conducted a sample poll to determine the political thinking of the workers. As the workers entered the meeting they were handed a ballot with two questions. The first was, "If the national elections were held today, how would you vote?" The results of this poll were: Republican Party with Dewey or Taft as candidate, 6 votes or 2.9%; Democratic Party with Truman, 92 votes or 44.9%; a Third Party with Wallace as the candidate, 41 votes or 20%; and a Labor Party with either John L. Lewis or Phillip Murray as possible candidates, 66 votes or 32.2% of the total of 205 which were cast.

The other question put to the members was, "If there is no Labor Party in the field, how would you vote?" This resulted in the following: Republican Party, 6 votes or 3.3%; Democratic Party, 123 votes or 61.4%; and Third Party, 39 votes or 21.5%. There were 4.4% who marked that they would not vote in such a case, and 3.9% said that they would vote for one of the minor political parties.

Housing Holdup



Veterans who bought houses at exorbitant prices didn't get very much, as this photo-exhibit to be presented to the joint congressional housing commission shows. On the left is a hole made in a wall by an 8-year-old boy who tossed a baseball. The other shows a porch breaking away and a foundation falling apart.

Federated Pictures

Oil Moguls Responsible For the Fuel Shortage

By John Fredericks

Thousands of people, depending on fuel oil for heat, are shivering in below zero weather while the oil monopoly grows fat on human misery.

There are a number of factors that enter into the present shortage of petroleum products. Fuel oil consumption has reached an all time high, replacing coal for the first time in 1947 as the No. 1 heating element. Hundreds of thousands of oil burners have been placed in homes and factories during the past two years. Diesel powered locomotives are replacing coal fired steam locomotives at the rate of one per day. Diesel oil powered trucks have in many cases replaced those powered by gasoline. Ships are now powered by oil rather than coal. Overall consumption of fuel oil has more than doubled since the start of the war.

While production of all types of petroleum products have increased tremendously, production of refined oil stocks has not met the demand. The oil shortage is actually the result of a war of extermination launched by the oil monopoly on the smaller companies, with the consumers being used as pawns in the struggle.

The Big Ten of the oil industry claim that transportation of fuel oil and crude oil from the fields in Texas to distribution points on the East Coast constitutes a bottleneck in the industry. If such is the case then they are solely responsible. They made the same claim during the war. As a result, the "Big Inch" and "Little Inch" pipelines were built by the government at a cost of 150 million dollars. Seven and a half billion barrels of oil per year were transported by means of

these pipelines, enough oil, that is, to provide every family in the U.S. with 275 gallons per year!

In September of 1945 they abruptly discontinued operation of these pipelines. Here is the real cause for the oil shortage.

The big companies did not want the government to continue operation of these lines on an impartial common carrier basis, since both large and small companies



were charged the same rates. The oil companies, therefore, insisted on the conversion of these lines to natural gas lines and a compliant government went along with their demands.

The big oil outfits argued that "regular private facilities" could supply any demands on the East Coast. They also demanded, and secured, the withdrawal of over 100 government-owned oil tankers because "they interfere with private initiative!" While these tankers lie idle and the seamen who formerly operated them are jobless, the East Coast remains in the grip of a fuel oil crisis.

The oil octopus is determined to drive smaller competing companies out of business. If the smaller outfits must depend on pipelines and tankers which are owned by their competitors, they are at the mercy of the big outfits who charge prohibitive rates for transportation.

This is only the latest scandalous incident of gouging the public and trading in human misery in the whole sordid history of the oil monopolists. The oil industry has resisted every attempt to regulate its activities and has built up a vast monopolistic structure in clear violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. It has extracted some 200 million dollars profit from its war contracts, increased its total profits by one-third in 1946, and by a similar amount in 1947.

New York's East Side Presents Open Forum

The East Side Branch of the Socialist Workers Party (New York Local) will present, on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 15, at 3 p.m., an open forum on WALLACE AND THE THIRD PARTY. Refreshments will follow the discussion. The address is 251 East Houston Street.

We are herewith reprinting the important letter of Tony Czerwinski, president of Briggs Local 212 of the CIO Automobile Workers in Detroit, to Walter P. Reuther on the union wage policy for 1948. This letter appeared in the "President's Column" of Voice of Local 212 in the Jan. 22 issue. Local 212 is one of the large locals of the union, with a membership of approximately 25,000.

January 20, 1948
Walter Reuther, President
International Union
United Automobile Workers
411 W. Milwaukee
Detroit, Michigan
Dear Sir and Brother:

As president of my local union and as one seriously concerned with the plight of our membership in the face of the continuing rise in the cost of living, I have given close attention to the wage proposals as outlined by the International Executive Board.

After careful consideration of the present situation and the conditions which will exist for the next immediate period, it appears to me that the proposals of the International Union are not completely adequate. Our past experience, in my opinion, in both the 1946 and 1947 wage drives should be sufficient demonstration that in a period such as we are in, of soaring prices, it is not enough merely to fight for flat wage increases to "restore purchasing power" lost through increases in the cost of living. I note in the press reports announcing the wage proposal of the International Union, that in arriving at the 25-cent figure the Board took into account a continuing rise in the cost of living of approximately 1% per month in the months immediately ahead. This approach, in my opinion, is a correct one and one that will enable us to sit down at the bargaining table with management with demands which represent the situation at that time rather than conditions which prevail now. This, as I say, is all well and good.

A NECESSARY SAFEGUARD

However, if this approach is correct in determining the amount of the flat wage demand, as apparently we all agree, it seems to me incumbent upon us, if we are to adequately meet the needs of our people, to make provisions in whatever agreement we finally arrive at, with the employer to provide for an automatic adjustment of the wages of our membership with each new rise in the cost of living. This approach, it seems to me, and to the members of my local union, is necessary to safeguard the wage increases we arrive at in our new negotiations.

Still an additional factor of major importance which dictates that a new approach be used in our third postwar wage drive, is the reaction of a considerable portion of our membership. The propaganda of the employers and their various

agents that the rising prices are a result of the wage increases won by labor, rather than the lust of the employers for profits, has not been without its effect. This is especially true since both our recent wage increases found a continuation of soaring prices. Many of our rank and file members and even secondary leaders of our organization are now saying, "What's the use of a new wage drive? Even if we back up our demands with strike action and win, our wage gains will be more than wiped out by higher prices." This sentiment cannot be lightly waved aside. In order to rally the fighting spirit and enthusiasm of the mass of our membership for the new struggle in the face of the general anti-labor reaction and the Taft-Hartley Act, I believe our demands must present a realistic answer to this problem which is understandable to the ranks of our union. If we fail to achieve the fighting spirit and enthusiasm which has made possible our earlier victories we are in for a rough time in our new wage battle.

EFFECTIVE STRUGGLE

Opponents of the proposal for an automatic cost of living bonus to meet each new increase in the cost of living have contended that the auto workers desire to "improve" their living standards, and are not satisfied to merely "maintain" them. Such an argument in view of the fact that in spite of two flat "increases" won in the past two years the standard of living of the auto workers has gone down and not up, is sheer demagoguery. Moreover, if the basic wages of our membership are protected by an automatic adjustment clause, we will then be in a real position to wage an effective struggle for pensions, additional vacation pay, hospital and life insurance protection and even for increases in the "basic" wage standards, and thus bring about a genuine improvement in the living standards of our people.

I believe the failure of the Board to favorably consider the proposal for a uniform contract termination date will only postpone our efforts to throw our full strength into the wage battle and to achieve industry-wide uniformity in our agreements.

Reports of the recent Conference of General Motors workers reveal that the International Union proposed that the cost of any pension proposal should come out of the 25-cent an hour demand. This proposal that the auto workers, whose sweat and blood have built the great corporations of this industry, should provide for the twilight years of their lives by sacrificing their standard of living today is outrageous.

I sincerely hope that the International Union will carefully reconsider their proposals in order that we may arrive at a realistic answer to the immediate wage problem which can capture the imagination of the ranks and revive the fighting spirit that made the UAW a great organization.

Fraternally yours,
Tony Czerwinski, president
Local 212, UAW-CIO

Students Protest Oklahoma Jim Crow

Mrs. Ada Lois Sipuel, Negro applicant for the University of Oklahoma Law School, has refused to register in the one-student, Jim Crow "Law School" that Oklahoma officials set up overnight. Mrs. Sipuel has appealed to the Supreme Court to issue an immediate order to Oklahoma University officials to admit her at once to the regular Law School.

As the court delayed taking action, a thousand white students at the lily-white Law School in Norman, Oklahoma, held a mass meeting at which leaders of campus organizations made speeches over loudspeakers demanding that the University be opened to all students regardless of race or color. At the end of the meeting the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which "guarantees" equality to Negro citizens, was read, declared nullified by the action of Oklahoma officials, and then burned. The ashes were put in an envelope and mailed to President Truman.

Jim Crow elements among the students then tried to organize a counter demonstration. Their meeting in support of University officials in the fight against non-segregated education was a miserable failure. Other students converted the meeting into a debate and carried the bulk of the audience with them.

Further harrying the white supremacist officials of Oklahoma were applications from six Negro students for graduate courses avail-

able only at the lily-white University of Oklahoma. Authorities would have to go through the expensive subterfuge of setting up six more one-man graduate schools for these applicants or admit them to the regular courses at the university.

Anti-Negro Governor Roy J. Turner of Oklahoma, in a "blast aimed at the NAACP, accused 'agitators, composed of radicals in minority groups, both white and Negro,' of doing a 'diservice' to their own people." This was "followed by a veiled threat that" it would be a grievous tragedy "if a few were to be responsible for losing the gains that have been made."

The repercussions of this fight against Jim Crow in education were felt beyond the borders of Oklahoma. In Arkansas, authorities tried to forestall an attack on their lily-white State University by admitting a Negro applicant, Silas Hunt, to the Law School. However, this young veteran of 23 months of combat in Europe, will have classes separate from the white students.

In Delaware greater concessions were made as University officials announced that Negro students would be accepted for unsegregated graduate courses not available at the state's Negro University.

Subscribe To
THE MILITANT
6 Months—50c