

Increase Wages To Meet Prices

An Editorial

If you bought clothes for yourself lately, did you notice how much more they cost than a year ago? Your wife, like most home-keepers, has already discovered that food prices have gone up and keep rising.

According to the government index, basic commodity prices have gone up 38% since the war began, and economists predict much greater rises.

The new tax program Congress is framing can only result in boosting commodity prices still higher and in further diminishing the real income of the workers.

In the past few months, some unions have managed to obtain wage increases. Few, if any, have won the 38% increase needed to keep wages in step with commodity prices.

The Roosevelt administration talks about preventing inflation and "freezing" price levels. How absurd is Leon Henderson's gesture forbidding any lifting of steel prices.

Even Hitler's totalitarian regime has been unable to avoid inflation. The reason for this lies in the very nature of capitalist production for profit.

While the Roosevelt government caters to the profiteers on the one hand, it is anxious to prevent the mass of people from accumulating too much purchasing power on the other.

As the N. Y. Times points out: "Public buying of civilian goods would then be competing with government buying of defense material . . . Many more people will want to buy automobiles.

In order to keep down the costs of war, the government aims to take away from the working masses a great part of any increased purchasing power resulting from the war-boom.

At the outset of the war, Washington's slogan was "Business as usual." Nowadays administration officials sing a different tune. Not so long ago, the American people, unlike the Germans, French and English, were promised both guns and butter.

Why must the workers suffer from the helplessness of the capitalist class to manage our economy efficiently? Why should they bear all the burdens of the war?

The workers, however, will wait until doomsday if they rely upon Roosevelt to correct this situation for them. Organized labor has to do this job for itself.

To protect unorganized workers, changes should be made in Wage-Hours Laws, providing for minimum rates and specifying that these minimums be adjusted in accordance with rising prices.

For a Rising Scale of Wages to Equalize the Rising Level of Prices! This demand should be placed at the top of every trade union agenda today.

THE MILITANT

Formerly the SOCIALIST APPEAL

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

VOL. V—No. 18

NEW YORK, N. Y. SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1941



FIVE (5) CENTS

FDR MASKS CONVOY PLANS

Mine Owners Yield To Miners

28-day Strike of 400,000 Soft-coal men Ends; Workers' Terms Accepted

BULLETIN

The Southern soft coal mine operators yielded Tuesday to the demand of the striking United Mine Workers (U. M. W.) members that the Southern mines be reopened under an agreement to make all wage increases granted in subsequent negotiations retroactive to the time of the start of operations.

defense" as they hold up signing the U. M. W. contract, using as the excuse, the actions of the Southern operators.

ROOSEVELT NOT FIRM

Aside from his latest proposal which the Southern operators have flatly rejected, Roosevelt has not made any decisive move to force the Southern owners to terms. The administration, which has the power to take over industries in the interests of "national defense," has made no move in this direction despite general recognition of the fact that the Southern mine owners are largely to blame for the continued shut-down of soft-coal production.

Southern bituminous mine operators, undoubtedly backed by Southern industrialists and the bloc of poll-tax Democrats in Congress, have balked all efforts to settle the strike of 400,000 United Mine Workers (U. M. W.) members which has tied up all soft-coal production in the Appalachian regions since April 2.

The Northern operators, who control over 65 per cent of soft coal production, had agreed after one week of the strike to grant the union's demands for a \$1 a day general wage increase and paid vacations. Signing of the Northern contract has been held up due to the unwillingness of the Northern operators to reopen their mines so long as the Southern operators hold out for a wage differential which would give them a material advantage in competition with the Northern operators.

SPURN RETROACTIVE PAY AGREEMENT

After demanding the intercession of the National Mediation Board, the Southern operators last Sunday turned down the Board's proposal to reopen the mines upon condition that all wage increases granted in subsequent negotiations be made retroactive to the time of reopening.

Meanwhile, Southern Democrats in Congress have been yelping about the strike holding up "national defense" and are making a concerted effort to club the miners back to work under a no-contract arrangement which would leave the workers powerless to force the Southern operators into line.

The Northern operators, whose refusal to meet the miner's reasonable demands prior to the walk-out helped precipitate the strike, and who turned down the miners' original proposal to continue operations under a retroactive pay agreement, are showing little concern for "national

MAIN DANGER

There is increasing danger that the miners may be caught in a scissors between the refusal of the Southern operators to accept their wage demands and the refusal of the Northern operators to sign a contract under competitive disadvantages.

While Roosevelt at the time of this writing has given no hint of what his next move may be, the position which the miners must take is clear. Under no circumstances should they back down from their original demands.

ON THE WAR FRONTS

by GEORGE STERN

Twenty-two years ago in these very weeks the diplomats and politicians of the victorious Allied Powers were in full conference at Versailles. The "war for democracy" having been won, these representatives of imperialism were carving up the continent in accordance with strategic necessities and secret treaties.

Versailles slashed Europe into pieces. Hitler has taken those pieces, crushed them into bloody pulps and brought them one by one into the new German imperialist empire. He stands now at the jumping-off places for the Middle East—for Britain's rich holdings in the Mosul oilfields, for Palestine, and for Suez.

But the difference between the system of Versailles and the system of Hitlerism is of degree rather than of kind. Both represent forms of imperialist domination. Neither offers any road to a hopeful future for the peoples of Europe.

Hitler is not stamping out national "freedom" for the small nations of Europe...because such freedom has never existed.

Seek Subway-goers Support



Members of the New York City local of the Transport Workers Union (CIO) launch their campaign to retain the closed-shop contract for 27,000 workers on the city-owned subway systems by putting out millions of union leaflets to subway goers to win their support.

Sea Patrol Prelude To Full Convoys

FDR Weighing Final Move Into Sphere Of Hostilities

When President Roosevelt last week announced the new U. S. "sea patrol" he pulled out the next to the last prop still holding up that frail structure of U. S. policy "short of war."

The new patrol will send U. S. warships 1,000 miles out into either ocean to warn "peaceful shipping" (i. e. the British) of the presence of enemy craft.

From this to the remaining steps of actual convoy and inevitable clashes with Nazi U-Boats and raiders, the distance is now reduced almost to the vanishing point.

For it was quite clear that the sea patrol idea was advanced by the President as a final, careful stage in his preparation for dropping the present status of the U. S. as a non-belligerent ally of Britain and substituting for it the full status of an active belligerent in the war.

What does Roosevelt think a Nazi sea raider or a far-ranging bomber is going to do when it is sighted by patrolling U. S. craft? How long will it be before action is taken to prevent these patrols from reporting back to the British?

But it may not even come to that. During the past week the full weight of the Administration has been thrown into a campaign designed to win the masses of the American people over to acceptance of the convoy idea. And last week also, for the first time, responsible spokesmen admitted in effect that convoys by U. S. warships might take us full blast into open hostilities.

In an obviously deliberate attempt to test public reaction, Roosevelt had his Navy Secretary, Frank Knox, get up last week and say these warning words:

"Having gone thus far, we can only go on. Hitler cannot allow our war supplies and food to reach England. He will be defeated if they do. We cannot allow our goods to be sunk in the Atlantic. We shall be beaten if they do. We must make good our promise to aid Britain."

Then Secretary of State Hull, in another speech, rolled out some more of the propaganda artillery. In carefully chosen words, he declared that the U. S. would have to go into the war well before the enemy gets across the hemisphere boundaries. He said:

"Some among us, doubtless with best intentions, still contend that our country need not resist until the armed forces of an invader shall have crossed the boundary line of this hemisphere. . . . This is an utterly short-sighted and dangerous point of view."

The next day Roosevelt came out with his sea patrol announcement, which can be described as a "policy short of convoys." And convoys, it is tacitly understood, are no longer "short of war." Roosevelt denied, in the face of all clear evidence, that convoys were being considered. The sea patrol was the step decided upon instead at this particular time, when the Gallup polls still show

(Continued on Page 3)

GM Strike Postponed For Gov't Mediation

Reuther-Thomas UAW Leadership Retreats Under Company And Government Pressure Despite 85% Strike Vote

DETROIT, Michigan, April 27—The immediate possibility of a strike in the 78 General Motors plants organized by the UAW-CIO was sidetracked Saturday, April 26, when the union and the company agreed to continued operation of the plants until hearings by the National Mediation Board Friday May 2.

The company has already indicated in its statements that it is ready to grant small wage increases, but has taken a very tough position on all other main demands of the union. Wage increases will be retroactive to April 28.

85% VOTE FOR STRIKE

The UAW-CIO local unions, from coast to coast in GM, have taken strike votes and voted overwhelmingly for strike authorization if it becomes necessary to back up their demands with action. The turnout of votes was exceptionally large, and the majority vote for strike was probably about 85% nationally. It is significant that in Flint the largest strike vote of all times was turned out last week.

TOWARD A SOVIET UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

The "unification" in Hitler's chains is the precursor to new divisions, new upheavals, new conflicts. Through this immense ordeal by blood, the thrice-oppressed peoples of Europe will have to find their slow, costly way toward a true unification based upon the socialist reconstruction of society... toward a real, a Soviet United States of Europe.

"Let no one now talk to us of "realism" which involves surrender, capitulation, acceptance of this bloody capitalist order of things. Our realism, the realism of the fight for the future of mankind consists in holding fast and firm to the struggle against capitalism and all its works. That's the road to the Socialist United States of Europe—the Socialist United States of the World. It's the only kind of realism that will smother the military machines of imperialism into pieces when the right time comes.

REASONS FOR REUTHER'S MILITANCY

The militancy of the Reuther-Thomas leadership, in its speeches and in some of its actions, was the result of a combination of

causes. Reuther, GM Director of the UAW, has been under considerable pressure from the General Motors locals, most of whom have been clamoring for months for improved wages, conditions and bargaining procedure. The insistent demands of the rank and file for action resulted in the General Motors Conference held in Detroit on February 8, 9, and 10.

Since that time, the local unions in Flint, Detroit, Saginaw, Los Angeles, Lansing and elsewhere, ever more impatient with the stalling tactics of the corporation, have demanded that action be taken to secure the demands which their delegates had drawn up at the conference.

This pressure, plus the absolutely adamant attitude of the company, forced Reuther to call for a strike vote. He first called for "authorization to call a strike vote"—an absolutely unnecessary action constitutionally—and then proceeded to give orders for the strike vote proper. He was met with an overwhelming vote for strike.

FACTIONAL RIVALRY ON UAW BOARD

Secondly, there was considerable pressure upon Reuther to take action in GM to achieve some gains, because of the intense rivalry between the two factions on the International Executive Board.

Reuther and Thomas on the one side, representing what is roughly termed the "Hillman" faction on the board, was daily taunted by the "Addes-Frankensteen-CP" caucus for its failure to make gains in GM, the domain of Reuther.

Addes wrote weekly articles in the Auto Worker, pointing out the great needs for improved contract provisions with GM. This was his way of putting Reuther on the spot, and prepared the ground-work for a struggle against the

(Continued on Page 3)

WORKERS' FORUM

Write to us—tell us what's going on in your part of the labor movement—what are the workers thinking about—tell us what the bosses are up to—and the G-men and the local cops—and the Stalinists—send us that story the capitalist press didn't print and that story they buried or distorted—our pages are open to you. Letters must carry name and address, but indicate if you do not want your name printed.

Negro Soldiers Offer Armed Resistance To Nat'l Guard Attack

EDITOR:

I have a piece of interesting news from Fort Jackson. On April 20 we were bowling at Twin Lakes which is now part of the military reservation. One of the alley boys asked us whether we had seen the M. P.'s (Military Police) hurrying by, armed with riot guns. The boy stated that there was a riot at the fort, but knew no more about it.

The next morning we heard all sorts of rumors about clashes between colored and white troops. This was confirmed when the newspapers had to give the incident publicity in the form of a statement from the commanding officer. I am enclosing a news item and editorial from the Columbia Record of April 22.

This is the straight story as I was able to gather it from reliable eye-witness sources.

A few Negro soldiers were swimming in a pond on the reservation which is devoted to their exclusive use (one form of segregation practiced in the army of "democracy.") Some white CCC boys, who were in camp near the fort, began to use this pond and seized and ducked one of the Negro soldiers and almost drowned him. A fight immediately ensued.

The other Negro soldiers, being greatly outnumbered, sent for aid and truck-loads of colored soldiers shortly arrived on the scene. The fracas became very hot, but was finally broken up through intervention of a commanding officer.

When the officer's back was turned, the white CCC boys hurled rocks at the Negro soldiers and the fight began all over again.

NATIONAL GUARD GOES INTO ACTION

A regiment of white Georgia National Guardsmen had heard of

the fight and had been told that eight white men had been killed. Without confirming this information, they all grabbed their arms and marched to the place where the Negroes were stationed and immediately took up battle formation.

The National Guardsmen had two machine guns and opened fire with these and their rifles. Although they were under-armed the undaunted Negro soldiers defended their lives, set up barricades and returned the fire. The National Guard colonel tried to intervene and stop the fight, but was shouted down. I have it from an absolutely reliable authority that the Guardsmen were led by some of their officers.

Upon the threat that the entire 30th Division would march on them, both sides ceased firing. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt.

The significant part of this incident is the courageous spirit of the Negro soldiers. That they fought back in the deep South is astounding. It will give the general staff something to think about. There will probably be an "investigation" of the matter and the National Guard will be exonerated.

A SOLDIER

The Newspaper clippings sent with this letter, although very cautiously worded, confirm the accuracy of the incident related.

Once again the fighting capacity of the Negroes is confirmed and their growing refusal to be Jim Crowed and kicked around by ignorant and reactionary boss-inspired whites.

The MILITANT hails the spirit of resistance of these Negro soldiers from Fort Jackson. This spirit, and this spirit, alone, will put an end to the vile system of discrimination in the North as well as in the South.—Ed.

VINSON ANTI-LABOR MEASURE BLOCKED BY UNION PRESSURE

The combined opposition of organized labor, including the CIO, AFL and Railroad Brotherhoods, last week slowed up the Congressional drive to rush through the anti-strike, open shop Vinson Bill.

Efforts of a powerful bloc of Southern Democratic and reactionary Northern congressmen to speed the bill to quick passage were blocked when demands of organized labor, with CIO President Philip Murray taking the lead, forced the House Rules Committee to postpone action on the bill pending an open hearing.

Plans of the bill's sponsors had been to jam the bill hastily through the Rules Committee and on to the floor of Congress by last Friday. They had predicted it would be passed within two days of its admission to the floor of the House.

The bill had been hastily approved by the House Naval Affairs Committee after a farcical two-day "hearing" and sent to the Rules Committee. Vinson, Georgia polltaxer who is chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, authored the bill.

VINSON VIOLATES HOUSE PROCEDURE

Under questioning before the Rules Committee last Wednesday, Vinson made the reluctant confession that his group had deliberately violated established House procedure in "trespassing" on the jurisdiction of the Labor and Judiciary Committees by routing his bill around these committees and into the Naval Affairs Committee where Vinson felt he would get more "cooperation."

The Administration squeezed the last drop of possible "usefulness" out of the threat of this bill to organized labor when it permitted "informed quarters" to make public the opinion that action on the bill depended upon the outcome of the soft coal strike.

This threat, it was undoubtedly felt, might move the miners to accept a hasty and unfavorable strike settlement.

May Issue Of 'Fourth Int'l' Off The Press

The May issue of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL magazine is now off the press, available for May Day distribution to its readers throughout the country.

May Day, 1941, is appraised as a milestone for the American labor movement in two outstanding articles analyzing the recent gains of labor. "Labor on the March: 1941" by the editors draws the lessons of the recent strikes. "The Mobilization of American Labor: 1939-1940," by William F. Ward analyzes the eleven-year growth of the American labor movement from a stage of stifling craft-unionism to its present status as the strongest labor movement in the world.

Likewise featured in the May issue of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL is "How It Happened," the tragic story of Stalin's GPT murder of Leon Trotsky, as seen through the eyes of Trotsky's wife, Natalia Sedov.

Leon Trotsky is represented by one of his most illuminating theoretical pieces: "The Curve of Capitalist Development," written in 1923, but equally pertinent today. The stenogram of a discussion with Trotsky on the problem of building a revolutionary party is also published.

Other articles in this month's issue are: "The Permanent Revolution," by Jack Weber; a thesis by the Executive Committee

Roebling Strikers Fight Off Police Assault

Picket Line Holds Against Hoses And Clubs

TRENTON, N. J., April 27.—A fighting picket line of thousands of workers has defeated the attempts of the bosses and local police to smash by violence the strike of 6,000 members of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (CIO) employed at the plants of the Roebling Steel and Wire Company here and in Roebling, New Jersey.

With the aid of hundreds of union brothers from Trenton, the Roebling workers last Tuesday rallied their ranks, after company police had smashed a thin picket line by turning four high pressure fire hoses on the pickets, and forced the sheriff of Burlington County to disarm his deputies and take them out of town.

PLANTS SHUT DOWN, STRIKE IS SOLID

Both plants are shut down completely, a back-to-work movement organized by the Company in Roebling has been broken, and the strike is more solid than at any time since its beginning on April 25.

Union leaders went to Washington after Tuesday's battle to meet with the National Mediation Board representatives.

The attempt to smash the strike in Roebling by violence came after the company succeeded in running scabs into the plant. The company took advantage of a small picket line to make this attempt.

Thinking the strike broken, the company police made their unprovoked assault on the handful of pickets Tuesday morning. The SWOC leadership was hesitant at first and failed to rally the strikers.

WORKERS JOIN IN DEFENSE EFFORT

A Roebling striker called the Trenton strikers by phone just when the Trenton workers were in a mass meeting. The message of the attack electrified the packed meeting. The Trenton workers had been demanding action, and this was the chance. They immediately adjourned their meeting, jumped into their cars, and rushed to Roebling, ten miles away.

The presence of the hundreds of Trenton workers turned the tide. Thousands of the local workers rallied to the picket lines. A hundred or more police and deputies tried to smash the lines with high-pressure hoses, clubs, etc. The hoses were slashed. The strikers drove the cops back after a half-hour pitched battle.

To save the forces of "law and order," the sheriff ordered a retreat, then removed the clubs, guns and other arms from his men, and finally, withdrew them out of town.

COMPANY DEMANDS STATE TROOPERS

The company pleaded for state troopers and complained because the "Home Defense" guards were not yet commissioned. The SWOC issued a statement that if state troopers were sent in, the union would get the aid of 5,000 Pennsylvania coal miners. Governor Edison decided not to send troopers.

Roebling is a company town. The company had tried to stop union organization, among other methods, by threatening the workers with eviction from the company houses. The town jail is in the corporation's gate house.

The strike began in Trenton after the company tried to make the workers in Department 75 operate six machines instead of four, and issued an ultimatum that the workers would have to accept the speed-up "or else." That "Or Else" became the strikers' chief slogan, which they are flaunting on their picket signs.

tee of the Fourth International on the workers' tasks in China's struggle for independence; an editorial on the Soviet-Japanese pact; and an article by Vladimir Ilyev, on the economic crisis in the Soviet Union.

Subscribe to the "Fourth International"

Textile Workers Meet



Scene at the second biennial convention of the Textile Workers Union (CIO) held last week in New York City. The delegates were informed that the union now represents some 260,000 workers in over 1,000 firms.

Rieve Covers Hillman's Strikebreaking Role

Textile Union Convention A War Rally

The Second Biennial Convention of the Textile Workers Union of America (CIO), held last week in New York City, had more the earmarks of a pro-war, patriotic rally than a labor convention.

Reflecting the policies pursued by Sidney Hillman, the union's retiring president, the time of the convention was devoted in great part to arousing the war spirit, boosting the Roosevelt administration, and playing down labor militancy in favor of collaboration with the government and the employers.

The convention was organized in a characteristic Hillman fashion. All committees were picked in advance by the Executive Council. Invited speakers included boss politicians, such as the President of the Council of Greater New York, who spoke in place of Mayor La Guardia, who was too busy to appear because of activities working to bust the Transport Workers Union.

Delegates had no opportunity to read the resolutions before they came to the floor. The Executive Council members had the opportunity to push through all resolutions, even of the most reactionary kind, because they had speeches all prepared, and the delegates had no chance to prepare adequate statements on any controversial issue.

Chief reactionary resolution passed was one barring from union posts all Nazis, Communists and "other subversive elements." This will be used chiefly against union militants who attempt to expose the policies of the Hillman-led officials.

RIEVE FOR SLOW-DOWN ON STRIKES

Emile Rieve, the new union head, in his convention speech, gave support to dependence upon mediation and other employer-government devices for stalling militant labor actions. While urging labor to oppose all anti-labor

Cannon Speaks At Chicago, Detroit And Buffalo Meetings This Week

James P. Cannon, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, will speak at open meetings this week in Chicago, Detroit and Buffalo. Comrade Cannon is on the return trip from a cross-country tour to the West Coast. Full details of the meetings for this week are given on page 3.

James P. Cannon has been a leader in the struggle for workers' rights for 35 years. As a former member of the I.W.W., and later a Socialist,

Tear Gas For "Defense"

Not all the national income is being spent upon shells destined for, what Churchill calls, "the malignant hum." A good share of it goes into what is known as "defense of the home front" (i. e., suppression of the workers).

This week we read a press release from the Duncan Chemical Company announcing enthusiastically the perfecting of a tear-gas machine gun. The advantages of the new gun are obvious. "The gun discharges Duncanite, a highly effective, invisible tear gas which is capable of instantly overpowering a man at distances up to 50 feet," the release reads. Ah, an invisible gas! The picket captain can be knocked out without anyone knowing who pressed the trigger. Buck Rogers couldn't do better than that.

The release continues, "One discharge incapacitates a man for 30 minutes." Here's progress. No more ten or 15 minute knockouts. "The gun is only 10 inches long," the description read, "and fits conveniently into the pocket, auto glove compartment or desk drawer. It is constructed of beautifully finished, forged steel and operates by a simple turn of its stainless steel nozzle. In the hands of the inexperienced the Duncan gun is safe but effective." There is a selling point. Goon squads are sometimes hastily organized and the thugs aren't always familiar with the cumbersome and complicated tear gas guns now in use. But here is a gun that is effective "in the hands of the inexperienced." We can see a smile of satisfaction spread over the face of Henry Ford.

Oh yes, we almost forgot. This descriptive leaflet was entitled "Tear Gas for Defense." And though there is no talk here of the "malignant hums," this is part of the American defense effort. The bosses know what they are defending . . . and against whom.

nothing but captives of employer-dominated government boards.

He tried to justify his stand on this question by asserting falsely that the government is leaning more and more toward labor for help and advice.

It would be incorrect, however, to judge the rank and file of Textile workers by the words and actions of the leadership at this convention. The fact that the convention report revealed that the union has grown to over 260,000 members indicates the militant character of the textile workers.

Harlem Branch Plans Opening

The Harlem branch of the Socialist Workers Party will open its headquarters in the center of Harlem at 72 West 125th Street, Saturday night, May 10, with a bang-up housewarming.

During the past weeks the headquarters have been renovated and decorated in preparation for the opening.

Dancing, refreshments, and a raffle will feature the evening's entertainment. First prize in the raffle is a \$5 bill. Second and third prizes are combined subscriptions to THE MILITANT and the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

All friends of the SWP in Harlem are invited to join in making this housewarming one that will long be remembered.

Subway Workers Open Drive To Gain N. Y. Public Support

TWU Distributes Million Leaflets; Explains Stand to Subway Riders

The campaign of the Transport Workers Union (CIO) to retain its closed shop contracts on the city-owned New York subways began in earnest this past week. Refusing to back down under the union-busting threats of Mayor La Guardia, who is trying to smash the organization of 27,000 subway workers at the termination of the contracts this June 30, the union is making a direct appeal for support to the millions of worker-subway users.

The first million of union leaflets, explaining the union's side in the subway controversy, was delivered to subway goers this week. The plan is to distribute many millions of these and other union leaflets in the next two months.

In defense of its demands for the continuation of the present union conditions on the subways, the TWU declared in its statement:

"Through the union we achieved freedom. Freedom from an inhuman seven-day work week, from the twelve-hour day, from the yellow dog company union contract.

"Through the union we won a six-day week (although most people today work only 5 days). We won wage improvements. We won vacations with pay, a union medical plan and other benefits.

"What we won were the things that working people strive for everywhere. We had to strive hard to raise our standard of living."

CITY VIOLATES CONTRACTS

The statement then shows what La Guardia and the Board of Transportation have been doing in the past year to destroy union conditions on the subways.

"Ten months ago the city paid \$340,000,000 for the bankrupt private corporations which operated the subways and elevated railways. At that time we were promised that we would get many things under civil service.

"What did we get? Many transit workers had their pay cut. The seven-day work week is being brought back. Hundreds of men have been laid off. Our seniority rights have been violated. Promotions guaranteed to us in contracts have been denied. Five to nine per cent is being deducted from our pay for pensions we had nothing to say about.

"In short, the city is ruthlessly violating labor agreements. The right of labor to bargain collectively is being denied.

"On the other hand, highly paid members of the Board of Transportation had their fat salaries boosted 33 1/3 per cent."

The union statement then points out how the workers have sought to get their rights through peaceful negotiations.

"Patiently we petitioned the Board of Transportation for redress of our grievances. President Philip A. Murray, of the CIO, appealed to the Mayor for redress of our grievances. But to no avail."

After showing how the union has been denied even negotiations with the city, the statement appeals to the New York millions to begin a campaign of letters to La Guardia demanding that he meet with the union committee to negotiate a union contract.

APPEAL TO WORKERS

In addition to direct literature distribution, the union has announced two radio broadcasts weekly, Monday and Tuesday evenings, over one of the smaller local stations, to acquaint the workers with the truth about the subway situation.

During the next few weeks twelve street corner rallies will be held in various sections of the city, to be climaxed by a huge public gathering at Madison Square Garden.

This heightened union activity has forced the Board of Transportation to take several hasty steps to cover up its strikebreaking plans and to attempt to win back its rapidly waning support from those sections of the public which its lying propaganda was able to influence.

BOARD GIVES "CRUMBS"

The Board last week announced its intentions of equalizing pay rates on the various subway lines. The union has been hammering away at the unequal hourly rates paid for the same type of work. Women ticket agents have been particularly discriminated against, being paid as low as 39 cents an hour. However, the Board has not made clear whether this equalization will apply to the women workers.

Union officials have characterized this as merely another "crumb" in the desperate efforts of the Board to stave off a subway strike and deny the union its closed shop contract, higher wages and other major improvements.



MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS

Largest of the May Day bundles were ordered by New York, Chicago, Boston, St. Paul, Philadelphia and Buffalo. We look forward to next week's news of how these branches organized special May Day activity with THE MILITANT. Write in your experiences, comrades!

6-PAGER CONTINUES TO DRAW COMPLIMENTS

SAN PEDRO, Calif.—Comrade G. writes: "The new 6-pager is very good and getting better all the time. Those two extra pages sure make a world of difference!"

BACK BILLS

BACK BILLS . . . There's a season for increasing subscriptions, there's a season for increasing bundle orders . . . but sooner or later the season arrives when the branches just have to check over their finances and get busy increasing their remittances to this office.

Our Michigan comrades, in this regard must be called to particular account. We know that money is scarce and money troubles plentiful. But comrades,

our troubles ride on the same graph! Flint has an accumulated back bill of \$55.75, every dollar of which is being badly missed in this office at the present time. Detroit, which for many months was a star account in our books, has permitted itself to run up a back bill of \$50.00.

Toledo and Youngstown, likewise good payers, are permitting themselves to slip behind with back bills of \$19.90 and \$15.00 respectively.

An old cancer in this office, the San Francisco back bill, is slowly being cut away, but it still amounts to the bloated sum of \$46.57. How about cutting it away with one sharp blow?

Philadelphia, with commendable Bolshevik spirit has refused all offers of assistance from the National Office, and is determined to pay up its old, old back bill of \$46.80. If only Flint would turn in an equally firm resolve, likewise backed up by hard cash . . .

Join the Socialist Workers Party

Sparrows Point, Bethlehem Steel Company Town, Is Beginning To Yield To Unionizing Drive

What Life Is Like Now In One of the Last Strongholds Of Bethlehem's Company Unionism

At the end of a winding road twelve miles from Baltimore stands a toll bridge leading to the huge property of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation known as Sparrows Point, Maryland.

On the other side of the bridge looms the gigantic steel mills of the largest section of Eugene Grace's metallic empire. Between the colossal steel structures of the various plant units there remain glinting waters and the remnants of majestic forests, an impressive picture of machine-age beauty imposed on a background of nature. Reflected in the waters of these neighboring creeks are the most modern steel edifices, in which over 25,000 workers today toil to produce the basic product of industrialism.

Within the center of this giant plant lies the little company town, Sparrows Point. Here in hundreds of dismal, ramshackle company-owned board houses live thousands of workers, whose labor makes Bethlehem Steel the second largest steel producer in America.

A SEETHING VOLCANO

This village seems peaceful on the surface. But it is a seething volcano within. It encloses the bitter lives of thousands of men and women who have stored within their breasts the accumulated hatred of decades of exploitation in Eugene Grace's infamous "American Way."

Every inch of Sparrows Point is owned by the corporation, every house, every store, every blade of grass.

In one isolated section of town, separated by several blocks of vacant lots from the rest of the houses, live the families of Negro workers. These stand out by reason of their unspeakable dilapidation, conspicuous even in the midst of general squalor. Further in the town are the dwellings of the whites, only a slight degree better than those of the segregated Negro workers.

Even the miserable wages paid the Sparrows Point workers are taken back from them by the company through exorbitant rents. In addition, the company can intimidate and enslave the workers with the threat of eviction without a moment's notice.

THE COMPANY STORE

Not merely the worker's shelter but his food, clothing and other necessities of life are entirely in the hands of the company. The one and only trade center, situated across the street from the Blast Furnace entrance, is the scandalous company store. Here the workers are compelled to buy and pay any price the company exacts. And these prices are kept so high that the worker's wages cannot pay for the most meager necessities.

The company is glad to "remedy" this condition — not by increasing wages and reducing prices, of course — but by extending "credit." The workers' debts are systematically deducted from their pay checks — another "convenience" provided by the company. In this fashion, hundreds of workers end up the week or month with no pay checks at all. They simply get a statement that their debts to the company store have consumed their entire earnings. Thus these workers are reduced to literal slavery, with no money of their own, chained by debt to the company, unable to escape except at the risk of immediate starvation.

In case of strikes, the company can starve out the strikers by cutting off their credit at the company store. This extortion device was used in the recent strike in the Sparrows Point shipyard.

MAINTAINING "LAW AND ORDER"

No detail of control over the workers of Sparrows Point is overlooked by Eugene Grace, including the preservation of "law and order." In the very center of the community, at the corner of 4th and D Streets, stands the small but impressive court and police station. The police, supervised by company men, have powers which would make any big city cop green with envy. There is no real distinction between plant and town police. Any worker who "misbehaves" in the plant, is not merely escorted from the plant by the plant police, but is arrested and thrown in the town jail. This police power is restricted to use against workers, and not against foremen or company officials. A company magistrate then gives the arrested worker a "trial."

Employed at the Sparrows Point plant are 20,000 steel workers and

rapidly to an end, even at its vilest spot, Sparrows Point.

Even before the recent strike victories in Bethlehem, Johnstown and Lackawanna, the Sparrows Point workers were beginning to make rapid headway with their union and press the company back. They established three new union offices and a functioning organization machinery within the plants. Union activity and militancy rose at unprecedented speed. Successful stoppages have taken place, and more are certain to follow.

The fortress of Bethlehem Steel has already been breached at three major points. The workers of Sparrows Point are preparing to shatter it altogether. What the workers of Bethlehem, Johnstown and Lackawanna have been able to do, the Sparrows Point workers know they can do as well.

Nothing will stop them when they strike — and that strike is coming, unless the company yields in advance — for they will fight with a spirit of vengeance which decades of suffering have graven in their hearts.

PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION

Sparrows Point, the largest unit of Bethlehem Steel, presents some individual organizational problems during this period of war production. Aside from the shipbuilding section, much of the production is not directly for war purposes. Its products include chiefly rods, wire, nails, pipes, sheet, strip steel and tin. Prior to the all-out "national defense" spending, this work was so parcelled out to the other plants and steel companies that the "Point" workers had a long period of part-time work or outright unemployment.

Technological improvements during the past period have made employment and part-time work a continuing threat. The new continuous strip mill has thrown hundreds of tin mill workers out of jobs. The continuous Butt weld pipe-making system, twice as fast as the old style mill has introduced part-time work for hundreds of the pipe mill workers. These are but two of many similar job-destroying methods which have been introduced.

In addition to all these factors, the company has maintained its company union, the Employees Representation Plan, to hold the workers down. This flint outfit has not only persistently attempted to block genuine unionization, but has helped the company maintain its discriminatory practices against various groups of the workers, particularly the Negroes. The ERP has backed the company in its policy of placing the Negroes in the hardest, most dangerous, lowest-paying jobs.

Industrial accidents and fatalities are so frequent at Sparrows Point that the ambulance is called the "Meat Wagon." The speed-up has reached such a cruel pace that "Point" workers frequently tell job-seekers, "Stick around, boys. Somebody'll be killed any minute now, and there'll be another job open."

But the day of unlimited Bethlehem Steel oppression is drawing

Negro Soldier Lynched, War Dep't Ignores NAACP Inquiry Demand

Two weeks ago, the body of Private Felix Hall, a Negro soldier of Montgomery, Alabama, was found hanging to a tree outside of Fort Benning, Georgia. Private Hall, a member of Company "E" 24th Infantry, stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, had been missing about a month from the army camp before his body was discovered.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is urging a complete investigation of the death of Private Hall. They have written to President Roosevelt and Secretary of War Stimson asking "action deemed necessary to discover and punish the perpetrators of this crime."

The NAACP branded the killing of Private Hall as a lynching and in its letter to Secretary Stimson stated: "We feel certain that the war department does not wish the crime of lynching to be perpetrated on the reservation of one of its largest forts, in connection with the training of an army supposedly for the defense of democracy."

The war department so far, however, has not evidenced the slightest concern over the death of Private Hall. A lynching off the army reservation or on — it's all part of the Jim Crow system which the war department is dedicated to uphold.

"The Union Suits Us"



Conventions went by the board when these members of the International Ladies Garment Workers (AFL) picketed in their underwear at the strike-bound Appalachian Mills in Knoxville, Tennessee. This new idea in picketing and the prominent banners, "I lost my pants at the Appalachian Mills," helped bring a speedy union victory.

General Motors Strike Postponed

(Continued from page 1) Thomas leadership at the UAW convention in July.

Reuther and Thomas, driven both by rank and file pressure, and by their own factional needs, were forced to meet the GM corporation's stubborn refusal to grant contract improvements with the threat of a strike. They had to get some gains, both to meet insistent rank and file demands, and to make a record for their group.

REUTHER BOWS BEFORE OPM

On the other hand, Reuther showed from the first days of the strike threat, that he was most of all knuckling down to the Government apparatus, the OPM of Hillman-Knudsen, when he announced that no war production work in GM would be struck. This was tantamount to giving up the strike weapon in war orders work, without the affected workers themselves having a thing to say about it.

Union militants realize that this formula sets a bad precedent; it reveals that the UAW leadership has given ground on the issue of "defense" strikes, and demonstrates it is ready to capitulate on that issue. Reuther's stand has disoriented and confused many GM workers, and has aroused the resentment of the advanced sections of the local unions, who themselves do not feel inclined to give any guarantees that they will not strike if necessary for decent wages and working conditions in arms plants, on work from which the corporation makes just as great if not greater profits than elsewhere.

As in the Ford negotiations, the International Leadership of the UAW has publicly whittled away its demands, in this case even before a strike.

The original demands as drawn up at the GM conference in Detroit included among its major points the demand for a ten cent blanket wage increase, a union shop, a shop steward system, a 60-

day seniority clause instead of the current 6-month clause for new employees, \$25 a week pay for drafted workers and the 80 hour vacation with pay instead of the current 40 hour clause.

REUTHER CUTS DEMANDS

In his public address in Flint April 20th, Reuther cut out of his report of the negotiations all mention of the 60-day seniority demand, and of the demand for \$25 weekly pay for draftees. The delegates to the GM conference who had drawn them up were not told what happened to these demands.

Reuther placed his main stress on the demands for: 1, the wage increase; 2, increased powers for the umpire; 3, the union shop; 4, the question of a changed hospitalization plan to give members more protection.

That is to say, on April 20 Reuther gave notice that he had given up some of the major demands, without the authorization of the General Motors locals, or the delegates to the GM conference, who, according to the decision reached at the February conference, were to be consulted on the question of negotiations before any final decisions were made.

The publicly announced list of demands were important enough however, in spite of the omissions, to inspire the tremendous strike vote.

After the strike vote, the same process of whittling away the demands went on.

In the statement issued Saturday April 26, agreeing to arbitrate the dispute with the National Mediation Board, the UAW Executive Board gave out a new statement of its demands. This statement demanded the ten cent wage increase as before, and also flatly demanded an increase in the powers of the umpire (a safe demand since it is one the corporation should have no qualms in granting). However, on the union shop issue the demand was stated in ambiguous terms which leaves room for some kind of compromise formula. The statement reads, "Our record of responsibility in our relations with the corporation and the overwhelming support of our union, entitle it to a greater degree of union recognition."

Instead of asking for the shop steward system, as before, this statement says, "We propose to strengthen handling and elimination of grievances in the plants where they originate."

This is a far cry from the demand for a steward system as drawn up at the GM Conference in February.

The statement's list of demands also includes a demand for an improved hospitalization plan.

GM MILITANTS ON THE ALERT

Thus the stake for which the union is preparing its fight has been reduced by the Reuther-Thomas negotiators, who, under governmental pressure, have retreated day by day.

Nevertheless, the GM workers have indicated that they feel they are entitled to substantial increases all along the line, both in wages and in union rights in the plant. Many militants in local unions are preparing to fight against any kind of agreement which does not include their necessary demands and needs, as drawn up in contract form at the February 8th Conference.

If some kind of compromise agreement emerges from the May 2nd arbitration with the National Mediation Board, it will have to be good to satisfy the rank and file. It is not yet clear what will happen. Unless the corporation comes a long way in meeting the workers' demands, the workers will be forced to strike despite the cowardly tactics of Reuther-Thomas.

Should a strike ensue, it would no doubt be a 100% solid strike. The workers in GM are well-organized. They are also experienced and ready.

In any case, the whole course of the GM negotiations has shown to the thinking militants in the local unions that they must demand more of a voice in such negotiations. They must also build up a new leadership from the ranks that can resist the pressures of this period and go forward to achieve new gains. These can be won, provided the leadership is courageous and truly representative of the membership and its wishes.

New York's gold coast looked startled last Saturday at the sight of a picket line around Rockefeller Center — and a black and white picket line at that! Placards proclaimed slogans such as, "Bullets Draw No Color Line; Bullet-Makers Do." "Down with Jim Crow," "A Real Democracy Draws No Color Line." The demonstration was part of a nationwide protest sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People against discrimination in the defense industries.

The pickets were amused at the attempts of one thick-necked cop to convince them that Rockefeller was their friend. "Aren't you people ashamed of yourselves, — acting this way toward Rockefeller who has always helped the Negro people?" The scornful reaction of the pickets implied how well they understood that Rockefeller is no friend of theirs.

Tallulah Bankhead, noted stage and screen actress, remarked while passing the line, "I'm all for you; keep up the fight." Miss Bankhead's father was the notorious labor-hating senator from Georgia. Apparently labor-hating is not hereditary even in a southern Bourbon family.

Next Jack Altman, one of the former leaders of the Socialist Party, entered the plaza. Upon seeing the placards and the picket line he remarked, "You filthy Communists are everywhere!" Altman proudly refers to himself as "America's Number One War-Monger." Any militant protest against the Jim Crow conditions that prevail under capitalist democracy immediately brings his red-baiting to the boiling point.

The pickets marched from nine A. M. until one in the afternoon. Police attempt to keep them out of the street bisecting the plaza on the grounds that this was private property belonging to the house of Rockefeller. But twice the picket line marched right down this street. "Hey, you can't do that!" yelled the police. They made no attempt, however, to use physical violence against the pickets, contenting themselves with trying to turn the colored members of the demonstration against the white pickets by arguing that the whites were "communists" who would lead the Negroes to no good end.

Curtis Wright and Sperry Gyroscope were the two war industries with offices in Rockefeller Center against whom the pickets demonstrated. Brewster Aircraft with offices at 6 East 45 St. is also on the list of corporations being picketed by the NAACP. Brewster sent a letter to the NAACP protesting that it does not discriminate against Negroes. They were unable, however, to adduce a single fact in their letter in support of this contention.

Patrol Last Step 'Short Of War'

(Continued from page 1) a sizeable section of the population opposed to that final, fateful step.

Let it be plain: the U. S. is already in the war. What these various maneuvers add up to is simply the final, carefully calculated strategy to bring the U. S. into military operations in the most advantageous possible manner. Mass reaction in this country is one great factor in these calculations. Also, however, there is the question of calculating the course of the war on its different fronts.

Washington knows that Japan is watching narrowly, waiting for the U. S. Navy to become engaged in the Atlantic, before plunging ahead in the South Pacific. Washington has to consider a war strategy that girdles the globe and to keep in mind that its present naval forces do not allow so wide a distribution if major action is in view.

But that is just the point. Let no one be deluded that there is still the possibility of any choice about U. S. entry into the imperialist conflict as an active belligerent. The only thing that really remains to be determined in the high councils of those who rule our destiny is the when and the how.

The big bosses of America are speaking out their will in public. John D. Rockefeller, Thomas Lamont of the House of Morgan,

Wendell Willkie of Wall Street... and all their echoes in the dovetails of the liberal pacifists and preachers... are demanding convulsions now, action now, war now.

The demand has become so immediate, so urgent, that even the pacifists of the Socialist Party skeleton... Reinhold Niebuhr and Jack Altman and Company... have hopped on the bandwagon openly favoring war... now. We shall deal with these latter more fully in our next issue... but we know from long experience that when these last rodents scurry from the foundering ship of peace, the war has truly come close.

The question... the only question now is: how best to prepare ourselves in this war situation, how best to train and organize ourselves for the battles that are to come, not the battles of the bosses for their profits, but the battles of the workers for the socialist reconstruction of the world. For our part, we demand military training under control of the trade unions and special training of workers as officers. This is the road toward preparation for the real fight against Fascism, at home and abroad. What Roosevelt and the rest offer us is blood and sweat for imperialist pelf. What we declare now is: blood is to be shed. Let us make certain it is shed in the cause of building a better world, a socialist world.

Negro Labor Group To Celebrate Victory In Winning Bus Jobs

To celebrate its victory over the Fifth Avenue Bus Company and the New York Omnibus Corporation, the United Negro Bus Association of Harlem is organizing a victory parade and mass rally on Saturday, May 3. The Harlem branch of the Socialist Workers Party, along with other organizations in Harlem, will participate in the parade and meeting.

The parade is scheduled to form at 1 p. m. at the Abyssinian Baptist Church at 132 West 138 St. It will then proceed along the main avenues and streets of Harlem to Dorrence Brooks Square, 137th St. and St. Nicholas Avenue where the mass rally will be held.

After a month's militant picketing of bus stops in Harlem, the two bus companies conceded a contract to the Harlem organization, which was countersigned by the Transport Workers Union (CIO). This contract calls for employment of 70 Negro mechanics, 100 Negro bus-drivers, and 50 per cent of all additional employees at the ratio of one Negro for one white person until Negroes comprise 17 per cent of all the workers employed by the bus companies.

After a month's militant picketing of bus stops in Harlem, the two bus companies conceded a contract to the Harlem organization, which was countersigned by the Transport Workers Union (CIO). This contract calls for employment of 70 Negro mechanics, 100 Negro bus-drivers, and 50 per cent of all additional employees at the ratio of one Negro for one white person until Negroes comprise 17 per cent of all the workers employed by the bus companies.

JAMES P. CANNON
National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party
Speaks This Week In
CHICAGO -- DETROIT -- BUFFALO

CHICAGO
Sunday, May 4
2:30 P.M.
Ashland Auditorium Room 237
Van Buren & Ashland Ave.
Subject:
Strikes and "National Defense"

DETROIT
Tuesday, May 6
8:00 P.M.
Garage Workers Hall
3965 Woodward Ave. (Second Floor)
Subject:
Strikes and "National Defense"

BUFFALO
Thursday, May 8
8:00 P.M.
East Side Social Center
571 Clinton Street
Subject:
The War Aims of the Government

JUST OFF THE PRESS
THE FIRST ISSUE OF
LA VERITE
A Monthly Organ for French-Speaking Marxists
5 CENTS A COPY
Order from
DALE EDWARDS
P.O.B. 173, Station D
New York, N. Y.

WHERE TO BUY APPEAL IN PITTSBURGH
Hirsch's Book Store, 1623 Center Avenue
Rose Book Shop, 1332 - 5th Avenue
You can read the Appeal at:
Barber Shop
426 E. Ohio St., North Side
International Labor Lyceum
805 James St., North Side

British "Democracy" In India---An Eyewitness Report

An Uncensored, Exclusive Story Of War Conditions

For many months, British imperialism has imposed an almost impenetrable censorship over all news from India. Occasionally some brief dispatch from India appears in the American press, with the obvious imprint of the official British propaganda ministry. "All's well," cries the British government. "The Indian peoples are giving loyal support to the Empire's war efforts."

American foreign news commentators, such as Ludwig Lore of the NEW YORK POST, have been supplying the American people with "interpretive" analyses of what goes on in India behind the black veil of British censorship. Their analyses show a striking conformity with British government press releases, whose "optimism" grows as their "facts" shrink.

What is the truth about India? The MILITANT herewith presents the first eye-witness account to appear in the American labor press of what has been happening since the war in the greatest colony of the British Empire, where over 350,000,000 human beings are preparing to cast off the British Imperial bondage which they have suffered for three centuries.

The giver of the interview is a young American sailor who has just returned after a five months voyage to the Far East on an American freighter delivering supplies to the Burma Road at Rangoon. He spent a month visiting the principal cities and ports in India.

He observed India with a fresh and clear eye, with class-conscious understanding. This sympathy combined with a friendly and agreeable personality enabled him to meet many Indian natives—workers, students, soldiers—and to penetrate their reticence toward all foreigners, particularly those whom they have reason to suspect might be friendly toward the British rulers.

No one observer in a month can hope to catch more than the minutest segment of India. Bearing this in mind, the reader will nevertheless appreciate his account as an authentic clue to the present mood of the Indian masses.

By ART PREIS

"If I were to give one general impression about my experiences in India, I would say: 'This is the horrors of war, without the war.' This thought persisted in my mind wherever I went in Karachi, Bombay, Calcutta. It was like looking at some scene of war refugees, starving, homeless, diseased. Only there has been no war. No bombed buildings, no wreckage, no burnt homes. It's just, how shall I explain it—as if some terrible war had passed over the country sparing everything but the people themselves."

For a moment, the young seaman paused. A shadow seemed to pass over his face; his eyes looked off into space. He was staring back through time at unforgettable experiences.

At another point in the interview, he stated: "You know, whenever I'd get in with one of the natives—of course, after I'd broken down his natural suspicions—and we'd get on the question of the war, sooner or later I'd have the same question popped at me: 'How soon do you think the British will be defeated?'"

NATIVES ANTI-BRITISH BUT NOT PRO-HITLER

"It's not that they're pro-Hitler, or anything like that. When I asked one friendly native soldier if they weren't afraid of what would happen to them under Hitler, he just slowly swung his arms out and said softly, but with such bitterness, 'Look at us . . . It was all he could say. 'Look at us . . . '—What he meant was that nothing could be worse than

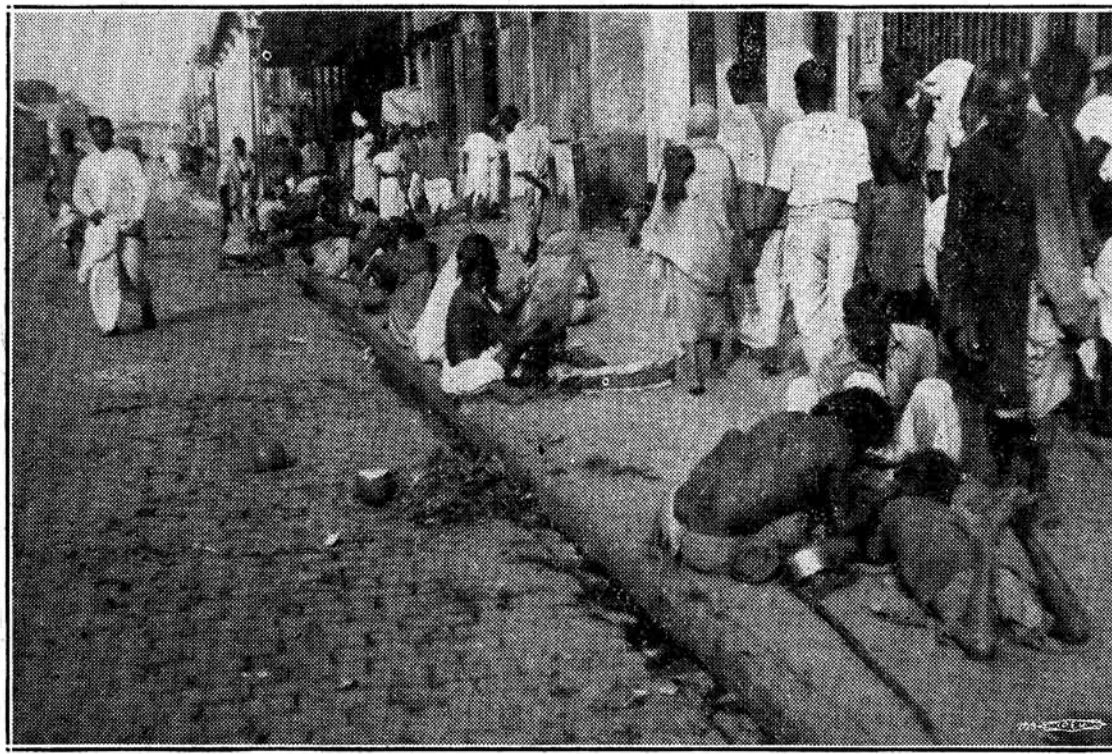
what they were already suffering. "I got the impression that Hitler is something too far away from their present misery. He just doesn't concern them. I can't say how wide-spread the feeling is, but I came away from India with the notion that they would welcome a military defeat of Britain for one reason—it would be an opportunity for them to drive out the British and gain their independence."

"IF WE ONLY HAD ARMS . . ." At a further point in his narrative, the young sailor supported his impression about the widespread desire among the people of India for a British defeat by recalling that on different occasions he had heard the wish expressed among groups of workers, "If we only had arms . . ."

"When I heard a worker say this in Karachi, our first stop in India, I thought it might be just an isolated sentiment. But I heard it in Bombay and again in Calcutta. And always the same words, 'If we only had arms . . . ' A weakened British army and arms for themselves. That's what many of them seem to be thinking about—and planning about."

The speaker then told of meeting a group of workers in Bombay whose complete confidence he managed to secure. A leader of these workers in greatest secrecy drew for him a rough map of the surrounding section of the country, marking the points of British troop concentrations and arms stores. "He burned it up again on the spot. I never saw such longing in any man's face as when he said to me, 'If we

Street Scene In India



This is a street scene in a town in India. Diseased and starving men, women and children line the sidewalk, begging from passers-by. This picture, which is sold to tourists, falls far short of conveying the actual conditions of filth and misery in which three centuries of British imperialist rule have steeped the people of India.

only had arms . . . If we only had arms."

The interview with the young seaman had started in the customary fashion, with the reporter asking questions about the trip—the ship, the cargo, the length of time at sea, the ports where they stopped, how long the sailors had leave at each port, etc.

He had shipped on a large freighter out of New York last November. It was his first trip to the Far East. They were at sea for 31 days before docking at Capetown, Union of South Africa. After only 12 hours ashore, they continued their trip around the Cape of Good Hope. They ploughed through the Indian Ocean for another 22 days, hitting Karachi, India, for their next stop.

CONDITIONS IN KARACHI

"Karachi was quite a shock to me. It was only after I saw Bombay and Calcutta that I realized that Karachi was quite a decent place by comparison.

"The first thing I noticed when we docked was the condition of the native longshoremen who came aboard the ship. They seemed so thin and scrawny that I wondered how they could lift the heavy loads they had to carry. They wore nothing but loin cloths—no shoes. I guess they have tough feet, but I couldn't imagine an American longshoreman working around lumber and heavy steel cargo without heavy shoes and clothing for protection.

"We had two days ashore. I've seen some of the foulest East Side slums and been down around the Negro quarters in Baltimore and Washington. But the worst in America couldn't equal this. The natives live in tiny shacks, some of rotted wood, others just weeds. Whole families—and several families live in a shack about ten feet square. Ten and 15 persons sleep

together on the ground in one shack. Here I got my first smell of India—that mixture of dirt, dung, crowded bodies and rotted flesh, diseased or dead. And the beggars! But that was nothing in Karachi! Wait until I tell you about Bombay and Calcutta.

"I was taken through one area of a few square blocks in Karachi which I was told housed more people than the rest of the city. After one trip through that particular area, I was convinced that this was true.

"But remember that conditions in Karachi are far better than in the rest of India. It's a comparatively new city being built up as a port. Many British officials have built palatial homes on the city outskirts."

BOMBAY CROWDED WITH BEGGARS

At this point, he seemed so anxious to tell about Bombay and Calcutta, the two chief cities of India, that the reporter switched the questions over to his experiences in these two ports.

"Bombay was our next stop. Bombay! That's where you'll see a real example of the true conditions in India. The first thing that hit me were the large troops of beggars everywhere. They reminded me of human beings out of a nightmare. They were in every condition of disease and disfigurement. Many seemed to be in the last stages of starvation dying on their feet. Many bore the open sores of terrible contagious diseases, small-pox and, especially, leprosy. You could see their bodies rotting away. The British government does nothing to help them. Human life is the cheapest thing in India. I shall never forget the feeling of horror I had the first time a pitiful leprous beggar came up begging for an anna (2 cents American) and touched me with his hand.

"Here I saw tens of thousands of people, whole families, who had no homes but the streets. They sleep in the streets, amongst incredible filth. They have no place else to go, and the British haven't got around to giving them such benefits of civilization as street cleaning departments and sewage. They lie uncovered in the streets. I saw only a few who managed to get hold of some old rag or cloth to cover themselves with. Most of the men have only a loin cloth covering. Children up to 12 go naked. I frequently saw little infants playing in the gutters amidst mud and manure. This is typical. Tens of millions live like this throughout India. It's the normal thing. Every other native one passes on the streets seems to have the obvious signs of disease. Nine out of ten have the physical marks of acute hunger—from the emaciation of continuous undernourishment to the last stages of outright starvation."

It was at this point that the speaker used the expression, "like refugees in a war zone—but worse." He broke in with an observation summing up his entire impression.

"I've tried to do some reading. I've read some of Trotsky's writings. I remember he once wrote about fascism being an attempt to organize the misery of the people. Well, I got the feeling that the British in India can't do even this. The poverty just spills

over into the streets like pus from a running sore."

RIOTS AND REVOLTS SUPPRESSED

Was there any resistance to the British now? Did he have a chance to talk with any industrial workers in Bombay?

"I had the luck to meet a British dock official who came aboard our ship in Bombay. I managed to get him to open up to me a little, although I had to be very cautious in asking him any questions. American sailors are watched very closely. The British know how well organized and how militant the American seamen are. He told me that just recently—that would be about three months ago now—there had been virtual civil war in a town north of Bombay, 'uncontrollable riots' he called it. British Militia, which are mainly English troops—they don't trust native soldiers for jobs like this—took four days to suppress the revolt using all the modern paraphernalia of war, including artillery. He said there were only 40,000 people involved.

"It immediately occurred to me what a job it would be for the British to suppress a revolution of 350,000,000 people, if it took four days for trained troops with machine guns and artillery to subdue 40,000 practically unarmed people. Incidentally, all news of this was suppressed within India itself. It's hard to say how many similar incidents have occurred that we cannot learn about.

WORKERS RECEPTIVE TO REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS "Another piece of luck I had was to get in with a group of workers employed at a big printing plant in Bombay. After we talked for a while, and they became assured of my sympathy for them and their fight against British imperialism, they eagerly asked me all sorts of questions about the labor and radical movements in America. When I mentioned, among other groups, the Trotskyites, they shot questions at me through a couple of workers who spoke English and acted as interpreters. It turned out that they were extremely receptive to revolutionary ideas, and, in fact, volunteered the information that they themselves were preparing for a revolutionary situation in India which they were certain was going to come soon.

"It was during this conversation that I again heard the question which I first heard in Karachi, 'How soon do you think the British will be defeated?' They hastened to assure me that this implied no sympathy with Hitler, but 'we are unarmed . . . ' and they felt that a decisive military defeat for Britain would accelerate their own struggle for freedom.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENTS THRIVE

"It was during this conversation that I first learned of the many underground political groups that are growing throughout India. Many of these groups believe in socialism. Most of them are becoming convinced that the British will be driven out of India only by forceful means. All of them are for national independence and don't want any part of the British rulers' war.

"The printing plant workers were particularly pleased when I explained what I knew of the Trotskyist international outlook. When I mentioned the fact that I believed that if a workers revolution developed in America the American workers would do everything possible to aid their Indian brothers, their faces lit up. They were so glad to hear about support for themselves in other countries. They are so isolated from the outside world, that they have felt all alone in their struggles. They did not even know up to then that an international revolutionary movement existed. After this, they displayed an almost touching effort to show their appreciation of my news by offering me little services, bringing me coffee, a chair, posting a look-out for the 'dicks' who infest the sections around plants and spy on every little grouping of workers.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENTS THRIVE

"I was during this conversation that I first learned of the many underground political groups that are growing throughout India. Many of these groups believe in socialism. Most of them are becoming convinced that the British will be driven out of India only by forceful means. All of them are for national independence and don't want any part of the British rulers' war.

An American Seaman Tells Sights Of Recent Trip

dence and don't want any part of the British rulers' war.

"The printing plant workers were particularly pleased when I explained what I knew of the Trotskyist international outlook. When I mentioned the fact that I believed that if a workers revolution developed in America the American workers would do everything possible to aid their Indian brothers, their faces lit up. They were so glad to hear about support for themselves in other countries. They are so isolated from the outside world, that they have felt all alone in their struggles. They did not even know up to then that an international revolutionary movement existed. After this, they displayed an almost touching effort to show their appreciation of my news by offering me little services, bringing me coffee, a chair, posting a look-out for the 'dicks' who infest the sections around plants and spy on every little grouping of workers.

"They did know a little about the Stalinists, but said the Stalinists were mainly among the students and had very little connections with the workers and the general masses. They also informed me that strikes were continuously breaking out among the various sections of the workers in Bombay, and that these strikes were bitterly fought and suppressed with much bloodshed. I was able to confirm this by a daily reading of the British papers. Every day I would see some obscure paragraph about 20 workers being killed, 30 workers being killed, in some 'disorders.' That's all it would say. They don't bother to mention the number injured.

BRITISH GRAFT "There was one incident in Bombay that gave me a real idea of the graft and exploitation that operates against the Indian people. Some of the sailors from our ship wanted a day's shore leave and were permitted to hire native longshoremen in their place. The American sailors paid the longshoremen each a dollar a day. This is enormous pay in India. Longshoremen usually get around 12 annas—25 cents—for a twelve to 16 hour day. We later found out that the British port officials had grafted two-thirds of the money paid the longshoremen away from them. We were plenty burned up, but what could we do in a British port dealing with British officials whose whole system is one big graft from the 'dirty beggars,' which is what British officials term the natives on whose backs they live.

LIFE IN CALCUTTA

The main portion of the interview dealt with the young sailor's two weeks in Calcutta, largest city in India. "Calcutta was the worst city of all. As we tied up in the mouth of the Ganges River, the first thing we saw were human bodies and dead cows floating down the river. All waste—including dead human beings—is thrown into this river, it seems. The corpse of a cow caught in our anchor chain, and we had a little trouble in freeing the chain. Then there were the vultures. They fly all over the city, circling above dead bodies. All the signs of death, the very smell of death hangs over this city. It is impossible to escape the terrible foul odor. "The docks were swarming with beggars. I thought I had seen the worst in Bombay, but the human misery which crawled and dragged itself over the Calcutta docks was beyond description. "And then I noticed that it wasn't merely the beggars who were begging. The longshoremen who came aboard the boat also were furtively begging the American seamen for a cigarette or a spare anna. The longshoremen, mind you, are among the BETTER PAID workers of India! "It wasn't lack of self-respect that drove these workers to beg even while they were working. I soon found that out. They had to work as long as 16 hours a day at inhuman physical labor for a few annas. Among these longshoremen I met educated men, white collar workers, college students. Their food was enough to make you heave up. All it was—or looked like—was a mixture of wormy rice and dirt. "A crust of bread, I found out,

was a luxury. These longshoremen used to hang around our mess-room eager for the scraps from our tables. A piece of the most rotten food dropped on the floor of a Calcutta street is snatched up in a second. The vultures haven't a chance against human hunger.

"When we got shore leave, we began to get a real picture of Calcutta. As you head toward the main center of town, the conditions get worse and worse. In the center of town we saw the most revolting sights. That is where they burn the dead bodies right out in public view. The burning ghats are all along the river bank. The air reeks with the smell of burning flesh.

"But then, this is the only measure of sanitation permitted the Indian people. At least cremation provides a sanitary means of disposing of the dead. And the death rate is enormous.

THE BLESSINGS OF BRITISH CIVILIZATION

"British civilization—in Calcutta, a city of almost two million people—doesn't even provide inspection of city water. Only in the few places where the British and the few native rich live is there purified water. Typhoid plagues are so common, the natives think nothing of it. Hundreds of thousands are wiped out each year in epidemics.

"There are beggars on every block, some obviously dying where they sit or lie. Mothers with infants appeal to you everywhere. I saw infants lying on the ground patting their swollen stomachs. And disease, sores, rotting flesh everywhere. Little naked children of one and two will toddle up to you and pat their stomachs and say the only words of English they have learned, 'Me dirty beggar.' Dirty beggar! They don't know what it means. But it's the only English they have learned from the British.

"Everywhere we went, we were swamped by hordes of beggars, mostly women and children. They stopped our taxis and even the trolleys on which we rode. Once a group of us seamen riding in a cab were stopped for a matter of 10 minutes by about 50 to 60 hungry women and children. The 'Bobbies' broke it up finally—and they weren't gentle about it."

BRITISH POLICE ABUSE THE NATIVES

What was the outward attitude of the British officials and police to the natives? Was there much open, general physical cruelty?

"I just scratched the surface. But what I saw on the streets of Calcutta with my own eyes was sufficient to make me understand why the Indian people don't jump every time the British yell, 'Hitler!' I saw the way the police—mainly British—customarily treat the natives.

"I remember one incident particularly. A group of us sailors were walking along a main street through the market place. A miserable old beggar came up and

begged for an anna. A British officer approached and without warning slammed the old fellow across the knee-caps with a heavy club. From the crack, I am sure the knee-caps were fractured. The old beggar staggered away. At a little distance, he stopped and muttered something in Hindustani at the cop. For me, the expression of hatred on that old beggar's face was the symbol of all the faces in India.

"I noticed that the native passers-by were looking on. Their faces bore the same look as the beggar's.

"That is the way the British police treat the natives everywhere. Aristocrats in big cars drive through the swarming streets, never slackening pace. If some poor soul is knocked down and injured, that's his tough luck. And besides, he knows better than to complain to the police. The British rob the natives right and left. In a shop, a British official will name his price for an article. The shop-keeper will give it to him even if he loses money on the sale. He does not dare to argue. One of our boys got run in for being drunk, and later told us about what he saw at the police court. The arrested natives were openly kicked about and clubbed in the court room."

UNIVERSAL POVERTY AND FILTH

What else about living conditions?

"Well, as an example, the closer you get to the town center, the more people you see lying in the gutters. Tens of thousands of men, women and children have no homes but the streets. There are no sidewalks in many sections, just mud and filth, including animal and human dung. At times the streets are so packed with sleeping humans that a car cannot pass without running over them.

"Without an adequate water supply, no cleaning materials, the British being too cheap to provide even a semblance of municipal sanitation, the dirt and dust almost blinds and chokes you on certain streets. In the market places the food is handled with hands covered with filth. Food will pass through 20 different hands before it is finally bought. Cleanliness is secondary when poverty is so acute that the masses will shop around in a dozen places to get the best bargain for an anna."

MEETS LONGSHOREMEN

On one occasion, during his stay in Calcutta, he had the opportunity to speak to a group of 12 to 15 longshoremen on board the ship. This was while there was an absence of officers about. He discovered a couple of the workers who could understand English, and translated for the rest.

"After I had won their confidence, I asked them what they thought about unions. 'Very good,' I was told. They wanted to know about American unions, because their wages were so miserable compared to that of the lowest paid American seamen. When I described something of the American labor movement, they crowded around with eager attention. One of those who spoke English expressed the keen desire of the

(Continued on Page 5)

Know what's going on . . . Understand what's going on . . .

Don't miss an issue—SUBSCRIBE!

Read THE MILITANT every week

Six months - \$1.00

One year - \$2.00

(Combination offer: 1 year of THE MILITANT and 1 year of the monthly magazine, FOURTH INTERNATIONAL—\$3.00)

CLIP AND MAIL THIS COUPON NOW

The Militant
116 University Place
New York City

I enclose—Please send my subscription to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

JUST OFF THE PRESS

**TODAY'S FIGHT
Against The Bosses**

New 8 page pamphlet giving in concise terms the immediate program of the Socialist Workers Party for defense of workers' rights in the present crisis . . .

ONLY 1c PER COPY

PIONEER PUBLISHERS
116 University Place New York City

The Negro Struggle

By ALBERT PARKER

Hillman Writes A Letter

After many months of receiving complaints from Negro and labor organizations about the Jim Crow bars that keep Negroes from getting jobs in the vital industries, Sidney Hillman, labor front for the Office of Production Management, finally has written a letter. In this letter, sent to all manufacturers receiving contracts from the government, Hillman follows his usual practice of subordinating every other consideration to that of "national defense."

He is not interested in Jim Crowism in plants financed and in many cases built by the government because of the effect it has on the Negro people, who are largely confined to menial jobs as a result, but because of the effect it will have on the war plans of the capitalist government he is serving.

First he points out that current reports "indicate skilled labor shortage in a number of fields vital to defense production." This situation has been aggravated because "in many localities, qualified and available Negro workers are either being restricted to unskilled jobs, or barred from defense employment entirely." Then he goes on with his complaint:

"Such practices are extremely wasteful of our human resources and prevent a total effort for national defense. They result in unnecessary migration of labor, in high rates of labor turnover, and they increase our present and future housing needs and social problems for defense workers."

Then follows his suggestions for correcting this situation: "All holders of defense contracts are urged to examine their employment and training policies at once to determine whether or not these policies make ample provision for the full utilization of Negro workers. Every available source of labor capable of producing defense materials must be tapped in the present emergency."

What the Letter Means

Two things stand out in this letter. First, Hillman is interested in Negroes being employed only because he doesn't want the war plans of the government disrupted. Second, his letter is not going to change the present situation at all.

It should be noted that the letter does not emphasize the need for hiring Negroes where there is no shortage of labor. This can be interpreted to mean, that employers should take them where they can't get anyone else. The employers do just that anyhow. The most rabid Negro-hating employer will hire Negroes when he can't get anyone else, because his main interest is in making profit; and to make it, he needs workers, regardless of their race or color.

Hillman wants the employers to determine whether their policies make ample provision for the full utilization of Negro workers. Very well, an employer will say, I will examine my policies and see whether they make provision for, etc.

Even assuming that Hillman really wants Negroes to get jobs, and that his letter is not just a face-saving device, what does it amount to? Little more than nothing. Because the letter does not provide a single hint of a measure to do something about those plants that refuse to "examine" their policies, and worse yet, refuse to hire Negro labor as long as they can get other workers.

An employer can toss the letter into the wastebasket, as probably most of them have done, and Hillman does not propose to do anything about it.

And so, because of the weakness of the letter and its lack of threat to take action against the employers who disregard it, we can confidently predict that nothing will come of it, any more than came of the no-discrimination statement issued several months ago by Knudsen, Hillman's partner. Not a Negro will get a job as the result of it.

The OPM Could Take Action

As the Chicago Defender put it, "His letter has all the earmarks of a theatrical stunt intended only for the gallery."

It is intended to draw away from the OPM criticism about its failure to do anything about the situation, while it continues to do nothing.

This does not mean that the OPM is powerless in the situation and is only trying to cover up its helplessness. Far from it.

Along with the President, the OPM has the power to veto any proposal of the War or Navy Department for expanding or building facilities for expediting production. Appropriation acts carrying funds for new facilities, according to Undersecretary of War Patterson, give them that authority.

This means that the OPM, by simply using its veto power, could at the very least refuse contracts to Jim Crow companies asking for funds to add to their building and equipment.

The fact that they don't use this power, but resort instead to weak and meaningless letters, is only additional proof that they don't want to do anything about the industrial Jim Crow bars against Negroes.

Negroes have to recognize this and to realize that they can expect no help from this direction until they are organized and strong enough to force it from them.

Help Publish Our Pamphlets

The two pamphlets we have prepared on the struggle of the Negroes to get equal rights in the army and jobs in the war industries are still awaiting publication. The only hitch is the money necessary. We urge readers who would like to see their publication to send a contribution, no matter how large or how small to us, c/o Albert Parker, 116 University Pl., New York, N. Y.

The Nationalist Revolt In Syria Cannot Be Smeared With The Nazi Brush

Majority of People In Fight Against Starvation Rule of the French Army

By RUTH JEFFREY

For the past month Nationalist uprisings have turned Syria into a powder-keg of the Near East, and the N. Y. Times admitted on March 11, 1941 that "only a miracle has prevented a revolution from taking place." Yet the past two or three weeks have found the capitalist press minimizing the continued trouble in Syria—dismissing it as Nazi-inspired propaganda activity.

What is really going on in Syria? The MILITANT sent a reporter to obtain information from well-informed Syrian sources in New York City.

NATIONALISM STRONG

The interviewed Syrians were quick to destroy any illusion regarding German strength in their native country. "The powerful Nationalist movement in Syria—Al-Katlat-al-Watanyah—is itself responsible for the nation-wide uprisings," they stated categorically. "Ninety percent of the Syrian people are actively involved in the movement for national independence, and have never accepted peacefully their country's role as a mandate of France."

A land with few resources, Syria's strategic importance as outlet of the oil pipelines between Palestine and Iraq, and as a corridor to Turkey, has kept her an unwilling slave of world imperialism. Following World War I, this small Mediterranean nation was a bone tossed to France, while England gathered in all the surrounding Arab world of the Near East. The subsequent history of Syria as a mandate of bankrupt French imperialism has been for its 3,000,000 Arab population an unrelieved tale of nation-wide starvation and nation-wide revolt.

"For two years," the Syrians

explained, "between 1925 and 1927, Syria, under the leadership of such men as Shukri Gowanli, carried on a bitter armed revolution against the French, which ceased only with a peace treaty signed by the government of France, providing for complete Syrian independence by 1937. This promise of independence, blandly broken by France has embittered a hundred-fold all but the Maronite ten percent who inhabit Lebanon, and who constitute there a Catholic majority loyal to the French."

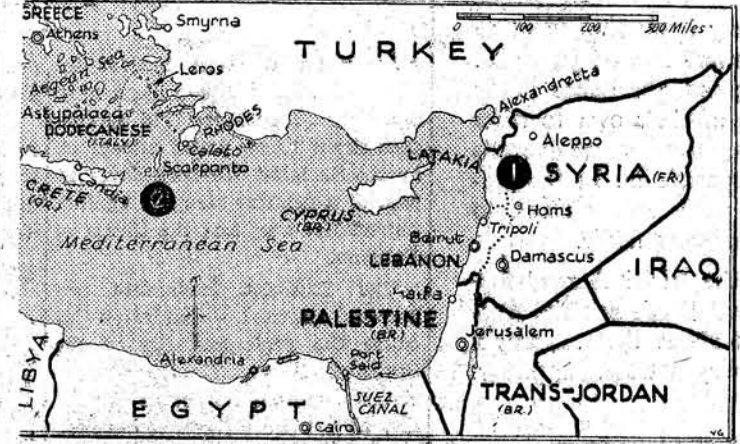
FRANCE STARVED SYRIA

Recent wide-spread revolts of a poverty-stricken population whose gold has been drained by desperate France were featured on front pages throughout the world on March 27th. (See accompanying map.) France's answer to Syria, which rejected the worthless paper money France issued to her, was to send the smouldering mandate a new High Commissioner. His first acts in office were to drain the country of its bread supply for shipment to France, and the starving population has continued to revolt.

Would the country prefer the rule of Germany, as recent news reports seem to indicate? "Emphatically 'No!'" our informants replied. "First and foremost Syria demands her independence. But if 90% of our people are opposed to French rule, 100% would be opposed to Nazi rule. The Arab peoples are sick of oppression and will not forget that Adolf Hitler, butcher of the Jews lists the Arabs even below the Jews in his sacred book, 'Mein Kampf'."

Do enlightened Syrians believe that it will be possible under present world conditions for Syria to obtain her independence? "For myself, I have few illusions," our

Where Revolt Flares



(1) Where French troops clashed with native demonstrators on March 27th, in widespread Nationalist uprisings in the principle Syrian cities of Aleppo, Homs, Damascus and Beirut.

A SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

The reporter from The MILITANT explained this paper's point of view: that revolutionary Marxists believe only socialism can bring the Arab peoples the answer to their problem of independence. I questioned them regarding the existence of a socialist movement in Syria.

"Yes, indeed," one answered, "There is a socialist movement. Directed by the exiled Sahadi, militant youth leader now in Brazil, 20,000 or 30,000 Syrian youth today belong to the Socialist Youth Organization, Al-Kawmi."

The entire English-controlled Arab world of the Near East is alive with intensely popular Nationalist movements, according to the Syrians interviewed.

Syria, which has literally nothing to lose but her chains is the focal point—and the present continued uprisings could have been predicted beforehand. To Marxists the existence of a Socialist Youth organization there is a sign

French rule over their country.

"TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP" The French government engineered a "treaty of friendship" between a few native tools and itself on November 20, 1933. But the Nationalists, who represented the overwhelming portion of the native population, refused to accept this worthless piece of paper. As an answer to the Nationalist demands for complete independence, the French High Commissioner dictatorially suspended the Syrian Parliament in November, 1934. He attempted to govern by absolute decree through a puppet Premier, Sheikh Taj.

Six weeks of violent riots and protracted strikes ensued in early 1936, and Sheikh Taj was forced to resign.

ALL RIGHTS SUSPENDED

In an effort to appease the popular discontent, the French permitted an election in December, 1936, and Hashem El Atassi was elected president of the State of Syria. El Atassi and his Cabinet resigned in July, 1939, in protest against the violation of the promises of the French government, made in 1936, to grant complete national independence.

Gabriel Puaux, the French High Commissioner, then dictatorially suspended the Constitution, appointed a puppet board of directors and ruled the mandated area by complete decree.

Twenty-one years of French domination over the lives of the Syrian people have brought only direct exploitation and continuous violence against them. But the day appears not far off when the Syrian people are going to break the bonds of their enslavement along with all the colonial peoples of Asia and Africa.

This latter small territory was set up as a separate Republic of Lebanon in September, 1920, for the purpose of fostering the religious division and keeping the entire native population embroiled against each other.

The Syrian nationalists have never voluntarily accepted

French rule over their country.

"TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP" The French government engineered a "treaty of friendship" between a few native tools and itself on November 20, 1933. But the Nationalists, who represented the overwhelming portion of the native population, refused to accept this worthless piece of paper. As an answer to the Nationalist demands for complete independence, the French High Commissioner dictatorially suspended the Syrian Parliament in November, 1934. He attempted to govern by absolute decree through a puppet Premier, Sheikh Taj.

Six weeks of violent riots and protracted strikes ensued in early 1936, and Sheikh Taj was forced to resign.

ALL RIGHTS SUSPENDED

In an effort to appease the popular discontent, the French permitted an election in December, 1936, and Hashem El Atassi was elected president of the State of Syria. El Atassi and his Cabinet resigned in July, 1939, in protest against the violation of the promises of the French government, made in 1936, to grant complete national independence.

Gabriel Puaux, the French High Commissioner, then dictatorially suspended the Constitution, appointed a puppet board of directors and ruled the mandated area by complete decree.

Twenty-one years of French domination over the lives of the Syrian people have brought only direct exploitation and continuous violence against them. But the day appears not far off when the Syrian people are going to break the bonds of their enslavement along with all the colonial peoples of Asia and Africa.

This latter small territory was set up as a separate Republic of Lebanon in September, 1920, for the purpose of fostering the religious division and keeping the entire native population embroiled against each other.

The Syrian nationalists have never voluntarily accepted

Nazi War Economy --Some Fiction And Some Facts

By JACK WEBER

The war economy of fascism has hypnotized many non-Marxists with the idea that German fascism has built a new kind of social system. These people give Hitler credit for miraculous powers, including the ability to completely control wages, prices, production — and even crises! Dwight MacDonald even calls fascist war economy planning for use!

Hitler was fortunate in coming to power just as the economic cycle of world capitalism was turning upwards. His political victory over the disunited workers permitted the capitalist class to stabilize their economy and to reestablish profits at the direct expense of the wages and living standards of the workers. Hitler "fixed" wages at their lowest level attained during the crisis, and then attempted (without complete success) to keep them there.

He then turned immediately to the rearmament of Germany and to preparations for war. This not only "solved" the unemployment problem by absorbing seven million unemployed, but soon created a shortage of labor. The tremendous speed of rearmament was rendered possible by the complete domination of monopoly capitalism and the utter impotence of the working class.

Forgotten was all Hitler's tommyrot about women staying at home. Women young and old flocked into the factories. Today there are seven million in factories and offices, not counting those giving forced labor on the farms. A million workers were taken from the farms between 1932 and 1937. This actually resulted in a decline in agricultural output in the latter year. Even handicraftsmen were forced into the factories. As the fascist press felicitously put it: "The handicraftsman must be forcibly led to his happiness."

"Controlling" Wages And Prices

The wage schemes of monopoly capitalism soon struck a snag in the war economy. Such an economy (in the United States, England, or Germany) demands reduced investments in new capital, the depletion of existing capital in order to supply the vast funds needed by the government from savings and capitalist surplus, and also reduced personal consumption. Carried too far, personal consumption comes into conflict with war's demand for increased production. However, when labor productivity declined under the terrible strain in Germany, the bosses were forced to raise wages, especially in the speeded-up war industries. Then the competition for labor, especially skilled labor, nullified all the laws and agreements. Wages had to be bid up, to secure labor—and to prevent slowdowns.

Nazi price control is no different from that of England or of the United States, except that here it is starting later. The boards set up for "planning" and for price control are the same as here. Here Stettinius, Knudsen and Henderson sit with the generals. There Krupp, Schroeder and their conferees not only sit with the generals but have themselves been given the glittering uniforms of generals and named "leaders" of their own monopolist enterprises. Prices are set in the usual manner in which monopoly capitalism sets prices. It would require more than this column to quote the complaints and exposures in the Nazi press itself regarding the methods of price evasion, rendered easy by the private control of production and distribution.

Fascist "Planning" Equals Anarchy

How about "planning"? Marx long ago pointed out the distinction between the ordered planning inside the factory under capitalism—and the resulting anarchy of production in society. Planning for use means planning for the whole of society so as to meet all the needs of people and raise their living standards. In fascist Germany production by monopoly capitalism for war breeds admittedly increasing misery of the masses. German economy is being wrenched for the purposes of war. The same thing is occurring in England, and will occur here.

In 1935 the share of capital goods to consumers goods in Germany was 55% as against 45%. In 1938 it was 62% as against 38%. In the ten years between 1928 and 1938 total income went up 26%. But the production of consumers goods dropped one-third! The awful fear of inflation inherent in these figures, the vision of another 1923, drove Secretary of State Brinkmann out of his mind six weeks after taking the place of Schacht.

Hitler's 'New Order' Lives By Looting

Hitler has gambled on being able to solve this anarchy of German capitalist economy by robbing the peoples of Europe. Are farm laborers needed in Germany? Then send millions of conquered peoples and soldiers there as slaves. Does Germany need to replace its badly worn machinery? Then dismantle the factories of the rest of Europe and send the machines to Germany. Are consumer goods needed by the German masses? Then take them away from the inferior races and let them starve! This is the "planning" of fascist capitalism that requires the looting of all Europe to attempt to make good its own anarchy.

So long as the state continues to give orders to German factories, so long as war industry expands, the capitalists need not worry about markets for their goods. But the distorting of German economy in the process, and the mounting of the state debt means not only bankruptcy but a tremendous economic explosion in the future.

British 'Democracy' In India

Further Details of the Exclusive Story of War Conditions Among the Workers in British-Ruled India

(Continued from Page 4)

India workers to attain to some of the conditions of the American sailors. They look up to the American workers with much respect.

"They then told me something of the workers organizations in India. Organization among certain groups of workers, including the longshoremen, is illegal. Nevertheless, the workers maintain an illegal organization. The longshoremen have a tradition of militancy in struggle, and are particularly suppressed by the British authorities, lest their struggles give an impulse to other workers.

"Among the jute and textile workers, there are legal unions, or rather semi-legal unions. Strikes are always breaking out. In Calcutta, as in Bombay, I was able to note in the British papers a hint of the continuous struggles taking place, despite the fact, as the longshoremen informed me, that strikes were very difficult to conduct at this time. All strikes are immediately physically suppressed. The strikers are shot down without mercy. Thousands are thrown into jail, from which they are lucky ever to come out alive. The British authorities impose 10 to 20 years at hard labor just for striking.

"A few lines at the bottom of a Calcutta newspaper will tell that so many and so many were killed in a strike yesterday. One day I read in such a brief and casual item of over 100 workers being killed. But the papers never mentioned anything about unions or give details.

"When I told the longshoremen that the time would come when the American workers would be able to help them in their struggles, they became very excited and enthusiastic. They stated that they were very anxious to get the aid of the American sailors and hoped that we would bring back to the American workers word of their conditions and struggles.

"They were all bitterly opposed to the war and to aiding the Brit-

ish government's war efforts. I found this same sentiment everywhere I went, incidentally. All the enthusiasm for the war was in the controlled press. But nowhere else. The papers were carrying big ads for recruits to the army, but I heard that the results were very meager. Among all types of native peoples whom I met, from many different stations of life, I got the same response on my questions about the war. They didn't want any part of it. I wouldn't want to be a British official in India when the natives start demonstrating in earnest their 'loyalty' to the government.

OPPOSED TO WAR

"From these same longshoremen I heard some significant political remarks. They seemed to feel that there was a tremendous leftward tendency taking place in India. They stated flatly that only force would drive the British out. I asked about Gandhi. They declared that he was losing much support among his followers. They said he was getting rich in the pay of the British. I cannot tell how widespread this idea is, but other workers I spoke to had the same viewpoint.

"In reference to Gandhi and the native capitalists he represents, who have aided the British in maintaining their rule, one of the longshoremen said, 'You American workers have only one club to dodge. We have two. By that he meant the native and foreign exploiters combined.'

TALKS WITH ARMY OFFICER

The young sailor then related a conversation that he had accidentally struck up with a native dock official. The official was a Mohammedan and a lieutenant in the army. He was well-dressed, but was paid only one-third as much as ordinary American seamen, although he held the highest army post open to natives of India.

"I soon discovered that he was an ardent nationalist and hated the British. When I told him of my own international outlook and my sympathies with the Indian

independence movement, he expressed deep appreciation.

"Then he told me his ideas, which amazed me, coming as they did from an army officer in the pay of the British. 'There is no reason for this appalling misery,' he told me. 'We have all the natural resources to become a great industrial country. But India can only develop after she has won her independence. In the last few years in particular, there has been little industrial development. The British have strangled it. The British say that if they left the country the Mohammedans and Hindus would turn the country into a shambles in a religious war. This is an outright lie. The British themselves are deliberately stirring up conflict between the two native groups. But we should unite. That is our only solution. Why—when we are all one in this filth and misery—should we not unite against those who strangle us both?'

"I don't imagine the British regard the native soldier-recruits with too much trust. I've told you about this high-ranking native officer. I occasionally witnessed native soldiers marching by. They were invariably led by British officers on horse-back. I managed a brief conversation with a couple of native soldiers on guard near the docks. I found out they were very dissatisfied with their pay — \$4 or \$5 a month."

FEELINGS OF BRITISH SEAMEN

He recalled an interesting meeting with some British seamen off a captured French freighter. "They had been having a pretty tough time of it. They asked us for hand-outs and spare cigarettes. I saw them pick up our discarded cigarette butts. They have been receiving as little as \$20 a month pay. Although many of them are married, they get scarcely any news from home, and some of them have been away from their homes for three and four years. They have to send every penny of their pittance home, and have nothing for themselves. 'These British seamen told us

that there have been strikes on a number of British boats. In at least one instance, the government sent out a battleship which took over an entire ship. The leaders or 'trouble-makers' were shot. Other seamen were given 10 year prison sentences at hard labor.

"They were eager to trade ideas with us. They wanted to know all about the war bonuses which the American union seamen are getting for travelling in the war zone. They were astounded to learn that we were getting three times as much regular pay as they. They wanted to see Hitler defeated, but they expressed quite bitter hatred for their own capitalists. They mentioned the huge profits the British corporations were making out of the war sacrifices of the common people. They were particularly angry about the taxes, and spoke of the 101 different taxes on food, etc..."

TROTSKYISM IN INDIA

Did he come across any evidences of an international revolutionary sentiment in India? "My impression was that there was no centralized or leading revolutionary organization at present in India. But there was a general revolutionary sentiment which would enable such an organization to grow very quickly.

"I did manage to meet several professed Trotskyists, but under circumstances which do not permit me to disclose any details. Suffice to say, there are Fourth Internationalists in India.

"I did notice, both in Bombay and Calcutta, that Trotsky's works, particularly his 'History of the Russian Revolution' were widely displayed in the book shops. I went into one Calcutta book-shop and asked the dealer if he had any other Trotsky works beside the 'History.' He showed me a couple of others. Then he said that he had heard that Trotsky's last book, on Stalin, was coming out soon, and that he had received many inquiries about it. While he was telling me this, several others in the store

Subscribe to the Fourth International

THE MILITANT

VOL. V—No. 18 Saturday, May, 3, 1941

Published Weekly by
THE MILITANT PUBLISHING ASS'N
at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.
Telephone: ALsconqu 4-8547

Editorial Board:
FELIX MORROW **ALBERT GOLDMAN**
Business Manager:
LYDIA BEIDEL

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months.
Foreign: \$2.00 per year, \$1.50 for six months. Bundle
orders: 3 cents per copy in the United States; 4 cents
per copy in all foreign countries. Single copies: 5 cents.

"Registered as second class matter February 13, 1941
at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of
March 3, 1879."

PROGRAM FOR TODAY'S FIGHT

1. No union fig-leaves for government strikebreaking. Demand that trade union officials resign from all posts in the government, including the OPM and the National Mediation Board.
2. Organize the picket lines for all-out militant defense against the thuggery of company hoodlums and government cops.
3. Organize Union Defense Guards to protect the picket lines and union halls against 'law and order committees,' and all other anti-labor bands.
4. Call an immediate halt to all acts of hostility between the AFL and CIO which serve the bosses' strikebreaking.
5. Demand the unification of the AFL and CIO on the basis of preserving and extending the industrial form of organization.
6. Independent working class political action. Build an Independent Labor Party.
7. Expropriate the war industries and operate them under workers' control.
8. For a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living.

Still More Hypocrisy

Only the appropriate "incident" is being awaited before this nation will be plunged into full military participation in the war.

The Roosevelt administration is making certain that the "incident" will come and soon.

Defeat of the British in the Balkans has given the administration the favorable atmosphere it has sought in which to launch its next big step to war: naval convoys for boats carrying war supplies to America's imperialist war ally, Great Britain.

No one could misunderstand last week's statement of Frank Knox that "ways must be found" to get goods to Britain safely, or the companion statement of Cordell Hull that "such aid must reach its destination in the shortest of time and in maximum quantity."

Stripped of all diplomatic phraseology, this means naval convoys. This means a preparation for the immediate "incident" which spells war.

And yet, despite the fact that everyone is fully aware that this is the deliberate plan of the administration, Roosevelt must still play the game of subterfuge and hypocrisy, the game which he has pursued with each succeeding stage of the developments of his war program.

Roosevelt does not come out for convoys. He assiduously avoids the phrase. He merely declares that he is extending the already existing "naval patrols" into wider areas and, wherever necessary, into the seven seas.

No one can possibly be fooled by this tricky device. "Naval patrols" will become full-fledged convoys with the same easy transition whereby Roosevelt's "short-of-war" campaign pledge became "risk-of-war."

In the very manner of his devious methods, one detects the character of the war to which Roosevelt is committed. It is a war for sordid ends and material purposes. It is a war in which the true aims of the war-mongers may not be stated. It is a war of imperialism, a war in which American capitalism is pitted against Axis capitalism for the right to exploit the earth.

If Roosevelt seems to hesitate to state things by their right names, to call convoys, convoys, and not "naval patrols"; that is merely essential caution in putting over an undertaking behind the backs of the people and against their will.

This nation is going to war just as quickly as Roosevelt can shove, drag or club it into doing so.

And this war will not be halted until the American masses, together with the oppressed of all nations, put an end to the system of capitalist imperialism from which this war has sprung.

Australian Dilemma

The Australian Labor Party is in a spot. It has the last thing in the world it really wants—a majority in Parliament.

For a party adhering to a program of "gradual" acquisition of power by labor through parliamentary means, this is theoretically the very height of their hopes—even though it does come through the death of a government member, wiping out a previous slim government majority.

But does the Labor Party leadership want to take the responsibility of power? Not on your life. Like its counterpart in England, the Labor Party "leaders" have no program of their own to offer the workers. They provide only a pair of overalls for the bourgeois rulers to parade in. In the present critical war situation, they are content to dance while the imperialist Neroes fiddle.

But a real way out of the crisis? A road forward for Australian workers? Don't ask the Australian Labor Party bosses about that... they'll be too busy figuring out a way not to take power.

A Pact Of 'Liberation'

We see by the *Daily Worker* of April 24th that the Chinese Communist Party hailed the Soviet-Japanese pact as a "definite contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation against the Japanese invaders."

We can only ask: If Stalin stops sending arms to the Chinese people, will the pact still be a "definite contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation against the Japanese invaders"? And if 250,000 Japanese soldiers now stationed on the border between Manchukuo and the Soviet Union are released by the treaty for military operations against the Chinese armies, will the pact still be a "definite contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation against the Japanese invaders?"

Meaningless Decision

The millions of poverty-stricken Negroes slaving away on the farms in the south and in the factories in the north will find very little cause for rejoicing at the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States which asserts that Negroes traveling on first-class railroad tickets from state to state must be furnished with pullman accommodations.

The decision does not do away with the Jim-Crowism on railroads. The railroads still have the right to separate white from black. It simply provides that if a Negro purchases a pullman ticket, he must be given pullman accommodations.

For Arthur W. Mitchell, Negro Democratic Congressman from Chicago, and the handful of Negroes who can afford to ride pullman, the decision can be considered somewhat of a victory, even though they still must ride apart from the "superior" whites.

But for the Negro masses, the "victory" is absolutely meaningless. The majority of the Negro masses haven't the fare to ride in coaches, let alone in pullmans. For them there will be no real victory until their standard of living will enable them to ride in pullmans and until all forms of discriminations will be destroyed. And this can be achieved not by a Supreme Court decision, but by the united efforts of Negro and white workers.

Oil On War Flames

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. is pouring a little Standard Oil on the flames of war. In a letter to the *N. Y. Times* the billionaire urged Roosevelt to convoy arms and war materials (oil included, no doubt) to Britain's door.

"We of the Americas should stand by the British Empire to the limit and at any cost." America's foremost "philanthropist" can easily afford to give away a few more million lives and billions of dollars—belonging to others!

Rockefeller also demanded that all labor disputes and stoppages be barred for the duration of the war and that the government proceed to get rid of "Red" and "fifth-column" instigators of the recent strikes. The businessmen and Congressmen who have been howling the same are only echoes of "their master's voice."

Well, Roosevelt has conceived intervention in the war, J. P. Morgan and Thomas Lamont have blessed it, and now Rockefeller has baptized it. It seems to be all over but the shooting, boys!

Byrnes Appointment

The *New York Times*, April 30, reported that Roosevelt, in a White House interview, indicated that he is preparing to appoint Jim-Crow Senator, James F. Byrnes, poll-tax Democrat from South Carolina, to the Supreme Court vacancy.

The *Times* indirectly quotes the President as saying that when he finally names his choice "he hoped the people of South Carolina would not be disappointed."

A large proportion of the people of South Carolina are going to be more than "disappointed." They will be downright enraged. They are the Negro workers and share-croppers against whom Byrnes has a two-decade record of vicious Negro-baiting and anti-Negro legislative actions.

How To Train Workers To Fight Fascism?

'Daily Worker' Attacks Our Military Policy But Offers

No Alternative Program; Stalinist Pacifism Disarms Workers

American workers in ever-increasing numbers are beginning seriously to consider and to discuss the military policy advocated by the Socialist Workers Party as part of a genuine struggle against imperialist war, and the threat of Fascism.

The Stalinist leadership has become alarmed — alarmed because the rank and file of the Stalinist Party, sincere revolutionists, cannot but come eventually to see the difference between the revolutionary political line of our party and the semi-pacifist, semi-isolationist attitude of the Stalinist party.

The Stalinist press finds it once again necessary by its usual methods to "expose" and discredit the Trotskyists, and, above all, to center the attack on our military policy.

STALINIST FRAME-UP

This time the editors of the *Daily Worker* have ripped out of its context part of a sentence from our May Day Manifesto. Upon this basis they try to erect an entire political frame-up in an editorial entitled, "Trotskyist Poison Against the Peace Fight" (*Daily Worker*, April 28).

There was once a man who undertook to demonstrate that the Bible is the most corrupt, sacrilegious book ever written. He made but one condition: that he be allowed to delete one little word,—"NOT"—from the Ten Commandments. The conditions for Stalinist "demonstrations" are far cruder.

WHAT WE SAID

After presenting our military policy, our May Day Manifesto states:

"Yes, we want the workers to become expert in all the military arts. We don't want the bourgeois officer caste to have life-and-death control over the men, any more than we want the boss to have that right in the factories. If the workers must fight, then they shall fight under the leadership of men whom they can trust — their own fellow workers, chosen by them as their officers."

AN OLD TRICK

Out of this paragraph, the *Daily Worker* has extracted the phrase: "If the workers must fight, then they shall fight under the leadership of men whom they can trust." And this phrase they pretend proves one and for all that the Trotskyists are supporters of the imperialist war; that the Trotskyists disseminate the lie that this war is a war of democracy against Fascism (i. e. the policy which the Stalinists themselves advanced during the days of the Peoples' Front); that the Trotskyists are the allies of London-Wall Street and the British Labor Party, and the Lovestonites and Norman-Thomasites, etc. etc., (Hitler and the Mikado are not included in the list, because they are, after all, the allies of Stalin); and last but not least, that the Trotskyists are a "gang of spies and wreckers."

To believe the *Daily Worker*, our military policy is only a "clumsy variation" of the policy of the British Labor Party, and besides — and this is the oldest slander of all! — it is a preparation for leading an imperialist assault on the Soviet Union. Our Manifesto itself is dismissed as a "hash of cunning verbiage, in which there is not a single word of criticism of the war plans of the United States Imperialism."

Our military policy is presented as follows in the May Day Manifesto:

"Military training of workers, financed by the government, under the control of the trade unions!"

"The establishment of special officers' training camps, financed by the government and controlled by the trade unions to train workers to become officers!"

"Full equality for Negroes in the

armed forces — down with Jim Crowism!"

This is what the Stalinists are really opposing. This is what they attack without daring to quote directly in their editorial. Why?

LIFE AND DEATH

The question of military training is a life-and-death question for the workers, not only in America but in the whole world. So far as military training itself is concerned, the workers have no choice. They are not free to choose whether or not to accept military training, no more than any worker is free to choose whether or not to work for his livelihood. Workers must go into the Army just as they must seek jobs in factories, — so long as capitalism continues to exist. The very same forces in society that turn men into slaves in factories in peace-time, — this same capitalism transforms workers into slaves of the military machine in war-time.

This is denied only by those who do not understand that war is today an integral part of life under capitalism.

IN WAR AS IN PEACE

The class conflicts which are tearing our society apart manifest themselves in time of war just as they do in peace-time, with this difference, that the military aspect penetrates every sphere of social activity. Modern wars are totalitarian, independently of whether they are led by Hitler or Churchill or Roosevelt; because modern wars are waged not by isolated armies but by entire nations. Even women and children become cogs in the war machine.

All the vital questions, all the problems of the working class, as of all classes in society, are posed in war-time in naked military form. That is why Lenin wrote during the first imperialist war, on November 1, 1914, that "to refuse military service, to strike against war, etc. is simply stupid; it is a wretched and cowardly dream of an unarmed struggle against the armed bourgeoisie; it is a yearning for the destruction of capitalism without a desperate civil war or a number of wars."

AID CAPITALISM

To refuse military training, to represent military training in itself as of no concern to the workers or harmful to their interests actually constitutes an unwillingness to prepare the workers for the essential tasks confronting them in this period of stark militarism, thus leaving them defenseless in the hands of the capitalist class.

Trained and led by the officer-caste of the bosses the workers have no choice except to participate in imperialist wars, for imperialist aims.

WORKERS HAVE CHOICE

But the American workers do have and can make a choice when it comes to such questions as military training by whom? military training under whose control? military training for what?

If the millions of workers organized in the CIO, the AFL and the Railway Brotherhoods demand military training under trade union control, no power on earth could deny their will. Yes, in the present conditions this demand is not only desirable but

wholly realizable. It would constitute a tremendous gain for the workers, and pave the way for a real struggle against the imperialist war, against Fascism, and for the institution of Socialism.

A BIG DIFFERENCE

Nothing could be false than the argument that after all it makes no difference whether the trade unions or the officer-caste control military training since the leadership of the trade unions is completely committed to imperialist policies, and, it is true, seeks only to harness the workers to the war machine. But the leadership of the trade unions is one thing and the millions of workers who still follow the present corrupt leadership are something else again. It is impermissible to identify the organizations of the working class with the leadership.

The conflict between the mass of organized workers and the leadership which supports the imperialist war will deepen month by month, week by week, and even day by day. It is precisely on the reality of irreconcilable class interests and class conflicts, that is, precisely on proletarian organizations that Marxists must base themselves in educating, training, and preparing the masses at every stage of the process. The leadership of the trade unions can be changed overnight — and without a military struggle — whenever the overwhelming mass of the workers are prepared and ready to take this step. But they are not yet prepared to accept revolutionary leadership either in the trade union movement or on the political arena. Meanwhile the class struggle continues, under war-time conditions. Military training under trade-union control, even under the initial leadership of social patriots, would immediately provide the workers with their own military organizations, the real means whereby they can preserve their trade unions, their press, their political liberties, against Fascist attack at home or abroad.

WHAT KIND OF PEACE?

It is not accidental that the *Daily Worker* centers its attack on precisely that plank in our program which exposes most completely the fake Stalinist "struggle" against imperialist war. The policy of the *Daily Worker* is best characterized as semi-pacifist and semi-isolationist. Their policy is Stalin's policy of peace at any price!

Their "struggle" against the imperialist war is to call for peace. Who is to institute this peace? What kind of peace can the imperialists ever arrive at? The Stalinists say, "a peoples' peace."

WHAT LENIN SAID

Here is what Lenin wrote on March 29, 1915, in the midst of the last imperialist slaughter, against those who then also called for termination of the imperialist slaughter through a "democratic peace":

"One of the forms of befuddling the working class," said Lenin, "is pacifism and the abstract advocacy of peace."

"The propaganda for peace in the midst of the imperialist war," continued Lenin, "can only sow illusions, can only corrupt the proletariat by instilling in the workers confidence in the humanitarian spirit of the bourgeoisie and can only turn the proletariat into a plaything in the hands of the secret diplomacy of the countries at war. In particular, utterly false is the idea of the so-called democratic peace without a series of revolutions."

A LENINIST PROGRAM

Every word of Lenin's denunciation of pacifist policies applies today to the policy of the Stalinist leaders, which can lead, as have all their past policies, only to disaster and defeat for the masses.

As against such a program, we propose our military policy. On our May Day Manifesto, it is stated:

"Carry out these steps, crown them with the formation of a Workers and Farmers Government—and the real war against Fascism can be waged to a successful and speedy conclusion."

Where We Stand

By Albert Goldman

It is interesting and instructive to see what connection the various groupings in this country make between the war and fascism. In their propaganda with reference to the war, how do they utilize the fact that Germany is in the hands of the Nazis?

While we deny that this war is a struggle of democracy against fascism, it is impossible to deny that Germany is in the grip of fascism. Fascism therefore enters as an important factor in the sense that various groups utilize or fail to utilize it in their attitude and propaganda in relation to the war.

Two political tendencies either ignore the existence of fascism entirely or relegate it to a place of secondary importance. They do not attempt to furnish an answer to the problem agitating the minds of the workers: How to defeat fascism in Germany and therefore prevent it from conquering this country? An analysis of the attitude of the group that has shoved Lindbergh to the front as its spokesman and the attitude of the Stalinist leadership shows that these two groups are almost alike in so far as they give no clue to the solution of the problem mentioned above.

Lindbergh And Stalinists Have No Answer On Fight Against Fascism

The Stalinist press is exceedingly anxious at present to distinguish itself from Lindbergh. In the early days of the war there was a distinct tendency on the part of the Stalinist leadership to make advances to Lindbergh, but the decisive German victories in Europe and the consequent shift of policy on the part of Stalin brought the flirtation of the Stalinists with Lindbergh to a halt. Lindbergh's fascist leanings and connections was also an important factor in the Stalinist turn away from him. They ran the risk of losing too many of their supporters by making an alliance with Lindbergh and his friends.

In the speech Lindbergh delivered in New York on April 23, he did not say a word about fascism. He confined himself to what he termed the practical question as to whether or not the United States, by helping England, can prevent a German victory. Whether he is competent to deal with this question and whether he is correct in replying to it in the negative are immaterial. The important point is that he ignored completely the question of fascism. By ignoring it he says in effect that so far as he is concerned, he has absolutely nothing against it.

Let it not be understood that Lindbergh and his group of fascist admirers are fifth-columnists in the sense that they would like to deliver this country into the clutches of Hitler. Such fifth columnists can exist only in a small country that has to subject itself to one or the other of the imperialist camps. No important figure in this country, no matter how great an admirer of Hitler he may be, would for one moment consent to having Hitler dominate the United States. The group behind Lindbergh wants American capitalism to play not only an independent but a dominant role in world affairs.

While Lindbergh stated that he would consider the defeat of the British Empire a tragedy, he did so from the point of view of one who realizes that the existence of the British Empire is an excellent thing for the continued existence of the supremacy of imperialism. There is also no doubt that his group would gladly pick up a few of the most important pieces of a defeated British Empire. From the same general point of view the group behind Lindbergh would consider a defeat of Hitler a tragedy. That might lead to some very serious consequences to the stability of the capitalist system. The ideal for Lindbergh is a negotiated peace where the three powerful capitalist ruling classes of the United States, of England and of Germany would work harmoniously to exploit the rest of the world—naturally with American capitalism getting the lion's share. This is the program and the hope of all the appeasers.

If no negotiated peace is possible then Lindbergh obviously prefers a German victory. He does not say so specifically but no other conclusion is possible. His preference is not motivated by pro-Germanism but by pro-fascism. A victory of Hitler means that the "wave of the future" comes that much closer to this country. Not in the sense that Hitler will conquer this country but because the idea of fascism will gain tremendous support.

The Stalinist Attitude Toward Fascism

If Lindbergh's silence about fascism indicates that he would like to see that system introduced into this country, the Stalinist silence with reference to the same problem indicates that they have no program for fighting fascism effectively. I do not mean to say that the Stalinist press is silent about fascism in general. I mean that the Stalinist leadership, in its attitude and propaganda with reference to the war, does not attempt to show what the workers should do in order to defeat fascism.

Incontrovertible proof of that statement exists in the program of the American Peace Mobilization, which must be considered the official program of the Stalinists. This program does not say a word about the problem of fascism and the war.

Again a warning is necessary. We do not claim that the ignoring of the problem by the Stalinist leadership indicates that it has the same attitude as Lindbergh and his group. Surely the vast majority of Communist party members and sympathizers are bitter foes of fascism. But, so far as the Stalinist leaders are concerned, they are Stalinists first and foremost, that is, they fight for Stalin and no more. Everything else is secondary.

The Stalinist leadership ignores the problem because it has no answer to it. An effective answer can be made only by those who, like ourselves, see in the taking of power by the working class the only road to destroy fascism everywhere. Only the revolutionary camp can give such an answer. The Stalinist leadership, tied as it is to Stalin's foreign policy, can give no answer to this all-important problem. That is why the Stalinist leadership, like Lindbergh's group, say nothing about it.

Now Available
In Limited Quantity

Bound Volumes

1940
**SOCIALIST
APPEAL**

\$2.50 each

Place your orders immediately

Socialist Appeal
116 University Place
New York City