

# Steel Workers Climax 50-Year Struggle, Close Down Entire Industry

Workers Of The World, Unite!

## Historic Battles With Steel Kings Inspire Pickets

By Art Preis

(Staff Reporter, The Militant)

PITTSBURGH, Jan. 23 — South along the snaky Monongahela, northwest along the broad Ohio, northeast along the Allegheny, immense tentacles of steel plants reach out from this city of smoke and steel and stretch for scores of miles beside the river banks.

For the past three days, these plants have sprawled lifeless. No smoke or flame belches forth from the squatting steel monsters, with their huge spines of stacks rising from the open hearths and furnaces.

Those whose labor fed these monsters and pumped life-blood through their iron veins have risen up in titanic revolt. Now the steelworkers of all races, creeds, colors and nationalities are on strike. 227,000 of them in this vast steel valley alone, 800,000 throughout the land, are engaged in the mightiest battle of their lives.

### New Fires Are Burning Now

When I saw the mills in their immense silence last night, only great ghosts of structures in blankets of snow-covered roofs stood dimly outlined behind iron-spiked or barbed-wire-topped surrounding walls. There was only blackness in the skies instead of fierce red glare and spurting flames.

Other and smaller fires are burning now, visible only as glowing red dots from a short distance. They are far different from the ore-eating, man-eating conflagrations that a few days ago roared and blazed inside the mills. These are friendly fires, meant to warm and comfort pickets in the long, freezing, vigil of the near-zero night.

These glowing coals in coke-fueled steel barrels, called salamanders, form a mighty chain up and down the valley and the river banks. They have become symbols of union strength and hope opposed to the tyrannical power of the steel bosses.

Hundreds and hundreds of these metal-barrel heaters burn night and day at the innumerable gates, entrances and possible entrances to the steel kingdoms. And always near and around them are the slow-circling clusters of men and women of steel, keeping their day and night-long guards in American labor's greatest strike siege.

Here at the moment there is no outward drama of clashing bodies, the sickening crack of state troopers' clubs, the metallic ring of the horses' hooves as they surge

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## POLICE TERROR HURLED AGAINST L.A. STRIKERS

By M. Patrick

(Special to The Militant)

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 19 — Police terror and brutality stalked the streets of Los Angeles, Thursday, January 17, as 100 police, armed with clubs and tear gas, routed a picket line of 1500 United Electrical-CIO strikers and sympathizers, at the United States Motors Corporation plant.

Trouble had been brewing since members of UE Local 1421 went out on strike against U. S. Motors on Friday, January 11.

On Saturday, January 12, office workers who had been ordered by the company to crash the lines or suffer loss of pay, attempted to go through, but were repulsed.

On Monday, police charged the line of 500 pickets, knocking one woman unconscious and injuring others in an attempt to get office workers through.

Tuesday, with the aid of 100 police who opened the line, office workers gained access to the plant.

### THURSDAY EVENTS

Thursday, 1500 pickets marched in solid formation, six abreast,

singing "Solidarity Forever," and defying office workers to crash their lines again.

Captain C. M. Wisdom of the Metropolitan Squad (a revival of the notorious "Red Squad" of a few years ago) was in charge of the police. A subordinate read an injunction, limiting the number of pickets to four at a gate. This was greeted with jeers and boos by the strikers.

### TEAR GAS!

Then the police moved in, swinging clubs at the heads of the pickets. Workers retaliated with fists and crash helmets, their only weapons to offset the riot clubs of the police. The police gave ground and the line was intact. Again the police tried to crash the line and failed.

As police retired to gather their forces for a third assault, (Continued on Page 7)

## GI Describes How Soldiers On Okinawa Organized Mass Protest Demonstrations

SPECIAL TO THE MILITANT

(The following eye-witness account of GI protest meetings on Okinawa describes vividly how the soldiers there, inspired by news of the first GI demonstration in Manila, organized their own action to demand "Get Us Home!")

OKINAWA, Jan. 13 — The information that came over the radio a few weeks back that GIs in Manila had staged a demonstration against the demobilization snafu had a tremendous effect here.

Every place you went, wherever there were two or more soldiers, the subject was: "Let's call a meeting"; "Let's go on strike"; "They did it there, we can do it here." A rash of mimeographed leaflets sprang up. A couple of men were busted for mimeographing pamphlets.

Then on January ninth, an impromptu meeting of about 1,000 GIs was held. A couple of members of the American Veterans Committee were there and after a while they got up and spoke for their outfit. They asked the men to come to a meeting to be held Sunday, January 13, at the Soldiers Bowl.

### OFFICERS MUTTER

The next night there was an AVC meeting that I attended. About 100 were present, including a colonel, a number of majors, captains and second lieutenants. Also a large number of G-2 men (Intelligence). The colonel kept muttering to a major sitting next to him: "They can't do anything. They can't do a damn thing." When he left he said to his aide, "Definitely communist."

A couple of the GIs got up and spoke. They said they had

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# CIO CHARGES GOVERNMENT FINANCES STRIKEBREAKING

## Ohio Strikers Demand State Jobless Aid

SPECIAL TO THE MILITANT

YOUNGSTOWN, O., Jan. 26 — The Mahoning County CIO Council set up a committee this Tuesday to launch an aggressive state-wide campaign to amend the Ohio Unemployment Compensation law to provide payments for workers and veterans out on strike.

This Committee is calling upon all other CIO bodies in Ohio to cooperate in its drive to force the governor to call a special session of the legislature immediately for favorable action on this matter.

Unemployment compensation is a burning issue here. In addition to the scores of thousands of steel workers on strike throughout Ohio, there are 10,000 CIO electrical workers on strike in this district alone.

### OFFICE JAMMED

The Bureau of Unemployment Compensation office has been jammed by workers and veterans filing claims since the companies started laying off men as they shut down plants in preparation for the strike. These workers and veterans will receive nothing unless the CIO-sponsored campaign to amend the law is successful.

In Pennsylvania, only five miles from here, strikers are entitled to compensation. But even in this neighboring state, the overwhelming majority of veterans are barred by law from receiving such benefits. A delegation of striking veterans has already marched on the State Capitol at Harrisburg to change the law.

Up to now, Governor Lausche of Ohio has given the CIO a run-around on this issue. The Mahoning County CIO Council is calling a mass meeting in Youngstown Sunday, February 3 at 3 p.m. at the Central Auditorium, 225 West Boardman, to force the capitalist politicians to make their stand clear.

### GI ORGANIZE

Well, the colonel was listening and could scarcely contain himself. He got up and walked around. He scowled and snorted. Finally he went up to the rostrum and asked for the floor. Then he made a little speech. It consisted of one thing said in several versions. "You're in the Army!" The meeting broke up and a number of people paid 30 yen (\$2.00) and made out membership slips.

Yesterday, the new General in command of Okinawa made a (Continued on Page 3)



Smash It Open!

## Ford, Chrysler Agree To Wage Increases Of 18c, 18 1-2c Hourly

### IN THE NEWS

#### The Bigger The Lie...

C. E. Wilson, president of General Motors Corporation, told the Senate Labor Committee's hearing on the "fact-finding" bill: "I'd be a Socialist, too, if I thought the American people would be happier under any other form of government."

#### The War On Labor?

President Truman's executive order for government seizure of the strike, bound meat packing plants stated that as a result of existing and threatened strikes "the war effort will be unduly impeded."

#### Too Hot To Hold

Saginaw, Mich., officials last week removed firepots used by General Motors pickets to keep warm, when the Saginaw Manufacturers Association demanded enforcement of a city ordinance prohibiting fires on public property. The CIO auto workers union threatened to make it hot for city officials, so the City Council promptly amended the ordinance. The firepots were returned and are burning as usual.

#### Makes Them See Red

"States - rights" Congressman on January 24 attacked as "communist" the federal government's \$50,000,000 free school lunch program. Said Representative Cleveland of Ohio, "The same forces are back of this as the FEPC and other similar bills. This is one of those cases where we're going to make a detour on the Communist road."

#### His Aim Realized

Right after Pearl Harbor Roosevelt secretly wrote Churchill, "I am frank to say that I feel better about the war than at any time in the past two years." (N. Y. Times, January 26, 1946.)

### SPECIAL TO THE MILITANT

DETROIT, Jan. 26 — The lengthy wage negotiations between the Ford Motor Company and Chrysler Corporation, two of the automotive industry's "Big Three," and the CIO United Auto Workers, terminated today in an agreement for an 18-cent an hour increase for the Ford workers and 18½ cents for the Chrysler workers.

General Motors Workers, whose courageous 10-week strike has been responsible for forcing these wage concessions in the auto industry, are continuing to hold their picket lines firm. They are determined to force General Motors to grant at least the 19½ cents an hour which Truman's fact-finding panel recommended, but which the multi-billion dollar corporation rejected.

Although the GM workers returned to their original demand for a 30 cent increase when GM failed to meet the union's deadline for acceptance of the government's proposal, Walter Reuther, UAW vice-president, stated after the announcement of the Ford and Chrysler settlements that the union would not settle for less than 19½ cents from GM.

So far, it was announced, only wage rates have been agreed upon in the Ford negotiations. Other contract provisions, it was reported, have not yet been worked out in detail.

If the union locals vote to approve the settlement, the increase for the Ford workers will amount to slightly over 15 per cent. Chrysler workers, whose present rates are lower than those at Ford, will receive a 16.7 per cent increase. These increases are slightly better than half of the original union demand.

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## Big Business Plot To Smash Unions

CIO President Philip Murray on January 22 charged a "sinister conspiracy" exists among the big corporations to raise prices, crush the unions and keep down wages.

The heads of the big corporations have hypocritically denied this grave charge. For instance, on January 25, a few days after Murray's declaration, C. E. Wilson, head of General Motors, swore before the Senate Labor Committee that "it would be impossible for us to get together on a mutual basis."

But Wilson lied. Even the N. Y. Herald Tribune, one of Wall Street's most conservative organs, has implied the truth of the union charges. An article in the January 23 issue, signed by Joseph and Stewart Alsop, declares:

## Murray Asks Prompt Repeal Of Tax Aid To Monopolists

CIO President Philip Murray, who also heads the striking CIO United Steelworkers of America, last week charged that the federal government is helping to finance strike-breaking and union-

## Detroit Stalinists Try To Put Ban On "Militant"

By Kay O'Brien

(Special to The Militant)

DETROIT, Jan. 25 — Alarm over the growing success and influence of The Militant and over their own loss of prestige among the workers, the Stalinists here are attempting to whip up a lynch spirit against the Socialist Workers Party members and supporters.

Unable to answer the factual reports and powerful working class political ideas in The Militant, these unprincipled agents of the Stalin bureaucracy are resorting to their usual filthy lies and slanders.

### STALINIST FALSEHOOD

At a recent meeting of the Executive Board of Detroit Transmission Local 735, UAW-CIO, which is on strike against General Motors, the Stalinists jammed through a motion to bar the distribution of The Militant on the picket lines. They then rushed into print with an account of this shameful action in the Daily Worker, January 23, adding the falsehood that two other GM Locals in Flint had taken similar action.

Thus, the Stalinists are trying to replace labor's hard-won (Continued on Page 6)

## CIO Meat Packers Return After Resisting Seizure

By Robert L. Birchman

(Special To The Militant)

CHICAGO, Jan. 26 — After denouncing Truman's government seizure of the struck meat-packing plants as a "strikebreaking action" and refusing for 24 hours to call off the strike of 200,000 CIO United Packinghouse Workers members, UPWA-CIO conference delegates here today voted to end the picketing at 5 p.m. this evening and return to work Monday.

Their decision to return to work after eleven days of the greatest strike the industry has ever known, came only after 300 delegates, representing 287 local unions, received a belated assurance in a telegram from Secretary of Agriculture Anderson that the government would raise packinghouse wages in line with a "fact-finding" board's awaited report.

In his original order for seizure of the plants, Truman included no directive for granting any wage gains to the terribly exploited packinghouse workers. They were supposed to return at the former wages and conditions of work against which they had struck.

### NOT CALLED OFF

The statement of the union on its agreement to return to work pending the report of the fact-finding panel declares that the workers are "not calling off their strike." Thus, the union is instituting what amounts to a truce "for a sufficient period to enable the government to com-

busting through tax rebates and similar measures to insure Big Business against any profit losses.

In a strongly-worded letter to Secretary of the Treasury Vinson on January 22, Murray demanded the amendment or repeal of tax measures slipped through Congress during the war which guarantee up to twenty billion dollars in post-war refunds to the labor-hating industrialists. This "war chest" which the government is providing the corporations for their fight against labor is eleven billions more than the total net corporate profits in 1929.

### PUBLIC MULCTED

The steel union's president declared that public funds are "being mulcted for the benefit of a privileged few... drunk with the fantastic financial resources accumulated during the war." He emphasized that this slush-fund is bolstering the union-busting campaign of the billionaires who are "bent in sinister conspiracy to plunge the country into economic chaos."

Thus, while 800,000 steel strikers on the cold picket lines have to tighten their belts, the steel barons are sitting back in comfort, knowing they can tap the public treasury for \$149,000,000 in 1946, even if they throw away the keys to their plants for the whole year. The "carry back" tax provisions guarantee them 30 per cent more than their prewar profit levels. This is one reason why the steel corporations are (Continued on Page 7)

ply with its commitments" to the workers.

Further, the UPWA states, "we of course reserve the right in the final analysis to be the judge of whether the increase made effective pursuant to the Secretary of Agriculture's telegram will be a substantial increase meeting the family needs of the workers of this industry, taking into account the low level of packinghouse workers' wages."

### CHARACTERIZE MOVE

At the same time, the union did not withdraw its characterization of Truman's action as a strikebreaking move. It is clear that the union's previous resistance to the seizure forced the administration to hastily indicate that wage increase, the amount not yet specified, would be forthcoming shortly.

Immediately following the unanimous vote yesterday of the UPWA delegates not to call off the strike in the face of government seizure, the union's president, Lewis Clark, charged that Truman "has engaged in a strikebreaking action the sole effect of which can be to play into the hands of the packers." He claimed that the union had received prior assurances (Continued on Page 3)

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