

## Madras Textile Strike Still Going Strong

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Workers Of The World, Unite!

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# BATTLE BEGINS AGAINST SLAVE LAW

## Labor Must Build Own Party To Combat Taft-Hartley Act

### STATEMENT OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

Few laws have ever been passed in America more hated and unpopular than the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Act.

It was bitterly opposed by the 15,000,000 organized workers who, with their families and allies, constitute the overwhelming majority of the country's population. It evoked the greatest flood of protest letters and telegrams in the history of Congress. The most widely assorted groups, including the generally conservative spokesmen of religious bodies, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish, denounced it as inimical to the welfare of America. Virtually all Negro organizations opposed it. A number of veterans' groups went on record against it. Its passage was protested even by sections of the business world. This opposition was the real will of the people, which Congress contemptuously flouted.

The Slave Labor Law is in the tradition of the edicts enacted against labor's economic and political organizations by the fascist regimes in Italy and Germany. It sets the clock back 100 years in the legal status of American organized labor. At one blow it wipes out legal rights won in a century of bitter struggle.

In its restrictions on the right of free speech and free press and the right of union members to engage in political activities, the Taft-Hartley Act violates the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution in a way not equaled since the notorious and short-lived "Alien and Sedition Act" of 1798. It bans thoughts about communism dangerous to Wall Street's rule, in the same way that the Japanese military dictatorship banned "dangerous thoughts."

The full implications of this Slave Labor Law are not yet fully revealed. Its sponsors and authors themselves do not dare to enforce all its provisions at one stroke. But the poisoned barbs are there, ready for use against organized labor.

### Designed to Crush the Unions

In essence, the new law mobilizes the federal administration, the courts and the new federal labor czar in Wall Street's drive to legalize strikes and break them by injunction. It provides the bosses with innumerable devices to undermine unions, intimidate and victimize their members and leaders. It opens the way for the complete destruction of union security and a return to the wide-open shop.

Do not think that this oppressive and tyrannical law was the product of some temporary emotional frenzy in Congress, as some union leaders indicate. It was drafted and passed by the most calculating and cold-hearted class that ever existed—the Big Business tycoons who insist on ruling the country without restraint and smashing any restrictions on their exploitation of America and the entire world.

The Taft-Hartley Act is the first big pay-off on the gilt-edged promises made by the imperialist war propagandists. They promised "Four Freedoms" and assured in the Atlantic Charter "improved labor standards, economic advancement and social security." The workers were promised again and again and again that once the war was over, a new and glorious day would dawn for the common people.

But for labor V-J Day dawned with stormy skies. American Big Business launched its all-out assault on the unions and the Democratic administration spearheaded the drive. Within two years, this savage offensive culminated in passage of the Slave Labor Law.

Does this law mark the end of the anti-labor drive? Are the capitalists now satisfied? No. Having tasted blood, their appetite has only been whetted. They view passage of this act as just a beach-head in Operation Anti-Labor, as just an advance base from which they can thrust toward their ultimate objective—the outright destruction of the labor movement.

The Taft-Hartley Act is the domestic section of Wall Street's plans for world conquest as formulated in the warmongering Truman Doctrine. It is the application of this doctrine to the American people themselves. In order to oppress people all over the world, Wall Street must have a submissive working class at home.

Behind this anti-labor drive is the same logic that led in Europe to the rise of Hitler and Mussolini. It is the arrow pointing straight down the road of capitalist reaction to the abyss of fascism. Passage of this act is the gravest possible warning to labor that Wall Street will stop at nothing.

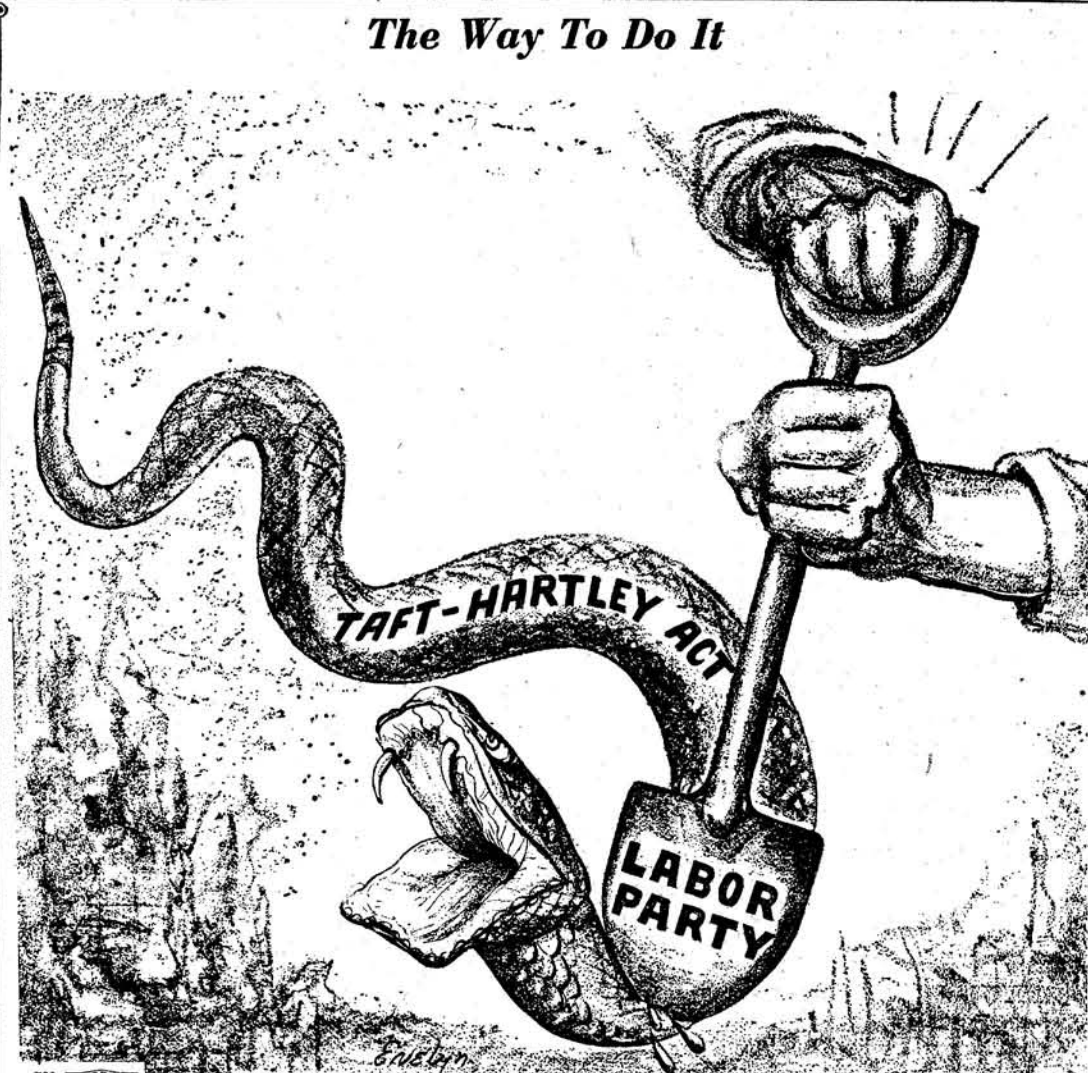
They know a great economic breakdown is looming. They have placed another world war on the agenda. That depression and that war—if Wall Street succeeds in carrying out its plan—mean catastrophe for the working people.

### The Workers Wanted to Fight

The union rank-and-file instinctively grasped the meaning of this postwar assault. They felt that the capitalists were conducting ruthless class warfare. They understood that the spirit of compromise displayed by the labor bureaucrats was regarded by the capitalists as a sign of miserable weakness. The slogan inscribed on the banner of Big Business is, "Class against class! War without quarter!"

The workers wanted to fight passage of the Slave Labor Law without compromise, with every means at their command, on every front. They tried to force the top

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## Hi-jacking Rent Measure Gets Truman's Signature

**By Art Preis**  
Although he denounced Congress' bi-partisan Rent Hi-jacking Bill as a "most unsatisfactory" measure that "irreparably weakened" federal rent control, Truman on June 30 signed this landlord-sponsored bill against the opposition of labor, tenant and liberal organizations.

Truman admitted that "for millions of families, it will result in substantial increases in rent." That section of the bill which permits "voluntary" 15% rent increases, he described as "voluntary only so far as the landlord is concerned."

Under the new law, landlords will be in a position to coerce and blackmail tenants into accepting leases providing for higher rents. By restoring eviction proceedings to the respective states, the law will permit evictions within 30 days in most states.

Rent controls, of even the fictional variety otherwise provided in the bill, are completely removed for all so-called transient dwellings, new or newly-remodeled housing units, or dwellings not previously rented. This will affect veterans, newly-weds, evicted families and others seeking homes.

One of the most threatening

sections of the law provides for the establishment of local area rent boards, nominated by the respective state governors. These are empowered to authorize the Office of Rent Control to eliminate all rent controls in their area, approve blanket rent increases or individual "hardship" rent hikes.

### RENT SHARKS ON BOARDS

Real estate and landlord groups are already pressuring the governors to nominate their spokesmen to these boards. In most instances it is expected that representatives of the rent sharks will dominate these boards.

This, in reality, continues the policy put into effect by the Truman administration. In the past year the federal agency has granted more than a million "hardship" rent boosts. Truman's own Office of Rent Control, it was revealed last week, approved 6,664 such boosts in the New York area during the past four months without even notifying tenants that landlords had made such application on the plea of "hardship."

Truman's sole justification for signing this infamous rent-

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## Miners Hurl First Challenge At New Union-Busting Law

JULY 1—"Let the Senators dig the coal!" was the embittered war-cry of 250,000 soft coal miners who angrily quit the pits last week in a spontaneous strike against the venomous Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Act.

By the week-end, all mines were down as the strike continued directly into the scheduled 10-day vacation period for 400,000 members of the AFL United Mine Workers.

On July 8, when the paid vacation ends, the miners are determined to have a new and improved contract or act on their traditional slogan: "No contract, no work!"

The UMW's contract with the government ended yesterday, with expiration of the Smith-Connally Anti-Strike Act under which Truman seized the mines in May 1946 in an attempt to break the mine strike.

All the savage blows of the government against the miners—the injunction and fine levied by a Federal District judge, the Supreme Court decision against the UMW and John L. Lewis, the Taft-Hartley Act directed most immediately against the mine workers—all these have failed to curb the miners' fighting spirits. Their latest action is an expres-

### Rent Hike, Eviction Drive On Full Blast

One day after Truman signed the Rent Decontrol Bill, the N. Y. Times reported: "Elimination of the requirement for Office of Rent Control certifications for most eviction actions threatened to bring thousands of eviction cases into the municipal courts here (New York City) from three to six months sooner than had been possible heretofore."

The July 1 N. Y. World-Telegram, reporting a survey by Scripps-Howard newspapers, ran headlines: "NATION-WIDE RENT HIKE DRIVE ON—Landlords Lose Little Time Seeking 15%—Pressure On, Survey Shows."

## Strike Spreads To 132,000 In Shipyards

### Vicious Law Stiffens Holdout of Profiteers

NEW YORK, July 1—Continuing and extending its defiance of the new Slave Labor Law, the CIO Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers today called out 90,000 more East Coast and Gulf shipyard workers, to swell the strike ranks to 131,500.

The strike began last Thursday, two days after passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, when 41,500 militant shipyard workers in ten yards, nine of them Bethlehem Steel Company subsidiaries, set up mass picket lines.

Shipyard owners, emboldened by the Taft-Hartley Act, have arrogantly refused to offer any wage concession. The union had scaled down its original wage demands to a "bottom dollar" demand for an across-the-board 13-cent hourly raise, plus several minor concessions. This demand corresponds to increases won in other industries such as steel, auto, rubber, etc.

### MEANS PAY SLASH

IUMSWA-CIO President John Green stated after the breakdown of negotiations that the employers' "best offer" was an extension of contracts that expired last week. "At the same time, certain other management requests would mean a reduction in pay for thousands of workers who are on piece work or receive incentive bonuses."

Laborers' wages under the old contract were 96 cents an hour; skilled workers, \$1.38. These rates were fixed prior to the latest big upward spurt in living costs.

When the union pointed out that workers in West Coast shipyards are receiving the higher wages demanded on the East Coast, a Bethlehem spokesman said the union was "calling attention to a mistake" made by the western shippers.

Most of the struck shipbuilding companies were named in war profiteering reports of Congressional committees as among the biggest looters of the public treasury during the war.

## Union Ranks Want Militant Struggle And Open Defiance

The union rank and file are clamoring for militant action on every front to openly defy the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Law. This was made clear during the first week after the new law's passage by the mine and ship-

### Akron Labor Urges Nation-Wide Strike

AKRON, O., June 26—The Greater Akron Area Council of Labor Unions, a joint body of the CIO, AFL and independent unions in this area, today urged the national union leaders to call a nationwide general strike in defense of labor's civil liberties "should the Taft-Hartley Law, a presidential decree, or a new strikebreaking law be invoked against the Mine and Shipyard workers."

The Area Council, representing 185,000 organized workers, also advocated a National Conference of Labor of all international and local unions bodies "for the purpose of consideration and action on the problem of defending labor's rights," to be held not later than July 31, 1947.

### OUTRIGHT DEFIANCE

Outright defiance of some of the most clearly unconstitutional provisions, particularly those affecting the right to publish political opinions in union-financed publications, has already been endorsed.

Most unions, according to both AFL and CIO leaders, are expected to refuse to submit to sections of the law requiring union officials to swear they are not "communists" in order for their unions to be recognized.

But dependence exclusively on legal actions and the courts will not suffice to protect the unions from the Slave Labor Law. It will take years before the hundreds of provisions of the Act can be tested in courts. And these courts are notoriously pro-capitalist and anti-labor.

### BANKRUPT POLICY

However, the CIO and AFL leaders rejected out of hand any suggestion of militant union action, such as the much-demanded nationwide protest strike.

AFL Teamsters President Daniel J. Tobin, always in the forefront of reactionary attacks on the union ranks, went so far as to urge the workers to abide by the Slave Labor Law "scrupulously." He slandered the hundreds of thousands of workers who have called for a nationwide strike as "enemies of labor."

The top union leaders likewise indicated they intended to

continue their bankrupt and dangerous policy of supporting capitalist politicians for office. While they threaten to work for the defeat of those who voted for the Slave Labor Law, they reassured Wall Street's Democratic and Republican hatchmen that they are opposed to breaking with the capitalist two-party political monopoly and forming a labor party.

Truman, whose last-minute vote-catching veto gesture gave the union leaders a pretext for passing him off as a "friend of labor," made it clear last week he intends to enforce the Slave Labor Law to the full.

Not a single rational pretext remains for the union leaders' continued hostility to a labor party. Yet they still try to cling to the political coat-tails of Big Business.

The workers have long since shown their desire for a party of their own. But they must break through the obstruction and hostility of the union leaders to a labor party.

The Slave Labor Law and its promulgators will be smashed decisively only on the political arena. The weapon needed is labor's own party.

## AFL PAINTERS IN New York OUST LOUIS WEINSTOCK

NEW YORK, June 28 — In a hotly contested election for Secretary-Treasurer of District Council 9 of the AFL Painters Union, Martin Rarback, candidate of the Progressive Caucus, defeated Louis Weinstock, candidate of the Rank & File Painter, by a vote of 2991 to 2796.

Weinstock, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, held office for approximately 10 years. Last year, Rarback came within 13 votes of being elected against Weinstock. This set the stage for the struggle waged this year to wrest control of the union from the Stalinist machine.

The Rarback group conducted a vigorous campaign against the sell-out record of the Weinstock administration. In the 10 years of Stalinist control the union had declined to the point where open shop conditions prevailed.

### ADMIT BETRAYAL

Approximately 75% of the trade remained unorganized. The bosses had unlimited control of hiring and firing. The speedup system reigned unchecked. Unemployment mounted as non-union bosses encroached more and more on the union's jurisdiction.

These conditions were due in large measure to the Stalinist

war-time policy of union surrender. Under the hammering of the Rarback group the Stalinists were forced to admit their war-time betrayal. In the Rank & File Painter, their caucus paper, they confessed:

"During the war years, regular organizing drives in the painting industry were sharply curtailed because of the war. It is true that this period presented an opportunity to the Union of really enforcing conditions in shops signed by District Council 9. This was not done to any great extent. Our win-the-war efforts took up most of our time."

Being unable to defend their record in the union, the Stalinists resorted to the most violent and unrestrained campaign of slander against Rarback and his supporters. They attacked the opposition as "gangsters, racketeers," and, of course, "Trotskyites." In their factional frenzy the Stalinists completely abandoned every decent standard of working class behavior. To illustrate:

### SLANDEROUS LIE

In the primary election, which is held to nominate candidates for Secretary-Treasurer, the Rank & File Painter came out and accused Weinstock's opponent of having scabbed during the 1937 general Painters strike. This slanderous lie was im-

### Notice On New Publication Date

Effective with the next issue, *The Militant's* publication date will be advanced from Saturday to Monday. In most cases subscribers will receive their copies one or two days later in the week than under the Saturday publication date.









