

## MINE WORKERS THREATEN TO STRIKE

### US Beveridge Plan Can't Provide Real Security

It Will Fail Because It Does Not Tackle Basic Problem; New Dealers Only Want to Patch Up Capitalism A Little

By C. Charles

Two documents, drafted by the the National Resources Planning Board in an attempt to lay out a plan to cope with the post-war economic crisis, were forwarded to Congress by President Roosevelt on March 10. The plan has already aroused stormy controversy, with opinions ranging from "It is one of those documents which will never die" to "the most fantastic conglomeration of bureaucratic stupidity ever sent to Congress."

For workers to understand the plan — which is outlined in two books

### UAW Reaffirms Opposition To Speedup 'Incentive' Plans

The international executive board of the CIO United Auto Workers, meeting in Columbus last week, voted unanimously to reaffirm the union's long-standing opposition to the use of "incentive wage plans" in the automobile industry. It thereby unquestionably expressed the views of the union's membership and handed a setback to the plans of the industrialists and the Communist Party, who are waging

campaigns to reintroduce the speedup and the stretch-out in the mass production industries. For the industrialists, the return of the "incentive wage" would kill two birds with one stone. It would bring back the speedup and thus increase their already-swollen profits. It would also deal a powerful blow to the union movement by reintroducing the system which always accompanies "incentive" or piece-work plans: favoritism, "good" jobs handed out to the stool-pigeons or brother-in-laws; jobs where you can never "make out" given to the militant union men who stand up for their rights; the inevitable development of friction and jealousies among the workers, and a system where at the end of a season workers are producing twice as much as at the beginning but where, by a mysterious process of retiming, wages never seem to increase.

Labor should understand that the campaigns of people like Rickenbacker — denouncing the workers as "absentees," loafers, drunkards, slow-down artists, etc. — are carried on precisely for the purpose of creating the atmosphere where the speedup can be put over in one form or another. It has already been reported that the War Labor Board is working out schemes to put over speedup — "incentive wage" plans.

#### REACTIONARY CP STAND

The Stalinists have been much more brazen in their campaign to put over the speedup, although like Rickenbacker and Co. they also wave the flag in the process. It is not surprising therefore — in this situation where the Communist Party as an institution has taken a position opposed to that held by the unions and where the Communist Party position is 100% wrong and 100% reactionary while the union position is completely correct and progressive — that the Stalinists have been getting a lot of black and blue marks in the unions.

The Militant reported last week that the president of the powerful Ford Local 600 of the UAW had issued leaflets denouncing the Stalinists for trying to bring back the notorious Bedaux piece-work

system. Indicative of the antagonism this issue has aroused among the workers, probably even within the C.P., is the space devoted to it in the March 14 issue of The Worker — three columns in the news section and three full pages in the magazine section. Featured prominently are a letter and the transcript of a speech by Earl Browder, who sets out to deny that the Stalinists favor a return to the Bedaux and bonus systems, and who winds up by proving that they do favor them, with slight variations and under a different title, the "incentive wage plan."

This form of the speedup Browder correctly says "corresponds to the true interests of the capitalists" for the capitalist "would not only have twice as much production, which means twice as much profits, he would have more than twice as much profits, because he would have only one overhead for two productions, and could afford to give labor an incentive above the regular wage rate."

Of course, the industrialists are already aware of this fact; that is why they are just as eager as the Stalinists to bring back the speedup, regardless of the name used for it.

The workers must be on guard in the coming months to fight this threat to their conditions and standards — whether it comes from the employers, or the War Labor Board, or from people in the unions posing as defenders of labor's interests.

### C. Charles Next Speaker at Forum

The speaker at the next Sunday Open Forum of the New York School of Social Science, March 21 at 8 P. M., will be C. Charles, well-known speaker and writer in the Trotskyist press.

The subject of his lecture will be "Your Standard of Living," which is also the title of a new

(Continued on page 2)

called "National Resources Planning Development—Report for 1943" and "Security, Work and Relief Policies" — it is necessary for them to realize that the end of the war will bring an economic crisis even more intense than that of 1929-39, which was the most devastating in the history of the nation.

With the return of millions of soldiers and with the shutting down of war plants employing 20 million workers, unemployment will become an acute question.

For a protracted period the industrial machinery, worn out by war needs, will probably not be able to produce enough food, clothing and shelter to meet the needs of the people.

#### THE COMING CRISIS

At the same time the government's demand for funds will continue, not only to take care of the post-war needs of demobilization and subsidizing the return to "normalcy," but also to pay interest on the accumulated loans.

Not the least of the post-war costs will be the expense of policing the post-war world against social revolt.

Under these conditions, the forces driving to inflation will gain greater power. This will mean added pressure to force prices even higher than their present levels.

These, and other factors, spell an acute social crisis. The solution of their post-war problems will require the most exacting thought and program on the part of the capitalist class. The life of capitalism will hang in the balance.

The American capitalist class is divided into roughly two groups, with two different methods to solve this problem.

One group centers around the New Deal advocates. It is this group which sponsored the documents recently sent to Congress. The other group, the old line capitalists, do not think the proposals of the New Deal necessary or practicable.

#### NEW DEAL PROGRESS

The New Deal post-war plans as expressed in the two NRDP documents, fall into the following subdivisions:

DEMOCRATIZATION: Gradual

(Continued on page 2)

### What the Miners Are Fighting

### LITTLE STEEL FORMULA

OR  
DON'T LET YOUR RIGHT HAND KNOW WHAT YOUR LEFT HAND IS DOING



—Reprinted from United Mine Workers District 50 News, Feb 15, 1943.

### Creation Of Labor Party Discussed

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

Further evidence of the growing sentiment for independent political action by organized labor was provided by a meeting held in Philadelphia on March 14 in honor of The New Leader and the seventy-year old Social Democratic spokesman, Algeron Lee. Among the speakers were James McDewitt, President of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor; John A. Phillips, President of the CIO State Industrial Union Council; and Dean Alfange, American Labor Party candidate for Governor of New York in the 1942 election. The meeting was given front page publicity in the N. Y. Times. Representatives of more than 40 labor organizations were present.

Alfange, according to the Times report, appealed to the Pennsylvania labor leader to "launch in this strategic Keystone State a labor party comparable in beneficial influence to the American Labor Party of New York." He went on to say: "We must build similar political units in every industrial state..."

AFL President McDewitt said that many workers in Pennsylvania waited for the day of the organization of a labor party in the State, but added that, in his opinion, "the day was not yet."

All the speakers solidly supported Roosevelt and his policies which they pictured as "idealistic" and as a bulwark against anti-labor and anti-liberal forces. They were, however, extremely fearful that the ultra-reactionaries would completely capture both the Democratic and Republican organizations in 1944, leaving labor out on a limb.

It is obvious from their speeches and from their actions that these trade union and American Labor Party leaders view their campaign for independent labor political organization primarily as the most effective means of exerting pressure upon the two capitalist parties and standing in the most favorable bargaining position with them.

They look upon the Labor Party, not as an independent political organization standing on its own feet and contending on equal terms with its capitalist rivals, but as an auxiliary weapon useful for making deals with Democratic and Republican bosses.

Alfange made this clear when he declared: "Our minimum objective is the nomination by at least one of the two old parties of a candidate in whose domestic and world outlook we, the people, can place our confidence." Their main aim is to use the threat of

(Continued on page 2)

### More Unions Aid K. Postal Defense

Most recent contributors to the defense of Kelly Postal, Minneapolis union leader who has been convicted on fraud charges because he obeyed his union's directives to transfer its funds to the CIO when it voted to leave the AFL Teamsters, are:

The San Diego Branch of the Cannery Workers and Fishermen's Union, Seafarers International Union, AFL.

Brassiere Workers Local 160, ILGWU, AFL, Bayonne, N. J. Funds to finance the appeal of Postal's conviction in the Minnesota courts are being raised by the Civil Rights Defense Committee, 160 Fifth Ave., New York City.

### Why Rickenbacker Has Time to Attack Labor

"Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker, president and general manager of Eastern Air Lines, Inc., announced yesterday a net profit of \$1,885,503... for 1942, comparing with \$1,609,706... earned in 1941, an increase of 16.7 per cent."—N. Y. Times, March 13.

### Operators' Strategy Is To Depend On Govt. Coercion

Miners Will Not Work Without A Contract After April 1 Deadline, Lewis Warns

By Michael Cort

NEW YORK, March 15. — After five days of fruitless wage negotiations with intransigent coal operators, United Mine Workers President John L. Lewis today thundered his denunciation of "millionaire mine owners," the War Labor Board and its "Little Steel" formula, and warned the operators that if a new contract was not negotiated, "the miners will not trespass upon your property the first or second of April," the date of the expiration of present soft coal contracts.

This ultimatum was handed down by Lewis to fifty mine owners and operators gathered in the grand ball room of the Hotel Biltmore here. Representing both northern and southern operators these men had since the beginning of the negotiations flatly refused to make the slightest concession in the way of wages and conditions to the 500,000 miners in the UMW, had constantly threatened government repression against the workers should they press their demands, and had, in effect, dared the miners to do their worst.

Their challenge was accepted by the miners, Lewis, in a two and one-half hour speech which dripped with scorn and defiance of his "millionaire opponents," placed the union squarely on record in regard to the fundamental issues involved. He warned that the continuance of the War Labor Board's "Little Steel" formula not only meant starvation for the workers, but the end of collective bargaining. He announced that regardless of "what the War Labor Board thinks or does" in relation to the miners, they intended to have the increase in wages.

Lewis was well aware of the significance of his words. He knew that millions of workers throughout the country were watching this conference and preparing to actively defend their rights and living standards should the mine workers point the way. Lewis had insisted, over the objections of the operators, that the press be admitted to the conference, and as he spoke, shaking his fist at the mine owners gathered together on one side of the vast ball room, a dozen reporters scribbled down his words.

LEWIS' SPEECH  
Lewis spoke over the heads of the mine owners to the rest of labor when he charged that government and industry were pursuing a policy which meant impoverishment for the workers. "They inflame the workers in industries who know that their rights are being withheld from them by this strange combination of government and industry," he declared. "Let me warn you this afternoon that you can't do this to our people with impunity. Corporations are artificial

bodies, protected under the law, so that men who do not labor may get theirs," he said. "We don't think that corporations should take enormous profits at the expense of the workers who are giving their all in this war. This war may last 5 or 10 years, and out of it the workers obtain only the minimum food and clothing. They sweat and die to protect your property."

"Mine workers are hungry. They are asking for food, and if they don't get it, and if their contract runs out, it is a safe assumption that the mine workers, in the absence of a contract, will not trespass upon your property the first or second of April this year."

Lewis then warned that unless the mine workers' demands were met, the union would carry the struggle right to the coal mines. "Your policy of do-nothing," he said to the operators, "and of waiting to see what the government will do for you, will not buy you anything in 1943. But go down to Washington, you gentlemen, when you are

(Continued on page 2)

### Hillman Says That Amalgamated Will Not Ask Pay Raises

The press reported this week that the Sidney Hillman-dominated executive board of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers will not ask for a general wage increase for 125,000 workers in the men's and boys' clothing industry when current agreements are renewed in May.

The manufacturers will be glad to hear this, and no doubt the War Labor Board in Washington will pat Hillman on the back for his "patriotism." But the workers in the shops, instead of applauding, will denounce Hillman for the cowardly rascal that he is.

Let no one think that the workers in this industry are different from those in other unions. We have to pay for food, rent and taxes too—and we need wage raises like the workers in other industries—and we are ready to fight to get them too if we could only get a leadership responsible to us instead of to the Democratic Party.

A CLOTHING WORKER, NEW YORK CITY.

## Protest Meeting Against Attack On 'Militant'

Frank C. Walker, Postmaster General and National Chairman of the Democratic Party, has cancelled the second-class mailing privileges of The Militant — the first attack on an anti-fascist labor paper since the war began.

If the mailing rights of The Militant can be taken away simply for criticizing administration policies, then every labor and liberal paper is liable to similar suppression.

No return to the witch-hunts of 1917-1918! No government blackout for freedom of speech! Protect the free press!

OSMOND K. FRAENKEL  
American Civil Liberties Union

JOHN FINERTY  
Attorney for Sacco-Vanzetti, Tom Mooney, Workers Defense League

LOUIS NELSON  
Manager, Knitgoods Workers Union, N. Y. Joint Board of ILGWU, AFL

EMANUEL GARRETT  
Editor of LABOR ACTION

ALBERT GOLDMAN  
Attorney for THE MILITANT

GEORGE NOVACK  
National Secretary, C. R. D. C.

MANHATTAN CENTER - 311 W. 34th ST., near 8th AVE., N. Y.  
AUSPICES: CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, MARCH 26, AT 8:15 P. M.



# Mine Workers Threaten To Strike

(Continued from page 1)

ready. Call on Mr. Davis of the War Labor Board. He didn't save you in 1941 and he won't save you in 1943."

## OPERATORS' STRATEGY

But the operators showed no intention of yielding. Between sessions they frankly revealed their strategy to the newspaper reporters:

They plan to sit tight in the negotiations, then rely on the "proper Washington agencies" to throttle the mine union for them. But the militancy and the courage of the miners may yet upset this schedule.

The strategy of the operators was revealed right in the negotiations by their failure to advance a single counterproposal to the mine workers' demands—except to suggest that all negotiations be postponed until three months after the war.

## UNION'S DEMANDS

When the conference opened on March 10, the UMW presented the following demands: a \$2 per day increase and a minimum daily wage of \$8; the elimination of the third shift in those mines where it now is in force; an additional 85 cent daily increase for sub-standard jobs such as greasers, trappers, flaggers and slate pickers; and the inclusion in the union of 50,000 foremen and supervisory employees.

The operators contented themselves with pointing out that the miners had already received the 15% rise over Jan. 1941 levels as provided under the WLB's "Little Steel" formula, and furthermore that the cost of living had not gone up so sharply as had been claimed by the UMW.

The miners, under the supervision of Percy Tetlow, President of District 17, West Virginia, had done extensive research on living costs and presented eight closely-typed pages of statistics to the wage conference. Comparing 1939 and 1943 food costs in the retail stores throughout the mining

areas of Pennsylvania, the UMW found that prices had gone up 124.6%.

When the mine owners disputed these figures and tried to prove by Department of Labor statistics that the cost of living had increased but 19%, Lewis brought one miner after another to the floor to testify as to prices in his district.

"These reports," said Lewis, "believe the money statistics being used (by the government) to try to convince the housewife and the working man that food prices are being held in check."

"The questionnaire used by the United Mine Workers is open to inspection by anyone. The miners are either paying these prices or they aren't. . . it's easy to establish. If they are, you'd better do something about it. The miners are going to eat."

## PROFITS AND TAXES

In contrast to the cost of living squeeze upon the workers, the UMW presented voluminous statistics on the war profits enjoyed by the industrialists. The union pointed out that while the government froze workers' wages, it protected the industrialists against increases in costs by giving them "cost plus contracts." This not only insures their profits, but actually increases them as costs go up.

"The mine operators get \$1,000,000 in inflationary profits from the cost plus system," said Lewis, "and then sit back in placid contentment while their spokesmen denies the miners a \$2 increase to buy bread."

Lewis said that the government had already granted the mine owners a 22% increase in coal prices which would cover the costs of the wage boosts asked by the miners.

Referring briefly to the new taxes loaded upon the workers, Lewis said that there had been a "500% increase in taxes, direct and indirect, upon the workers in this war over the last war."

"How do you millionaires who run the coal industry expect the workers to pay these taxes?" he asked. "Where is the money coming from — out of the marrow of their bones?"

## THE THIRD SHIFT

In discussing the mine workers' demands for the elimination of the third shift, Lewis pointed out that when the mines are constantly worked and the coal is not allowed to "bleed," gas forms more quickly and accidents rapidly increase.

Lewis revealed that there were 64,000 men killed and injured in the mines in 1941. 75,000 were killed and injured in 1942, and the estimate for 1943 reaches 100,000. "That's a lot of meat," he said, "a lot of human meat to grind up in an industry in one year. There are too many funerals in this industry, gentlemen. We care not if the elimination of this third shift takes a few shekels out of some operators' pocket."

Lewis concluded his speech to-day with a blistering attack upon William H. Davis, chairman of the War Labor Board.

"I am not particularly interested at this time," he said, "in the figuring of a rapacious, predatory Park Avenue lawyer on the loose in Washington against the American worker. If I had a yellow dog I would hate to have his standard of living fixed by this man Davis and the men who are doing his dirty work on the War Labor Board. A corporation lawyer, a millionaire practitioner on the make in a business way, putting articles in the newspapers, speaking before private gatherings, telling how he's

whetting his knife, waiting for the United Mine Workers to come to his court asking justice.

## THE PRESS AND THE CP

Both at the recent UMW convention in Scranton, and at the wage conference now underway in New York, it was obvious that Lewis enjoyed the wholehearted support of the union's rank and file for his announced program of resistance to the capitalist offensive against the living standards of the workers.

The capitalist class is well aware that Lewis and the miners now constitute a threat to the entire governmental mediation machinery which is designed to keep the workers in the chains of no-strike agreements while the war costs are loaded upon their shoulders. Thus, the counter-offensive of the employing class is directed at "Lewis the dictator" and attempts to drive a wedge between him and the workers.

On the fourth day of the wage negotiations the N. Y. *Herald-Tribune* printed an editorial which said, "The government of the United States . . . has got to do something about John L. Lewis. . . it is not easy to exaggerate Lewis's challenge, a challenge not only to the nation's prosecution of the war but to the basic conception of American democracy."

And the Stalinists, quick to play lackey to the bosses, editorialized in the *Daily Worker*: "The Lewis line is disruption of the war effort and provocation that could only result in irreparable harm to labor." And more, "He wants to throw the country into a home-front war against the President, not against Hitler."

## THE BASIC ISSUE

There is much more involved in the present wage conference than the question of \$2 per day wage increase. What is involved is the ability of the workers to call a halt to the retreat of the unions, to reestablish them as instruments for the protection of the rights and interests of the workers under the conditions of reaction accompanying the war.

It was with full understanding of this that Charles O'Neill, spokesman for the mine owners, said quietly after listening to Lewis, "We take strike threats seriously. The intervention by the government in the dispute may be expected sooner than is usually the case in such situations."

(See Page 4 for an editorial on the mine wage negotiations.)

## Natalia Trotsky Is Recovering

A telegram from Mexico informs us that Natalia Sedov Trotsky, widow of Leon Trotsky who was reported last week to have been seriously ill, is "improved and in no immediate danger." A specialist summoned last week to examine Comrade Natalia made a thorough analysis of her condition and issued a reassuring report.

## C. Charles Is Next Speaker at Forum (Continued from page 1)

Pioneer Publishers pamphlet written by Charles, now receiving widespread and enthusiastic distribution throughout the country. The lecture, however, will analyze questions which are only slightly or not at all dealt with in the pamphlet.

Those who have read the pamphlet and those who had the opportunity to attend Charles' class at the New York School of Social Science last year know that the coming lecture can be depended on to throw light on the many economic problems facing the workers today.

The lecture will be held at the school's headquarters, second floor, 116 University Pl., corner of 13th Street.

## GEORGE M. WHITESIDE

The *Militant* regretfully reports the death of George M. Whiteside, 50, of Whitewater, Kansas, after an illness which had confined him to his home for several years.

Whiteside was formerly a member of the Socialist Party, and was once selected as the candidate for governor. He became a member of the left wing of the Socialist Party, and when the revolutionary left wing was expelled from that party in 1937, he left with it to help found the Socialist Workers Party.

In 1940 he left the S.W.P. with the minority group that refused to accept the party's decision to continue to defend the Soviet Union against imperialist attack.

## BASIC TRAINING COURSE IN MARXISM

Every Tuesday and Friday nights from 8:15 to 9:45 Inquire 4th floor 116 UNIVERSITY PL., N. Y.

# 'Absenteeism' And The Problem Of Shopping

By IRENE JAMES

It is estimated that by the end of 1943 there will be nineteen million women in the labor force, and that seven million will be married women. Yet little has been done to solve the problems of women who have to work and at the same time face the responsibility and

unceasing labor of running a home.

Employers complain that absenteeism is much higher among women workers. They label it lack of patriotism and deliberately ignore the real causes—inadequate child-care facilities, illness in the family, and the increasing difficulty of shopping for the household.

It is hard enough for a full-

time housewife to struggle against the conditions created by war—rising prices, food shortages, rationing, limitation of laundry service. For a working wife the situation is even more difficult.

Each day aggravates the overwhelming burden of household work. A woman who works eight to ten hours a day in a plant, plus one or two hours spent in transportation, is expected to shop at night and prepare the main meal of the day.

And now the unenviable right to shop at night, when fresh meat and vegetables are sold out, is also threatened. Proposals such as those before the City Council in New York demanding an 8 P. M. curfew for all retail stores would close delicatessens, neighborhood and department stores open in the evening and take away the only shopping time available to women in industry.

## IN SOVIET UNION AND BRITAIN

In the Soviet Union these difficulties have been met by serving a big midday meal at the plant. This eliminated shopping and cooking at night, when a light supper was sufficient. England has to some extent adopted a similar plan of "factory canteen" feeding. Cafeterias at the plant, organized by both unions and employers, are growing more common in this country.

Pressure of war conditions is creating new answers to the shopping problem in England. Women workers, by simply taking time off, have forced employers to give them "shopping time," half days off that are staggered throughout the plant. Other experimental plans are being tried out in England. Stores have been opened within the factories, and recently a Women's Auxiliary Service group was assigned to the job—on a restricted scale—of shopping for certain women in industry.

Workers in this country should study these plans for cafeterias at the plant. Faced by the same shopping problem as women workers in England, they can be guided by the concessions which English workers have won. Unions must raise the demand for shopping time, and organize their own cafeterias. If unions fail to act on these problems now, employers may soon institute from above unsatisfactory systems of "canteen feeding."

## THE "IDEAL WORKER"

But women must prepare to fight opposition to their demands. The boss dreams of an "ideal worker," who has no "family obligations," no children, no sickness, no shopping problem, no difficulties of any kind which might interfere with the schedule of his plant. He feels that if such problems arise they should be solved by the woman herself or by "the community." He dislikes concessions which acknowledge the existence of these problems and force him to adjust to the needs of women workers.

Society women apparently share the ideal of the boss. At a recent meeting held by Essex County, N. J., clubwomen to discuss recruitment of women for factories—other women, of course, they had no intention of working themselves!—one of the women at the speakers' table said:

"Our job is to find the women with no responsibilities and get them into industry."

## N. Y. SWP PUSHES SALE OF LATEST BOOK BY L. TROTSKY

A 30-day sales campaign to place Leon Trotsky's latest book, "In Defense of Marxism," in the hands of every person interested in a fundamental analysis of the economic and political forces determining today's world-shaking events was inaugurated March 15 by the New York Local of the Socialist Workers Party.

The value of the material contained in this latest classic of Marxism has been demonstrated by the fact that a considerable number of people heretofore unfamiliar with the ideas and methods of Marxism have already bought the book and enthusiastically acclaimed its contents.

The committee in charge of the campaign is offering a valuable prize to the member selling the largest number of copies during the month. Plans for obtaining distribution include branch educational lectures on the historic and political importance of this volume; special mailings to friends and sympathizers; attrac-

tive displays at branch meetings, classes and forums; special payment plans; arrangements to assist Pioneer Publishers in placing the book in bookstores, university and public branch libraries, etc. An outstanding feature of the campaign will be the publication of a special symposium bulletin containing articles of appreciation on the rich contents of the book. Among these articles will be one recounting the conversations of a comrade with Trotsky in Coyoacan, Mexico, at the time he was working on the material in the book.

Comment made by new readers of the book shows that Trotsky's analysis of the Soviet Union, the invasion of Poland and the character of the Second World War has provided them with the key to the current diplomatic strategy of the United Nations and the Axis regarding Finland, Italy and other European countries.

Copies of "In Defense of Marxism" can be purchased at the Local New York headquarters, 116 University Place.

# Creation Of Labor Party Discussed At Meeting In Pa.

(Continued from page 1)

independent action to force a fourth-term nomination for Roosevelt and to have more say in the selection of other candidates in state and local elections.

## PRESSURE FROM TWO DIRECTIONS

Despite their boastful words and menacing gestures, they propose to run independent labor candidates only as a last resort and if all attempts to arrive at agreements with the Republicans and Democrats have fallen through. They have pursued this policy in the past and plan to continue with it as long as they can.

But it is becoming more difficult for the ALP and trade union leaders to practice this double-dealing policy. On their right hand the ultra-reactionary wings, who taking command of both the Republican and Democratic parties, have become more outspoken and aggressive in their anti-labor attitude. They do not want to make concessions or conclude deals with the labor officials; they are out to dismember and destroy the entire labor movement during this war.

On their left hand the rank and file trade unionists, as McDewitt declares, are beginning to demand a party of their own that can conduct a real fight against all anti-labor conspirators. They don't want to remain forever a fifth wheel to the Democratic and Republican political machines. They want to build a political party that belongs to them, and can be made responsible to them.

Caught in this crossfire of contending class forces, the official leaders of labor are today somewhat unsure of themselves and their political course. They vacillate between the alternatives of supporting the old-line parties and of initiating a new Labor Party. They combine threats of independent political action with appeals to the Democratic and Republican bosses to make it pos-

sible for them to deal with them. This is "mutiny on one's knees."

## LABOR PARTY NEEDED NOW

The ALP 1942 campaign for Governor of New York proved that circumstances beyond their control can compel the Laborite leaders to run their own ticket, despite all their intentions and reservations. It also proved that the organized workers will turn out and vote for labor candidates.

It is up to the workers in the AFL and CIO to see that their representatives take the right road to independent political organization and action. They are the only force that can prevent their leaders from continuing along the fatal course of captivity to the capitalist parties and making sell-out deals with them at election time.

Every move in the direction of the creation of a Labor Party which the leadership is obliged to take deserves support. It is necessary to launch, to build, to strengthen the Labor Party movement.

But this movement will be endangered and seriously crippled if it starts out with the prospect of making deals with the capitalist parties and renominating Roosevelt for a fourth term. The organized workers need their own nationwide independent Labor Party. They need candidates who will remain responsible solely to them, just as a steward in the shops or a union president is. They need a program of struggle against the administration and its policies as well as against the ultra-reactionaries in Washington.

Today is the time to prepare for the 1944 elections by demanding that the trade-unions organize their Independent Labor Party on a national, state and local scale. Combat the drive against labor by building a militant mass party of labor now.

# Behind The Roosevelt Request On Puerto Rico

By TERENCE PHELAN

President Roosevelt's request last week to Congress to enact legislation enabling Puerto Ricans to elect their own governor, heretofore appointed by the president, is his answer to the resolution asking for independence, adopted on Feb. 10 by the Puerto Rican legislature. Roosevelt's request had almost unanimous support of all the island's political parties, though Juan Antonio Corretjer, secretary-general of the Nationalist Party — most of whose leaders have been imprisoned by the U. S. because of their struggles for national liberation — correctly pointed out that it does not alter the territory's colonial status.

Mixed motives were attributed to the President's action: in part, the desire to make a demagogic demonstration to the justly suspicious peoples of Latin America, who bitterly resent U. S. exploitation of their Puerto Rican brothers. But the most compelling reason was evidently the hope that such a limited "home rule" measure might stifle the popular drive for complete independence which has been swelling menacingly under the lash of conditions so increasingly horrible that even such a reactionary organ as *Life* recently protested against them.

Under mass pressure of the aroused people, the usually shilly-shallying legislators of Puerto Rico not only indignantly denounced the infamous Crawford proposal, but, on February 10, in an action unprecedented in the 44 years of U. S. control, kept Governor Tugwell cooling his heels with his Annual Message while it proceeded to vote the flat demand that the U. S. Congress put an end once and for all to the colonial system, and to call for a universal referendum by the Puerto Rican people to determine the island's status.

Students demonstrated; shopkeepers, demanding that foodstuffs be allowed to be imported from other countries, threatened to close 500 stores; labor, with "unauthorized" strikes epidemic against minimum-wage chiseling, stood menacingly ready for general strike action. So, last week, Roosevelt gracefully made his recommendation to Congress.

U. S. WORKERS MUST HELP No one who knows the realities of imperialism in the colonies will have any illusions that this "home rule" sop, tossed to quiet Puerto Rico's desperately protesting people, can solve the Puerto Rican problem.

Such "independent" semi-colonies as Cuba and Haiti are demonstrations that U. S. finance capital can rule as thoroughly by economic pressure as by direct governmental control.

For an essentially one-crop country dependent on the exterior for its market and its food supplies, there is no final and complete solution short of socialism on a world scale. Yet U. S. workers, to whom the masses of the American colonies and semi-colonies look as to their surest allies, should support and seek to extend every step, however slight, which lessens the super-exploitation of their colonial brothers.

REACTION AND PROTEST In late January, Republican Representative Fred L. Crawford

## Truth About the Press Reports On Fighting in L. A.

On March 7, the UP sent out a dispatch from Los Angeles telling of police breaking up a fight between members of the International Association of Machinists and distributors of pamphlets bearing the signature of the Socialist Workers Party.

The dispatch was widely printed. In an obvious effort to make it appear that the Trotskyists were under attack from workers as well as the administration, some newspapers even tried to tie it up with the announcement of the same day that the Post Office had revoked *The Militant's* second-class privileges.

Our correspondents in Los Angeles inform us that the report was erroneous, that the pamphlet distributors were members of the DeLeonite organization, the Socialist Labor Party, and that the error had to be admitted and corrected in the local press. But there was no such correction in the many papers throughout the nation that carried the first dispatch.

Needless to say, *The Militant*, while desiring to get the facts straight, is firmly opposed to attacks on any workers' organization exercising its democratic right to distribute literature presenting its ideas.

# 150 Hear Goldman On Alter-Erich Murders

Over 150 New York Forum workers heard Albert Goldman attorney for Leon Trotsky analyze "Stalin's Murder of Erlich and Alter" at the March 14 Sunday Open Forum of the New York School of Social Science.

Goldman began by discussing the nature of the charges against the two Polish labor leaders as contained in the letter from Litvinov to William Green, and denounced them as frameups, as crude and vicious as those of the Moscow Trials.

He then went ahead to discuss that part of the history of the case which is available, and analyze the reason why the Stalinist bureaucrats wanted to get Erlich and Alter out of the way.

One of the most interesting aspects of the speech was Goldman's review of how the methods of Stalinism weaken the defense of the Soviet Union. Stalinism, he showed, deprives the workers' state of its best fighters, as in the case of the assassination of Leon Trotsky and the purge of the ablest generals of the Red Army—and it gives weapons to reactionaries trying to undermine the pro-Soviet sympathies of the masses of the world. Goldman also tore to pieces the contention, ad-

vanced by all types of democrats, that Stalin's degenerate methods prove that Stalinism is the product of Bolshevism.

Extracts from Goldman's speech will be found on Page 3 of this issue.

Following Goldman's lecture, the audience adopted a resolution condemning the murder of Erlich and Alter as "a most serious blow against the defense of the Soviet Union" and demanding "the immediate release of all pro-Soviet prisoners now in Stalin's jails and concentration camps." Copies of the resolution were ordered sent to the Soviet Embassy in Washington and to the press.

The question and discussion period lasted almost as long as the lecture itself. The discussion brought out the connection of the Erlich-Alter murders with the Moscow Trial frameups and the slanders in Ex-Ambassador Davies' book and motion picture.

The overflow crowd at the Forum was the biggest in the short history of the Forum. Most of it sat with interest throughout the discussion period, bought a considerable amount of the literature on sale, and enjoyed the refreshments which are a regular part of the Open Forum.



# The Murder Of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter

## Their Execution By Stalin Is A Blow Against The Defense Of The Soviet Union

By ALBERT GOLDMAN

Excerpts from a lecture delivered at the Sunday Open Forum of the New York School for Social Science, Mar. 14, 1943.

It would almost seem as if Stalin intentionally takes care to remind the workers that his criminal activities against the working class will not and cannot cease, so long as he rules over the destinies of the Soviet Union. It is possible that with the lapse of time many workers who were shocked by the Moscow frameup trials and the execution of some of the most devoted and capable leaders of the Russian Revolution, would have either forgotten or minimized the gravity of these crimes of the Kremlin dictator. Especially is this true at the present moment when the workers are so elated at the victories of the Red Army over the Nazi forces.

But no! Stalin does not permit any one to forget his criminal activities. His position as the leader of a bureaucratic caste that has usurped power in the Soviet Union and is anxious to protect itself against the workers of the SU and of the whole world compel him to continue with those activities. No crime can be his last so long as he is master of the Kremlin. His power, based on violence against and treachery to the revolution, can continue only with violence and treachery.

Alas, his latest crime, the murder of Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter, is not the last. It only serves to remind those who might forget that he has committed crimes in the past and will continue to commit them in the future.

Is there the slightest chance that Erlich and Alter were guilty of the accusations leveled against them in Litvinoff's letter to William Green? The answer must be an unhesitating and loud "No!"

I refer expressly to the charges mentioned in Litvinoff's letter. We know of no other charges. The impression prevails that Erlich and Alter have been charged with being Nazi agents. The Stalinist press speaks of them in this way. As a matter of fact Litvinoff's letter does not indicate that they were accused of being Nazi agents.

It would have been somewhat too inconsistent to accuse them of being Nazi agents because they were first condemned to death in August, 1941 for being in the pay of the Polish Secret Service. If they were agents of the Polish Espionage service it would have been somewhat difficult to explain how they became Nazi agents after they were already placed in confinement in Soviet Union.

It may well be that the GPU will furnish us with new charges actually accusing the two Socialists of being Nazi agents. In reality consistency and logic play a very small role in their charges. It may well be that the charges were purposely made very vague in Litvinoff's letter with the expectation that later they can be changed if circumstances require.

The Stalinist press here continues to accuse Erlich and Alter of being Nazi agents. It goes without saying that no one except a completely blinded Stalinist can believe that these two people could possibly be Nazi agents. Everything is of course possible in this world and it may be argued that it is possible for two Jewish Socialist leaders with many years of activity in the labor movement to sell themselves to the Nazis.

But if one wants people to believe such an utterly improbable accusation one must be ready to produce proof so convincing that not even their closest friends would have any doubt of it. The Stalinists do not and cannot produce proof and we must brand the accusations as lies and slanders.

In Litvinoff's letter they are charged with making appeals to Soviet troops to stop bloodshed and with advocating a separate peace between the Soviet Union and Hitler. One must admit that off-hand these charges sound a little more plausible than the Stalinist press accusation of their being Nazi agents. Because, it may be argued, people who advocate a separate peace or call upon Soviet troops to stop fighting need not necessarily be Nazi agents. Absolutely consistent pacifists and non-resisters might do that very thing.

## WHO WILL BELIEVE THESE CHARGES?

But it is known to everybody that Erlich and Alter were not pacifists; it is known to everybody that they organized the resistance of the Jewish workers in Poland to the German invasion. In a letter which Erlich succeeded in smuggling out of the Soviet Union he tells of negotiations that he had with Soviet officials for the purpose of organizing the Jewish masses in the struggle against Hitler. That was during the short period they were out of jail, between September, 1941 and December of the same year.

Why were not the accusations made public at the time of their re-arrest in December 1941? These men were not unknown individuals.

Their detention by the Soviet Government received world-wide publicity and was made the subject of representations by many prominent men both of Labor and bourgeois circles. Does it not follow that if the Soviet Government were serious in its charges it would have made them public?

Why were they not given an open trial with the right of defense by counsel of their own choice and with the representatives of world labor present at the trial? The stature of these men demanded such a trial if the Soviet Government had the slightest sense of responsibility to world labor.

They are charged with advocating a separate peace between the Soviet Union and Germany and with urging the Soviet troops to stop bloodshed. As I indicated these charges are incredible on the basis of their beliefs and activities. But we still want to know when and how did they advocate a separate peace or urge the Red soldiers not to shoot? They were arrested in September 1939, released in August 1941 and re-arrested in December of that year. Did they, after having been released from a death sentence which was commuted to ten years of imprisonment, begin advocating a separate peace immediately after they were released from jail? Did the Soviet government grant them the right to publish a paper? Did they speak on the street corners of Moscow and Kuibishev? Or did they convene with some GPU agent who reported that they hired him to arrange for the separate peace?

But, and this is a question frequently asked, didn't Stalin know that the execution of Erlich and Alter would arouse a great

## SOCIALISM ON TRIAL

by James P. Cannon

The official court record of his testimony in the famous Minneapolis "Sedition" trial.

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deal of comment and adverse publicity and resentment among a large section of the working class?

Of course he knew, but to execute them was the lesser evil for Stalin.

The basic reason for the execution is the fact that the two men were conscious anti-Stalinists and leaders of an important section of the working class. I use the term conscious anti-Stalinists in the sense that they understood the reactionary character of Stalinism and the necessity for a struggle against it. They were not liberals who simply deplored and regretted Stalin's "excessive" violence but were willing to forgive him many things because he was also an anti-fascist. They were not liberals who could be hoodwinked by official statistics and by the fact that Stalin had granted a constitution which promised many freedoms.

They were not of course Trotskyists and therefore, from our point of view, their opposition to Stalinism was not really revolutionary or effective. But they were opponents of Stalin and leaders in the labor movement and this fact meant that they were in serious danger of assassination when they were caught in the clutches of the GPU.

Naturally the GPU took all known anti-Stalinists in the labor movement of Poland into custody when the Red Army invaded the eastern part of Poland. Hitler took revolutionary workers into custody in his section of Poland and Stalin did likewise in his section.

Until Hitler attacked the Soviet Union Stalin paid no attention to any protests emanating from the capitalist democracies against the detention of Erlich and Alter. It was not until after the attack and after Stalin became friendly with the capitalist democracies that he paid any attention to the protests of leading representatives of labor. But remember that by that time he had kept them in jail for almost two years.

## WHY THEY WERE EXECUTED

Erlich and Alter were not ordinary people. They were articulate leaders and well-known in the labor movement. They had received world-wide publicity. They knew the Russian language. They undoubtedly had met many a revolutionist in prison. They had learnt much and to release them and permit them to go out of the country would mean to free two people who could speak and write with great authority on the situation in the Soviet Union. Stalin simply could not permit these people to get out of the Soviet Union and reveal the secrets of his prisons and prisoners.

There was obviously a great deal of hesitation as to what to do with Erlich and Alter. They were at first released even though they had been convicted of working for the Polish Intelligence Service. That was in September, 1941. In those days Stalin possibly played around with the idea of enlisting the help of Erlich and Alter. In Erlich's only letter from the Soviet Union, written during his short period of freedom, he mentions the negotiations with Soviet officials for the organization of some Jewish committee.

Soon, however, Stalin rearrested Erlich and Alter. That was in December, 1941, after the German army began its retreat from Moscow. Keeping them in jail was no solution because they were too prominent and too many important people were demanding their release. To set them free and keep them in the Soviet Union was also no solution because they would be given an opportunity to study conditions in the Soviet Union and the demand for permission to have them leave the Soviet Union would continue, in spite of the fact that Stalin would confer the questionable privilege of Soviet citizenship on them.

To kill them was for Stalin the best solution under the circumstances, and Stalin therefore ordered his GPU agents to proceed with the executions.

Before he had them executed Stalin made them citizens of the Soviet Union. When, in March 1942, the representatives of the Polish Government were told that Erlich and Alter were citizens of the Soviet Union and no representation from any government was therefore permissible, their fate was sealed.

One shudders at the idea that the granting of Soviet citizenship to foreign socialists is only a prelude to a horrible death. The land where twenty-five years ago a revolution was made on the basis of the grandest concepts of internationalism, the land which internationalists everywhere considered as their own, where to be granted citizenship was a mark of honor and distinction,—that land has degenerated under Stalin to a point where the granting of citizenship is a preliminary to execution.

Why did not Stalin arrange for a public trial as he did in the case of the Moscow Trials? One must of course first of all extort confessions, and Alter and Erlich were perhaps not the type of men to yield to torture. Then again a trial would involve tremendous publicity. There would be demands for representation of labor from the rest of the world.

Stalin handles each case differently, depending upon the type of men and the circumstances. He had to justify the executions of the Old Bolsheviks before the Soviet masses. Hence the confessions and the trials. Erlich and Alter are unknown to the Soviet masses and I doubt whether they know of the executions. To kill them secretly was the best course open for Stalin.

When Hitler executes a revolutionist, the class-conscious workers are likely to feel more determined than ever to continue the struggle to avenge their martyrs. But when Stalin murders revolutionists and besmirches their character, many a class-conscious worker suffers spiritually and is demoralized. Stalin's crimes bring demoralization to large sections of workers and consequently weaken the Soviet Union.

## STALIN'S CRIMES WEAKEN THE USSR

When Stalin destroyed Soviet democracy; when through torture he forced some of the great leaders of the Russian Revolution to degrade themselves by false confessions in open court; when Stalin had them found guilty as Nazi agents and had them executed; when he killed the ablest generals of the Red Army; when he imprisoned and executed thousands of loyal communists who would not confess; when he, through his GPU agent, assassinated Lenin's partner in the leadership of the Russian Revolution; when he plays power-politics without any regard to the democratic and national-liberation sentiments of the masses; when he killed Erlich and Alter, he struck heavy blows at the Soviet Union and therefore at the working class of the world.

In spite of the fact that the masses are elated at the victories of the Red Army and in spite of the growth of Stalin's prestige as a result of those victories, the tendency among large sections of the working class is to consider Stalin merely as a lesser evil to Hitler. One needs only remember that the sympathies of the masses were with Finland at the time of the Soviet-Finnish war to realize what damage Stalin has done to the Soviet Union.

Why did the Finnish people resist the invasion of the Red Army so stubbornly? Because the attractive power of the Soviet Union was lost by virtue of the crimes of Stalin. Not because the Finnish masses love Mannerheim, I assure you.

Only the most advanced section of the working class, the Trotskyists, realizing the enormous value that the continued existence of the Soviet Union has for the workers of the world,

stood for the defense of the Soviet Union in the Finnish conflict. Stalin's crimes make it exceedingly difficult to rouse the masses in the defense of the Soviet Union under circumstances when it needs defense most.

Stalin relies on the victories of the Red Army to cover up his past, present and future crimes. By some fantastic logic it is held, by the ignorant and the vicious, that the resistance of the Red Army proves that the generals executed by Stalin were fifth-columnists. What would one say of a person who claimed credit for the resistance of a prize-fighter whose right arm this person broke just before the fight? Stalin crippled the Red Army which offers heroic resistance in spite of its being crippled. The criminal responsible for the beheading is given credit for the resistance. Is that not fantastic?

They who are now busy whitewashing the past crimes of Stalin are helping him commit his present and future crimes. What greater service can be rendered to Stalin than to film the Moscow Trials not as frameups but as authentic? Davies is nothing but a hypocrite when he claims that he changed his mind on the Moscow Trials. He is part of that section of the capitalist class which is willing to pay Stalin for services rendered by executing real revolutionists.

So long as the Soviet Union retains nationalized property, so long as capitalism is not permitted to function in the Soviet Union, so long will the capitalist class remain hostile to it. That is true even when the Stalinist bureaucracy rules the Soviet Union. But certain sections of the capitalist class are capable of recognizing and do recognize the difference between Stalinism and Trotskyism in the Soviet Union. When the sanctimonious Vice-president, Wallace asserts that war is inevitable if Trotskyism should return to the Soviet Union, it is a clear indication that the capitalist class is interested in preventing such a return not because it fears war, but because it fears revolution.

Although some sections of the capitalist class utilize Stalin's crimes to arouse the animosity of the masses, other sections cover them up in order to pay Stalin for the services he renders them and to prevent the masses from waging a revolutionary struggle against Stalin. With the same end in view different sections of the capitalist class follow different courses towards Stalin.

The advanced workers will never be a party to covering up Stalin's crimes. Defending the Soviet Union, they will expose Stalin and his crimes. Not we, by exposing the crimes, are in any way bringing harm to the Soviet Union, but Stalin, by committing them, and the reactionaries and the fools, by covering them up.

Undoubtedly the crime of Stalin in murdering Erlich and Alter will be utilized by all types of democrats once more to point to their moral lesson that Stalinism, which is the very antithesis of Bolshevism, is a product of Bolshevism. Once more the nonsense that Bolshevism believes in utilizing all means to achieve its ends will be trotted out as a warning not only against Stalinism but against revolutionary Marxism as represented by Trotskyism.

This very meeting organized by followers of the ideas of Trotsky is a refutation of the absurd and vicious theory that Stalinism has anything to do with Bolshevism. The Trotskyists are opponents of the political program of Erlich and Alter.

Erlich and Alter, while recognizing the validity of some fundamental principles of revolutionary Marxism, insisted on remaining in the Second International, together with people who would have nothing to do with revolutionary Marxism. Erlich argued that Trotsky favored the idea of revolutionists remaining in the trade unions; why not then remain in reformist parties? He did not make, as we make, a fundamental distinction between and organization including all workers, such as a trade union, and the organization of the most advanced section of the class, the political party.

We do not hesitate to criticize political opponents in the ranks of the workers. But I defy anyone to show that in the theory or practice of Bolshevism there is the slightest suggestion that violence should be utilized against political opponents.

## BOLSHEVISM VS STALINISM

Ah, but did not the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky use violence, during the Civil War, not only against the capitalists who started the Civil War but also against the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries?

It is of course absurd to compare the actions of men in a period of civil war and in a period of comparative peace. In the terrible fierceness of a life-and-death struggle between classes, it is

not always possible to guard against excesses. In such a period the tendency is to say that he who is not for us is against us. Fine distinctions between opponents are overlooked and excesses may be committed. Unfortunately revolutions are not guided by the principles of sweetness and light.

But look carefully at the historical record, beginning with the February Revolution, and the actions of the Bolsheviks against all their political opponents can be easily defended. Mistakes were probably made in individual cases, but on the whole record the Bolsheviks can easily defend themselves against any political group.

Let me remind you that Lenin pleaded in vain with the reformist parties to take power in the Soviets and promised to support them and to conduct a peaceful struggle in the Soviets for the majority. This, Lenin claimed, and he was a thousand times right, would avoid bloodshed altogether. But the pleas of Lenin went unheeded and in this lies an important reason for the Civil War.

True Bolsheviks will always enter into a compact with all working-class parties to struggle peacefully for the majority and to support whatever party has the majority against the capitalist class.

No one has to teach Bolsheviks a lesson in workers' democracy. It has been and is the conception of Bolshevism that without workers' democracy there can be no socialism.

## CONNECTION WITH COMING REVOLUTIONS

At this time the crime of Stalin in murdering Erlich and Alter has a particular significance because of possible revolutionary upheavals in Europe in the immediate future. The war has assumed a turn where the military defeat of Hitler can be looked forward to with some confidence. What will follow? The capitalists of England and the United States are worried; so is Stalin.

A defeat of Hitler confronts the masses with the question: what shall we do now? Shall we go back to the pre-Hitler period, to the period of unemployment, of inflation, of the rule of the democratic capitalist governments and their inability to solve a single important problem? The probability of an attempt by the masses of Europe to take their fate into their own hands is very great. Especially is this true if the defeat of Hitler comes as a result of a victorious offensive on the part of the Red Army.

It is indeed true that the victories of the Red Army have brought great and undeserved prestige to Stalin but they have also raised the prestige of the Soviet system in the eyes of the masses. The masses do not want Stalin's dictatorship but they want something that will bring a new life to them and vaguely they behold in the Soviet system something new and good for them.

Should revolutionary uprisings occur in Europe Stalin must follow one of two courses—either come to an agreement with the American and English capitalists to suppress them or take control and lead them into bureaucratic channels. In either case he can not afford to have conscious anti-Stalinists playing a leading role in the labor movement. You will remember that in Spain he did not hesitate to kill not only Trotskyists but anarchists and socialists who were unwilling to be bought by him.

Stalin's execution of Erlich and Alter is an indication of the fate that threatens all conscious anti-Stalinists in the ranks of the European working class in case of revolutionary uprisings. The advanced workers of Europe must be fully conscious of this possibility and must warn the workers not to permit anyone to interfere with their revolution and with their workers' democracy.

But we must be clear on one subject. We must understand that the crimes of Stalin should not sway us one bit from the defense of the Soviet Union. In spite of its degeneration under the regime of Stalin, the Soviet Union remains a great asset to the working class of the whole world. The October Revolution still lives in the Soviet Union in the form of nationalized property. It is this which must be defended against the capitalists and against Stalin.

Our task is to see to it that the October Revolution is not destroyed but is extended throughout the world and is revived in the Soviet Union. That will destroy the capitalist system and with it the vicious and criminal Stalinist bureaucracy. The criminal career of Stalinism will be ended by a new October Revolution.

# Two Madison Sq. Garden Rallies Demand Action To Aid The Jews

By DAN SHELTON

Following close on the heels of the March 1 meeting which filled Madison Square Garden, 40,000 Jews and Gentiles crowded into the Garden on March 9 to show their solidarity with the persecuted Jews in Europe.

While the earlier meeting was political in character, asking the Allies to fit their deeds to their words, the March 9 meeting, a memorial for the Jews slaughtered by Hitler, was essentially religious in nature.

Political impotence was revealed in these two meetings, as well as an undercurrent of growing distrust with the Allied leadership. But the failure of the "democracies" to solve or even to alleviate the refugee problem is apparently not yet fully clear to the Jews.

## THE BITTER FACTS

They still close their eyes to such facts as the immigration quotas of the United States which virtually exclude refugees; the 1939 British White Paper stopping, in effect, all immigration to Palestine—which till then had taken more refugees than any other country; the "results" of the Evian Conference on Refugees, where the international bourgeoisie got together to determine how most effectively not to help the refugees.

In addition, there is the Allies' eloquent silence over Rumania's offer to transfer 70,000 Jews to any country selected by the Allies.

## United Mass Action, Not Prayers Or Pleas, Will Force Open the Doors to the Refugees

And the British and American governments are at this very moment carrying on "negotiations" consisting of polite diplomatic backpassing and hasty assurances from both sides that these "in any case" are only "exploratory in nature."

While the Allied governments "explore" the Jews continue to die. And where in the face of death and desperation politics seems to be of no avail, religion steps in to help. This, essentially, was the function of the Madison Square Garden mass memorial. As reported by the March 10 N. Y. Times, these unbelievable words were spoken at that meeting: "We are not here to weep for our dead. We are here to honor them and to proclaim the victory of their dying. For in our testament are written the words: 'They shall never die!'"

## A PROGRAM OF PROSTRATION

To the hundreds of thousands dying in Europe, the promise goes out from New York: "We shall never die." When apparently there is no place available for the Jews on this earth, these sorry peddlers of religion investigate the possibilities of immigration to heaven. When reality is hell, the Jews are invited to take a walk in paradise. To the hundreds of thousands asking for help, for a voice that will speak

for them, this reassurance is offered: "We have a voice. Let us raise it. Perhaps the dying will hear it, and find hope. Perhaps the Four Freedoms will hear it and find tongue. It is the voice of prayer."

This is their consolation; their "program of action": "You are dead"—they say—"but your spirit is eternal."

The Jewish people, however, are not only concerned with their "spirit," but also with their purely physical existence which is threatened all over the world. The Jewish people are beginning to see through this program of prostration. Only thus can we interpret the rebellious overtones, and statements made in the course of both meetings; the strong reaction of the audience to the more militant speakers.

80,000 persons participated in these two protest meetings following one another within one week. This means that tens of thousands—in this city alone!—found it necessary to voice their protest and to seek for a program.

## A REAL PROGRAM

There is a real program for them. To a program of prostration they must counterpose the program of conscious political action.

We Trotskyists do not ask the dying to hear "our voice of prayer"; we ask the living to hear our call to action. To the program

of prayer-books, mild criticisms of "their Allies" and the consolation of the Old Testament—we counterpose class action, participation of the Jewish people in the world struggle for socialist equality. We do not ask the "Four Freedoms" to "find a tongue" and speak for us; they have had a tongue all along and have spoken very clearly and eloquently for themselves.

We are not concerned with HEAVENLY living conditions; we want THIS WORLD to be a livable place for Jews and Gentiles, whites and Negroes. We do not proclaim the "victory of the dying"—we fight for the victory of the living. "Our voice" shall not be sterile prayer, but fruitful concerted political action. "Our allies"—not the hypocritical ruling class which tramples underfoot the rights of minorities and colonial peoples, but the working class which in its fight for emancipation liberates all the down-trodden of this earth.

The workers' vanguard, the trade union movement and the Jewish masses must unite in a common struggle and put pressure on their respective governments for the realization of this immediate demand: "You say this is a war for democracy; then show a little interest in democracy by rescuing as many of those unfortunate as you possibly can. Open your doors! Let in all those that suffer racial or political persecution, Jews as well as Gentiles! Open the doors to the refugees!"



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To defend the USSR as the main fortress of the world proletariat, against all assaults of world imperialism and of internal counter-revolution, is the most important duty of every class-conscious worker.

— LEON TROTSKY

## Support The Miners!

The mine workers' fight for wage increases and a satisfactory contract, although it is far from finished, has already thrown a good deal of light, for the broad mass of American union men and women watching their struggle with the greatest interest and sympathy, on the present status of the labor movement, caught in the vise of frozen wages and rising living costs.

It has also demonstrated that the employers, backed by all U. S. industrialists, grown fat with profits and full of self-confidence and arrogance, are depending on the administration and its agencies such as the War Labor Board to help them resist the justified demands of the United Mine Workers.

As in the great coal strike of 1941, the workers can see that the War Labor Board and similar agencies by which the workers were put into a wartime straitjacket, can survive only with the participation and support of the labor movement itself. The moment even one section of the labor movement challenges this seemingly imposing edifice, the house is in danger of collapse. And remember, the real fighting has not yet started; an important union leader has simply issued a denunciation and a warning, and a full-blown crisis is in the offing in all the labor agencies in Washington. What a demonstration of the tremendous power lodged in labor's ranks, of the ease with which the labor movement could get out of bondage and restore its full independence and fighting strength!

The miners' fight has not yet been concluded, but observe the effects of a policy based on a certain amount of courage: The heads of the OPA, which has done nothing effective to halt the rising cost of living in the last year, are running around telling everyone that now, now at last, they are going to control prices and they are even making a few gestures in the direction of stronger price policies. And the AFL and CIO leaders, afraid of being discredited for not fighting for the interests of their members, are also beginning to talk a little louder and a little more sharply against the "Little Steel" formula, frozen wages, etc.

Regardless of what transpires further in the UMW negotiations, the whole labor movement owes the miners a debt, for their union has again taken the lead and shown the path and by its action moved the whole labor movement another step forward.

The first task of every militant, no matter what union he belongs to, is to work to get his union, and its leaders on record in support of the mine workers' demands and any action which they may be forced to take to win those demands. Then the UMW experience should become the basis for the reestablishment of collective bargaining — as the term was understood in the early days of the CIO — on the part of every local union in the country.

## Wallace's Remarks About Trotskyism

In his March 8 address at Ohio Wesleyan University, Vice-President Henry A. Wallace made the following interesting statements:

1. Marxism, he declared, "says that class warfare is inevitable until such time as the proletariat comes out on top, everywhere in the world, and can start building a society without classes."

2. "The future well-being of the world depends upon the extent to which Marxism, AS IT IS BEING PROGRESSIVELY MODIFIED IN RUSSIA, and democracy, as we are adapting it to twentieth-century conditions, can live together in peace."

3. Even though the United States follows "the

most constructive course," a third world war "would be inevitable if Russia should AGAIN embrace the Trotskyist idea of fomenting world-wide revolution."

Despite the deliberate falsifications with which Wallace's speech was studded, he expressed the truth in these statements — distorted though they were to suit his purposes. The ideas of Marxism, of the creation of a socialist world that will end exploitation of man by man, are being "modified", that is, rejected, "in Russia," that is, by the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.

Wallace's purpose in characterizing Trotskyism as he did was to convince his fellow-democratic capitalists of the need for "cooperating" after the war with Stalinism, which he hopes will cooperate in return in helping to put down socialist revolts in Europe. To do so, however, he had to admit that Trotskyism is synonymous with the principles of world revolution that guided the workers' state in its early days.

This admission, of course, is in direct conflict with the slanderous picture of Trotskyism painted by the ex-Ambassador Davies' book, "Mission to Moscow," which repeats the Stalinist lies about the Moscow Trials and the Trotskyist "agents of Hitler" and which is being filmed in Hollywood, with State Department permission and much ballyhoo.

Here we see a perfect example of the division of labor in capitalist propaganda. Davies denounces us as fascists and fifth-columnists; Wallace denounces us as world revolutionists. The obvious contradiction will disturb neither Davies, who lies about and incites repressions against us for the purpose of appeasing and whitewashing Stalin, nor Wallace, who tells the truth about us in this instance for the purpose of gaining support for "collaboration" with the Soviet Union, against which he is prepared to declare war if it is again led by people accepting our ideas.

Nevertheless this contradiction should be used by advanced workers at the present time in combatting the slanders of the Stalinists and the motion picture lie being prepared in Hollywood.

## King Of England Is NOT Working

Readers of last week's issue of *The Militant* will recall our enthusiastic approval of the AP report that the King of England "has become a part-time worker in a war factory, standing at a bench two night a week turning out precision parts. He 'clocks in' at 6 P. M. wearing overalls and leaves about 8:30 P. M."

We stated last week that this was a wonderful idea and that we were all in favor of expanding it so that both King George and all the other ruling class parasites would be put to full-time, useful work for the first time in their lives.

Since then, however, we have learned that the AP dispatch was in error — King George had merely made some inquiries as to certain production operations: "The royal family is too busy with official activities to engage in such activities," said the Buckingham Palace press officer. In other words, King George has not become a useful and productive member of society, part-time or full-time, and he evidently has no intention of becoming one.

That's too bad. We still think it's a good idea, and we're still in favor of transforming society so that it can be realized on an all-out basis.

## Stalinists Speak Up For J. P. Morgan

"Wars and panics on the stock exchange, machinegun fire and arson, bankruptcies, warloans, starvation, lice, cholera and typhus; good growing weather for the House of Morgan."

That was how John Dos Passos in his book, "U. S. A.," concluded his brilliant indictment of the House of Morgan, whose head died in Florida last week. And that is how for decades the J. P. Morgans have been regarded by the labor movement.

The capitalist press paid its respects and tribute this week to the recent Morgan — but there was no account of workers' mourning the death of the biggest finance capitalist of them all — the man who floated the Allied loans which contributed toward U. S. entry into the war, who said in 1915 that he thought \$10 a week was enough for a longshoreman, who applauded the breaking of the steel strike in 1919, who helped stabilize the fascist Mussolini government with a huge loan in 1925, who "influenced" judges and government figures and therefore their decisions and laws by placing them on his "preferred stock lists", etc., etc.

But there WAS one paper claiming to speak for labor which had something good to say about Morgan — and that was the Stalinist *Daily Worker*. Morgan's record was so notorious that the Stalinists had to list some of it in their March 14 issue. But then they concluded by saying:

"In the present war crisis, HOWEVER, the Morgan firm appeared to realize the danger that Axis aggression represents to all American interests since spokesmen for the company have urged United Nations solidarity and contributions to Russian War Relief."

# What Others Said About P. O. Attack On 'Militant'

## W. D. L.

The Workers Defense League announced last week that it would support the effort of *The Militant* to have its second-class mailing rights restored by the Post Office. A public statement issued by the WDL declared:

"The quotations released by the Post Office as the basis for Postmaster General Walker's revocation of *The Militant's* second-class mailing privileges are similar to those one might find in score of labor and Negro weeklies."

"*The Militant* has not been alone in attacking race discrimination, business control of the war production program, the caste system in the Army, the imperialist designs of leading Americans and British, and the unequal sacrifices imposed on working people."

"The revocation is intended to scare editors so that they will censor themselves. The revocation is the responsibility of Attorney General Biddle, who requested it in a letter to the Postmaster General."

"We will do everything possible to have *The Militant's* second-class mailing privileges restored, for we are convinced that the Espionage Act does not warrant the stifling of legitimate comment on the war effort."

## Labor Action

An editorial in the March 15 issue of *Labor Action*, which itself was under Post Office attack last week, calls on the labor movement to support *The Militant's* fight to regain its second-class rights.

"The crime of *The Militant* is

the crime of HOLDING OPINIONS which Biddle and his associates do not like!" says the editorial.

"The question of the truth or falsity of these opinions obviously does not interest Biddle. It is probably more accurate to say that what does interest Biddle is that these opinions are generally based upon the truth."

"If the Postmaster General is reversed by the court, it will be a victory not only for *The Militant*, but for the whole labor movement and specifically for the whole labor and liberal press, which the reactionaries hope to intimidate into a state of complete docility by the action against the more radical labor papers."

"If, however, the revocation is upheld by the court, there can be little doubt that the reactionaries will be encouraged to take bolder and more sweeping steps against the labor press."

"In simple self-protection, every labor and liberal organization and publication in the country must express itself in unmistakable language against the autocratic and reactionary decision of the Post Office against *The Militant*, and give unstinting support in the fight of *The Militant* to reverse the Postmaster General and regain its second-class mailing privileges."

## The Nation

An editorial in the Mar. 12 issue of *The Nation* declares that "censorship of the press is in its nature so risky that we favor a rigid adherence to the Holmes doctrine of taking no action except in cases of clear and present danger" and concludes that it is sorry to see the government "set a dangerous precedent" in its cancellation of the second-class mailing privileges of *The Militant*.

## Civil War in Yugoslavia

# Role Of Women And Youth Groups

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

"The Women's Anti-Fascist Front of Yugoslavia" was one of the first organizations formed under the regime of the Partisan central government that was created at Bihac on Nov. 26 and 27, 1942. The first All-Yugoslav Conference of the Women's Anti-Fascist Front convened on Dec. 6, 1942, that is, almost immediately after the adjournment of the Constituent Assembly of the Anti-Fascist Council of People's Liberation of Yugoslavia. Whereas the latter was attended by only 53 delegates, an attempt was obviously made to invest the Women's Conference with a semblance of a mass movement through the participation of "160 delegates from different organizations and 400 guests." (*The Truth About Yugoslavia*, p. 27).

This body claims the support of hundreds of organizations "in all parts of the country (Yugoslavia), in the towns and villages. Some of the organizations publish their own papers." (*Idem.*) The Yugoslav Women's Front publishes its own central organ, *Woman Today*.

Its avowed aim is identical with that of the Women's Anti-Fascist Front created in Moscow shortly after the Nazi invasion.

The Soviet Women's Front has met regularly and has issued manifestoes, appeals, etc., aimed to mobilize the women at home and to further the struggle in Hitler's rear, especially among the Slav peoples. The same line is now being closely followed in Yugoslavia. The thirty-fifth anniversary of the International Woman's Day (March 8) has been widely utilized by the Stalinists to lay the basis for similar organization throughout occupied Europe. The goal apparently is to extend the arena of activity to the United States, Canada and Latin America as well.

Great importance is likewise attached by the Kremlin to the "Anti-Fascist Youth Congress" which first convened in Moscow

at the end of September 1941, about a month after the formation of the All-Slav Rally. At this founding conference, Yugoslavia was singled out and an ovation tendered to her official representative, "Velimir Vlakovich, young Montenegrin, former president of the student federation of Belgrade University, who fought in the International Brigade in Spain and lately as a guerrilla partisan in Yugoslavia."

The Yugoslav section of Stalin's new "Slav Youth International" was founded on Dec. 27, 1942 "with 356 delegates representing the youth of Yugoslavia, including 100 delegates from army units and guerrilla detachments and several delegates from occupied cities." (*The Truth About Yugoslavia*, p. 29.)

A wide mass base is claimed for the youth movement who reportedly comprise the bulk of the armed Partisan forces. It also publishes its own press and in its activity closely parallels that of the central Moscow organization. The first Manifesto issued by the Yugoslav youth section, like the documents issuing from Moscow, is directed particularly to the youth of "the oppressed Slav peoples."

The functioning of the All-Slav Rally and its auxiliaries the Women's Anti-Fascist Front and the Anti-Fascist Youth Congress is in marked contrast to the inactivity of the Communist Parties and Young Communist Leagues of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, not to mention the Communist International itself. Since the outbreak of the Soviet-Nazi war none of these bodies has met or issued any world appeals, manifestoes, etc. Opinions have been expressed in the bourgeois and social democratic press that Stalin has side-tracked these organizations in favor of his new creations. In our opinion it is far more correct to say that the latter merely supplement the former and, at the present time, provide the most expedient public front for certain Stalinist activities.

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## CRDC

The Civil Rights Defense Committee last week issued the following statement protesting Postmaster General Walker's revocation of the second-class mailing privileges of *The Militant*.

"The attack on *The Militant* by the Post Office Department is the first move of this kind taken by the administration against an anti-fascist labor paper during this war. Dozens of labor and liberal publications, including *The Nation*, *New Republic*, *New Leader*, and many civil liberties organizations, such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Workers Defense League, have already protested against this action of the Post Office Department. They have pointed out its resemblance to the suppressions of labor and liberal papers during 1917-1918 by Attorney General Palmer and Postmaster General Burleson."

## BIDDLE'S PROMISES

"In the N. Y. Times of September 21, 1941 Attorney General Biddle was quoted as saying: 'Insofar as I can, by the use of the authority and influence of my office, I intend to see that civil liberties in this country are protected; that we do not again fall into the disgraceful hysteria of witch-hunts, strike-breakings and minority persecutions which were such a dark chapter in our record of the last world war.' 'By instigating this blow against *The Militant*, Attorney General Biddle violates his repeated promises and is using 'the authority and influence of his office' not to maintain free speech and freedom of the press, but to abridge these democratic rights."

"The Post Office Department hearings on January 21 amply demonstrated that *The Militant* has been attacked simply because it has been consistently critical of the foreign and domestic policies of the present administration. If criticism is henceforth to be considered 'seditious', every labor or liberal paper in the country is liable to suppression."

"That is why this action against *The Militant* constitutes the most serious menace to freedom of the press that has occurred during this war. Together with the American Civil Liberties Union, our Committee proposes to contest this unconstitutional action in the courts and to arouse labor and liberal opinion to the importance of this case for the protection of civil rights."

The Civil Rights Defense Committee has its national office at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York City. James T. Farrell is Chairman and John Dos Passos Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

## New Leader

"If the editors of *The Militant* are prevented from publishing, then every American journal is in danger or may soon be in danger," says an editorial in the March 13 issue of *The New Leader*, organ of the Social-Democratic Federation.

The editorial declares that the attack on *The Militant* by the Post Office Department "is clearly an act which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be considered conducive to the more effective conduct of the war."

"The presentation of criticisms of our social and economic system cannot be made to appear what Justice Holmes called a 'clear and present danger.' It does not tend to discourage loyal service in our Army or Navy. It does not turn citizens from our ideals or toward those of the enemy."

"Without freedom of discussion, there can be no democracy. And discussion is not free unless advocates of all ideas not definitely subversive or disloyal are allowed free expression."

"The case is now being carried into the courts. There is good basis for the hope that the action of the Postmaster General will be overruled."

## The Stalinists

Although the *Daily Worker* has thus far confined its comment on the Post Office action against *The Militant* to the reprinting of a brief United Press dispatch, the stand of the Stalinists was expressed on Mar. 9 in an editorial in the Jewish Stalinist paper, *Morning Freiheit*. The editorial began:

"Everyone who is wholeheartedly interested in winning the war against the Axis bandits will welcome the act of Postmaster General Frank Walker..."

And then the editorial continued with the usual slanders and vilifications of the Trotskyist movement. The Stalinists are the only organization up to this time who have approved the attack on *The Militant's* mailing rights.

# Some Lessons Of The Paris Commune

By JOHN BATES

On March 18, 1871, the revolutionary workers of Paris established the Commune. It was the first attempt at the creation of a workers' government, and while that government failed to retain power, still we revere those workers who attempted to throw off their chains, and on its 72nd anniversary we retell the story for it contains many lessons vital to the working class today.

In 1870 Napoleon III was the ruler of a France corrupted and looted by its own ruling class. In the hope of consolidating the prestige of his empire abroad and checking opposition at home, Napoleon the Little declared war upon Prussia and prepared for a series of quick and easy victories.

But the reverse happened. The hollow shell of the rotten French state crumbled before the Prussian armies and in three months Napoleon III was decisively defeated at Sedan and forced to surrender.

With the fall of Napoleon the monarchy was abolished in Paris and a republic proclaimed. Since the workers were unorganized, power fell into the hands of the middle classes. But as the Prussian troops continued to march upon the city, weapons were finally placed in the hands of the workers.

The workers were fired with patriotism and considered it their duty to liberate France from the Prussian troops. But the French capitalists — like their descendants in France in 1940 — considered their own workers a graver threat to their privileges and profits than the foreign invader. They concluded a peace with the German ruler and joined with him in crushing the armed workers of Paris who were the enemies of private property and the capitalist system.

The French capitalists established their headquarters in Versailles and before dawn on March 18, 1871, sent several regiments creeping toward Paris to steal the cannon which belonged to the workers.

The move was discovered and the roused and angry masses of the city, now fully aware of the treachery of their capitalist rulers, seized the city. The French capitalist class declared war on Workingmen's Paris. On March 26 the Commune, composed of representatives from each section of the city, was elected, and for 71 days the Red Flag waved over the city.

This first workers' government, while it was beset by all sorts of difficulties in a military sense, found time to legislate in the benefit of the most exploited class.

All house rents were remitted from October 1870 to April 1871. Night work was eliminated for bakers. Pawnshops were abolished and all pawned goods belonging to the workers was returned to them free of charge.

The Paris Commune immediately embraced the international working class by announcing the "flag of the Commune was the Universal Republic."

This workers' government publicly burned the guillotine, hated symbol of the capitalist rule. It decreed the strict separation of Church and State. It fixed maximum pay allowed to an official of the Commune at the levels of workers' wages. And all representatives were subject to recall by the people at any time.

But after the capture of power comes the task of holding it and using it to spread and deepen the revolutionary struggle of the masses. It was here that the Commune failed. Its tenure in office was but 71 days and its immediate influence was little beyond the limits of Paris itself.

The capitalists were given a breathing spell in which they strengthened their armies for resumption of the struggle against the workers' government in Paris.

With the aid of Bismarck and the Prussians, the French capitalists laid siege to Paris, and through overwhelming superiority of material, crushed the Commune.

While in an immediate sense it was the superior cannon fire which defeated the Paris workers, in a broader sense it was their lack of political development and readiness for the task at hand which was responsible.

The principal reason for the defeat of the Commune was the fact that the workers did not have a revolutionary political party to lead them. In this they paid the price of being revolutionary pioneers. Although the Commune seized the powers of the state, it tried to operate within the framework of the old state apparatus instead of replacing that apparatus, as the Bolsheviks did in Russia 45 years later, with the organs of workers' democracy, the Soviets.

The capitalist state must be replaced by a workers' government, a true democracy — and this can only be accomplished under the leadership of a revolutionary party. This Marx and Engels learned from the Communards and their 71 days of power. This is what Lenin and Trotsky taught.

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