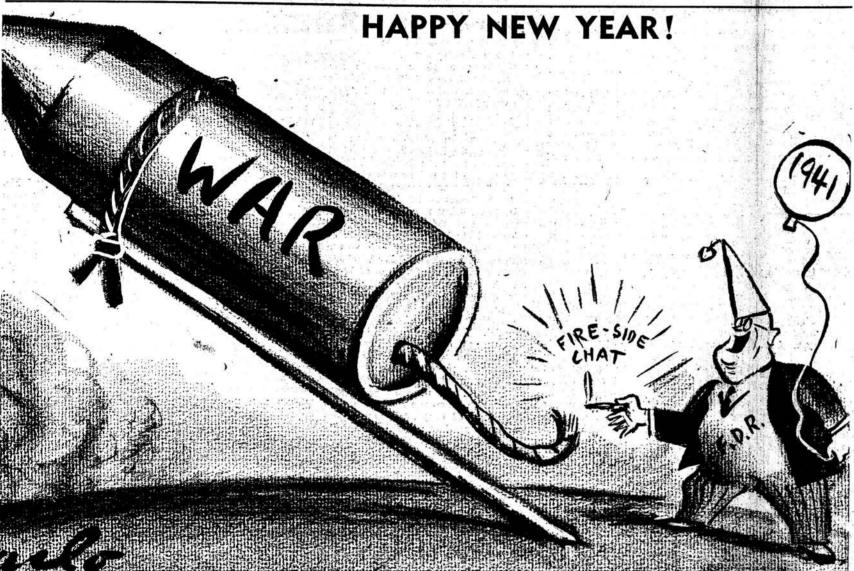
JANUARY 6, 1941

ORGAN OF THE WORKERS PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

THREE CENTS

ROOSEVELT'S INTERVENTIONIST SPEECH WAS NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE PEOPLE!



Northcrop Aircraft **Company Cuts** Hours of Work

Special to Labor Action

LOS ANGELES, Calif.-The Northrop Aircraft Inc. created a temsurprise last week when it announced that the work day would

Some people thought the company was getting kindhearted.

However, it was later explained that the reason the plant was going from a ten hour to an eight hour day was because there was a shortage of basic materials.

"The change will be effective until we can obtain materials in sufficient quantities to restore the longer shift," M.T. Cohn, plant manager,

One of the immediate benefits of CIO union organization would be to keep that 8 hour day as permanent.

At the Boeing plant in Seattle, Washington, where the company and AFL bureaucrats got together, via stool pigeons and ousted militant officers, the company's next move was to go from the 40 hour to a 45 hour week in the body department.

Incidentally, there is quite an argument over the shortage of basic materials between the J.P. Morgan controlled Aluminum Corp. of America, a powerful monopoly, and the local aircraft manufacturers. Apparently Morgan is trying to squeeze even more profits from his lucrative

Lynn Food Union Seeks Rising Scale of Wages

Special to Labor Action

LYNN, Mass. - Foodworkers of Lynn served notice that employers must expect to pay a rising scale of wages to meet higher living costs when the Allied Food Workers, Local 701, signed a six month's contract with Ansell's Hofbrau.

Union spokesmen explained that contracts for longer periods will be signed only when they contain a clause that provides for higher wages as living costs mount. When such clauses are not obtained only short term agreements will be negotiated, leaving the union free to take action at a later date.

The renewed contract with Ansell's won for the workers an increase in wages and protection of jobs for those workers drafted for military

Lively Discussion At Coolidge **Buffalo Meeting**

BUFFALO, New York, Dec. 28-David Coolidge, National Secretary of the Workers Party now on a national speaking and organization tour, addressed an audience of thirty Negro and white workers on "Negroes. Is it Our

Country?' A lively discussion followed the lecture as several Stalinists and other workers took issue with the speaker on some of the points he had made. The audience responded with gusto as comrade Coolidge flayed the Stalinist policy in his summation.

David Coolidge is now in Ohio. From Ohio he goes to Illinois. See page 3 for the full schedule of his tour.

Violence Against Pickets Marks Fifth Month of Creosoting Strike

By S. MICHAELS

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana - The strike against the Republic Creosoting Co., called by District 50 of the United Mine Workers is in its fifth month. The workers went on strike in August for an increase in their \$14.70 weekly wage.

This strike has been called "the most vicious of 1940". One of the strikers, Joe Wildman was driving around the 88 acres that are being picketed, to round up the strikers to eat in the mess tent. 19 scabs opened fire on him. His car plunged into a ditch and Wildman hid behind it until a rescue party of strikers appeared. A bullet passed through the car only two inches from his chest, three bullets tore holes in the windshield and four more pierced the

rear of the car. And while Joe Wildman was dodging bullets from company armed scabs the company was pressing an

injunction suit against picketing because the strikers were using "violence." Two scabs were arrested by deputy sheriffs when one fired two shots and the other brandished a shot gun at two pickets.

Harold Horner, a plant superintendent, in driving a bunch of scabs through the picket line, ran into one of the pickets with his car and pinned him underneath the wheels. His excuse in the court was that the worker "fell" in front of the car. He charged that the pickets were guilty of the crime of overturning the car to release their fellow-striker. The court agreed with the Company. All the scabs and company officials have been found not guilty, but ten strikers have served ten days apiece rising out of these disturbances.

Sheriff Sees Poorly

had seen no violence about the plants and said that it was not his duty "to tell pickets what to do". The company has been asking that the sheriff deputize more scabs to "assist employees to return to work". The sheriff appeared at the next Board of Directors meeting of the Corporation and said "I'm going to take your advice." So pointing at various Board members he proceeded to deputize them, assigning a Vicepresident to the back-gate from midnight to 6 a.m., a banker director to the front gate, etc. Of course, the gentlemen insisted that this it not what they meant. They wanted the property guarded and the scabs aided, but not by them. After all why should they risk their lives and limbs? All they draw out of the business is a few millions in profits.

The wording of the appeal for an "contract with the Government, but is and has been unable to either

President Roosevelt is declaring war on the installment plan. That's the meaning of Roosevelt's fireside chat on December 29. Long words have been found to describe each one of the stages in Roosevelt's road to war. Right from the start Roosevelt lined us up for the

The newspapers called it "NON-BELLIGERENCE". That means: you're in the war, but you pretend you're not, because you haven't yet gotten around to sending the army.

British Empire, just as Russia lined up for Germany.

Imperialist Aims

present, nor do the common people of the country read the American

Banker in which the speech was published (Dec. 11, 1940). Roosevelt's

policy of "hemisphere defense" is called by its right name: good, old

fashioned imperialism. The purpose of aid to Britain is frankly stated

power, and making Britain itself " a junior partner in a new Anglo-Saxon

of fascism. But Jordan goes to the heart of the matter and reveals the

Below we quote a few highlights from Jordan's speech.

real program of Roosevelt and big business.

"U.S. IS ALREADY IN THE WAR"

"hemisphere defense". . . .

pation in the last World War. . . .

Roosevelt may talk about democracy, independence, and the defeat

"Whether this colossal commitment, of which the American com-

"Whatever the outcome of the war, America has embarked upon a

career of imperialism, both in world affairs and in every other aspect

well as political prestige, the sceptre passes to the United States.

"We have no alternative, in truth, than to move along the road we

"Even though, by our aid, England should emerge from this struggle

without defeat, she will be so impoverished economically and crippled

in prestige that it is improbable she will be able to resume or maintain

At best, England will become a junior partner in a new Anglo-Saxon

have been travelling in the past quarter century, in the direction which

we took with the conquest of Cuba and the Philippines and our partici-

munity was, and still is, largely unconscious, was a wise one for the

future of the American people is a debatable but now utterly idle ques-

Association of America.

The day after Roosevelt's speech Al Smith and the New York TIMES invented another word. They called Roosevelt's new stage, "DYNAMIC NON BELLIGER-

ENCE". **Bankers Frankly** That means: you're in the war and make LESS pretense about it. Announce World What was new about Roose-

Mostly the language and the

For the first time, he openly named the "enemy" against. whom he was piling up arms. He dropped all the diplomatic If you want to know the real meaning of Roosevelt's program of language that the head of one 'national defense" and "short-of-war" aid to Britain, read the speech government is supposed to use of Virgil Jordan, president of the National Industrial Conference in talking about another govern-Board, delivered on Dec. 10 at the convention of the Investment Bankers ment with which it is not at At such a gathering the truth could be told-there were no workers

It wasn't "certain aggressor nations" any more. It was "the European and Asiatic war-makers" of Germany, Italy and Japan, "the unholy alliance of as that of making the United States the most powerful world imperialist power and pelf to enslave the human race," "the Nazi masters," and so on.

Now we don't object to harsh language in describing the Nazis. Really, if that was Roosevelt's object then he didn't get hot enough by half.

But we didn't hear any such language from Roosevelt when Hitler's "modern slavery" first got started, with murder and terror against the trade unions and workers' parties. We didn't hear it, either from him or from the British imperial lords, for the following six years, during which Germany ran with workers' blood.

"We may be afraid of the unfamiliar and forbidding word, imperial-HE'S PUTTING THE NEEDLE ism, in connection with the commitment we have made. We may prefer, ON THE PHONOGRAPH RECin the current American fashion, to disguise it in a vague phrase like ORD NOW IN ORDER TO HOP US UP FOR THE WAR.

The workers, who didn't have "Southward in our hemisphere and westward in the Pacific the path to wait six years to denounce of empire takes its way, and in modern terms of economic power as Hitlerism, don't want a war which is waged by the bosses on whose toes Hitler is stepping.

They don't want a boss war which will only wipe out all democracy at home.

That's why Roosevelt is declaring war "on the installment plan". He's like the salesman who tells you: "Lay it out a little at a time and you'll never the dominant position in world affairs which she has occupied so long.

> Roosevelt is hoping we won't know we're in the war until he's got us in up to our necks.

"In effect, Mr. Roosevelt's speech was a declaration of war . . ." said the Seattle Times, with joy.

"Mr. Roosevelt spat in Hitler's eye," said the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, gleefully.

It's a "declaration of war without war," said the Swedish papers happily, according to a Stockholm cable. It's a "declaration of unde-

clared war on Germany," said General Wood, head of Sears, Roebuck. "President Roosevelt's speech

was obviously designed to bring (Continued on page 4)

Stalinists Run ASU Convention Lash Organizes Pro-War Student Movement

NEW YORK CITY-The American Student Union, the Stalinist controlled student organization, held its 6th National Convention over the weckend here. The convention was marked by monotonous Stalinist unanimity. Only one delegate, a girl from Northwestern University, dared to raise her voice in protest against the completely Stalinist character of the war resolution passed by the convention.

The main political keynote of the convention was hit by Bert Witt, Stalinist National Secretary of the ASU, who called for a "Moscow-Chungking-Washington" axis. This slogan, representing both a political feeler of the Moscow government to Washington and a bit of wishful thinking on the part of the American Stalinists, did not, however, prevent the convention from endorsing the present Stalinist line. The convention characterized the war as imperialist and attacked the "aid to Britain" movement, but by its failure to condemn the role of the Soviet Union as a partner and agent of Hitler, gave its objective support to the

Rome-Berlin-Moscow axis. The one delegate who differed from the Stalinists declared that she believed Russia was no longer a democracy, and that Stalin had become "a partner of Hitler in the war." Her objection was quickly overridden and the convention proceeded with the usual Stalinist unanimity.

Few Non-Stalinists This ASU convention demonstrated that the organization is now an almost completely Stalinized groupnot only in leadership and program, but even in membership. The usual minority of non-Stalinist liberals was missing and in their place were desegates of whom at least 90% were Stalinists. The delegates made little attempt to conceal their connections. The figure of Joe Clark, Young Communist League leader, could be seen throughout the convention directing the show from behind the scenes.

The delegates were met with a statement of policy issued by the Young Peoples Socialist League, Youth Section of the Workers Party, which analyzed the history and policies of the ASU. It traced the various turns of policy effected by the ASU, each of them coming immediately after a new Stalinist zig-zag. It ended with some pertinent questions: If your proposed Moscow-Chungking-Washington axis would become a reality, would you, ASU delegates, continue to call America an imperialist country? Would you still refuse to support the war preparations? Or would you turn back

(Continued on page 3)

Really?

We apologize for not reporting it earlier. But about two weeks ago the newspapers carried dispatches from Oslo to the effect that the Nobel Peace Prize would not be given Sheriff Al Feeney testified that he

injunction by the Company raises the 'cry that has become so popular in the last few weeks, that it has a manufacturer or ship the 'phenol' so contracted for, because of the unlawful, illegal and violent acts of the defendants hereinafter specifically set out; that the Government is demanding that said complainant make immediate delivery under its contract". Over two-hundred men have been out on strike these last five months. When working they produce material that is necessary in the manufacture of shells, and for this reason they have been attacked by the capitalist press while the lar bor press has kept quiet. But the strikers care not about the making. of shells. They do care about making a living wage.

Morale and the Boss War

It is now everywhere acknowledged that the military defeats suffered by the Italian forces have been due in great part to the apathy of the Italian soldier and civilian masses, who are very cynical concerning the noble aims of their bosses' war. .

Striking confirmation of the existence of this spirit in the camp of the "democratic" imperialists is furnished by an article written by Major Philip Gribble of the British army about the English collapse in France, published in the Saturday Evening Post for December 14. The following are some excerpts from the article:

"The sad thing is the war's unpopularity . . . It is one of the main causes of our reverses. We have no shouting and singing of national

"There is nothing very phoney about this warfare . . . The lack of conviction, the irresolution, the sense of resignation, and, above all, the sense of indifference, are wholly disillusioning.

These disillusioned English soldiers are not yet singing The Red Flag, as did Italian soldiers captured by the Greeks. But it may be only a matter of time.

FROM OUR WEST COAST CORRESPONDENT

Labor Organizes as War Industries Boom

California puzzled and dazzled the rest of the country for a long time. It was considered the seat of the crack pot political movements ranging from Upton Sinclair's Epic Plan to the Ham and Eggs campaign. Its labor movement centered around the spectacular events of the San Francisco general strike in 1934; Harry Lundeberg and Harry Bridges became nationally known, and obtained publicity far beyond the strength and importance of their unions, compared to other powerful national unions.

But this was California. It was the home of Hollywood, the modern Babylon, the fantastic center of movies.

This was truly the land of make believe. "Grapes of Wrath" was a sour note, no doubt. But, after all, the movie companies did make some money on it, Steinbeck got rich, and the Associated Farmers basked in national publicity, even though it was unfavorable.

It was all taken in stride, without a serious stumble. Now it is different. Contemporary California is as puzzled and dazzled by itself as the rest of the country used to be. Although California doesn't know it, it has become the classic model of America, 1941 style. In its present development are compressed the whole life and problems of society today.

The war boom has hit California. It sky-rocketed the air industry into the major industrial development here. It created a new and powerful proletariat overnight. It brought wealth and riches to industrialists beyond their most fantastic dreams.

Once people talked about the huge movie salaries and the few millions of dollars made by the cinema companies. Now they try to grasp the fact that a small handful of manufacturers are guaranteed nearly \$100,000,000 profit in the next two years for producing airplanes.

It took the auto and steel industries years of development, monopoly, growth, expansion and hard competition to reach the billion dollar class. Literally overnight, some small fry here found themselves at the head of an industry with nearly one billion dollars in advance orders.

Douglass and the other aircraft companies just can't stand this prosperity. Stories circulate about their blindness and the blunders made by them daily. Other industries spend millions of dollars advertising to sell the product. The aircraft industry is swamped with orders. It catches hell for not producing more and fast enough.

Of course, General Motors is gobbling up Douglass, and the other companies won't stay out of Wall Street's clutches very long. Profits are too juicy to permit independent capitalists. But until this happens, the small fry are playing kingfish.

Confusion reigns at the top of the industry. The U.S. Army chiefs blast the air manufacturers for a lag in production. The industrialists blame the lag on the constant changing of plans by the Army bureaucrats who don't understand industrial problems. Both are right about each other.

Understanding this general situation is vital to the labor and revolutionary movement. It offers the objective conditions for some marvelous forward strides by the union movement. And with the success of the workers, comes the growth of the revolutionary cadres. The prospects are excellent.

The CIO enters this picture with experience on its side which gives much hope for the organizing campaign it has launched. The bosses are swimming in circles from their own production problems. The dizzy pace of developments has them reeling. The CIO can concentrate on one thing: organizing. It is used to dealing with powerful industrial concerns like General Motors. The aircraft manufacturers have the open shop mentality of a small shop keeper confronting a craft union.

To be sure, the CIO has competition—the AFL machinists union. It is competition only in the sense that the aircraft companies might give the AFL contracts on a less adequate basis to keep out the more militant CIO. But the perennial blindness of the AFL leaders precludes any real threat there.

The CIO stands for the great struggles in auto, steel, rubber and other basic industries. The auto workers union is tackling not only aircraft but also hitting at Henry Ford. It has done in the last five years what the AFL never dared do, namely organize the auto workers. The AFL machinists has a lousy record.

The CIO stands for industrial unionism. The AFL machinists supported the resolution at the recent AFL convention giving craft unions the right to take out members from federal unions. Already, local AFL officials have warned the Lockheed and Vega workers that President Brown of the Machinists has agreed to let them be divided up by the craft unions.

Soon the 8,500 workers at the North American Aviation company will vote on whether to choose the CIO auto workers or the AFL pattern makers as sole collective bargaining agent in competition with a company union. The workers should vote for the CIO.

In a sense, this NLRB vote will furnish us with an indication of the trend of the workers towards either the CIO or the AFL. Let us repeat, we hope the workers exercise good judgment and vote for the CIO which has much more to offer them in this field than the AFL.

It will be difficult for manufacturers to stop a union organization drive. The unions can do a great deal for the workers, and the bosses aren't in a very good position to fight them without the most open strike-breaking tactics on the part of the federal government.

But even the Sidney Hillman's are hard put to it in defending the aircraft manufacturers. These gentlemen are simply rolling in wealth and profits. Everyone believes the aircraft workers should get higher wages. This is the unanswerable argument of the CIO in its struggle for the aircraft workers.

This intensified struggle between capital and labor will be the dominant factor in California life in the next year. San Francisco is a strong union town now. The shipping industry is well organized. Now Los Angeles and Southern California are becoming a huge industrial center, and union campaigns are already

The Dept. of Labor estimates that over 425,000 men will be employed in aircraft before 1942. Over 100,000 of them will be concentrated in this area. Los Angeles will become the Detroit of the West Coast at this rate of development.

Just as California is at the peak of the war boom, it will sink to the depths of the post-war crash. This will open a new epoch of struggles. It is common knowl-

New York City
Dear Friends:
I am interested in learning more about the Workers Party and its fight against the bosses' war plans.
Name

City _____

LABOR ACTION

Address

114 W. 14th Street

edge that the end of war means the inevitable collapse of the war industries, with the streets jammed with thousands of suddenly unemployed workers. If they have learned the lessons of union organization, the need for militant struggle, undying hatred for the bosses who exploit them—these workers will not be hopeless and lost souls. They will have the iron discipline of the factory, the education of union experience, and a leadership which arose from its own ranks in the plants.

California workers can prepare themselves for the big days ahead. They seem to be doing a pretty good job already.

And once again this state will undergo a transformation, but this time a fundamental one.

CALIFORNIA "REFORMS" ITS YOUTH

For years there were whispers about conditions at the Whittier State School (reformatory) for boys. About the merciless beatings given by thugs in guards' uniforms to the young boys sent there by juvenile

Mexican youth especially were the target of the bluecoat sadists. The Mexican youth had few friends outside, less pull.

Attempts to investigate the situation usually were forestalled by setting up fake committees which white-washed this hell-hole.

A Hollywood committee headed by Frank Scully finally was able to get its teeth into something when a 12-year old boy was found dead, ostensibly a "suicide."

Despite serious criticism of conditions which came from a state committee, prison officials exonerated the staff. Another youth, 15 years old, was also found a "suicide." This time the situation was cracked wide open. Competent testimony revealed that the boy was "hanged" after he was dead.

It was plain, brutal murder. Although threats against other young inmates silenced many tongues a few boys testified. They told how this Mexican youth was repeatedly beaten until he began to lose his senses.

They described how the reformatory was filled with screams of this tortured youth, begging for mercy, while the guards pounded him to pieces.

They told about the solitary confinement for boys which made Alcatraz seem like a resort center. And they gave evidence that flogging was the chief "disciplinary" measure employed to teach these youth, victims of a lousy society, how to be good citizens.

Reading a transcript of this testimony is like reading the story of the Gestapo concentration camps. But this exists in California, and the victims are kids.

So far the murderers have escaped any punishment. It has taken a powerful campaign to force a hearing which is to begin next week, after continual postponements.

No doubt, the prison authorities in the state will seek to push the blame on the shoulders of a few minor scape-goats. And a few petty bureaucrats will be penalized one way or another in an effort to appease the liberals who raised the issue.

But nothing can erase the indictment of this society

But nothing can erase the indictment of this society which leaves no path open to hundreds of youth except to struggle for a catch-as-catch-can existence, and then subjects them to a reign of terror, and torture, and death for not making good in a big way and becoming respectable bankers or industrialists or—other types of thieves.

JACK WILSON

Dear Mary:

Ted and Sis are getting married, sometime next month. He is making between \$22 and \$25 a week, and Sis has a job which gives her about \$12 more. They can manage all right on that. Of course either one of them may lose the job, he may get drafted or any one of a hundred other things may happen. You have to figure things down so fine these days that any one small thing can upset all calculations. However they are a couple of swell kids and there is no use waiting, the future may be worse, probably will be. Guess I'm blue, probably got a Christmas hangover!

That shop where Ted works is a real sweat-shop. He was telling me about it last night. He works on a press and gets paid piece work. And it depends on what kind of a job he gets whether he can make anything. But the pay-off is that when he is waiting for his press to be set up or waiting for work to come in he makes the hourly rate—57½ per hour. And often that is more than he can make on piece work. And the only minimums the boss will talk about is the hourly minimum. He refuses to raise the piecework rates.

Ted says the union is weak, not more than half in the shop belong and there is no contract. Everytime they have started negotiating for a raise the boss has given them a small hourly raise and that has stopped any further action, the piece work rates stay the same. The plant has about half women workers and there is always a row going on between the women and the men, and between the tool makers and the press hands. They don't seem to understand that unless they all stand together the boss will win. He plays one group against the other. Ted has a scheme that he is going to propose at the next union meeting. I'll let you know how it works out.

I saw a good one in the paper last week. You know the Defense Commission that the Government has set up to mediate labor disputes? Welln there was a threat of a bus strike on the Greyhound running between New York and Chicago. The Defense Commission persuaded the union to delay action. Now by what stretch of the imagination could a bus line come under defense? It only goes to prove that any and all industries will come, and quickly, "under this emergency" (I can hear the sweet tones of FDR). And in the name of defense they will try to break unions of the pants pressers, the share croppers, the carpet makers and what have you. Well, we'll show them they can't do that to us.

Guess this is all and best regards to Joe and the kids.

Sally

Imperialism Writes Its Profits In the Blood of Countless Millions

By JACK WILSON

Aiding the Chinese people defeat Japanese imperialism is a noteworthy and progressive action. It strikes a blow at the enemy of all colonial peoples: world imperialism.

While Europe suffers from the effects of war, increasing in its intensity daily, China still qualifies as the stamping ground of the Four Horsemen of the Apocolypse. Any account of the miseries of the Chinese people always bring to mind the question—How can human flesh stand this much?

Knowledge of this situation is so common that many people here felt rather good about the news that the American government announced new loans to the Chinese government. Of course, the Great Father in the White House was given credit in most newspapers for another noble humanitarian deed.

Mr. Roosevelt, after all, was a democrat, we were reminded. America in world politics has more than merely materialistic motives. Doubters were asked to look at the loans to China.

Well, we did just that. First we learned that loans to colonial countries are a time-honored device for strapping that country to the specific imperialist exploiter. The U.S. has several times in the past "loaned" money to China---and not always by request. Then, aided by a remarkable interview published in the Los Angeles Daily News and given by Nicol Smith, author and Far Eastern explorer got another slant on the loan. Mr. Smith drew no conclusions. His facts, however, speak for themselves. We checked them with a qualified expert on the Far

China is to repay the United States partly by shipping its tin supplies from the fabulous mines of Kochiu in the province of Yunan via the famous Burma road to this country. This transaction will help liquidate the loan. In other words, the new loan to China was primarily a business deal by which the U.S.A. received a much needed war metal,

What's wrong with the United States doing that? Why shouldn't America feel it is helping the Chinese people by buying the tin mined there? Just a little trifle, to some people.

Slavery for Children

Let us tell you in Mr. Smith's words about the tin mines in China. Remember them the next time you open a can of fruit or vegetables. Perhaps the tin came from China.

"The tin from Kochiu is mined by 25,000 children, sixty per cent of whom are under 10 years of age. None of the children miners are over 15 years old.

"The children, when running about the town present an appearance more fantastic than those seen at the Grand Guignol horror shows in Paris before the war.

"The bodies (they work naked, you know) have been tinted green by the arsenic content of the stuff in which they work. Then the red dust from the tin settles over their sweating bodies—you add to this their natural yellow hues and you have singular appearances.

"These children are sold into slavery by their families. They earn a penny a day. The first year, 20 per cent of them die. The second another 20 per cent.

"Some die later, after twelve lunar

months of work in the mines, when they return home. Altogether 53 per cent of them die. "The mine shafts are so small, you

know, that only a child could enter them.

"The working children sleep in long barrack-like rooms. There is no sanitation system. Most of them suffer

from inherited venereal diseases.

"They do not receive their penny a day wages, which are sent to those who sold them into slavery. Most of them soon learn to escape the horror of reality through fantastic dreams furnished by opium.

"One tenth of the world's tin supply comes from the Kochiu district. The mine owners here are fabulously rich.

Hold Meeting For Waller In the Bronx

A meeting in defense of Odell Waller, Southern Negro sharecropper sentenced to death for having shot his landlord, was held on Friday, December 27, by the Bronx Sections of the Workers Party and Young Peoples Socialist League. The meeting was held in the large Negro neighborhood in the Bronx.

Stating that the case of Waller was a case of national importance because he represented the rebellion of the Negro worker against the landlord system, Irving Howe, New York organizer of the Young Peoples Socialist League who was the speaker of the evening, described the series of events which led to the conviction of Waller. He told of the economic difficulties in which Waller found himself, of the attempt of Davis, his white landlord, to defraud him of his crops and of Waller's last, desperate gesture in shooting Davis because he feared Davis was about to shoot him.

Howe then described the life of the typical Negro youth in America. He demonstrated that from birth until death the Negro suffers the tortures of Jim-Crow discrimination. In child-hood, in school, in employment, in the army, in every phase of life the Negro worker is the victim of the boss' discrimination. The speaker ended with a plea for Negro and white cooperation in order to build a united movement for Socialist liberation.

The meeting closed by sending a resolution to the Governor of Virginia demanding the release of Waller.

"One has a yearly income of \$16,-000,000 American money.

"They contribute heavily to the war chest of China, and for that reason the new order of Chiang Kaishek as yet has not interfered with their methods of working the tin mines.

"Having so much money and nowhere to send it—although they are so rich they have their private armies—they gamble most of the time. And then they smoke opium, dressed in their bond street clothes."

U.S. Gets the Gravy

And now the United States, through the diplomatic maneuvers of the humanitarian Roosevelt, gets the main benefits of this almost unbelievable exploitation of the Chinese children. Clever peoples, these Roosevelts. Japan's blundering imperialists can hardly refrain from admiring such finesse.

It's all done under the guise of aiding the Chinese people. Readers of English history might

Readers of English history might recall how shocked the English people were when Jonathan Swift satirically proposed that the poor children be eaten to put them out of their misery.

Civilization has progressed since then. The world doesn't bother with satire anymore. That is why we say that it will

take only a few more similar acts of kindness by Mr. Roosevelt to reduce China into a semi-slave state, a vassal of American imperialism squeezing out Japan in their bloody struggle for domination of the Far East.

In the ghastly story of the mines of the Kochiu, each word written by the broken bodies and pitiful cries of anguish of helpless children, the Chinese people are learning the painful lesson that all imperialist nations, Japan, England and America as well, are their enemies. And that a Chinese mine owner is no different from a Henry Ford.

Du Quoin Victims Pardoned

Five victims of a grave injustice have finally been released, by Governor's pardon from the Illinois jail in which they have been kept for

s six years.

So comes to an end the work of the Du Quoin Miners Defense Committee which, supported by the United Mine Workers and the Progressive Mine Workers, has for six years pressed for the release of the boys. The Committee rallied labor to its cause by calling attention to the circumstances under which Olis Battaglia, Sam Ferro, Barney Bossetto, Robert Shingleton, and Emery Albers were railroaded to jail by a jury of farmers after the five had been cruelly beaten, held incommunicado and shifted from jail to jail. The first were serving life terms, the last a forty years sentence.

How It Happened

In 1933 the United Mine Workers and the Progressive Miners were engaged in a bitter struggle for jurisdictional control in the Illinois mine fields. On the night of April 6 a stray bullet, fired by an unidentified person, killed Laverne Miller. The shooting followed a pitched battle between strikers and nonstrikers at the United Electrical Coal Co. strip mine near Du Quoin. Feeling between the unions was at white heat. Violence was rampant throughout the Illinois coal fields.

In this setting the five boys were arrested and railroaded to prison. Two of the boys were members of the Progressive Miners, one was a member of the United Mine Workers, one was a student just out of high-school, one was an unemployed garage mechanic. Under the severest duress, they signed "confessions" which they repudiated when brought to trial.

No shred of real evidence connected them with the killing. The prosecution mobilized every device at its command to convince the jury of non-workers of the boys' guilt. They were given the maximum penalty short of death. Thus, they became the victims of conditions arising out of the miserable situation in the coal fields—poverty, unemployment, no relief.

Every person, the least bit acquainted with the situation in the Illinois coal fields at the time, petitioned for their release. Hundreds of labor, political, cultural, civic and religious organizations asked the governor and the Board of Parole to free the boys. Yet it took six years to save five boys from death in prison for a crime they did not commit. That's the way boss "justice" works!

Party News

BOSTON—The Boston Branch is conducting house to house activity in the Negro neighborhood, concentrating on a few blocks, and visiting them every week. After four weeks of steady work, one member was able to sell 25 copies of LABOR ACTION in two hours, and to distribute several other copies free. The Boston Branch is encouraged by the results, and have increased their bundle order of LABOR ACTION again.

BALTIMORE — A Branch of the Workers Party of 8 members has been formed in Baltimore, Maryland.

ST. LOUIS—The St. Louis Branch of the Workers Party reports that affairs are progressing steadily. A study class is to be started again. The Youth group is beginning to function better, and recently sent delegates to a Youth Congress gathering, etc. Members are active in their unions. LABOR ACTION and the New International are well disposed of.

CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Branch of the Workers Party is arranging a series of 8-10 lectures on elementary Marxism for a class of contacts obtained in the recent period. In addition, discussions are being prepared on Fascism and Big Business LABOR ACTION has been distributed in recent weeks before factory gates of a big auto factory organized in the United Autò Workers.

Many of the comrades are very active in trade union work, one having been an active force in a recent strike.

The Last

article in the series on FASCISM AND THE WORLD WAR by Max Shachtman will appear in the next issue of LABOR ACTION. This article will deal with the policy of the Workers Party. In addition we will publish an article by David Coolidge on the

article by David Coolidge on the Negro worker and the "Defense" Industries. Comrade Coolidge writes us that the pressure of engagements made it impossible for him to complete his article, based on interviews with workers on his national tour, in time for this issue. But he hopes to have this and other material ready for the next issue.

To See or Not to See

By Susan Green

Well Concealed Tripe

"The Philadelphia Story"

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer attains here its too-oftenunattained objective—entertainment. There are a flock of amusing situations. The dialogue is snappy. Katherine Hepburn makes of the main character, Tracy Lord, a captivating little snob. James Stewart does a reporter with his usual ingratiating humor. The manly Cary Grant gives a good account of himself as the stillloving first husband of the heroine. There is a diverting young busybody, played by Virginia Weidler, and Roland Young who is funny just to look at, and many other pleasing features. No doubt the crowds who wait more than an hour for a seat, think it was worth the wait.

But when all is said and done the story is superficial and hackneyed, and has to do with people whose blood is blue not red—the Lords of Philadelphia, blue-bloods of the deepest dye who, in the midst of the "50,000,000 shrunken bellies," continue to pursue happiness with such trifling advantages as mansions, huge estates, stables, cars, swimming pools, champagne parties. Here is the story for what it is worth:

Old man Lord pursues happiness in the shape of a New York dancing girl. This is a skeleton in the family closet, as is also the love life of Tracy, beautiful, unpredictable daughter of the house. It seems that because of her hypocritical, better-than-thou puritanism, she divorced her loving but hard-drinking first husband. (This smells strongly of "Susan and God"). Tracy is about to make another try at marriage, but this does not come off.

A couple of hard-hitting lectures from husband No. 1 and from her erring father result in her going on a champagne binge—apparently to free her inhibitions. At dawn, Tracy, the pure, is being carried from the swimming pool in the arms of this very attractive reporter, who has been hanging around to get the story of her wedding. The straight-jacketed husband-to-be draws the obvious conclusions from the situation—which happen to be wrong—and the marriage is off.

Presumably the goodness of the champagne and of the reporter's kisses—that is as far as he went—have made Tracy realize that man's desire for liquor and dancing girls is not to be condemned. She forgives her father—or vice versa—and remarries her ever loving first husband.

This tripe has been made so toothsome an entertainment morsel that the uncritical audience accepts, with its laughter, the futile existence of this good-for-nothing bunch of parasites.

I Prefer Conrad

"Victory"

It would be a good thing if Hollywood admitted to itself that, even with the best intentions on its part (which are often absent), the written word is a much better vehicle for certain moods and meanings than the movies can hope to be. Conrad's "Victory" must, I think, necessarily be better off between the covers of a book. At any rate, this screen version has left out everything that distinguishes the original from the runof-the-mill South Sea yarn. Conrad gave importance to the story not only by his clear-cut character delineations, but by his philosophic slant. One can imagine him sadly shaking his head over life: "See how life is. Here was this man Heyst, a civilized soul, wanting nothing but to be left alone. But being civilized, he had great compassion for suffering and was compelled, in spite of his better judgment, to help. That was his undoing." Nothing of this gets across the screen.

The victory-theme of the film is the usual "good man plus good girl kill off one or more villains and live happily ever after". But Conrad wrote "Victory" over this story with tongue in cheek, for he ended it with disaster for Heyst and for the girl. Heyst tried to save her from a sordid life but could not defend her from the desperado's gun. But the girl dies with victory in her heart for she holds in her hand the knife that was to have brought death to her beloved Heyst. She does not know that he will die anyway.

Such fine shadings were apparently too much for the producers. They have turned out just another movie—graced, however, by a very fine cast.

Success Story

"Dispatch from Reuter's"

"Dispatch from Reuter's"

My knowledge of the development of the world-famous Reuter news agency—which presumably got going more than 100 years ago with the use of carrier pigeons—is very flimsy. So I can't tell how much of the film is historical biography and how much Holly-wood. However, I can say that the strong Horatio Alger overtones made me lift a skeptical eyebrow.

According to the film, Julius Reuter, known at first as the crazy pigeon man, succeeded in getting his carrier service established against tremendous odds. When the extension of the telegraph put his pigeons out of a job, he conceived the idea of the telegraphic news service—only to be ousted by the telegraph company itself when it went into the news distributing business on its own. So Julius, not to be outdone, slung up a few wires on his own, and of course was able to get the news quicker than all the rest.

Following the usual Hollywood formula, the Reuter of the film was motivated only by public service, love of a free press, and devotion to truth. (Parenthetically, I might say that during the days of Lenin and Trotsky the fameus Reuter agency distinguished itself by spreading the most infamous lies about the Russian revolution.) Also true to form is the faithful little woman, always at his side, cheering and helping.

The really bright spots, on the whole, are those in which Albert Basserman appears. He does the part of a slightly slap-happy old artist. Though he over-acts a bit, he seems to be having so much genuine fun doing it that the enjoyment is passed on to the audience.

Did you ask me if I liked the picture? I stifle just a little yawn and reply: "Aw-awright."

Watching the Money Bags

This is one of the numerous propaganda films Hollywood is turning out to assist in the preparation for entry into the imperialist war. It is supercharged with patriotism, and would have the audience believe that, because "your son, my son and the neighbor's son" form the personnel of the air division of the navy, therefore the whole works belong to us. Might as well believe that because "your son, m" son and the neighbor's son" run the factories, the factories are ours, not the boss'. However, one lie is as good as another in attempting to create the false illusion that the armed forces of the boss government belong to the people.

The film does succeed in conveying the thrill of flying and the lure it has for youth. The shame of it is that decadent caitalist society can do nothing better with this marvelous spirit of youth and with the great inventions of our age, than use them for bloody war.

We Want Everything That Rightly Belongs To Us

(The St. Louis Branch of the Workers Party has been regularly sending LABOR ACTION, pamphlets, etc., to sharecroppers in southeast Missouri, most of them Negroes and all members of the CIO sharecroppers' union. The following letter was received from one of these croppers. The "houses" referred to have been built by state authorities since last January, following threats at that time of a new "highway" demonstration by the croppers, similar to the famous one of two years ago, in which the author of this letter participated. Aside from building these houses, no effort is being made by the state authorities to provide for even the barest necessities of life for the croppers and their families, or to protect them from the big landowners. The "Laforge project" referred to, is a cooperative community established by the federal government (the only one so far established in Missouri), which provides a few sharecropper families with decent living conditions, and the opportunity to raise their own food and learn something about sound farming methods). DEAR SIR & BROTHER:

I received your letter a few days ago and was glad to hear from you. This Local is still sticking together Brother—and we do wish that you could come to this Local again. We want you to talk to us again in the near future. Let us know when can you come here again. We meet every night. Listen Brother-we all receive those little books and they was fine to read. Please send us some more kind of good books to read. We often think of you Brother-they say these houses here not for us people that went on the hiway. They won't talk to us much about them houses and furthermore we or not ran for these houses becouse we want home like the Laforge project. Not only that we want everything that rightly belong to us. We or all working togeather. I will never give up the banner of the u.c.a.p.a.w.a. of C.I.O. We started out to win and we must win if we stand up like mens and weamen. Please let me no when you can come back to this Local. Please send us some more kind of lettures to read by return mail please answer soon.

Please let me here from you soon and send me some kind of pamphlet to read. Those you sen was really good.

England at War A Series of Articles by Dwight Macdonald 3. The War Economy of Great Britain

failure of the American 'national defense' program to progress as planned. It is now seven months after the German blitzkrieg against France; the situation of England has grown desperate and it is becoming clear that only large-scale shipments of guns, planes, ships from America will make up for her productive losses from German bombing. Congress has appropriated billions on billions, orders have been placed, great gestures have been made of putting America on 'a war footing'. Yet it now appears that little has been so far accomplished. The current statements of Stimson and Knudsen (who revealed a serious lag in plane production), the open conflict between New Dealers and private industry over increase of steel capacity and diversion of planes to the private airlines—when this much dirty linen gets washed in public, we may be sure much more is still in the hamper.

Much the same situation-and for the same reasons—seems to obtain in

ment is now spending on the war about \$40,000,000 a day. It is expected that in the coming year, England's \$14,000,000,000—which is half again as much as the highest national budget yet borne by the 131,000,000 American people. A war effort on this scale cannot be conducted within the social, political or economic framework of normal peacetime capitalism. War today is a social—though by no means necessarily a socialistic!-undertaking. It involves such enormous expenditures, such wide participation by the whole civil population, such a drastic shift in the national productive effort as to require that production be centrally controlled, planned and coordinated and that the interests of specific individuals, groups and classes be subordinated to the general aim of winning the

The particular war which the Churchill-Labor Government is trying to win has a twofold aspect. To the great majority of the British workingclass it is a war for 'democracy', a war to protect their class interests against the black reaction represented by Hitler. To the British bourgeoisie, however, it is a war against a rival group of imperialist bandits, who constitute a deadly threat to British imperial profits and plunder. Since the British bourgeoisie are still most definitely the ruling class, and since both the Labor and the Tory chiefs of the Government

The papers are now full of the England today. The British Govern- are agreed on the preservation of capitalism in England, it is the second view of the war which is the reality, the first which is the illusion The Churchill-Labor regime is waging an imperialist war, in defense not of 'democracy' but of the British Empire. The nature of this war has determined the nature of the present British war economy.

I can see two methods of getting the degree of centralized State control and coordination of the entire national economy which is necessary to meet on equal terms the kind of totalitarian war economy that has been built up in Germany. A workingclass socialist regime, which puts the most numerous and progressive class in full control of the economy, could build up a war potential in a country like England or the United States which could easily outstrip Hitler's war machine. Or, of course, it can be done by instituting the same kind of a regime as Hitler has-a totalitarian dictatorship exercising rigid control over both the workingclass and the bourgeoisie, and able to suppress the contradictions of the capitalist market. But I doubt that it can be done as the bourgeoisie of America and England-with the enthusiastic cooperation of the important workingclass organizations—are now attempting to do it: by a patchwork 'war economy' built within the confines of democratic capitalism. Let us look briefly at the English exerience as a case in point.

the Government had not used its emergency powers to transfer labor to the most useful work; emergencies were being met by appeals, not by compulsion; "we can't run the war by a succession of Flag Days".

"Flag Days won't win the war against Germany." But for the kind of unstable, uneasy Tory-Labor coalition now ruling England, any too direct pressure against either capital or labor is risky, and Flag Days ("appeals, not compulsion") seem a much less dangerous method of conducting the war. It would not improve matters decisively if the Labor Party took over full control of the war effort. For the Labor Party is also committed to the defense of caitalism, and its leadership also fears to violate property interests and its leadership also must respect the 'rights' and interests of the British plutocracy. Nor is the Labor top bureaucracy any too sure of its holds on the workingclass, which is constantly pressing in a leftward di-

The people of England can organize a war economy as effective as that of Germany only by changing the character of the war-overthrowing the present British ruling class by revolution and replacing it with a democratic workingclass socialist order. This would put an unconquerable morale into the British masses, it would make possible a really planned and coordinated war economy, and above all, it would mean a set of war aims which would call forth workingclass support behind Hitler's lines on the Continent. Or the British plutocracy can do the job in its own way by trying to put into power a native brand of fascism. These are the ultimate choices.

There is another aspect of British war economy, not touched on here, which I plan to consider next week: namely, the relative burdens borne by the workers and the bourgeoisie, and what if any shift has followed the coming into power of the Churchill-Labor Government.

Despite all the laws and decrees. economists noted that under Cham-

THE CHAMBERLAIN GOVERNMENT

Every one now agrees that, for the first eight months of the war, under the Chamberlain Government, England had little more than the forms of a modern 'war economy'. As Fortune (July, 1940) described it: "Englishmen could not recall such a state of laws and decrees. All shipping and ship construction, transportation and food distribution were nationalized . . . A Ministry of Supply with power to decide priorities for thousands of commodities, was assembled and charged with the double task of organizing British industry for war and holding up exports 'to win foreign exchange' to pay for war goods. Yet, as in France, this State control for the first eight months of the war, was theoretical more than it was real, for it, too, sought to reconcile its aspirations with those of private enterprise."

The forms of war economy can look fine on paper, but can prove to be merely forms. (Even the supreme step of nationalization may turn out to be a form merely: thus the French war industries, especially aircraft, were nationalized in the Popular Front period, while those of Germany remained in private hands.)

liament the Emergency Powers De-

fense Bill, giving Government the

widest powers over capital and la-

bor, much to-do was made in the

press about the new 'totalitarian' re-

gime. And indeed, compared to the

laissez-faire policy of Chamberlain,

there was considerable tightening of

the British economy. A month later,

Minister of Supply Morrison was able

to announce some impressive gains

in production of aircraft, guns and

tanks. Unemployment has been re-

duced, civilian consumption curtailed,

non-military imports severely ra-

tioned, a firmer control exercised by

the State over production in general.

months the Churchill-Labor Govern-

ment has been in office, and con-

sidering how desperate has been,

and is today more than ever, the

situation of Britain, one is struck

not with how much but with how

Chamberlain's Sir John Simon has

been succeeded in the key eco-

nomic post of Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer by the equally conservative

and equally incompetent Sir Kings-

ley Wood, whose budgets, like those

of Simon, have been sharply criti-

Not until October was a real ef-

cised as inadequate and timid.

little has been done.

But looking back on the eight

CHURCHILL-LABOR REORGANIZATION

When the new Churchill-Labor which private building and construc-

government, on May 22, twelve days tion will be prohibited except under

berlain the number of unemployed remained well over one million, aircraft production rose very slowly, shipbuilding lagged, and all sorts of profitable but militarily useless luxury and consumers' goods continued to be produced. The reason was that the control of this 'war economy' was in the hands of the same conservative politicians and big businessmen who had built up and controlled Britain's peacetime capitalist system-and who stood to lose by any very drastic or sudden transformation of this system into a war economy. It is true that this loss would be merely immediate and temporary, and that victory in the war will mean huge postwar profits for the British ruling class. In this sense, an effective war economy would be a shrewd 'long-term investment' for the British bourgeoisie. But history goes to show that, so long as big business itself remains in direct political control of the war economy, immediate property interests are not effectively curbed and the result is pretty much of a compromise patchwork. This is the situation in England in this war.

from the Commissioner

Works.' Measures like these were, of

course, taken in Germany years ago.

Unemployment has been reduced,

but not very much. The latest figures

to hand show 829,000 unemployed in

the middle of September. Many of

these, of course, lost their jobs be-

cause of the curtailment of consum-

ers' goods whic hthe Government

has been carrying on. But it is a

severe indictment of the regime that.

despite its desperate need for in-

dustrial production, it is unable to

Finally, with a few exceptions

such as Laborite Hugh Dalton in the

Ministry of Economic Warfare, the

representatives of the business com-

munity are still in control of the key

posts in the British war economy.

Beaverbrook, the millionaire pub-

lisher, heads the Ministry of Air-

craft Production. The aforementioned

steelmaster, Sir A. Duncan, in Oc-

tober replaced Laborite Morrison in

the vital Ministry of Supply. And so

on down the line. These gentlemen

are still hesitant about invoking too

drastically against their class col-

leagues the enormous powers they

possess on paper. Thus in Commerce

Reports for August 10, we read: "The

compulsory powers available to Gov-

ernment have been invoked sparing-

ly, reliance being placed on volun-

tary cooperation as far as possible."

What this means is that, as in the

case of our own War Industries

Board in the last war, one group of

businessmen, temporarily represent-

in gthe collective interests of the

national bourgeoisie, sit down to

bargain with another group of bus-

inessmen, representing each his own

private interests (by no means nec-

essarily synonomus)-and the result

is at best a compromise, at worst a

stalemate. England is in no situation

today to afford either luxury.

use these workers.

Hounding in Store for Aliens

As alien registration drew to a close last week an announcement by Earl G. Harrison, Director of Alien Registration, made clear that legal sanction for the hounding of aliens is in the offing.

B Despite the fact that the alien registration legislation specifically exempts the alien from carrying his registration receipt and guarantees him from reprisals, Mr. Harrison can only call questioning of aliens by local officials, employers and assorted. snoopers, "premature."

In the first place, the Director of Alien Registration explained, some 2,000,000 of the nearly 5,000,000 aliens ve not yet received their registration receipts, and secondly, a trifling matter, it is illegal, "at the present time" to quote Mr. Harrison, to ask a non-citizen to produce proof of

Likewise Mr. Harrison reminds the local coppers and town constables that enforcement of the Alien Registration Act is the responsibility of the Federal Government. "While at the proper time the collaboration of the local authorities may be sought", at present the herding and harrying of the foreign-born is in the hands of

the gentlemanly G-men. The registration period is over, the consoling promises of Congress have served their purpose and can now be discarded. The foreign-born worker, with his name and record neatly tabulated and indexed, can look forward to a future of constant surveillance and supervision.

Students-

(Continued from page 1) to your collective security period and become the super-patriots you were

War Dealers Meet

At the same time that the Stalinists were putting on their show at the ASU convention, a group of War Deal students were organizing a movement of their own-the Student League for Progressive Action. Inspired and led by Joe Lash, notorious on the American campus as the unofficial agent of the Roosevelt administration who acts as recruiter for the New Deal and its war preparations, this convention of handpicked "liberals" timidly endorsed the "aid-to-Britain" movement and the Roosevelt administration.

President Roosevelt sent a message of encouragement, and Eleanor made a speech to start off her protege Joe's new outfit. But the meeting was particularly uninspired. Even the "student leaders" who were preparing to corral American youth in FDR's conscription camps couldn't get very enthusiastic about it.

For Labor Action -Join Workers Party

American Capitalism Gets an Outline Of Its Economic Program for the War

By FRANK DEMBY

Ever since the last war, the intelligent capitalists of this country have been analyzing the experiences of World War I in preparation for the inevitable outbreak of World War II. These analyses involve not only military preparation, but also economic preparation. The fruits of the economic investigations are to be found in a little book, called WARTIME CONTROL OF PRICES (written by Charles O. Hardy and published by the Brookings Instituiton, Washington, D.C. in September, 1940-price \$1.00).

Mr. Hardy proposes a very simple program - rigid control of prices. This includes all prices, not only the prices of the commodities which we have to buy and which the Government must buy in order to carry out the military program, but wages and rents as well. The only exception to this program is profits. In order to concentrate all energies on the war effort, all restrictions on the efficient (cheap) mobilization of both human and natural resources must be abandoned-at least, for the duration of the "emergency" period.

Reforms Go First

That this is the real program of the American capitalists can be readily seen from a few comparisons of what is recommended by Mr. Hardy with what is actually going on "Walsh-Healey Act be suspended for the duration of the war emergency." The Navy Department has recently made this proposal, because it has made more difficult the letting of contracts by the Navy. In other words, one of the key reforms of the New Deal—that companies serving the Government should maintain "adequate" standards of pay and working conditions-is to be thrown into the waste paper basket because capital is insisting that the sky is the limit for profits. What a commentary on this Second World War for Democracy!

Mr. Hardy, in effect, is for outlawing strikes in "national defense" industries. This has not as yet been enacted into law, but what a campaign the capitalists and their agents are putting on to accomplish this: Only the conscious and determined opposition of organized labor can prevent this undermining of one of the fundamental and hard-won democratic rights of labor. Similarly, for the 40 hour week, time and a half for overtime, WPA, relief and virtually everything else that can possibly be considered progressive. If the workers permit the capitalists to carry out their program, all of these will be abolished.

The experiences of World War II to date shows that in many ways the civilian population (if one can speak of a civilian population as separate and distinct from the armed forces) plays a key role in the maintenance of national morale. When prices rise substantially and the real income of the population declines, the capitalist understands that it is more difficult

reasons they were apprehended.

Labor Action,

Name

Address ...

114 W. 14th St.,

New York, N.Y.

to convince the population at large of the justness of the war. Fragmentary reports that have reached us so far indicate that, on the average, prices have risen 50% and the standard of living has declined by at least one-third in all belligerent

To be sure, the cost of the war must be borne by the people in the form of declining standards of living, for from an economic point of view, war is sheer and unadulterated waste. The problem, however, is to sugar-coat the declining standard of living so that it appears not to be as great as it is. This is made especially necessary by the experiences (still within the living memory of many adult citizens) that every belligerent country experienced during and after the last war with inflation, catastrophic declines in living standardsa few making millions in sharp contrast to the remainder of the population - and the general economic breakdown which is the inevitable

aftermath of war.
To all these considerations, there is added another, which makes the current problem of price control even more fundamental than at any previous time in the history of capitalism. Capitalism has clearly entered upon its period of decline. Discussion of what the new order of things will be after this war is unavoidable. The ruling class, as a whole, is keenly aware of the impact of the war ciety. They wish to make as certain as they can that any controls introduced - in fact, any governmental measures of any type whatsoevershall not alter the basic foundations of capitalism.

A Blueprint for War

During the First World War, the cost of living rose some 60% in the United States. Certain commodity prices, such as sugar, butter and meats, rose between 100% and 200%, and in some of these cases rationing was required. In all the warring countries today, on top of the substantial price rises and inferior quality of many commodities, rationing of many essentials is already in effect. The Government is not only interested in this problem from the point of view of its effect on the standards of living and, therefore, on civilian morale, but in the most direct way it is concerned with the

cost of the war effort.

war to it.

Defend Victims of British "Justice"

We have just learned from English friends of the persecution of a

Under the conditions of the war, information is, naturally, very scant.

group of militant Negro colonial revolutionaries, who are now in jail await-

ing trial in London: These militants were engaged in a campaign for the

liberation of colonial peoples now living under British imperialism. For these

But for that reason, their case is all the more serious They need help and

they need it at once. The Editorial Board of LABOR ACTION calls upon

all readers of this paper to contribute for aid to these colonials. Money is

needed immediately for their defense. Send your contributions to:

The more prices rise, the greater is the cost of the war to the Government. The greater the cost of the war, the greater the necessity for increasing taxation of all sorts. Increased taxation is always a difficult measure for any popularly elected government to resort to, because it is sure to raise a storm of protest from one or more sections of the population. Hence in a very practical and direct way, the government is interested in such a study as Mr. Hardy has made from the point, of view of cutting down the cost of

What emerges as outstanding in Mr. Hardy's discussion is that al-

though he is speaking about controlling prices during the present period-that is, one of national "defense," when formally speaking, the country is not at war-he himself makes the admission that the problems which confront the organization of the "defense" effort are substantially the same as they would be if the United States were actually engaged in war. So what we have is a primer or a blueprint of what is in store for us during the next five years-which is the legal limitation at present of the "emergency" period.

The second outstanding fact that Mr. Hardy, and we may be sure the members of the government as well, realizes is that: "The problem of economic organization in time of war differs from that in time of peace in that it is essential to concentrate productive energies on an abnormal emergency objective-that of winning the war." All energies must be devoted to this end. Everything else is secondary, including to be sure, the preservation of those democratic rights, for which, presumably, the war is to be fought.

Sees Tight Control

Since controls were required during the last war. Mr. Hardy correctly assumes that even more extensive controls will be required this time. The only question in his mind is the character of these controls and the efficacy of some of these controls as compared to others. The conclusion implicit in the book is that far more extensive controls will be required this time than last. While the author does not say so directly, in view of the criticisms he makes of the methods used during the last war, the implication is clear that such far reaching controls will be required this time that the difference between the economic setup in the United States at war and that which prevails in totalitarian countries will be very slight indeed.

Another outstanding feature of the study is that no matter what proposal is discussed or proposed, there is always a conscious emphasis on the necessity for maintaining profits. Even in discussing the price-ceiling plan of Mr. Bernard Baruch, who was Chairman of the War Industries Board during the World War and also a member of the Price-Fixing Committee, the necessity for establishing such prices which will yield profits even to the high-cost producer made quite clear. This, in spite of the title of the book (privately printed) in which Mr. Baruch presents his views - TAKING THE PROFITS OUT OF WAR. For example, in summarizing the lessons of the last war, Mr. Hardy states: "There was undue reliance on the excess profits tax to correct unnecessarily high prices paid by the gov-

From a technical point of view one of the few shortcomings of the book is that it omits any real discussion of profits and their control during wartime. But what else can be the meaning of the passage quoted than a defense of the necessity of industry making profits in order to organize a war effort "most efficiently?" And, of course, the experiences of the last war and the present war to date show very clearly that war is a profitble undertaking for the capitalist class, or at least for the most powerful sections of it, even if it means untold misery and privation for the masses of the population.

Labor Takes Rap

That the plans discussed in this book are thoroughly reactionary from the point of view of labor and the mass of peoples is not surprising. But what is surprising is that the entire reactionary program of the war department should here be set down in black on white for all those with eves to see. First of all, the author advocates "compulsory labor at wages which the worker is not free to reject" for those directly employed

by the government. It should be obvious that the number of people directly employed by the government represents a far larger proportion of the total population this time than in the case of the last war. Since the conception of the war effort which Mr. Hardy has, in common with the rest of the capitalists, is that all that matters is winning the war-not how the war is won and what the effects of the various methods will be, he quite logically proposes, for example, the suspension of the Walsh-Healey

If one has any doubt of the intentions of big business, just read very carefully the following excerpts from Mr. Hardy, which clearly speaks for them: "To take the position that labor

should make no contribution toward carrying the economic burden of the war would be indefensible . . . If labor is to make any economic contribution to the cost of the war, the cost of living must rise more than the wage rates." Again, "Unemployment benefits should not be permitted to act as a drag on re-employment." Hence out of the window with WPA, relief-and perhaps even with unemployment insurance.

Since Mr. Hardy (erroneously) attributes the 1937 collapse to increases in wages, it is only natural that he is against any wage increases during the war period, except in a few exceptional cases, The Government would be given by Mr. Hardy the authority to review and decide all collective bargaining agreements now in effect. "All restrictions on hours of labor, except those that serve a bona fide purpose of protecting workers' health, must be abrogated." Compulsory payments of time and a half for overtime must be abolished. By not-too-well-concealed implications. Mr. Hardy is also for the outlawing of strikes. Shades of Hitler! This is the real program of the capitalist class, for which the workers of America will be told to lay down their lives.

This investigation of the experiences of American imperialism in controlling prices during the First World War, with recommendations for price control during the Second World War, was undertaken at the request of the United States War Department. Therein lies the tremendous significance of the book. It represents the policies which the capitalists are considering and proposing in relation to the economic control of the nation. It goes without saying that labor cannot look to its own defense unless it knows and understands the plans of the Government. The book should really be compulsory reading for every trade unionist-indeed for everyone who does not live off the fruits of other people's labor.

SCHEDULE FOR COOLIDGE TOUR

January 18 Denver January 21-27 Los Angeles San Francisco January 28-February 1 Seattle St. Paul Louisville Columbus Pittsburgh **Baltimore** Washington Philadelphia Worcester Boston

January 5-11 Chicago January 12-15 St. Louis January 16-17 Kansas City

February 24-25 February 27 New York

February 3 February 6 February 7-8 February 9-10 February 11-13 February 14 February 15-17 February 18-19 February 20-21 February 22-23

fort made to stop the wasting of productive facilities on luxury goods, and even then only a stopgap measure was taken: imposition of a 24% sales tax. The sale of new automo-

biles was stopped only in October, and the sale of silk stockings and silk underwear (which had diverted much needed silk from the armed forces) was prohibited only this month. Most incredible of all, according to Commerce Reports of October 5: "A civil building control similar to that in the last war becomes effective on October 7, under

LABORITE SHINWELL ON THE SITUATION

In Time for December 9 last, there was an interesting report on a speech recently made in Parliament by a Labor member, Emanuel Shinwell:

In a powerful, reasoned and disturbing speech, Shinwell shocked the House by declaring: 'Unless we can with speed and with utmost efficiency reorganize our resources . . . victory may be beyond our grasp.' Laborite Shinwell went on to denounce the Government's propagandist optimism ('The people of this country have no desire to be fobbed off with an exaggerated optimism which has no

foundation in fact.') and the Government's inconsistent announcements on industrial production . . . Shinwell then gave some pertinent figures to back up his claim that shipping losses were 'ominous' . . . Since the beginning of July, shipping losses have been at the rate of 4,000,000 tons a year. Against this the Admiralty's shipbuilding program aimed at only 1,250,000 tons in the first war year, and even this figure was not reached. Lord Beaverbrook had upped aircraft production at shipbuilding's expense, said Shinwell;

Editorials

OUR PROGRAM AGAINST THE WAR

- 1. Not a man, not a cent for Wall Street's war. All war funds to the unemployed.
- 2. For a rising scale of wages to meet increasing cost of living. Thirty-Thirty \$30 weekly minimum wage-30tour weekly maximum for all workers.
- 3. Expropriate the Sixty Families. For Government ownership and workers control of all war industries-aviation ,steel, chemicals, railroads, public utilities, etc.
- Against both imperialist war camps. For the Third Camp of World Labor and the Colonial Peoples.
- Let the people vote on war. For the right of youth to vote at the age
- 6. Abolish secret diplomacy. Open the files of the State Department.
- Withdraw all armed forces from terriory outside the United States. Free the colonies. Hands off Latin America.
- 8. Against compulsory military training and conscription.
- For the defense of civil liberties and workers' rights. Stop the persecution of aliens. Against the M-Day Plans and war-time dictatorship.
- 10. For full social, economic and political equality for Negroes. End discrimination against Negroes in industry and trade unions.
- 11. For an independent Labor Party. 12. For Workers' Defense Guards against
- Fascist and vigilante attacks. 13. No confidence in the Roosevelt government. For a workers' government and a people's army.
- For Peace through Socialism. For the Socialist United States of the Americas, for the Socialist United States of Europe, and for the World Socialist

Great Struggles Pend in Auto

Workers at the Lincoln plant of the Ford Motor Company have voted to authorize a strike. Workers at Chevrolet Plant No. 9 are going to take a similar vote next week.

These are two important actions, and on their outcome much may depend.

The issue here involved, as in virtually every strike now-a-days, is whether or not labor can defend and improve its standard of living in the face of organized "defense" hysteria, There are other issues as well, all of them important-but none so important as this.

For years, the United Automobile Workers has sought to organize Ford. With threat and terror Ford has managed to stave off union organization in his plants. And now, despite his infamous open-shop record, and in violation of various labor acts, Ford has been given sizeable war contracts by the Army and "Defense" commission. To wage an organized union struggle in a Ford plant is therefore both a test of further Ford unionization and a resounding slap at the government unionbusters.

Many manufacturers, emboldened by bulging profits and government support, are seeking to disregard union conditions and demands. So, for example, in Chevrolet Plant No. 9, the company has failed to abide by its collective bargaining agreement and union grievances have piled up. However, it is the men at the machines who have the final say. The boss may think he can go along on his own merry way. But without the men there is no production—and no profit.

A strike will, of course, bring a terrific increase in the vicious barrage already levelled at the workers. Ford, General Motors and the government will do their utmost to break the strike should either one or both, be called. There may even be some union leaders-of the Hillman or Green type- who will counsel retreat, agreeing with the bosses that labor cannot strike at this time.

But that is precisely the point. Labor CAN strike if it so decides, and nobody, except labor itself, should be allowed to decide differently. The UAW has, through its spokesmen, defended the right to strike, warned the bosses that labor will not yield this right. Good. That is the way for union leaders to speak. That, and not the needs of boss "defense," should be a union leader's concern.

Back in 1936 the organization of the auto workers was the impulse behind the wave of union organization that swept the country. It can play the same role today. Already, the strides in aircraft organization by the UAW have done much toward priming labor morale, stiffening it up for the greater struggles that will have to be waged against war-time repression.

The successful strike in Vultee brought better conditions in a whole series of plants. It spurred union organization in aircraft. In the same way, will successful

union action in the great auto factories of Flint and Detroit go far towards promoting the spirit of union militancy and organization in America.

On Housing

One third of the nation is inadequately housed. That is a fact established beyond contest. If anything, it is an understatement.

New and cheap housing is, therefore, one of the principal needs of the many millions who are now compelled to live in disease-ridden slums. Here and there, the government has scratched the surface of the nation's need by replacing slum shacks or tenements with fairly decent low-cost dwellings.

Of course, the few housing developments have come nowhere near a real tackling of the situation. But the problem doesn't end there-even for those slums that have been eliminated. Very often, the evicted slum dwellers cannot afford the new dwellings, so severe are the restrictions in the new housing projects. And just as often, those residents who are evicted so that the slum area may be torn down, are forced to move into dwellings as bad or worse than the old

This situation is illustrated, for example, by the plight of the Lincoln Square Tenants in New York City. They welcomed the City administration's plan for a housing project. But what, they asked, shall they do while the project is being built? and what are their chances of getting into the new project? So far, the City administration has offered them nothing more than an information service which they can consult in the finding of new

What this means for the tenants, many of whom are Negroes and many of whom are on relief, is clear enough. They are being forced to quit one slum tenement for another. The Negro tenants may even be compelled, by the vicious race prejudice of boss society, to pay more for worse rooms. And after all that, when the project is finished, their chances of getting into the new buildings are exceedingly slight. Relief clients, for the most part, are not excepted into the housing projects. Race discrimination is almost a matter of

The same story can be told for virtually every project built in and out of New

What to do? Tenants must band together, as have the Lincoln Square tenants, to make their needs and demands known. That is a good, and necessary step. More than that, however, the union movement (the organized arm of labor) must make this an active part of its business. Most unions, and the whole of the CIO, have already incorporated into their programs the housing needs of the masses. These should be concretized by specially organized union action, aimed not only at slum eradication, but also at compelling adequate governmental provision for those evicted from the slums.

Business First

Yes, it must be admitted that not all the American capitalists see eye to eye on World War II. Though most of them see their interests as best served by a war alliance with Britain, there are a few who prefer friendship with Germany.

We learn, for example, that a Mr. William Rhodes Davis is behind the "No Foreign War Committee" which has lately provoked a furor in the newspapers. Mr. Davis, it is said, has offered to underwrite the Committee's expenses which cover, among other things, full-page newspaper advertisements.

But the measure of Mr. Davis' opposition to Roosevelt's foreign policy is equal to his own short-sightedness. Having gotten large contracts for the sale of Mexican Oil to Germany and Italy, Mr. Davis finds himself in a business disagreement with the rest of the Sixty Families, and consequently at odds with their spokesman, Roosevelt.

Wall Street's "idealistic" interest in the war against Germany is exactly equal to the amount of profit it expects to gain. As it happens, Wall Street represents the generality of capitalists in the United States. And Mr. Davis is in the position of a dissenter whose "idealistic" profit interests conflict with those of his class brothers. Pay-triotism in both cases is spelled with a \$ sign.

So much, therefore, for Mr. Davis, and for the "No Foreign War Committee."

Roosevelt Declares War "On the Installment Plan"

(Continued from page 1)

home to the American people the central fact that the war going on in Europe is our war, even though the United States is not now-and may not immediately become—an active belligerent," said the New York Sun. (Notice the five words between the

Did you notice what Roosevelt left out of this speech? It was his usual "pledge" that he's going to keep us out of a LAST-DITCH WAR for the

What he promised this time was that there would be "far less chance" of getting into it, if we did what he

In another place all he said is that 'our ability to 'keep out of war' is going to be affected by that outcome," that is-by the British Empire's fight.

He opened his speech by explaining that "the whole purpose of your President is to keep you now . . .

The Workers' Militia

"In working out the necessary concrete and practical reply on the question of the militia we should say: we are in favor not of a bourgeois militia but only of a proletarian militia. Therefore, 'not one penny and not one man' should be given for a standing army or a bourgeois militia, even in such countries as the United States, Switzerland, Norway, or the like. Moreover, we see in the freeist republican countries (for instance, in Switzerland) an ever-increasing Prussification of the militia and its prostitution for the purpose of mobilizing the troops against the strikers. We can demand: the election of army officers by the people; the abolition of every military tribunal; the equalizing of the rights of foreign and native workers (an especially important point for imperialist states which like Switzerland are exploiting an ever larger number of foreign workers and in an ever more shameless fashion, without granting them any rights). Further, we can demand the right for every, let us say, one hundred residents of a country to form a free union for the study of military affairs, the freely elected instructors to be paid by the state, etc. Only under those conditions could the proletariat actually, for its own benefit and not for the benefit of its slave owners, study military affairs; and the interests of the proletariat absolutely demand this study."

- From ON THE SLOGAN OF DISARMAMENT, December, 1916.

Our Readers— Take the Floor

FRET OVER IRELAND Dear comrade Editor:

A variety of persons appear to be concerned over Eire. No less a personage than President Roosevelt asks, Would Irish freedom be permitted as an amazing, pet exception in an unfree world?" if Hitler should be victorious.

A columnist in the New York Post, Ludwig Lore, voices his fear that Eire's neutrality in the war may cost the Irish friends. Eire, it seems, while a member of the United Kingdom, won't play cricket in this second World War and refuses to come to the aid of Britain.

Eire, Mr. Lore says and Roosevelt implies, can retain the modicum of independence achieved after centuries of conflict with the British, only by turning her territory over to the British to be used as a battleground against Hitler. According to Mr. Lore, only "Irish psychology" can explain their peculiar unwillingness to return to the clutches of the British imperial lion.

Actually, neither Lore, nor Roosevelt, nor Churchill nor a single one of the pack of sorrowing "friends of Irish freedom" are at all interested in the fate of the Irish people. All their anxiety is concentrated on the inability of the British navy to utilize the Irish ports to protect British

"Irish ports for the British navy." Only a peculiar race with a peculiar Irish psychology could possibly see anything incongruous in such a situation! Certainly not Mr. Lore and his counter-parts of the London Spectator and the Manchester Guardian! "If the ports become a matter of life and death-for Ireland as well as England-there can be only one way out: we must take them," writes the London Spectator.

"Of course," Lore regrets, "the old bitterness between Britain and Ireland would be revived."

Yes, the old bitterness would be revived. The centuries-old struggle between the Irish people and the British exploiters would burst into new flame. The new generation of Irish patriots will not forget their heritage.

Ah, but that perverse "Irish psychology" that frets Mr. Lore and his colleagues in the defense of Great Britain, "the last great democracy in Europe". What a lather those gentlemen will work up when they begin to examine the peculiar psychology of the Indians in India, the Negroes in South Africa, the Arabs in North Africa and all the other diverse peoples that compose the crumbling British Empire!

> Fraternally, -Tom Vaughn

SAYS WE MUST KEEP STRIKE WEAPON SHARP

Dear Editor:

Isador Lubin, Labor Department statistician, testifying before one of the numerous congressional snooping committees said that there were fewer strikes in the past five months than in the same five months of 1916. This period of 1916 was also a time of preparing for imperialist war. Also, there have been fewer strikes

this past five months than the same five months of 1917 when the U.S. was already in the first world imperialist war. Lubin said there have really been no significant strikes this year. Of course Lubin will never make

the bosses believe that there have been no significant strikes this year. Both the bosses and the workers know that the Vultee strike was significant. It was a victory for the workers. They didn't get all their demands but they won substantial gains. Furthermore, they won these gains under their own steam and without the "aid" of the government or some "arbitrator." They remained on the picket line until the bosses came across. This made Vultee strike significant both for the workers and the bosses.

The bosses don't want anymore strikes; they may lead to more victories for the workers. That's why they have instructed their yes men in Congress to introduce anti-strike bills. The workers should learn once again from such events as the Vultee strike that the strike is our most powerful weapon. This weapon must be kept sharp and not be permitted to become dull and rusty through the substitution of "arbitration" for

Fraternally,

O. Beron

RENEGACY AT ITS WORST

Dear comrade Editor:

The other night I happened to hear over Station WEVD an interview between Dr. William Bohn and that erstwhile revolutionist, Max Eastman.

We are all familiar with examples of cynical renegacy, but Eastman touched new depths - sufficient to arouse even the oldest of participants in the revolutionary movement.

During the course of his interview Eastman endorsed Roosevelt and Winston Churchill; approved of the Dies Committee; recommended the ousting of all "Communist" teachers from the school system; declared for full support to Britain-including a war declaration if necessary; approved of the necessity for a military dictatorship in America during war time; etc. Talk about going over 'whole-hog" to the extreme patriotic camp! Eastman has done this and is eating the hog whole, in ad-

Yours. Sherman Stanley

Playing Safe

The Vichy government Tuesday sent out an official reprimand to the French press.

Disclosing that specific censorship restrictions are being reduced from 384 to 90, the government complained of "the fact that newspapers have fallen out of the habit of making comments", and have "for some time been limiting themselves to reproducing identical texts of government communiques and bulletins".

preservation of American independ-

In other words, the way to stay out of a "last-ditch war" is to fight at

the first ditch. Roosevelt has reached the point of ditching even his anti-war PROM-ISES. That shows what they were worth in the first place.

NOW his promise runs as follows: There is no intention by any member of your government" to send an expeditionary force to Europe.

We'll bet he hasn't any such intention-at the moment. His army isn't prepared to be sent anywhere. except maybe to break a strike.

What his actual intentions are, for THIS installment of his war with Germany, has to be gathered from the news - columns alongside his speech.

There are three war steps under consideration in Washington now. (1) To LEND American warships and airplanes to Britain, for use in

the war, or to LEASE them. (2) To use American warships to convoy British merchant vessels for protection against German sea-raids. (3) To seize the foreign ships bottled up in American ports by the

war and then turn them over to Churchill. Now just suppose the Germans are shooting at a British merchant vessel and are careless enough to hit

an American warship which is con-Or even if they sink the ships we lend to Britain, and which the United

States still owns. . . . Why, that'd be practically as if the Nazis were attacking our shores,

There's No Excuse For Ignorance

Norman Thomas, national chairman of the Socialist party, in an address before the fourth National Youth Anti-War Congress at Madison, Wis., declared:

"The President's chat was a very skillful presentation of a very difficult problem, but the President did not greatly commit himself one way or the other. The fact is that we don't know much more now than we did before. It is hard to imagine a more clever performance than the President gave.

(N.Y. Times, Dec. 31) Well, it's obvious that Thomas doesn't know.

wouldn't it? Roosevelt could then make another fireside chat appealing to all "our patriotic indignation." Of course, Roosevelt didn't men-

tion any of these proposals in his speech on Sunday. He just DOES them, when he gets good and ready. Then if any one objects too much, that man is breaking our "national

Come to think of it, why didn't sevelt bring this declaration-ofwar speech and these proposals before the American people BEFORE the recent elections, instead of springing them the very next month after he got another four-year lease on the White House?

During the election campaign he used to put a lot more feeling into his promises to keep us out of war. Roosevelt has gone from "neutrality" to "non-belligerency" to "dynamic non-belligerency", to naming the enemies of the country, to "common cause with England"-all without a single authorization from the people or even from Congress.

All Congress seems to be around for is to vote a lot of money for more guns. Where's all the democracy in this

war going to? Now, workers who ask questions like these get some special attention in Roosevelt's fireside chat.

They're the people, you see, who try to stir up "internal strife." Shut your mouth and don't be a fifthcolumnist.

The fifth-columnists, says Roosevelt, "try to turn capital against labor, and vice versa.

Now turning capital against labor isn't a job that has to be done by fifth-columnists or anybody else. But the vice-versa-that's the prob-

lem for the bosses. "The nation," says Roosevelt, "expects our defense industries to continue operation without interruption by strikes or lockouts."

The day after this speech the auto workers voted to authorize a strike against Ford. It must be the other part of the nation that Roosevelt has been listening to-the bosses. It seems that Henry Ford has been

stirring up internal strife by firing workers for union activity. The workers' answer is the strike. If the auto union goes through with

its threat, once more the boss press will raise the same wolf-like howls as over the Vultee strike in aircraft. Roosevelt's words give the basis for all the "patriotic" strike-breakers. His words are only the echo of what all the boss associations are yelling for-prohibition of strikes.

If the workers are called on to sacrifice their demands and conditions for the sake of "national defense" and "national unity", let them remember the following passage from Roosevelt's speech.

Let them take it seriously even though Roosevelt uttered it only as the demagogue: "I would ask no one to defend a

democracy which in turn would not defend every one in the nation against want and privation."

THE NEGRO'S FIGHT-

The Fatalists Speak Only For Themselves

By JACK MANN_

There is a growing tendency among Negro intellectuals to take a fatalistic attitude towards the future of the Negro. This fatalism consists of many elements, depending on the individual. But at bottom it can be expressed as a complete lack of confidence in the ability of the Negro to overcome the obstacles imposed by American capitalism (at least not in our time).

Because this attitude has paralyzed the articulate Negro "leadership" in the United States, their disillusionment has had the effect of discouraging any serious attempt at organizing the Negro masses for the defense and advancement

THINGS AS THEY ARE . . ."

Roosevelt has also helped to "pacify" a good number of "radicals" by giving them soft administrative berths, where their function is to "integrate" the Negro with the least possible resistance into the Jim Crow status quo. Other Negro intellectuals receive handsome grants for "sociological" and other studies which solve their personal problems but don't seem to give them much time to worry about their less fortunate brethren.

These indirect bribes (and that's what they are in most cases), have corrupted the Negro intellectuals to the point where their whole outlook is adjusted to "making the best of things as they are.'

But the 15 million Negroes in the United States, who every day face lynchings, unemployment and hunger, disfranchisement and degradation cannot adjust themselves with ease to "things as they are." Every moment of their lives they are forced to constantly fight with their backs to the wall for the most elementary human rights. What hope for them?

At the present time, in the midst of America's preparations to enter the war, Negroes are being barred from new jobs created by the war boom. They are Jim Crowed and discriminated against in the armed forces which are supposed to defend our American "democracy." In Brownsville, Tennessee, the lynchers of Elbert Williams are free to carry on the intimidation of Negroes who wish to exercise their right to vote. Fifteen states still have Jim Crow laws of one type or another, while it is practiced in every state, law or no law. In Virginia, Odell Waller is condemned to death because he defended himself against a landlord who threw his family out of their home and deprived them of their share of the crop. . . .

A BOLD ORGANIZATION NEEDED

But all this is not news. It has been a permanent feature of "our American way of life." The fight against these conditions requires a bold, vigorous, militant leadership which will not compromise the needs and aspirations of 15 million Negroes for a few soft jobs on various meaningless government committees and commissions-which leaves the mass of Negroes just where they were.

Such a leadership would recognize that the Negro's fight will not be won by petitions and letters to the government, or through the courts of the bosses. It would rally the masses of Negroes in the United States into a powerful organization which would be able to show the bosses and their government that the Negro is not helpless and is ready to defend and fight for his rights. Such an organization would give confidence and hope to the millions of Negroes in the United States who are at present unable to carry out any effective action in defense of their rights. It would realize that the most reliable ally the Negro has is the white working class, since they are also oppressed and exploited by the same capitalist system that keeps the Negro in subjection.

There are some Negroes like George Schuyler who see through the sham of American "democracy" and also recognize that the present war is not being fought for "democracy", but for the continued exploitation of the colonies. He knows that regardless of which imperialist camp wins the war, the lot of the Negro people will undergo little change. But that's as far as Schuyler can see. Like so many others today, he sees only TWO camps in the war, but unlike the others he says "a plague on both your houses"-the Negro has nothing to gain from supporting either.

In his own words: "We are caught in a trap from which perhaps we cannot extricate ourselves, but at least we don't have to fool ourselves into believing that the trap does not exist."

Next week we will show why this attitude is both fallacious and at the same time plays into the hands of the imperialists.

No Comment

. Out of 5 known and 10 suspected murders by lynching in 1940, reported by the NAACP, "not one of the lynchers . . . has been punished by the States". Of the 5 lynchings, 2 occurred in Georgia, 2 in Alabama and one in Tennessee.

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