U.S. Capitalism Lost Its Ablest Statesman

Roosevelt, Far-Sighted Strategist of His Class

By MAX SHACHTMAN, Nat'l Sec'y, Workers Party

With the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt, American capitalism has lost

His breadth of vision and his political stature in general may well be measured by comparison with the man he succeeded in the presidency of the country, Herbert Hoover. The "Great Engineer" was helpless in the crisis that began in 1929. His answer to the mounting problems of the day was the pious hope that somehow, soon, the machinery of production would start moving again. Meanwhile, all the unemployed, whose number increased every week, were freely offered the opportunity to go into business for themselves-selling apples. The farmers of the country, with agricultural prices tumbling down to an all-time law, and their farms being foreclosed by the thousands, were advised to pray.

The result was a growing dissatisfaction in the industrial and agricultural population. Workers gathered in the streets for the largest and most menacing protest demonstrations seen in this country in generations. Farmers rioted with guns in hand against evictions and foreclosures. Increasingly, this dissatisfaction was directed not only against the government but against the whole social system of capitalism. People began to understand that there was something fundamentally wrong with the famous system of "free enterprise" if millions could remain out of work, hungry and homeless, in the face of the most powerful and wealthy economic machine in the history of the world. The continuation of Hooverism for another period would undoubtedly have stimulated the growth of an independent and aggressive class movement of the American workers. Hoover could do nothing about it except to hope, to pray, and to have veterans shot in Washington.

Roosevelt undoubtedly saved the situation for American capitalism. He was intelligent enough to see that things could not continue as they were for much longer without the country facing sharp class conflicts. With a series of swift measures, he began to free the hands which capitalism had got caught in the stopped gears of its own productive machinery.

Drawing heavily on the tremendous financial resources of a wealthy country, he proceeded to "prime the pump." Farm prices were artificially raised in order to appease the agricultural population, or considerable sections of it. Public funds were poured into the purses of the big industries and transportation systems, which were mighty quiet in those days about "government intervention" into the precious system of "free enterprise." Millions of unemployed were given jobs, mostly wasteful, by civil and public works administrations. Other millions of unemployed were put on a modest relief list. Hundreds of thousands of young men were taken away to "conservation" camps

FDR'S LABOR POLICY

By some masterly strokes, the new administration won the warm allegiance of the workers in general and the organized labor movement in particular. Labor's right to organize and bargain collectively was legally recognized. The uglier aspects of the capitalist anti-labor machinery, like the spy-system and private armies of thugs, were either outlawed or toned down. Labor looked upon Roosevelt as its most powerful friend and protector, the best man it had ever had in the White House.

Better than any capitalist in the country, Roosevelt understood that unless these concessions were made to labor "from above," labor would not only take these concessions by itself, but would surely take much more, and take it in pugnacious battle against the "economic royalists." No other President had ever intervened so directly and continuously in the affairs of the labor movement. None saw so clearly the importance of keeping the labor movement under the velvet - touch control of the government, in which labor was given a few concessions for the surrender of the independence by which it could have made gains that would make these concessions look exactly as modest and tiny as they really

But not even Roosevelt could move beyond the limits set by the crisis of American capitalism, despite all the resources at his disposal. His second term ended with the announcement by the American Federation of Labor in January, 1940, that there were still 10,000,000 workers unempoyed. Roosevelt was able to moderate the class struggle, but not to abolish it. Labor, though appeased, had acquired new confidence in itself by virtue of the increase in the number of organized workers. It demanded more. Capital, though its profits were rising at a brisk rate, had also acquired the confidence it lost in the earlier days of the crisis and demanded still more for itself and less for labor.

Roosevelt was able really to get out of the crisis and the depression only because the country was

LABOR ACTION

April 23, 1945

A PAPER IN THE INTERESTS OF LABOR



ONE CENT

SAN FRANCISCO POINTS TO BIG 3 WORLD DOMINATION

President Truman's Record

By HILDY JOHNSON

"I feel as if the sun and the moon and the stars have fallen on me." These are the words that Harry S. Truman, thirty-second President of the United States, is reputed to have uttered when informed of the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt and of his succession to the Presidency. And his

plea to Washington newspapermen was, "If you ever pray, boys, pray for me now.'

It is not surprising that the Vice-President, traditionally the forgotten man and comic butt of American politics, should be overwhelmed at the prospect of stepping into the sevenleague boots of the man who was America's most brilliant capitalist politician. Neither in the ranks of the Democrats nor in the ranks of their opponent party is there a politician or statesman who is anywhere near the stature of Roosevelt.

TRUMAN'S QUALIFICATIONS

There is a general feeling of dismay in the press about the disparities in capabilities between the Missouri dirt farmer and his aristocratic Hyde Park predecessor, whatever the attempt to build the new president into a world figure. It is significant that the qualification of the new president that the press has been making most of is his "loyalty." For labor, whose leaders have for too long slavishly followed Roosevelt and now hasten to give full support to Truman, it is important to understand to whom the loyalty is given.

Truman was given the nomination to the vice-presidenty at the last Democratic convention because of his loyalty to the Democratic party machine. The city bosses, southern Bourbons and disgruntled Congressional politicians, chafing under Roosevelt and yet unable to nominate any other figure who could win an election, turned down Henry Wallace and nominated Truman, as a reminder to Roosevelt that they were still in the saddle.

In spite of latter-day attempts to show Truman as a great liberal, his political career has hardly been a distinguished one. After a business failure in the early twenties, Truman was brought into politics through the efforts of Jim Pendergast, the nephew of the notorious Boss Pendergast of Kansas City. In 1934, Truman was the presiding judge of a Missouri county court and definitely a smallpotatoes politician. One day Truman

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The plan of Dumbarton Oaks now being realized in the San Francisco Conference is the fruition of imperialist power politics. It is the result of power politics because the Big Three na-

tions decided all important questions at Yalta, in proportion to the might of arms—itself the product of the weight of industrial wealth of the respective countries.

While the old League of Nations gave at least formal equality to its participants, the world security conference accords votes only to the Big Five. The smaller nations, the oppressed or satellite countries, may only "advise." So tense is the struggle for world domination, the big powers may not risk whatever meager demands these nations might make.

> (In such a setting, they must laugh at Ghandi, who plaintively rejects the Indian delegation because it wasn't elected to approve the ready-made decisions.)

The narrowed opportunities for exploitation of the world do not permit even a five-way split of power. Proof of China's subservience is contained in its reply to the "Polish question" (Tass):

"The Chinese Government, in its reply to the Soviet Government, declared that it had not adopted a decision in this question so far. The Chinese Government gave as a reason that, in view of the negative reply of the British and American Governments, the question of consent or non-consent of the Chinese Government would be of no significance."

This is mere realism on China's part!

The whole question of Po-

(Continued on page 3)



plunged into the war. Ten million unemployed were eliminated - and more than ten million men were put under arms. The inustrial machine that not even Roosevelt could get to operate to maintain and enrich the life of all in peacetime proved to be a high-speed, full-time mechanism only for the purpose of killing millions in wartime.

SAW AHEAD OF HIS CLASS

Yet even in the question of the war, Roosevelt saw farther ahead than his class. He knew that the United States would have to take an active and dominant part in the battle for world rule, not only in

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Gov't Evicting Missouri Tenant Farmers managers have been acting in a way closed. At another unit, the wash BOR ACTION as follows: "Here are the houses. We think this is awful." In response to the Congressional

instruction to the Farm Security Administration to put up for sale at public auction the Delmo Labor Homes Project, the farm laborers of southeast Missouri who occupy the 580 homes sent a delegation to Washington to present a petition protesting this action and demanding that the homes be sold to the present occupants on terms which they could

These homes were established by the FSA as a result of a highway demonstration in the winter of 1939, when some 1,500 sharecropper families camped on the public highways of Missouri in protest against eviction from the shacks in which they were then living. Now these same families are faced with another eviction-this time at the instigation of the United States government.

BACK TO SHARECROPPING

These homes were ordered sold to compel the farm laborers to return to the vacant, uninhabitable shacks on the plantations where they would once again have to take up life as sharecroppers. It is against a return to this kind of existence that the residents of the project, who now work on nearby cotton plantations as wage workers, are protesting.

The petition taken to Missouri senators and congressmen by a delegation consisting of six project residents and officers of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union brought about the introduction of legislation which would authorize the FSA to sell the houses to the present occupants on long term payments. The delegation was assured that while this legislation was pending, no changes would be made in the operation of the projects. That is, no sales would be held

and no evictions enforced. Hardly had the delegates returned home, when they found that the local managers of the project had begun to take steps to drive the tenants out. Without taking formal steps to sell the houses or to counteract the promise made to the delegates, the local street's within a stone's throw of the

to try the patience of the resi-

One of the things that they have tried is to provoke a conflict between the Negro and white residents. For example, they have discontinued the water supply in one of the units which is occupied by Negroes, and

house was closed for about ten days. The laundry facilities have been cut down to three days a week for whites only in a third unit. In still other units, where the families were out working on nearby plantations,

some of the things that are happening on the Delmo Projects. Some of the residents of the project who went out to make share crops to help produce food for the war and did not give up their contracts are up against it. Their houses are being opened by taking the hinges off the doors, and the furniture taken out. Some of the

Thus does the United States gov-

ernment keep its promises to a group and women. The government is acting just like any other hard-boiled landlord. The farm laborers of southeast Missouri have shown before that they knew how to organize effectively against hard-boiled landlords, and we know that they will do it again.

Two Citizens: One In 2B; One "To Be"

THE CASE OF DE LORENZO

He is to be inducted into the armed forces on April 26. Aged 36, he has a wife and three

Last August he was sentenced to thirty days in jail or payment of a \$500 fine for giving "false information" on a civil service application. He appealed and has been free on bail. The Army does not take men under bail but was so anxious to have this "criminal" that a federal judge was recently persuaded by the Selective Service office in New York City to lift the bail.

WHY SO NECESSARY TO ARMY?

Why is this "undesirable person" -old by present standards of the armed forces and with a "court record" besides-so necessary to the

De Lorenzo is an outstanding leader in the United Automobile Workers Union, president of Local 365, the fighting Brewster local, which every unionist knows about.

He has also been a leader in the (Continued on page 2)

THE CASE OF HENRY FORD II

The DeLorenzo case will remind you of many others in which the draft machinery was use to "get" real union leaders.

It will remind you, on the other hand, of the case of Strickland, agent of the Dies Committee, who was recently revealed to have escaped induction again and again, so that he could carry on anti-labor activities.

It will remind you, too, of hundreds of big shots in supervisory and managerial ranks, who were so, so necessary to war production that they had to be deferred.

Take Henry Ford II.

A fine, strong young fellow in his middle twenties.

After leaving Yale without graduating, he worked for the Ford Company for a year, "NEVER ASSUMED ANY GREAT AMOUNT OF RE-SPONSIBILITY" (New York Times, May 27, 1943), then got a commission in the Navy as a second lieutenant.

For two years he was assistant to the director of training, whatever that

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dents of the project and to make life impossible for them.

for a while they kept the wash house

the hinges had been removed from the doors and the furniture moved out. One of the residents writes to LA-

furniture is now sitting out beside

of underpaid and hard-working men

Why the London Dockers Struck

By DOUGLAS ROGERS

On Thursday morning, March 1st, dockers at the Royal Albert Docks, London, struck work. Within a few hours the strike had spread to other docks and by Saturday, with between 7,000 to 8,000 men on strike, the whole of London's dockland was idle. On Saturday, 150 soldiers were draft. ed to the docks and the number was increased until by Monday there were 3,000 soldiers strike-breaking. But, at the same time, the strike was spreading down river. When the Tilbury men came out, 13,000 men were now taking part in what had become the biggest dock strike since 1926. It

was front page news. Each day the papers carried stories that the men were expected to resume work the next day. But it was not until Thursday a week later that the London dockers began to return to work. The next day (Friday) a committee of enquiry into the administration of the London Dock Labor Corporation began its investigation.

WHAT WAS BEHIND IT?

Those, briefly, are the bald facts. What story is behind them?

When I was told to find out what was happening in Dockland I went not to officials, either at the Ministry of Labor or the trade unions, but to the men who wandered about the

is the place from which to start an investigation into a strike. You will not find the truth in statistics and official statements. And the reception I got from these dockers confirmed

They did not welcome me. In fact, they were intensely hostile. No one at first was prepared to talk. No one was prepared even to admit he was a docker. It was a technique of silence to avoid the inquisition of strangers. It seemed ludicrous, but it was irri- won?"

that belief.

Even more irritating was the experience I had at the local trade union office, which I located with a good deal of difficuty, as it was a bare and paintless shop in a much-bombed district. When I entered I found three men engaged in that exaggerated allgood-pals-together back-slapping talk which is usually affected by commercial travelers in the saloon bar or members of the local Chamber of Commerce over their lunch. One of them disengaged himself and moved

He had the bumptious swagger, the inane, sneering, conceited grin, the half-hysterical aggressive whining voice of the man who has been vested with a little authority over his fellowmen, is enjoying it like hell, but wonders somewhere in the back of his pathetic, sterile mind how long

rows of silent cranes. I believe that he can maintain it. He was a trade mation, and then make statements the dockers' weekly union dues.

"Could you give me some information about the strike?" I began. "No, I couldn't," he said cockily, as much as to say "That surprised you,

"Why not?" "If you want to know anything you'd better 'phone Mr. - at Transport House."

I asked "Is the strike still going "I shouldn't be surprised if Mr. wouldn't tell you that as well!" And so on. This was the trade union

If you wish to understand what trade union bureaucracy means in terms of its effect upon the workers

on the job, think over this: It was the fact that I was ejected from that murky union office within two minutes of my entry that inspired the men on the streets with sufficient confidence to talk to me!

WHY THEY STRUCK

The truth is they had become sick to death of all officials-Ministry of Labor and trade union-and all reporters and all persons with clean hands and faces who make one-day visits to the dock areas, ask questions as if they should be answered by natural right, gather fragmentary infor-

union official. He is paid for out of about the dockers as if they were zoological specimens.

These are the men who, in peacetime, sometimes became so desperate with the hunger in their homes that they fought physically with their bare hands for work; they are the men who, in wartime, have taken the worst of the London bombings, have seen their homes smashed, their mates and families killed, who live now in an area which is a shambles of blitz wreckage, who are driven like cattle under the wartime regulation of labor and whose sons, most of them, are somewhere fighting in the war "for democracy."

The central fact about the strike is that the 13,000 men came out largely because for months they have been living in a system wherein bumptious officials have been ordering them about, bullying and threatening them to such an extent that one docker

told me: "It has been like living under the Gestapo!"

And his mates all nodded their agreement. This is of the utmost importance to everybody; it is of urgent importance

to socialists. It is said that the system against which these men revolted is one fa-

vorable to them. But I spoke to dock-

(Continued on page 2)

By David Coolidge

MASS ACTION:

BLACK MARKET IS **NECESSARY FOR PROFITS**

It has been my contention for sometime that the use of the expession "black market," especially when applied to the meat situation, was incorrect. What is called the "black market" is nothing more nor less than the regular activity of "our system of free enterprise" carried on for profit-making under the "restrictions" laid down by the OPA. The so-called black market is a method used by the big packers, poultry raisers, canners and produce jobbers to raise prices despite the official price ceilings.

There are five big meat packers in the country. They control not only the meat packing industry but also to a large extent the raising of cattle. Altogether there are less than 100 packers of any consequence. Then where do the little fellows get the meat which sells at "black market" prices? From these packers of course, all of whom are members of the American Meat Packers Association. This is an organization like the Iron and Steel Institute which controls the production and marketing of steel and steel products.

The members of the Meat Packers Association may not increase their profits directly right now from their connivance in "black market" operations but they do hope by this procedure to defeat the price control meas-

Time and a half after forty hours

of work is, for most workers in

America, the law of the land. Time

and a half after eight hours in any

given day is a clause written into

most union contracts. The eight-hour

day is the norm in American indus-

In the days when Ira Steward lived

and fought for the shorter work day,

his proposals for an eight-hour day

were considered as radical as socialist

ideas are today. He was fired from his

first job, as an apprentice machinist.

for voicing the "crazy" viewpoint

that twelve hours a day were too

much for a working man and eight

hous a day more than enough. In the

1850's and 60's, twelve and fourteen

hours a day were the rule. When,

through Steward's efforts, the Inter-

national Union of Machinists and

Blacksmiths, at a convention in Boston in 1863, passed a resolution call-

ing for an eight-hour day, it was a

great step forward for the labor

Ira Steward devoted himself to the

fight for the short work day, writing,

speaking and organizing for the

cause. He was organizer and presi-

dent of the Boston Eight-Hour Day

League and the national Ten-Hour

League. With funds granted by the

Trades Assembly, Steward, together

with his close co-worker, Wendell

Phillips, organized eight-hour leagues

all over the country. The leagues

drew their membership from the

workers and the middle classes. They

carried on intensive public agitation

for the eight-hour day and aided the

and the Boston

movement.

ures of their government to the end that they may be granted "legal" price increases. They do this by withholding meat from the market and by conspiring with the go-between shysters to run meat through "black market" dealers.

And now comes one Arthur Winn, representative of the packers, to admit that all of this is true. Winn admitted in testimony before the Senate Banking Committee that many packers are violating price ceilings and are operating in the "black market." The packers don't like the OPA rulings and the price ceilings and they refuse to abide by them. They refuse to submit financial statements to the OPA. One can understand this when it is revealed that the profits of the people have jumped 700 per cent. (That's one for the capitalist press to write editorials about.)

The packers and others in the food industry are only following in the footsteps of the airplane manufactures and other "free enterprisers." If their government refuses to give them the profits which they demand they will refuse to produce, and in the case of the meat producers, what they do produce they sell through the "black market." And nobody stopped them: the President, Byrnes, White House Spokesman," nor OPA Bowles, nor Congress.

As a result of Steward's work, the

Massachusetts Legislature passed a

ten-hour law and in various indus-

tries the ten and later the eight-hour

day was won. In time, Steward's

"crazy notions" about the short work

.Ira Steward looked upon the short-

er work day as the central point in

the fight for the complete emancipa-

tion of labor from wage slavery. The

platform of the International Labor.

Union, which Steward, together with

members of the First International

in the C. S., founded in 1876, stated

that a continual reduction in hours

and the subsequent rise in wages,

would melt "profits upon labor out

of 'existence" and bring about "the

logical step from wage slavery to

wages absorbed more of the profits

of the employers, they, finding it no

longer profitable to run industry,

would turn the factories over to the

workers. This theory led Steward to

ignore the need for independent po-

litical action on the part of the work-

Since he believed that the eco-

nomic struggles alone could bring

socialism, he considered that the ef-

forts of such men as William Sylvis

to establish an independent Labor

Party diverted the workers from the

main problem of high wages. Experi-

ence has shown the fallacy of Stew-

ard's views. The capitalists will never

voluntarily give up their ownership

and control of industry. Only politi-

Steward reasoned that as higher

free labor."

day became part of the platform of

every union and social reformer.

Out of the Past

The capitalist manufacturers and bankers are not impressed by the speeches of Murray and Thomas about the boys dying in Europe because they don't get enough supplies from the home front. They know that the purpose of the dying is to guarantee profits to U. S. "free enterprise." They are not fooled about this. They know that the best patriot is not the youth who dies on the battlefield but the man who remains at home and keeps the profits of capitalist industry at an all-time high. If you want to be a real patriot and go down in history as a man who served his country well the thing to do is to become a meat packer during war time, boost your. profits 700 per cent, boost the cost of living 43 per cent while wages go up only half that amount and the boys die on the front by the hundreds of thousands.

Also the working people should not forget that the meat packers, the automobile and steel makers, the shipowners, the coal operators and all of "free enterprise" had a president who approved their profit boosting schemes, so that they might get their profits not only in wartime but after the war is over. A National Service Act which was demanded chains the working class to the 700 per cent-profit mines,

Ira Steward, Champion

Of the Eight-Hour Day

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE LABOR FRONT

out of it.

UE Local 425 Contract Below Par

NEW YORK - After six months of negotiations, Local 425, United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America, CIO, has reached an agreemen with the Ford Instrument Co. of Long Island City. This contract falls far short of the seventeen-cent increase requested by the union, of the one-week severance pay for every six months of seniority, of the thirty-

into effect. The end result of negotiations was no increase at all for the majority of workers. First-class men are to receive two automatic increases at sixmonth intervals and a few of the lower paid categories are to receive increases by transfer into higher wage groups.

five hour week before layoffs are put

SOME CLAUSES

Instead of the twelve weeks maximum severance pay, only two weeks was granted by the company and this clause placed in a special category of not being used as a precedent in any new negotiations, and not being

extended beyond December 31, the date of the new contract, should there be the necessity of extending the 1944 agreement until a new one is signed. Obviously even now the Ford management is trying to get

before layoffs could be effected, a system of multiple occupational seniority in any department in which he has served for one year. Thus a man with five years of service in three departments, each for more than one year, has five years of seniority in each of these departments. Less than one year of seniority in a department removes him from that group. However, a transfer from a higher paying category back to a lower one (this affects those who have received promotional transfers -mainly the Negro workers, who hired in as unskilled and were subsequently transferred to skilled departments) means a corresponding

This contract is far below the

standard in negotiations set by Local 425 in the past. This has been the outstanding local in the UE for its militant stand on all questions. In a case testing the union's militancy last October, the local backed down. A shop steward was fired for discharging Instead of a thirty-five-hour week union business and the membership permitted the case to be dragged through six months of government red tape with no solution yet. This gave the company its go-ahead signal

> But far more important than this is the set of restrictions laid down by the War Labor Board. The company has been able to use these as an excuse for not meeting the very legitimate demands of the Ford workers. Consequently the union is stumped twice-once in negotiations and even that poor agreement is still likely to be cut more after it reaches the WLB.

as far as the union was concerned.

The fact that labor nationally has given up the strike, its only weapon to coerce the bosses to giving better wages and conditions, has further

permitted the Ford management to refuse the union's demands. Even if no strike took place, with that weapon ready to be used when needed, management would not be able to ride roughshod over union demands.

END COLLECTIVE BEGGING

Labor as a whole must return to collective bargaining rather than its present course of "collective begging." This means leaving the War Labor Board, whose restrictions on wages, in spite of the rising cost of living, have made it impossible for any local to achieve its demands.

And labor must take back its strike weapon, without which it is paralyzed before the onslaught of capital.

Local 425 alone cannot break this vise-like grip upon its militancy and its ability to give its members those conditions so necessary for a decent standard of living. But it can and must take its place with those locals of the American labor movement in achieving labor's goals.

Dep't \$tores Aren't Doing Badly

Stockholders and financial experts who follow the back pages of the newspapers, where the financial news is usually buried, will not be surprised to learn that the profits of American department stores were 1,046 per cent higher in 1943 than in 1939. Nor will these same people be shocked to learn that while these fabulous profits were being made, wages for department store workers remained at their low pre-war levels. They will not be surprised or shocked because these tremendous profits by the department stores of the country only conform with the pattern set for all American industries, war or consumer, during the past few years.

But those workers who believed the WLB and other government spokesmen when they claimed that it was necessary to keep wages low in order to prevent the price of conto be shocked at the fraud and hypocrisy of that claim. They will ask, as they read the figures given below, five-cents-an-hour department store employee? And they have a right to

Two reports have just been made

At the same time that these fan-

published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that thousands of department store saleswomen earn about \$20 a week and that tens of thousands of department store workers receive less than fifty-five cents an hour. The smallest pay envelopes were found in the South, where many workers were receiving wages below thirty-five cents an hour.

The recent WLB decision setting fifty-five cents an hour as a minimum hourly wage does not automatically mean an increase for these department store workers, because it only empowers regional boards to approve increases if they are requested by employees or employers.

"With interest currently shifting to employment in peacetime pursuits," states the Bureau of Labor Statistics report, "the role of retail trade as a prospective employer of labor assumes more importance."

The report hits the nail on the

head when it gives as the chief reason for the continued low wage rate of department store workers, their lack of unionization. There has always been a bad tendency within the "white collar class" (department store employees, office workers, telephone operators, etc.) to consider itself the aristocracy of the working class and to rely on government promises rather than on its own organized strength. This has hampered union organization in the past and has caused wages in this category to remain more rigid during the war than other wages.

This feeling is rapidly changing, however, as we can see from the splendid militancy displayed by the Montgomery Ward workers and the telephone operators. White collar workers are beginning to realize that they are part of the labor movement and that in building strong representative unions they are availing themselves of the best means possible to force wages upward.

sumer goods from rising, have a right hour (which includes commission) for furniture salesmen. The survey

By JESSIE KAAREN

cal action aimed at the conquest of state power by the workers can usher in socialism. Furthermore, the whole tendency of capitalist economy has been to create a giant army of unemployed (except in wartime), which in turn depresses wages. On the economic field the struggle becomes more and more a fight to keep wages at a subsistence level or a little above. Economic action is essential, but it must be linked with political action in orde for the working class to achieve a better life.

In spite of the errors in his social philosophy, Steward's fight for the eight-hour day and higher wages was of tremendous significance when he lived. Many social reformers of his time believed in the futility of fighting for higher wages and shorter hours. They argued instead for the settling of differences between labor and capital through profit sharing and monetary and land reforms. In counteracting their influence, Steward played an important role.

In addition to his fight for the eight-hour day, Steward was one of the few labor leaders of his day who were concerned with the unskilled workers. The International Labor Union, which he helped to establish, was the first major attempt at organ-

ization of the unskilled in the U.S. The work that Ira Steward started back in 1850 goes on today in the fight of the militants in the labor movement for a thirty-hour week. The breadlines of post-war America will show this to be the next necessary step in the progress of labor.

why didn't some of that profit find its way into the pockets of some thirtyask whose interests were being considered when ceiling prices were set -the interests of the consumer or those of the industrialist?

public on department store operation in the last few years, one being released by the OPA and the other by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. They reveal that department store profits in 1943 were \$593.800.000, as compared with an annual average of \$51,800,000 in the peacetime period of 1936-39an increase of 1,046 per cent.

tastic profits were being made, the hourly rates of pay in these stores in 1943 ranged from thirty-nine cents an hour to a top wage of \$1.18 an

Why the London Dockers Struck--

(Continued from page 1)

ers, representative of the rank and file, who had come to hate it so deeply that they said they preferred the old system of casual labor.

That is of tremendous significance When the London Dock Labor Corporation was inaugurated, casual labor was abolished. Every docker got with his labor book a guaranteed minimum weekly wage of sixty-six shillings.

In practice he has suffered intolerable indignities for that guaranteed sisxty-six shillings a week. He has had to work where he was instucted upon what work he was instructed to, under whatever conditions were defined. There has been no arugment about it. He has been worked from eight in the morning until ten at night and sometimes all night. Any objections or alternative suggestions he might have made have been cut

from work. And hundreds of dockers have been suspended time and again by the little Hitlers who quickly infested the system.

How those Hitlers behaved only the docker can know. I only met a trade union official who had no pull over me except to be awkward. I tremble to imagine the indignities of working under the authority of the mean tyrants who have behind them all the repressive legislature of the total war state and the support of the trade union bureaucracy.

DISGRACEFUL CONDITIONS

And all this harassing by petty dictators has come on top of disgracefully long hours of hard and exacting physical labor. Here are some examples: The normal hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays; 8:00 a.m. to

noon Saturdays. They report at a

On rehearing, the appeal was again denied and induction set for

hard and they are not prepared to be shoved around by men in offices with clean hands and white collars. They have had too much of that. It is beginning to sound a platitude

to say that the only solution lies in socialism. But it is true. The dockers have had their fight. They may win an amelioration of conditions when the enquiry is finished. They have demanded that it shall publish its findings by April 1st. But the real value of the strike lies in the demonstration of solidarity it meant,

These 13,000 men have been slandered right and left, they have been cajoled and threatened, they have had (as far as they knew) the whole world against them. But they stood together. And for a week they lived like men and threw off the tyranny

One day these men will stand together for more than a week. Then they will live out their lives like men and throw off the tyranny of centuries. They will do so in the general exertion of will and solidarity of the whole working class out of which must come our libertarian socialism.

Leader)

NEW YORK MAY DAY CELEBRATION

5th Workers Party and Anniversary Labor Action

BUFFET DINNER . . . DANCING

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SUNDAY, APRIL 29th

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DINNER AND PROGRAM 6:00 TO 9:00 P. M. DANCING TO 12:00

SPEAKERS: Shachtman, Gates, Coolidge, Lund, Craine, Bell and Others

De Lorenzo

(Continued from page 1)

Rank and File group of the Auto Workers and has long tried to free the unions from the strangling nostrike pledge. The Navy and a congressional in-

vestigating committee worked hard to break Local 365 and De Lorenzo by persecution and phony charges. Finally, all else failing, Navy contracts at Brewster were cancelledthis "cutback" later resulted in one of those famous aircraft "shortages" of not so long ago-and hundreds lost their jobs.

Then, out of the congressional investigation, came the prosecution of De Lorenzo and his conviction on very trifling charges.

But the local and De Lorenzo continued their life of "crime." That is, they went out and organized other plants in the New York area, becoming bargaining agency for six companies besides Brewster.

INDUCTION SET

Last week General Hershey, national head of Selective Service, ordered an appeal board to re-hear a local board order for induction of De Lorenzo. Not only had the union claimed his deferment as an essential man, but the Brewster Company, De Lorenzo has told LABOR AC-TION, had done the same. Besides, inducting a man over 34 in an essential connecting industry doesn't appear to be what the regulations call for at the present time. Hershey must have felt that the case was too smelly.

De Lorenzo's local board was enraged. So was the red-baiting, antiunion World-Telegram, Scipps-Howard paper in New York, which made

Hershey's order front-page news for several days. And so was the Daily

Henry Ford II

(Continued from page 1) may mean, at the Great Lakes Station, not too far from home. HE'S "NECESSARY" AT HOME

Soon after the death of his father, Edsel Ford, in 1943, he was put on inactive service by the Navy. The release was a very quiet job, too-not much publicity.

Harry Bennett, Ford's strong-arm man and a self-confessed contributor to fascist causes, later said that nobody in the family or company suggested Henry's release. The late Secretary of the Navy, big business man Frank Fox (according to Bennett), said that it was more important for Henry to shoulder some of the responsibility for the vast war-production work of Ford's than to serve in the Navy. "Henry did as he was told."

(Fortune magazine, June, 1944) Every morning Henry has been hurrying to work (on a bicycle perhaps?-Ed.) from his \$52,000 home, arriving before 8:30 (Newsweek, April 24, 1944). In about six months, never having assumed responsibility before, he became a vice-president. Three months after that, he became executive vice-president, second only to his grandfather in the great Ford

Empire. "Henry plans no changes now. The future naturally dominates his mind." (Fortune, June, 1944)

How, then, is he aiding the "war effort?" Thinking of the next war? their work. If the number of cargoes coming in or out demand their labor, they are told during the day that they must work on until seven or nine o'clock. (It doesn't matter that the wife at home is expecting them earlier and is getting a meal ready.) Or they may be told to work all night, in which case they get an evening break from 8:00 until 11:00! Only made for food. It is an appalling indictment of the

central office and are instructed to

new slavery that men should even begin to think that hunger is preferable to dog-like security. It is a warning to those Morrisonian socialists who want a system of public corporations and would call that socialism! It is an urgent call to the libertarian socialists to insist that socialism is more than slavish security from hunger. There is a price beyong which even security is no longer valuable!

More thoughtful dockers have not suggested a return to the old days of scrambling for work. They want the guaranteed wage-yes, and more than sixty-six shillings a week, but they also want freedom from bureaucratic tyranny. They work damned

(Reprinted from the British New

THE VISIONARY

The visionary is an animal that believes in spirits. It is in general a good-natured animal (although there are some vicious specimens), that holds belief in spirits the only worthwhile belief. It is connected with the outside world through various organs as, for example, The Militant. The Militant on March 24 printed the following message from a

"The DACHAU concentration camp, one of the largest prisons for revolutionary and communist workers, has become a center of struggle against the Nazi régime."

Believe it or not, but The Militant has become a center for the slogan: BELIEVE IT OR NOT!

It could only happen at 116 University Place, near Broadway.

DETROIT: Carl's Bookstore Woodward at Clairmount

BUY LABOR ACTION IN

Note on Ford Election!

The headline on the Ford Bomber election story last week indicated that a progressive group had won out. Actually this was not the case as the story made clear. The election merely defeated the Stalinist-Communist leader and some of his followers. Actually the new administration is pursuing a reactionary policy.

The struggle of the progressive

unionists in the local is still ahead

CHICAGO MAY DAY MEETING

Celebrate with the Chicago Branch of the Workers Party

TUESDAY, MAY 1, 8:00 P. M. HOTEL MIDLAND, Walnut Room, ADAMS AT WELLS LABOR

PRISONS



A PAPER IN THE INTEREST OF LABOR Published Weekly by the

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ALBERT GATES, Editor

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From the PROGRAM of the WORKERS PARTY

For the defense of all democratic rights! Against wartime dictatorship measures! Abolish wage-freezing and job-freezing!

Restore full and unrestricted collective bargaining rights of the unions! Rescind the nostrike pledge! Repeal the Smith-Connally antistrike law!

Expropriate the "Sixty Families"-the plutocratic three per cent of the population who own ninety-six per cent of the national wealth!

A one hundred per cent tax on all war profits above a five per cent maximum on invested capital! Immediate renegotiation of all war contracts to cut the fabulous profits to this level!

Government planning to guarantee the highest national production and income, a yeararound job and a minimum annual wage to all, and a rising standard of living!

Conscript all war industries! Nationalize the banks, big industrial monopolies and transportation systems. No handing over of governmentbuilt and owned plants and facilities to private ownership!

For a two hundred and fifty billion dollar five year program to provide decent housing for all, extensive public works, rural electrification and modernization!

For a guaranteed \$5,000 annual income to all workers' families, made possible by a planned rise in the total national income and a thirtyhour maximum work-week.

All discrimination against Negroes, Jews or other minorities in the armed forces or by employers in industry must be made a criminal

German Slaves Change Masters

While the question of German slave labor is still reported to be an undecided issue among the Big Three, Stalin continues to act unilaterally by putting his demand into effect. If the Russians continue to take German workers at the rate of deportations which have already occurred, they will have a large part of the foreign labor demanded in official conferences.

Latest reports reveal that the Russians have deported 70,000 Germans, men and women, from Romania. Actually there were 500,000 German nationals in that country. Stalin demanded practically the whole half million, but American and Allied opposition is reported to have intervened to cause a "reconsideration."

However, an estimated 100,000 Germans have been transferred from Yugoslavia, which is under the rule of Stalin's servant, Marshal Tito. There is no report of where they have been sent, but the New York Post presumes that "they also were sent into Russia." There can hardly be any doubt of this since the Russian policy is abundantly clear and Yugoslavia, under Tito, is a Russian "sphere of influence."

Mass deportations have taken place during the whole past year. Exclusive of Germans, the Russians have removed over 700,000 people from Eastern Europe, to be used as slave labor in Stalin's prison camp for workers.

When Hitler was actively engaged in removing millions of Europeans for slave labor in Germany, the world was justifiably horrified. One of the reasons for which the war was supposedly fought was to end the kind of slavery initiated by the barbarous regime of German capitalism. To rally support from the peoples of the world to their war, the ruling classes of the Allied powers adopted the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms. But these, like so many other promises made by the same ruling classes, were completely hypocritical and never meant to be translated into life.

The enslavement of millions of people by Stalin, who also endorsed and signed the Atlantic Charter, only emphasizes the hypocrisy of its signers. Both Churchill and Roosevelt, before the latter's death, thought it might be a good thing for German labor to be enslaved by Stalin.

Business Wants MORE Post-War Profits

By RAY MANTLER

The Roosevelt Administration through the OPA promised the labor movement to hold prices down in the course of the war. This has not happened. Every worker knows it. It has merely been used as an argument to keep wages down. Yet the cost of living has risen 45.5 per cent, according to CIO

The leaders of big business are not satisfied. however, with these meager profits. In the postwar period they want absolutely clear sailing and no limit at all on their profits. The National Association of Manufacturers, an association of the most powerful business concerns in the country. has publicly demanded a relaxation of all price controls to avert "bankruptcy" in the post-war

THEY WANT STILL MORE!

Industry will enter the post-war period with blood-soaked profits reaped in the course of the imperialist war, and now, when the slaughter

From 1939 to September, 1944, all corporations in the U.S., not including banks and insurance companies, increased their holdings of cash and government securities by \$30 billion. The net working capital of the corporations has increased by \$20 billion, an increase of 83 per cent since 1939. From 1940 to 1944, the corporations have reaped \$40 billion in profits after taxes.

GUARANTEED PROFITS

"bankruptcy." Just in case their profits don't remain so high, they are insured against hard times by the promise of the administration to have tax refunds to ensure at least the pre-war profit level. These tax refunds can be use to pay dividends. Labor doesn't have a guaranteed annual wage, but industry has guaranteed annual profits!

ceases, they want a guarantee to exploit the market as much as possible by high prices.

they function almost exclusively in relation to the Negro community. The ordinary white worker is only vaguely aware of their existence. MENIAL POSTS So we see, there is no immediate threat of

A worker never goes into an insurance office, or a department store, or a lawyer's office where he sees a Negro or Negroes occuping positions of authoity, or giving evidence of knowledge, or receiving the consideration which is due to those who have achieved the status of the middleclass. For the daily round of his life Negroes for the most part, if not menials, are entertainers, singers, dancers, or players of jazz music.'

This column will attempt to de-

scribe some of the social reasons for

the antagonism of the white worker

to the Negro. While this antagonism

is basically due to the system of capi-

talism, there are obvious ways in

which Jim Crow makes itself felt.

First, whites and Negroes are seg-

regated in the communities in which

they live. The mass of Negroes the

white worker has occasion to observe

occupy an inferior and degraded po-

The Negroes whom he happens to

meet are as a rule poor, shabby, often

belonging to the dregs of the popula-

tion. There are many whites who be-

long to the dregs of the population

also. But counteracting these are the

whites who are rich, powerful, well

educated: besides the number who

are just ordinary citizens, neither

rich nor dregs, but fulfilling in their

various ways the social functions of

are Negroes who have achieved a

certain education and competence,

If in a particular community there

These concrete realities are reinforced by the literature and art of the system. The worker does not create these. He does not ask for anti-Negro literature. As workers do in every country, he reads books, newspapers, and goes to the show. From every one of these organs of communication and education his daily impressions about Negroes are reenforced. Movies reflect the society in which they are prouced. The white woker constantly sees the Negro on the screen in situations which merely confirm his knowledge of the realities he himself has experienced.

One-Tenth of the Nation
White Workers' Prejudices

By J. R. Johnson

In books and magazines, all grace, strength, beauty, nobility, courage are automatically attributed to members of the white race. It isn't that the books are openly or even subtly and emotional stimulation which they provide, good or bad, the Negro is usually excluded. If he is included, he is placed in his usual menial position, made the butt of jokes or at the very best is portrayed as a good and loyal servant.

The process does not end there. The whole history of the nation, the background of its thought, its social customs as expressed in the unconscious attitudes and sense of values of even people who are not personally hostile to Negroes-all these are permeated by the national attitude to the Negro people. Take an apparently simple thing like a brilliant performance in any sphere by a Negro. A well-meaning reporter will say with a certain satisfaction that the individual in question is a Negro.

He means well, but the mere statement of the fact carries with it the connotation that it is an exceptional thing for a Negro to show exceptional

merit. A white man or woman who is friendly with a Negro is conscious that he or she risks criticism, or at any rate comment from most of his

This is the daily, the inescapable experience of the average American white 'worker.

BASIS OF JIM CROW

The productive system of the United States created the basis of the Negro situation and it is the productive system which is creating the basis of its solution. It is the mass production industries which have within recent years placed whites and Negoes together on a basis of equality in that most fundamental social sphere - the process of productive

Even though segregation (into the lowest jobs) pursued the Negro there, yet the discipline of large-scale production welded blacks and whites into a unit. It was on this that the fraternal unity of blacks and whites in the CIO was founded. It could have been founded and can be maintained on no other basis.

The social forces and customs making for division between whites and Negroes are too powerful to be seriously affected except by some such powerful discipline and unity as are imposed by the productive process itself. In the past the competition between workers was a fruitful source of maintaining the division. It will be more dangerous in the future But if the unions tackle the struggle for full employment as a struggle for which both employed and unem. ployed workers must be mobilized, then what has been a cause of divi sion in the past can be a source (even greater unity in the future.

F. E. P. C. Negro Rights Struggle

By JESSIE KAAREN

The numerous state FEPC bills now up for consideration in various parts of the county are a big headache to the business associations which are organizing desperately to defeat them. Most of all they fear that the wave of popular pressure for enactment of anti-iscrimination laws which resulted in the passage of the Ives-Quinn law in New York State and an FEPC law in New Jersey may stampede Congress into passing a federal FEPC law. So they reserve their biggest guns for keeping FEPC bills from reaching the floor of

The Norton FEPC bill was voted out favorably by the House Labor Committee a few months ago, but it is quietly being buried in the Rules Committee, whose function it is to arrange for bills to be put on the calendar. Recently the author of the bill, Representative Mary T. Norton, chairman of the House Labor Committee, threatened that she would appeal to Congress itself to take up the bill, but so far nothing more has been done about pushing it up for consideration.

In the Senate, a companion bill introduced by Chavez of New Mexico is delayed from reaching the Senate by numerous hearings. In a further effort to sidetrack FEPC legislation, Senator Taft introduced a bill to "study the problem of racial

LOOPHOLES IN FEPC BILLS

The provisions of the Ives-Quinn bill, the New Jersey bill and even the federal bills are so full of loopholes as to make it unlikely that they will ever be very effective. Just the same, there is tremendous opposition to them by business interests because they are opposed to anything that will encourage and stengthen labor.

The publicity organized around the Ives-Quinn bill, "it will incite bad racial feelings, etc.," beomeranged against the reactionaries because of the very militant fight waged by trade unions, Negro, Jewish and liberal organizations in defense of the

In addition to that, state legislators are in a mood to pacify labor and liberal elements, first because they don't consider the Ives-Quinn bill to be a very radical piece of legislation and second because they remember that the labor vote was of decisive importance in electing President Roosevelt in 1944. This mood is even noticeable in Washington where a die-hard Republican like Senator Vandenberg declares himself in favor of an FEPC.

Already it is apparent that the Ives-Quinn bill, supposedly the model FEPC law, will be ineffectual unless another law is passed to grant the attorney-general the right to prosecute anyone charged with discrimination in employment.

The New Jersey act puts the job of anti-discrimination enforcement in the State Department of Education, which department has already passed a motion "questioning the propriety of putting this type of state service under the educational division's jurisdiction."

BIG BUSINESS OPPOSITION

Despite the fact that it has nothing much to fear from these laws, big business is in principle opposed to any legislation that favors labor. Just before the New Jersey FEPC bill became a law the National Association of State Chambers of Commerce sent out a confidential memorandum to its members, which is interesting because of the

"It is quite evident that all this hue and cry for legislation covering fair employment practices the result of a concerted effort by certain radical elements to sow discord into our economic and political system, so that they may turn this discord to their own benefit.

"The Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York and many other business service organizations put up a determined fight against the New York bill but as you no doubt know, the bill was passed.

"The New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce doing everything possible to defeat the bills that have been presented to the New Jersey Legislature on this subject. A meeting, under the sponsorship of local Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations was recently held to discuss this matter and plan united action. Without a dissenting vote, every one of the thirty-three organizations present pledged themselves to work to the utmost for the defeat of these bills."

The fact that the New Jersey bill was also passed over this opposition will not deter Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations in the other nine states where bills are pending from putting up the same stiff fight and from continuing to mobilize the most powerful pressure of all against a federal bill. For two years now, the question of a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission has been before Congress and so far Congress can't find time to deal with it.

SOME WEAKNESSES

The Negroes have suffered a great deal from Jim Crowism in employment even during the war boom. Any law which will check this evil is all to the good. But in their desire to get FEPC laws passed, the unions and the Negro organizations are too willing to accept compromises which weaken their program. For example, the Ives-Quinn bill, the New Jersey law and the federal bills include provisions for regulating discrimination in the unions which may prove to be loopholes for interfering in internal affairs of labor organizations.

The enforcement provisions are so hemmed in with legal restrictions that it is doubtful if they will ever be much good. Then there is the danger that the unions will depend too much on these ineffectual laws and neglecte to take advantage of their own strength to fight racial discrimination

Needless to say, LABOR ACTION supports any law which advances the cause of labor. But it is our duty to show up the weaknesses of these supposedly favorable laws and to point out that for a really effective anti-discrimination program, labor needs a strong political organization of its own, able and willing to send its own representatives to Congress.

Note: Federal FEPC bills are designed to regulate discrimination in interstate commerce, while State legislation is aimed at intra-state commerce.

San Francisco Conference--

(Continued from page 1)

land is now in dispute between the Big Three since neither England or the U.S. want to accept the present Russianmade Polish régime and seat it at San Francisco. They demand the execution of the Yalta decision, i.e., to add a few representatives to make the régime more palatable to the masses.

Russia, however, insists on the seating of the Polish delegates.

This dispute is one of the reasons Stalin's foreign minister, Molotov, has been sent to this country after previously deciding not to attend. The Big Three will, of course, find it necessary to reach an agreement before the conference opens, otherwise the issue will be thrown into the meeting, whether or not, the conference has any power of decision.

The problem of colonies and mandates (colonial countries which were the spoils of the first World War and parcelled out among the leading na-

population of the planet. Their freedom and independence is not an issue to be settled at San Francisco. Britain (a voting power) makes no bones about her intention to retain her present empire and to expand it. She has already made known her desire for Italian colonies seized in this war. Russia likewise will relinquish none of her newly-acquired Balkan empire, and has definite expansionist aims in Asia.

The policy being proposed by the United States goes under the name of "trusteeships" for mandated and colonial areas to permit an "open door" policy in which free competition prevails. This free competition

tions) embraces the majority of the means that the United States, on the basis of its tremendous production apparatus, may reduce the older imperialisms to secondary positions. . Of course, the Big Three are trying to settle peacefully this question of colonies and mandates among

themselves.

If the leaders of small nations are not permitted a voice at San Francisco, it is idiocy to think that the desires of the masses of the people will be remotely reflected.

The fate of millions is being decided through the agency of the Big

This is the bitter fruit of the second World War for democracy in the "century of the common man."

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FROM MAY 7 TO MAY 30, 1945

GROWTH OF AMERICAN

LABOR AND SOCIALISM

WORLD POLITICS TODAY

TRADE UNION ECONOMICS

Class

CAPITALISM

piecework system is typical. Accord-

ing to White, wages are the American

equivalent of from \$20 to \$40 for a

can get certain staple foods through

In the factories the sweatshop it or not, White says has been taken

sixty-six hour week. While workers but the élite. The distinction between

their factories, everything else goes hill' is everywhere apparent. The so-

BEHIND THE ATTACK ON W. L. WHITE'S BOOK ON RUSSIA

By SUSAN GREEN

W. L. White, journalist, author of several wartime books and a "roving editor" of the Reader's Digest, was one of the party that recently went to Russia with Eric Johnston, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce. Mr. White went, saw and came home to write first a digest of his trip for Reader's Digest and then full account in a book entitled "Report on the Russians."

Then the fireworks started. The Communist Party and fellow travelers let loose their thunderbolts. The tender-hearted liberals, anxious to mollify the Russian bear, joined in the assault. Pro-capitalist writers, awed by Russian military successes and rubbing their hands in anticipation of \$6,000,000,000 post-war Russian business, also went after White with hammer and tongs.

If one were to take the word of these critics - with - an - axe - to - grind, White's book is one-sided, reporting only the uncomplimentary things. Judging by the same critics, White is a liar. He is accused of planting the seeds of United Nations disunity, and -horror of horrors-of not letting the sacrosanct word "Yalta" shut his mouth. And those critics who don't find any real fault with the contents of White's report, solemnly assure their readers that this is not the time to bring out Russia's dirty linen for public observation.

Now this reviewer holds no brief for the opinions of Mr. White. Mr. White has a strong pro-capitalist bias and hates the sight or sound of socialism. Furthermore his idea of socialism is all askew for he identifies the dictatorial Stalinist regime with socialism. However, a reading of his book soon reveals that whatever else White may be, he is not a one-sided reporter.

As far as his reporting of what he saw and heard goes, he gives the good as well as the bad. If in one place he points out the inefficiency of a plant, waste of labor and neglect of work-

(Continued from Last Week)

discovered that there was a shortage

in aluminum, as there was in most

strategic industries where cartel

agreements with Germany existed.

Under pressure of war needs, new

plants were financed at government

expense, most of these under ALCOA,

but also under two new companies,

Reynolds Metals and Olin Corpora-

the prices of aluminum down slight-

ly, though ALCOA has hardly gone

hungry during this war, and monop-

oly prices are gladly accepted by the

However, it was hardly all good

competitors. Jesse Jones,

sailing and fair skies for the auda-

through his Defense Plant Corpora-

tion, handed Reynolds a handicap of

a loan of more than \$53 million at

four per cent interest, whereas the

plants built for ALCOA were whol-

ly charged to the government and

only leased to ALCOA. Being in all

things fair, however, Jones, when he

made a loan to Aluminum, Ltd. (83

pe cent owned by ALCOA) charged

Another threat to ALCOA is the

entrance into the magnesium field,

again because of war shortages, of

such powerful independents as Ford

and Kaiser. At pesent ALCOA is

forced to grant them patents and pro-

manding high royalties. Court deci-

sions may possibly alter this inten-

tion by fixing "reasonable" royalties,

but again ALCOA will probably fight

another long, gigantic legal battle

before compromising and letting

THREE PER CENT interest.

tion, a factor that has tended to keep

At the beginning of the war, it was

By V. P. JENSEN

Alcoa-Story of

A Complete Trust

ers' comfort, in another place he praises factory tidiness and efficiency. If he describes the lowly conditions of the workers, he doesn't neglect to report that at least women get the same pay as men. If he tells of certain technical deficiencies of the Russian army in earlier days, he also expresses appreciation of the Russian army as such. If he reveals that the bureaucrats have moved "into both the palaces and the privileges of the old aristocrocy, and are drinking quite as much champagne," he also admits that they are working hard for the state.

CAPITALIST JOURNALIST'S

In fact, if one were to make a list of the good things White says about Russia, it might well be longer than the list of not so good things he says. He likes Russian agriculture. He compliments Russian surgery. He reports favorably on nurseries he saw. He approves Russia's handling of minority peoples. He even thinks Stalin a great man, although he ridicules the imposed hero worship.

On the political side the reader of White's book sees how complete is the dictatorship. The Communist Party not only puts up candiates and controls so-called elections, but its members act as spies on the community as a whole. Then there is the secret police - NKVD - whose representatives are everywhere: beside the mayor of a town answering questions for him; beside the director of a factory telling him when to stop asking questions of the visiting American capitalist: and also somehow on the heels of a Russian girl who may become too friendly with a foreign correspondent.

So tight a vise has the government clamped on the press that even the term "free press" is taboo. White relates how at a banquet he started his speech with the sentence: "I am here not as a representative of American business but rather as an American

SOCIALIST THOUGHTS ___

WHAT ARE TRADE UNIONS?

In a previous article we examined the time-honored motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," and came to the conclusion that the fairest day's wages under present social conditions is necessarily tantamount to the very unfairest division of the workman's produce, the greater portion of that produce going into the capitalist's pocket, and the workman having to put up with just as

much as will enable him to keep

himself in working order and to

writer and representing her free

press." This, to White's indignation,

the interpreter just didn't translate

because of those bad words "free

press." Such are the "democratic"

conditions which prevail. All opinion

is strictly government-made and gov-

ernment-conveyed, since the govern-

propagate his race. This is a law of political economy, or, in other words, a law of the present economic organization of society, which is more powerful than all the Common and Statute of Law of England put together, the Court of Chancery included. While society is divided into two opposing classes-on the one hand the capitalists, monopolizers of the whole of the means of production, land, raw materials, machinery; on the other hand, laborers, working people deprived of all property in the means of production, owners of nothing but their own working power; while this social organization exists the law of wages will remain all-powerful and will every day afresh rivet the chains by which the working man is made the slave of his own produce monopolized by the capitalist.

LIMITS OF UNIONISM

The trades unions of this country [England-Ed.] for nearly 60 years have fought against this law -with what result? Have they succeeded in freeing the working class from the bondage in which capital—the produce of its own hands-holds it? Have they enabled a single section of the working class to rise above the situation of wage slaves, to become owners of their own means of production, of the raw materials, tools, machinery required in their trade, and thus to become the owners of the produce of their own labor? It is well known that not only have they not done so, but that they never tried.

Far be it from us to say that trades unions are of no use because they have not done that. On the contrary, trades unions in England, as well as in every other manufacturing country, are a necessity for the working classes in their struggle against capital. The average rate of wages is equal to the sum of necessaries sufficient to keep up the face of workmen in a certain country according to the standard of life habitual in that country. That standard of life may be very different for different

classes of workmen. The great merit of trade unions, in their struggle to keep up the rate of wages and to reduce working hours, is that they tend to keep up and to raise the standard of life. There are many trades in the East End of London whose labor is not more skilled and quite as hard as that of bricklayers and bricklayers' laborers, yet they hardly earn half the wages of these. Why? Simply because a powerful organization enables the one set to maintain a comparatively high standard of life as the rule by which their wages are measured; while the other set, disorganized and powerless, have to submit not only to unavoidable but also to arbitrary encroachments of their employers: their standard of life is gradually reduced, they learn how to live on less and less wages, and their wages naturally fall to that level which they themselves have learned to accept as sufficient.

LABOR IS CHEATED

The law of wages, then, is not one which draws a hard and fast line. It is not inexorable with certain limits. There is at every time (great depression excepted) for every trade a certain latitude within which the rate of wages may be modified by the results of the struggle between the two contending parties. Wages in every case are fixed by a bargain, and in a bargain he who resists longest and best has the greatest chance of getting more than his

Frederick Engels

over by the government itself. In

these government-run black-market

stores, prices are prohibitive to all

those in the slums and those on "the

due. If the isolated workman tries to drive his bargain with the capitalist he is easily beaten and has to surrender at discretion; but if a whole trade of workmen form a powerful organization, collect among themselves a fund to enable them to defy their employers if need be, and thus become enabled to treat with these employers as a power, then, and then only, have they a chance to get even that pittance which, according to the economic constitution of present society, may be called a fair day's wages for a fair day's

The law of wages is not upset by the struggles of trades unions. On the contrary, it is enforced by them. Without the means of resistance of the trades unions, the laborer does not receive even what is his due according to the rules of the wages system. It is only with the fear of the trades unions before his eyes that the capitalist can be made to part with the full market value of his laborer's power. Do you want a proof? Look at the wages paid to the members of the large trades unions, and at the wages paid to the numberless small trades in that pool of stag-'nant misery, the East End of Lon-

Thus the trades unions do not attack the wages system. But it is not the highness or lowness of wages which constitutes the economic degradation of the working class: this degradation is comprised in the fact that, instead of receiving for its labor the full produce of this labor, the working class has to be satisfied with a portion of its own produce called wages. The capitalist pockets the whole produce (paying the laborer out of it) because he is the owner of the means of labor. And, therefore, there is no real redemption for the working class until it becomes owner of all the means of work-land, raw material, machinery, etc. - and thereby also the owner of the whole of the produce of its own labor. - The Labor Standard, London, May 21, 1881.

ment owns all means of propaganda. into the black market which, believe cial caste system was evidenced even in the dining rooms of a bomber motor plant where workers, foremen, engineers and directors all ate separately—their menus graded from grub to delicacies according to position.

> And what of industrial democracy? Some light is cast on this subject by a bit of conversation had by White's party with Kuznetsov, big chief of Russia's so-called labor unions:

"If a worker is discontented and gets discharged for any reason, would it be difficult for him to get a job some place else?' 'Very, very difficult,' said Kuznetsov. 'Well, isn't this what the workers in America call an employers' blacklist?' 'No,' said Kuznetsov. But he didn't say why it wasn't."

White relates the prison-like methods used to eliminate absenteeism. He tells also of seeing women workers toiling under military guard. These women supposedly had in some way deviated from the straight and narrow political path, and had therefore become a "chain gang."

REASON FOR CAMPAIGN

Yes, these are the things that "the friends" consider unmentionable and that White mentioned. They resent White's mentioning the possibility that the Polish officers found slaughforest, might have been victims of the Russians and not of the Nazis. Nor do "the friends" relish White's story of how Russian secrecy about military equipment-in this case the lack of radar-led to the destruction of a whole fleet of allied fortresses based on a Ukranian field supposedly protected by Russian anti-aircraft.

So much for the reportorial side of White's book What he reveals bears the ear-marks of reliability to one who is fairly cognizant of the real situation in Russia, unadorned by whitewash from the brush of "the friends." However, White's opinions, as distinguished from the facts, are something else again.

cally pro-capitalist and rabidly antisocialist. Without rhyme or reason, he takes the Stalinist regime as a QED argument in favor of capitalism and against socialism. This approach is absolutely ridiculous.

In the first place, the Stalinist system is not socialism but a dictatorial system of bureaucratic collectivism which developed after Stalin's successful counterrevolution against the great socialist revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky. Whether through ignorance or malice, White persists in referring to the present Russian dictatorship as socialism.

Therefore, the only alternative he can see to it is capitalism, so-called free enterprise. He has a panacea for every Russian deficiency—just a little bit of competition on the American plan, just a drop of business acumen as the American industrialist practises it. White reduces his panacea to an absurdity. Thus, for example, when he sees factories with broken floors and poor lighting, he comments: "But a hard-boiled American production man, trying to squeeze the last thin dime of value from his workers, would start by making them comfortable with good light and tidy floors, to increase the man-hour production ate." As if the workers have to embrace the evils of capitalism in order to have good lighting and tidy

Socialism would solve such problems quite differently since the comfort, health and well-being of the workers would be determined by themselves under factory democracy. And they themselves would enjoy the full fruits of their labor. In Russia today the keys to the kingdom are in the Kremlin and the fruits of labor go to a new exploiting class.

That White labeled this anti-socialist régime socialism, did not bother the fiery critics of his book! What they hollered about was the absence of whitewash in White's report.

FDR-A Capitalist Statesman--

(Continued from page 1)

Europe, but in Asia. To the best of his ability he sought to prepare for that participation, and for a postwar world in which American imperialism would have the greatest gains and the decisive say.

The capitalist class, it must be said, was certainly not grateful, or not grateful enough, to Roosevelt. For every scratch they suffered under his administration, he saved them a bone that would otherwise have been broken. He lifted them all but of the profitlessness of the Roover days into the fabulous pots of gold they have been accumulating for the last few years. He lifted them out of their provincial isolation and into the dominating position in the world of imperialism. He was a thousand times more loyal to them than they were to him. Far from being a renegade from his class, he was its savior. Their condemnation of him as a "radical" or "friend of radicals," was due primarily to their bigoted, stupid, reactionary bourbonism, their venomous contempt and hatred of the "mob," the workers, their failure to understand that capitalism, and they themselves, are sometimes better seved by a few concessions to labor than by the

brutal blackjack. As for labor, it was badly served, because it served itself badly. At a time when it numbered more organized millions than ever before in history, and became the largest social and political power in the country, it traed off its ability to get independent action a hundred times more than it did get-to get everything it wanted and needed, and should have, in fact!-for reliance upon a benevolent patron in the ranks of the enemy class.

How much clearer that is, now that the patron is gone! What is lett is the Democratic Party-reactionary at its heart, divided among the cor-

rupt machines of the North, the Bourbon bigots of the South, and a' handful of bewildered New Dealers who are being readied for the axe.

Something else is left, howeverthe mighty, irresistible labor movement. More exactly, it will be mighty and irresistible if it acquires selfreliance, if it acquires the consciousness of its position in this world. and of its duty and ability to reorganize the world so that it becomes a place where mankind can live amidst freedom, abundance, brotherhood and peace.

THE FUTURE FOR LABOR

Labor supported Roosevelt because it believed that this is the kind of world he was going to establish. This support was at once a sign of its awakening and of its backwardness. Of its awakening, because it showed that it no longer wanted the old capitalist world, but something new, in which the working people would finally come into their own, in which the interests of the "economic royalists" would not be dominant. Of its backwardness, because it relied on capitalist polities and politicians to accomplish its aim, instead of relying on its own organized, independent class strength.

The death of Roosevelt has been felt so keenly by the common people only because of their awakening in this past decade. But his death only emphasizes the tragedy of labor, in placing all its reliance and hope in a benevolent patron, in a "savior" tied to capitalist society.

The future, so full of vital problems, will put the working class to the severest tests. It cannot pass them without being fully equipped. Now is the time for it to form a militant, working class party of its own. Now is the time to work out a working class program which sets itself the aim of a new social order, with liberty and plenty for all.

duction processes royalty-free, but after the war is counting on maintaining its monopoly position by de-

SHIPSAW SCANDAL That ALCOA and its government friends are not planning to let court decisions or rivals or government in-

these others share the booty.

1943 Shipsaw scandal. In January of 1943 the news leaked out that a huge power project in Shipsaw was being built by Alumi-

num Co. of Canada, Ltd. (ALCO-

DETROIT PUBLIC MEETING

Friday, May 11, at 8 P. M.

terference disrupt its monopoly po-

sition was made amply clear in the

CAN). ALCOCAN is controlled by ALCOA which uses it to make cartel agreements that are illegal for the American company. The two companies are virtually twins, with virtually the same officers and boards of directors. The president of Aluminum, Ltd., is the brother of the president of ALCOA.

That project was financed by one of Jesse Jones' agencies, the Metal Reserve Corp., which advanced \$681/2 million, INTEREST FREE, through a series of four contracts, which nicely covered the cost of the project. The cost of aluminum for ALCOCAN is about 6c a pound, the price to be paid was 15c a pound for 80% and 17c for the rest of the aluminum delivered. The contract also allowed for a rise in price if labor or transportation costs rose plus a very favorable contract termination clauses. Such beau-

Meanwhile, in this country, power plants under construction were shut down. In 1944, several ALCOA plants shut down and friends of ALCOA on the WPB refused to free the metal for civilian production. ALCOA is not interested in seeing new plants operated, it can make more comfortable profits by maintaining cartel agreements, monopoly prices and a restricted market.

COURTS NO AID

Liberals who believe that government agencies are going to crash the powers of the monopolies are not even consistent. They tear their hair and scream that the Federal Loan and other important agencies are being handed over lock, stock and barrel to those big businessmen who are most interested in maintaining monopoly and then greet with joy this joker decision of the Circuit Court. The best they have to hope for is that Reynolds, Kaiser or a few other of Roosevelt's favorite businessmen can horn in on some of the booty.

Court decisions have never broken any trusts. Government agencies under the

control of big business never will! Labor must have its own government to see that plants are not kept

closed down for the greater glory and profits of ALCOA or any other monopoly.

Admission 25c

The New President--

went from the backwoods to see Boss

Pendergast, the fuehrer of Missouri politics, to ask for the job of collector of internal revenue, a job carrying with it not inconsiderable financial emoluments. Pendergast agreed readily that Truman's services to the corrupt machine were deserving of reward, but he had already promised this job to someone else, so he made this offer: "The best I can do now. Harry, is a United States Senatorship. How's that?"

Truman accepted, of course, and became the junior Senator from Missouri. He certainly was loyal to the boss. When reform elements in Kansas City were opposing Pendergast, he stuck to the machine. And when the Treasury Department finally nailed Pendergast on an income tax evasion, Truman defended him in Congress. Very recently, when Pendergast died. Truman flew from Washington for the funeral. To this day Jim Pendergast, the Boss's nephew, remains one of his best friends and most valued advisors.

NEW PRESIDENT'S RECORD

His legislative record is equally undistinguished. For the most part he voted as Roosevelt wished, but on such matters as vitally concerned the Southern political machine, like the vote on the poll tax and the anti-'lynch bill, Truman made sure to be absent at voting time. The president of the National Negro Council accused him of having consistently refuse action that would have helped Negroes get a square deal in war plants In addition, the Farmers Union has accused him of giving lipservice to the idea of a Missouri Valley Authority, similar to the TVA, while actually hampering it through committee maneuvers.

Truman first came into nationwide notice through his Senate Investigating Committee which uncovered some first-class scandals on war contracts and in war plants. The work of the committee, while undoubtedly useful, did nothing more than scratch the surface of malpractice, while in the case of Curtiss-Wright, where sabotage and conspiracy to pass off defective materials on the part of management was exposed, the Committee refused to publish the full

truth of the scandal on the grounds that "it would shock and arouse the public."

This, then, is the record of the new President. It is hardly awe-inspiring. Though honest himself, Truman bears the taint of the worst political machine in the country. Mediocre in personal capabilities, the best that can be found to say of him is that he is loyal and earnest. These are troublesome times and these are hardly the characteristics of a world leader. RISE IN SENATE'S POWER

What then is to be expected of the new executive? His predecessor, though certaintly not independent of Congress and the Democratic machines, held the strings of administrative an executive machinery in his own hands to a degree unprecedented in this country. Truman is not expected to be able to repeat this feat. It is significant on this score, that onhis first day as president, he lunched with a group of Senators. Unsure of himself, he is bound to lean on Congressional and primarily Senatorial support.

Senators, who for a long time had been chafing under Roosevelt's highhanded manner of treating them as messenger boys and had been fighting, as best they could, the increase of administration powers, see their chance to regain their prestige and influence. This influence is primarily a reactionary one, and it can be expected that Senatorial influence will be at a height not seen in this country since the golden days f(or Senators) of Harding.

Evidence of this can be seen in the Congressional reception of the new Pesident's first message. This entirely undistinguished message, which simply pledges to carry on the policies of Roosevelt, is not seriously regarded as other than a formality. Certainly, no major changes in foreign policy are contemplated at the

NEW YORK FORUM:

ALBERT GATES on "RUSSIA IN THE WAR"

Sunday, April 22 HOTEL DIPLOMAT 43rd St. and 6th Ave.

present time. But it is significant that while the legislators greeted his words on the war and foreign policy with wild enthusiasm, they were visibly and noticeably cool to that portion of the speech devoted to a promise that there would be "no relaxation" in the effort to better the lot of the common people."

Further evidence that the new regime means only a still further conservatism can be seen by an examination of the men who are expected to act as Truman's closest advisors and upon whom he will lean most. Foremost among them is the reactionary James Byrnes, for some time Roosevelt's "assistant president."

Other friends are John Snyder, the St. Louis banker just confirmed as RFC Aministrator; Hugh Fulton, a conservative lawyer; Robert Hannegan, chairman of the National Democratic Committee and machine politician par excellence; Boss Pendergast's nephew; Bennett Champ Clark, the reactionary isolationist ex-senator from Missouri; and even the notorious Bert Wheeler of Montana, who may find this the occasion for a political comeback. Certainly, this is not a line-up that

promises too much for Labor. And yet the labor leaders have hastened to assure Truman of their unqualified loyalty and support. It is unlikely that Murray and Green will have even the privilege that they had with Roosevelt. At least when Roosevelt knifed them, they had the privilege of coming to the back door of the White House and gaining access to the presidential ear to enter a feeble protest before they once again assured Roosevelt of their undying support. Now it is not considered likely that they will have this same access to Truman, the friend of the Senate.

As the war draws to an end, the problems of reconversion and peacetime face the American workingclass with ever greater urgency and intensity. The Democratic Party hack in the White House and his Senate friends cannot solve the problems of reconversion and full employment. Now, more than ever before, Labor must build its own party, around an independent program of working class action and with its own candidates, independent of the corrupt capitalist political machines.

DETROIT L'ABOR ACTION FORUM

BIG POWERS' PEACE PLANS

The Meaning of the

San Francisco Conference

Speaker: LOUISE BROWN

Sunday, April 22, 8:15 P. M.

LABOR ACTION HALL

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Woodward at Sibley

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MAX SHACHTMAN

Nat'l Sec., Workers Party

A Program for Detroit Workers