

# NEWS & LETTERS

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## WORKER'S JOURNAL

By CHARLES DENBY

### Facts About Communists?

A reader has written to ask for facts about the support sympathy the Communists are said to be giving Reuther when it suits their line. (See READERS' VIEWS, p.

I would say, first, that his experience in the union or politics has not meant very much. Any worker can give a hundred examples of things that have happened to him in any given time at the hands of both the company and the union leadership. But when you ask him for the facts, what are you asking for? Proof?

#### WHAT KIND OF PROOF?

If a worker tries to give proof he usually finds himself in an awful mess. Both the company and the union will say, "Prove it." Then, all they have to do is deny a particular fact.

I have known it to be a fact that workers have been laid off and still are being pointed out by union leaders to the company. I have also known workers to be paid off and then the union having the company do it. But to give the facts isn't easy.

A worker made the statement in the Ford plant where the biggest base of Communist workers are in Detroit, that the C. P. was in support of Reuther since the Geneva Conference. This worker was a supporter of Reuther, active in the caucus for some time after the Conference. The union election was coming up. He stated that many of the Communists ran for office in that caucus and were elected by supporting the Reuther program.

#### REUTHERITES WOULD DO THE SAME

The reader stated that in his local union in California, the C. P. is different from what they are here in that they provoke wildcat strikes there. The Reutherites would do the same if some opposition was in power and he wanted to show the workers they are the good leaders in order to take the power away from the opposition.

We will get nowhere, therefore, by pointing to any single incident, whether it relates to the labor bureaucracy or the Communists, which shows them "for" or against the strike. One day they will lead strikers all over the place, the next day they will hate nothing worse than workers who will strike.

The point is not as simple as the reader seems to think that the Communists are trying to reproduce here the conditions which exist in Russia. Surely it is not because they have any belief, "false" or otherwise, that they are trying to help the workers.

#### READERS AND PLANS

These are not the things that move them. What moves them is that they think of themselves as the leaders who have all the plans ready for everything and the workers are the backward ones who can do nothing for themselves and therefore should do their bidding.

The reader seems to say the same thing and I feel he means the same thing. But I must make clear that Reuther and the same because both have this conception and picture of themselves, though one is for Russia and the other is for America. Each feels himself to be a master who is to be followed and the planning while they force the workers to follow and increase production, no matter where they are.

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## What's Become of the 8-Hour Day?

"My whole life is spent in the plant," an auto production worker said, "and every day you will hear workers say, 'I went home, washed up, went to sleep and here I am again.' This overtime has changed everything so you come home to eat and sleep—that's all home is."

Yet on the very day, December 5th, that this production worker declared that overtime has destroyed the eight-hour day, Walter Reuther, the auto workers' president, glibly told the newly merged AFL-CIO convention that the eight-hour day is one of

labor's great gains.

### AN EIGHT-HOUR LAW DECISION

BUFFALO, May 29.—Henry J. Warren, superintendent of the Barber Asphalt Company, was committed to jail this morning by Judge Seaver for refusing to pay a fine of \$25 imposed several months ago for violation of the State law which prohibits the employment of men at city work for more than eight hours a day. . . .

The company will take the case to the Supreme Court of the United States to get a decision as to the constitutionality of a law fixing the hours of labor.

(—NEW YORK WEEKLY TRIBUNE, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1894.)

For the union leadership, the eight-hour day is little more than a bookkeeping device whereby the worker is forced to work long hours. He is forced to work the long hours, not only because the cost of living demands overtime pay, but because the company and the union both demand overtime work.

#### EMPTY PHRASES

In his speech to the cut-and-dried convention, Reuther said, "If you will look at the possibilities you will find that within the next ten or 12 years the American people can double their living standards. We can have higher wages . . . and we can have a shorter work week."

The problem of the work week is not something that will be faced within the next ten or 12 years. "When does my day begin and when does it end?" is the critical question that workers face today.

Reuther is well known for his habit of promising pie-in-the-sky. He makes glittering speeches about the future, for which he can't be held responsible today, while he ignores and opposes the resentment of the workers against what is going on right now.

In 1953 and 1954 when there was a sharp rise in unemployment, some of the union leadership played around with the six-hour day and five-day week. The minute the workers went back to work and got some bargaining power, the leadership settled for the so-called Guaranteed Annual Wage and said that the next goal, "within ten or 12 years," will be the 30-hour week.

"Reuther says he got us 20c," the auto worker continued. "If that were so the company wouldn't play around with overtime and we wouldn't need to work overtime. But since he only got us 1c, the claim that the American worker is taking home the highest pay is not based on regular pay but on all this overtime.

It is the same in coal. Lewis boasted about the \$2 raise he recently won. It wasn't the money, in Lewis' narrow and vulgar sense, that the miners are struggling for. Not only are so many miners now permanently unemployed, but automation in coal is exerting such pressure upon them that their very safety, health and lives are under threat. The shortening of the work day—and their control over their conditions of labor—is of pressing concern to the miners, not Lewis' cheap \$2 raise.

(Continued on Back Page)

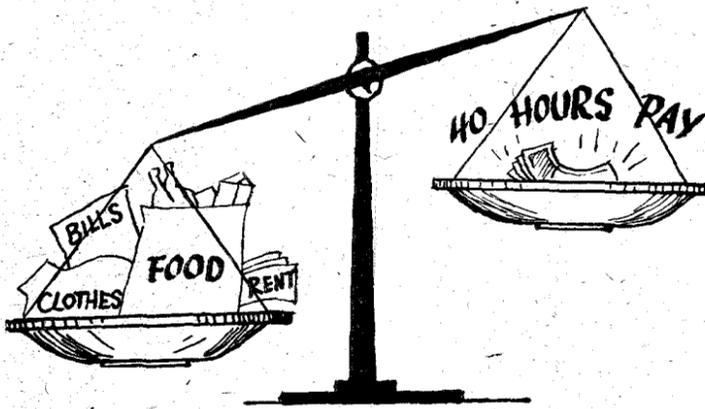
## "Be His Payment High or Low . . ."

Guys have been working a hell of a lot, ten hours a day seven days a week, which is a new development at Chrysler. They say, "You've got to get it when it's there, it may not be there long."

Auto Worker  
Los Angeles

They told us we're supposed to be working ten hours a day, five and six days a week. The truth is we never know from one day to the next if we're going to work or not, nor how many hours.

GM Worker  
Detroit



After 23 years at Chrysler, I feel that my leisure is worth something. At three o'clock, I want to be totally free of this place. Saturday and Sunday, I want to be home so I can work on my car or do what I please.

Auto Worker  
Los Angeles

In my neighborhood, the housewives were discussing how their husbands worked ten and 12 hours a day. All said they would rather not have such beautiful appliances but would rather have their husbands home with them.

Housewife  
Los Angeles

## A DOCTOR SPEAKS

BY M.D.

### INDIVIDUALITY — A LUXURY OR A NECESSITY

Walking along a busy city street, I was attracted by a sign in a large store window, filled with modern furniture. It read, "You too can have the luxury of individuality."

Into my office, came a patient, recuperating from gall bladder surgery. She was disturbed by the hospital bill, which she had found much higher than expected. Though her illness was covered by insurance, she had paid an additional \$125.00 to the hospital over the amount paid by the insurance company.

### EXPENSIVE MEDICINE

I looked over the bill and noted repeated charges of \$8.50 for a vial of antibiotic medicine, given by injection twice a day after the operation. This price appeared excessive, and I called a nearby druggist to ask about it. He said that his charge to a patient was \$2.50. I then phoned two other hospitals and found that one wanted \$5.00, the other \$13.75 for the same medicine. It was then quite clear about the extra \$125.00.

### ADMINISTRATIVE OVERHEAD

When I called the hospital pharmacist and told him what I had learned, his explanation was that the hospital had to pay the salary of a graduate nurse to give the injection. But when I pointed out that the \$18.50 per day the patient paid for a bed included nursing service, he reluctantly agreed to come down to \$5.00 for the same medicine in the future.

This patient had come to me for surgery, even though through her job she was covered by a surgical and hospital plan, which required no additional payments. She had rejected this plan, because she could not select her own doctor, but had to take the surgeon employed by the organization.

I found it difficult to explain things to the patient's satisfaction. That sign in the furniture store window kept running through my head. **Should individuality be a luxury?**

Biologists have long accepted the great importance of variation and individual differences in the physical evolution of the human race. But what about thinking and feeling? The inner drives which differentiate one person from another and which are the source of movement and growth, seems to me to be something more than a luxury.

I knew this woman to be a member of a clerks' union. It was through this union that she had received the complete coverage medical plan, which she had chosen not to use. The union officials had obtained this concession, paid for by the employers, and they had come with it to the membership as a great victory.

### INDIVIDUALITY AND ACTIVITY

Unions were formed by the actions of working men and women to improve the conditions under which they live. But any real and permanent betterment in people's lives emerges only through their own thinking, their own wants and their course of action. The organization that does things to and for a person, (even when it improves his living condition) without the individual's full and active involvement, is unable to use the force and direction of the necessity which flows from individuality. Under such conditions, the final result is more often degradation rather than betterment.

**Individuality is not a luxury, but a necessity for all humanity.**

### A WEST VIRGINIA MINER SAYS:

I think the paper is all right! Of course, it's going to take some patience. If you haven't any patience, you might as well quit now. You're going to find people criticizing you. Don't stop for that. If Booker T. Washington had stopped, those monuments to him wouldn't be there now. He didn't stop, he just kept going.

Don't think because your paper is small it won't come to be larger, if you keep pushing at it. You've made your start and I believe you'll really go somewhere, if you just have the patience.

—New Subscriber  
Jeri, West Virginia

**Do Your Friends Read  
NEWS & LETTERS**

## COAL AND ITS PEOPLE

### Company Fouls Up Miners' Lives

FAIRMONT, W. Va. — We've been getting two or three days a week lately. The last time I got my check it was for four days. Four days work for half a month. I handed my check to my wife, but she just looked at it. "What can I do with that?" she asked.

### BETTER NOT WORKING

With pay checks like this, it's better not to be working. If I wasn't working at all, I'd get \$30 a week sent to my door. That would all be clear money. But with what I'm making now, by the time the deductions are taken out—the union dues, social security, income tax, doctor fees and the rest—I don't clear as much as I would be not working at all.

It isn't just the pay check that is all fouled up. You can never do anything with the days that you don't work. If I know that I'm not going to work, I can make plans to go squirrel or rabbit hunting. But you can't even do that the way the company is working it.

### JUST WAIT

At first, when we were slacking off work, we could call up at about 11 a.m. and find out if we were going to work that afternoon. But then it was "Call back at noon." It has reached the point now that they tell you to call back about one o'clock in the afternoon. It takes twenty cents to make a call, so you have to pay in a lot of ways, even when you're not informed that there is work.

## How to Lose Weight

CASSVILLE, W. Va.—Two mechanics were talking about their work in general. They got on the subject of the continuous miner section. The shorter of the two mentioned something about being a little overweight and said he'd been trying to keep his weight down.

### SHUT DOWN AND FIX

The tall mechanic told him, "Well now, I can tell you what you should do if you want to lose weight. Just go on the "miner" section. I guarantee you that you'll lose weight."

"The kind of work you're doing now is a pleasure compared to what you have to do on the "miner" section. About the only time you do anything where you are now is when something breaks down. Get on the "miner" section and you'll always be pushed to do something. If a machine isn't broken down, you're doing some other job like pinning or running a buggy or shovelling—everything. You're never caught up on that section."

By the time you find out that you don't have to work, it's too late to do anything before it gets dark. An outfit as big as the one we work for ought to know when there is going to be work at least a day ahead of time. But they seem to enjoy keeping us guessing, to just sit and wait and call. It's the same story if you're in the mine or out—always waiting on the company.

### NO EXCUSES FROM THEM

One of the things that gripes the men is that the company has it all the way. They never have to make a single excuse or explanation

to the men who work in the mine. If they say no work, that is it and hundreds of men have to take it, regardless of what they might have done or whether they want or don't want to work.

But if the mine management says there is work, you'd better show up or have a good reason for missing. Because the next day that you work—if you miss a day—you have to prove that you have a legitimate excuse for not going to work. Anything they want to do is legitimate, anything a miner wants to do that doesn't meet with their approval is illegitimate.

## What the Man Said

PURSGLOVE, W. Va.— It was getting near the end of the shift and about a half a dozen of us were killing a few minutes before going to the man trip. We were all talking at the end of the supply track when we saw the section boss come around a corner with the cutter and his helper. "That's it," he said. "Now just cut those posts out and let it come in."

We all looked to see what he was talking about. It was a mess. The top was bad on this section and there had been several big falls. A whole cross cut had fallen in, but the intersection had been shored up with bars and posts. These were sagging from the excessive weight that was pressing down on them, but they were holding the intersection up. The idea was to cut the posts out with a cutting machine and let the top come in. Then the work of cleaning up the fall could proceed and be followed with

### DOESN'T LOOK GOOD

The cutter and his buddy examined the place from all angles. No matter how you looked at it, it didn't look good at all. The posts could be cut out from only one approach, all of the others were blocked off with falls except where the supply track was. The machine couldn't get in there. If the cutter did cut the posts out, there was a good chance of being caught in the fall. If he and his buddy were not crushed by the fall itself, they might be trapped behind the fall since previous falls had blocked all other means of getting away from that particular spot on the section.

The cutter came to where we were all gathered after looking over the job. "I don't know if I want to cut those posts out or not. It sure doesn't look good to me," he said. The best thing to do would be to get some cables and tie them around a couple of the posts and pull them out. This could be done from the supply track approach and the danger of anyone being injured or trapped could thus be avoided.

### THE MAN SAID

At this exchange of opinions and conclusions, the section boss said, "No, we're not going to pull them. The man said to cut them out, and that what we've gotta do." He was referring to the superintendent of the mine, who at that moment was probably enjoying a hot cup of coffee in his office on the outside.

Every man there looked at the boss in amazement. The cutter looked at his buddy, then back at the boss, struggling to keep his voice under control.

"The man said! The man said? It may be very easy for him to say, but me and my buddy are the ones who have to do it. I don't see him here anywhere. He's outside, and I'm going to make sure that I get out there too." With this, he turned and walked off, his buddy at his side.

### KEEP GOING AND FIX

"It's bad enough that you are kept busy for every minute with the boss looking down your collar every second. If it isn't your boss, it's some other big wheel who is checking you. But the "miner" doesn't go down if a hose, or something that doesn't really effect the running of the machine, breaks. I've had to put hoses on that machine while it was going full blast. And if you don't think that's doing something, just try it. You've got to stay with that machine, replace a hose or something while it keeps grinding into the face. You have to eat all that dust. It's the same as eight cutting machines working in one place with those eight chains on the head going full blast. You have to watch that you don't get in the way of any moving parts and get a part of you torn off, or be caught by the machine kicking back. "I don't advise you to work on that section, but if you want to lose weight, you can sure do it there."

## LABOR

## New Union Contracts Take Away Rights Won By Workers

DETROIT.—How much of workers' rights will the union leaders take away from them and give to the company?

As one worker said, "There is nothing left in the contract that belongs to us anymore."

Several months ago we were handed the new contract at the meeting of ratification. No scholar in this hole wide world could have read it, listening to the report by the UAW secretary, Lazey, at the same time and ready to vote by the time he was through speaking. But that's what happened. Shortly after Lazey's report the question was called to take a vote on about a hundred pages of typing called the contract.

## COMPANY'S RIGHTS

Several weeks later, some workers had finished reading. The first chapter deals exclusively with the company's rights over production and over the life of each worker while in the plant. The second chapter deals with what workers have no rights in, with regard to production.

Everything in the shop hangs on the company and the shop representative writing it up and getting it sanctioned by the local union and then the international union before any direct action can be taken.

A worker said, "If it was possible that you would hear from them and get action, it would not be too bad. But you never hear from them again."

## GETTING WORSE

Each new contract is worse than the one before. When a worker was asked had he read the last one, he said, "No. The one before the last was bad enough. I hear this is worse. Why should I want to read it?"

Any worker who can get the old contracts of ten or 12 years ago and read them all to the present, will wonder when are the union leaders going to stop? Or when are the workers going to stop them?

(Editor's Note: We will return to the contract in future issues.)

## FORCE USED AGAINST STRIKING WORKERS

WEST VIRGINIA.— This conversation could have taken place.

During the recent strike in Indiana, TV showed pictures of the tanks and machine gunners of the National Guard move on the striking workers. A boy was watching. He said to his dad, "Daddy, why did the governor call out the National Guard?"

"To protect the peace," said his father, without putting down his paper.

"But don't the Russians do that in a local disturbance? Don't they bring in tanks and soldiers when there is a strike?"

"Yes, the workers in Russia don't have the right to strike."

"But daddy, don't those guys in Indiana have the right to strike?"

"Yes, son, but they were causing a disturbance. They were destroying property and shooting."

"Couldn't the company come to terms with the workers? How come the company let some work while a strike was going on?"

"Well, son, some people didn't want to strike."

"But the majority did."

"Yes, but the minority have rights, too, son."

"But, if the minority didn't win an election, would they call the National Guard out to keep the majority from ruling?"

"No, that's different. The union isn't a governing body."

"But daddy, isn't it the only body the men have to protect them from the company? They can't get any protection from the government."

"Now, son," he said, taking off his glasses, "Son, you're confusing the issue."

"Well, I don't see any difference between the government and the company. I think the National Guard are strikebreakers, and on the side of the company."

"That isn't so, son, they are impartial."

"Well, why do they always aim those guns at the workers. I never heard of a company man getting shot by a policeman."

"Well, that's so, but it's only to keep the peace, and protect property."

"But dad, the worker's property is his work and his conditions of work. Why don't they protect that with the tanks and machine guns?"

"Confound it, son, they can't do that. This is a dispute between labor and management. The government is impartial."

"If that's so, why didn't the labor unions call in the military and police to point those guns at the company?"

"Son, that would ruin free enterprise."

"Gee, dad, I don't get it. Seems like the police are always on the side of management, and are always ready to defend them against labor, just like in Russia, only the government and management are all the same thing."

"Good God, son, you can't compare America with Russia," he said, loosening his tie.

"Well, I'll bet if you took a Russian worker to Indiana, he wouldn't see much difference in the way a strike was handled over there and over here."

"Maybe you're right, son. Maybe you're right."

## Big Pay Checks Look Good, But Grind Is Unbearable

LOS ANGELES.—Recently I was threatened by my foreman with a reprimand for refusing to work overtime. We have been working 10- and 12-hour shifts for several months now, sometimes for weeks straight without a day off. A number of us started to take a day or two off each week just to rest up. The big pay checks looked good but the grind was becoming unbearable. That's when the foreman started to jump us. "40-HOUR WEEK"

I told the union committeeman that I didn't think too much of a union contract which would allow the company to work its men as long as they pleased. It seems that the union contract mentions the 40 hour week only to say that any time after 40 hours is to be paid at premium overtime rates. The company schedules the working hours as they please and the men have nothing to say about hours of work each day or the number of working days in each week.

He told me this is an issue that the union has been fighting for many years. He said that maybe the next contract, three years from now, would have something to say on this. I let him know that any talk of what is going to happen in three years is just talk about pie in the sky. He had to agree with me that men who work these long hours are just shortening their lives.

## SICK CALL

In talking around about this problem I did find out that there have been certain

improvements made because the men themselves wouldn't stand to have their home life completely broken by the company schedule.

It used to be that the men wouldn't know until Friday if they were going to have to work the weekend. Late one Friday, when the men were given notice of Saturday work, they all decided not to come in Saturday. Everyone called in sick. Reprimands were given freely, but from then on the company gave notice early Thursday of any Saturday work. Even now, though, they sometimes wait until Saturday to give notice of Sunday work.

## 12 HOURS A DAY

The company also used to schedule 13-hour working days. After 12 hours there was a compulsory 42 minute lunch break so the men were actually at work better than 14 hours, including two unpaid lunch breaks. After some time of working this schedule all of the men started to clock out after eight hours of work. They refused to work any day overtime at all.

Management held a long three hour meeting with the men over this. The outcome was that the maximum scheduled day would be 12 hours and no one would be compelled to take that extra unpaid lunch break.

The workers in my department not only want to know when the company day ends and theirs begins, but they want overtime work to be voluntary and not compulsory.

## Low Wages Make Workers Desperate

WEST VIRGINIA—Wages are low enough in this prosperous country without working people working against themselves. But that's what some of them are doing. They make me more angry than anything else does.

I was doing day work for one woman, when another woman who had done some work for her son came to the house. He asked her how much he owed her and pulled out his money.

She said she had only worked for him for four hours and asked him for 97c! That's what I call really undermining wages! I make \$22 a week for going in six days, which isn't much, but it's better than 97c.

If it was only one woman you could say she might just be off her rocker, but there are advertisements in the paper from women who are begging to work for 50c an hour.

It gets worse in the winter, when work on the farms gets slack and a lot of people come into town from their farms looking for some work. They must be so desperate for work that they offer to

work for almost nothing.

That makes it hard on all the working people. Wages are low enough, but if we don't all stick together things can get even worse.

—Working Woman

## Nut Head Says—



"That was some merger between the AFL and CIO. Now we're gonna get some place."

## Modern Working Conditions Destroy Old Workers

They just made some kind of change in the insurance plan at work. On the new cards we had to fill out was the question of how we wanted the insurance paid out to the beneficiary, in a lump sum or monthly payments, in case anything happens to you. There was a lot of joking about this but then the conversation got on to how these companies are just rackets. You no sooner get your pay when you have to start giving a little here and a little there, before you know it there's not much left.

Although you know these people are just living off your back you got to have the insurance. If anything serious happens to you and you have no savings you're stuck.

If you don't have money you mean very little in this world. Before they let you into a hospital, my friend said, you could be bleeding to death, if you don't have cash or an insurance card you can't get in.

It sure is a crazy world. My folks have worked hard all their lives and one of their biggest fears is what will happen when they can't work any more.

My neighbor stopped me one day, he was very upset and just wanted someone to talk to. He has been laid off for more than eight weeks now. He told me to work and save as much as I can now because when you get old nobody gives a darn. He said Packard was the worst company to work for. They laid off men with 21 years seniority and kept younger men.

Why should it be that "gold" is so important? That people who have worked hard all their lives can't look forward to retiring, not at 65 years old, when the average life span is 64, (they even try to get an extra year out of you), but earlier. Or why does an older person have to retire if they still feel they can work.

I have an aunt who is more than 75 years old. She was working till a few months ago in a laundry for 85 cents an hour. The company made it so miserable for her she finally did leave her job. But she is a big woman with a lot of energy and still wants to work, but they wanted to hire younger girls. I remember her saying that they won't get the young girls to stand on their feet for eight hours a day. She now lives on \$60 a month social security. Her rent alone is \$40, a month, so you figure it.

Like my friend at work said, "In this money crazy world you can't even get six feet under unless the plot is paid for."

—A. T.

## EDITORIALS

## WORDS NOT DEEDS

There are many words written in daily newspapers and spoken from official platforms about the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the recent interstate commerce railroad case.

There are thousands and thousands of words about it from Negro leaders. But when it comes to brutality and death by white Southerners against Negroes there is very little in print by comparison—and no concrete action.

**They seem to want people to think that all they need is big legal laws passed on the books. The more such laws are passed, the more beatings, shootings and lynchings occur in the Southern States.**

The signs in the railroad stations, marked "For White Only," still hang in those stations. Days after the Supreme Court decision on interstate commerce, Negroes were still looking at those signs.

Several months ago, a Negro priest was refused admission to worship in Louisiana with white Catholics and was turned away by them to show how firm they were. Since then, a white Catholic woman was attacked and beaten by three other white Catholic women for teaching prayers to Negro and white children in the same classroom. The Bishop excommunicated the three women after the teacher brought a suit in court against them. One must wonder would he have taken this action without the teacher suing the women.

**The question now is, words and the Supreme Court legal decision versus the living life of Negroes without any action to protect their civil rights as humans.**

There is no other minority in this country to whom it could happen in this way without some intervention by the federal law. Where is the democracy, the civil rights, the freedom which is now so often talked about so loudly?

## ...AND MORE WORDS

The Seventeenth and last Convention of the CIO was held last week. Actor Melvyn Douglas recited a very militant poem about how tough things were 20 years ago and how much better they are now thanks to the struggles of the CIO.

Folk-singer Joe Glazer sang a few old union songs and when he sang "Joe Hill," Walter Reuther joined him, saying he did not have permission from Jimmy Petrillo and he didn't want to interfere with unity by upsetting some of the AFL boys who are touchy about questions of jurisdiction.

Then there were a lot of speeches about stout-hearted workers who struggled to organize themselves.

An old needle trades worker who took part in the bitter struggles before World War I, when told of these speeches, said, "I know what we did them. That doesn't excuse what they're not doing now."

Finally, the new AFL-CIO Convention opened in the armory on 34th Street and Park Avenue, New York City. The opening prayer was by Cardinal Spellman who prayed to Christ, the worker, to guide the industrialists not to regard the new unified labor body as an enemy but rather as the protector of their interests.

There were many speeches. About 15 million workers were represented by about 1500 delegates. It was a long road since the armory was first established to maintain order after the great strikes of the last quarter of the 19th century.

When president Meany was reported as having been invited to address the National Association of Manufacturers, one commentator was heard to say, "How much more of this maturity can we stand?"

## FACTS ABOUT COMMUNISTS?

A number of times NEWS AND LETTERS has reported that the Communists are having a honeymoon with Reuther and that both are now united, because of the Geneva conference, against wild-cat strikes. I would like to see someone write an article on this for the paper and present all the facts.

Where I work the union is dominated by an anti-Reuther faction. They certainly are not having any honeymoon with the Communists in the plant. In this local situation the Communists seem to be interested in provoking wild-cats and, in fact, were evidently very active in a recent one directed against the UAW international and Reuther.

But the issue is more fundamental than temporary factional blocs in the union movement. NEWS AND LETTERS has to be constantly aware that at certain points the Communists "play dead" in the unions, at other times they are with the union bureaucracy against the ranks, and at still other times the Communists can play at being friends of the rank and file against the bureaucracy. The fundamental treachery remains throughout in that the Communist tactics are motivated by the desire to duplicate Russian conditions in the United States in the false belief that this will "help" the workers. They want nothing more or less than a situation where (1): all property is in the hands of the state; (2): the state is in the hands of a small, ruthless and "intelligent" party; and (3): where the "stupid and backward" workers will produce like eager beavers without having "reactionary" thoughts of controlling production themselves in a free and human manner.

Editing Committee Member  
Los Angeles, Calif.

• See Worker's Journal, p. 1.

## STRIKES, CONTRACTS &amp; CONDITIONS

Burroughs spent a lot of money propagandizing how terrific their benefit and insurance plans are for the workers. But they never bothered to explain that it's a 50-50 proposition and the worker has to pay half for this high-priced insurance.

Burrough Worker  
Detroit

## Readers

I remember those dark days of the Depression real well. How could you forget them? They took every bit of furniture in our house—for the rent. But they'll never do it again! I'll make sure of that! What gets you is the thought of how hard you had to work for what you had. And they just took it without a blink. I still get mad about it, when I think of it, no matter how long ago it was! I don't think people will ever stand for that sort of thing again.

Miner's Wife  
Fairmont, W. Va.

Everybody's talking about the problem of automation. Some are saying that it will bring depression, others are saying that it will cause a short recession and after that better prosperity than ever. Reuther plays with the question. He pretends to use it against the company when he's bargaining but otherwise he keeps away from it.

About three or four years ago, Ford was planning to put automation into one of his plants here and was moving some equipment to Cleveland to make room for the new automation machines. The Ford local almost struck to prevent it when Reuther stepped in and said: You don't know anything about automation so don't play around with things you're ignorant about and try to prevent them.

Detroit  
Auto Body Worker

## WORKERS AND POLITICS

I haven't heard a single person in the plant talk about Ike's illness except from the point of view of being worried as to what would happen if Nixon succeeded to the Presidency. The workers fear and hate Nixon even more than they ever disliked Joe McCarthy. If, as the rumors have it, Ike is planning to retire next Spring and let Nixon take over the remainder of the Presidential term, there is going to be extremely strong sentiment in the plant for a Presidential candidate who is definitely linked with the labor movement. Under these circumstances the workers would accept Adlai Stevenson less than they did in 1952, although they might vote for him just to protest against the Republicans.

Toolmaker  
Los Angeles, Calif.

The way I see politics it's better to change every year, or at least every four years. If you keep a man in four years and he's going to do anything, I ought to have got something done by that time. But if he's in for four more he's not wanting to do anything he pleases and I gets to believe he owns the office. They all promise everything. That's one reason I like Stevenson. At least he didn't promise anything.

Retired Miner  
West Virginia

Recently I spoke to one of the members of the local union election committee about the results of an election. About ten percent of the membership had shown up for the election. It was evident from talking to him that union elections were often won and lost not on the basis of any real issues but on the practical basis of which candidate could get more personal friends down the vote.

Machinist  
Los Angeles, Calif.

The leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States now have the world on the brink of war. Who is right and who is wrong in what they call their ideologies? I say neither. The United States is supposed to be fighting for freedom. How can we fight for freedom abroad when a person here at home must have the right color of skin and enough money in order to obtain his freedom, and low enough morals to keep it?

Ex-GI  
West Virginia

Our world situation today is not the result of loss of religion, loss of culture, or loss of confidence. The world's present mad dash toward universal suicide is the result of the seemingly never-ending contest for world market and natural resources between the West and the East. It serves only to hide the real tensions of the world today. It is like worrying about the bean when the house is burning down.

The true tensions in the world today can be shown more easily in Morocco or Kenya. All people—not one not two, not a group, or many—but all of them want their eminent dignity and they will someday have it.

WVU Student  
Morgantown, W. Va.

# Views

## NEGRO AMERICANS

The NAACP is trying to take a monopoly over the Till case. They're politicians trying to make hay over it but they don't propose to do anything about it. If there's something to be done, these politicians will leave it to the people to do and then they'll try to hold it back and use it for themselves.

Ford Worker  
Detroit

I wanted to give out copies of the paper at the Till protest meeting called by the NAACP on November 13th at the Cow Palace here in San Francisco. I went to the meeting in a downpour of rain and found that I couldn't enter the grounds with the paper.

This was an order from the Sheriff's office of San Mateo County and it was enforced by a cluster of deputies and police officers. According to a deputy, the NAACP had requested them to keep all radical literature out of the area that belongs to the Cow Palace arena.

Committee Member  
San Francisco

It was bad enough that they got away with murder, but they admitted the kidnapping, and got away with that. How they let them get away with that beats me. When the Federal Government says they can't step in because of "State's Rights" it's like saying that the South won the Civil War after all. They seceded and fought a war and the Union was supposed to have won. But they have as much as if they had seceded. If I was one of those big shots in the Government, I'd do everything in my power to keep any news like this out of the papers. It sure makes them look bad. It makes you wonder what the central government is for, besides collecting taxes. Everybody knows that if it had happened to a white man, or in the North, the Federal Government would step in.

Student  
West Virginia

When I read about the new desegregation law the Supreme Court just passed, it made me almost laugh. to think they'd ballyhoo about another "law" when they haven't even succeeded in desegregating the schools after all this time. It made me mad to think

they'd try to pretend they're for equal rights when they let them get away with murder in Mississippi. Whatever they're trying to pretend, they're not fooling anybody. I didn't hear a soul talking about the new law. Even when I brought the subject up, people just shrugged their shoulders. Everyone seems so disgusted they don't even consider that it's worthwhile talking about.

Committee Member  
West Virginia

What's the use of passing another desegregation law? They haven't even got the school bill put into effect in the South yet. What's there to get excited about? It doesn't mean anything.

Negro Housewife  
Osage, W. Va.

There was one restaurant in the Run that used to have a sign in the window saying that colored weren't served there. It was some of the white guys that decided to get rid of it. They got some of their colored friends and all went in the place together. They pretended they were "high"—but it was one time they were all dead sober. They went in laughing and cutting up and ordered some beer. When the owner told them he couldn't serve the colored, that was it. They really tore into the place. The next day, the sign was out of the window.

Woman Reader  
Scots Run, W. Va.

## WOMEN

The front page article on women (Oct. 26) was very good. Some of the things like international topics and the things that women in other countries are doing would add a lot to the paper. It would be very interesting to hear what the miner's wives would do in case of a strike. I'd like to get some of the feeling in the paper of the group of women throughout the country who are taking a stand on their own local problems.

Working Woman  
Los Angeles

I'm not ashamed of my race—I'm proud of it. I

wouldn't be any other color, if I could.

What makes me a little mad is how some try to look like whites—or how some judge whether a Negro girl is attractive by how Caucasian her features are. I was really tickled when I read about one beauty contest that was conducted among Negro soldiers not too long ago. They sent pictures of different colored girls to the troops. Some of the guys picked colored girls with "white-looking" features and light skin. But one troop picked a girl who really looked Negro—and they were proud of it. And I was proud of it, too.

Miner's Wife  
West Virginia

It would be interesting to hear about the automobile as a household appliance. They're all geared for women now, colors, easy driving and so on.

A Friendly Man  
Los Angeles

I'd like to read something I could learn something from, not just husband and wife problems. No matter how hard my husband works, we can't seem to get the things we need to make our life more comfortable. Even when I went out to work, we were still only able to get the bills paid on time.

Housewife  
Los Angeles

## ANY VOLUNTEERS?

The GI students who wouldn't volunteer in class (Oct. 26) aren't the only ones. At a meeting of some staff members, the department head (a much older man than the others) announced that he couldn't make some conference or other and would like someone to go in his place. He asked for suggestions and getting none, asked for a volunteer, or he'd "just have to appoint somebody." One of the staff, a GI from World War II simply said, "We've all been in the Army, you won't get any volunteers." Students may not have much in common with their profs, but the Army sure gave them one common attitude!

WVU Student  
Morgantown, W. Va.

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## Notes from a Diary

# TWO WORLDS

## EUGENE VICTOR DEBS: AMERICAN SOCIALIST

One hundred years ago Eugene Victor Debs, who was to become the greatest American socialist, was born in Terre Haute, Indiana. He became a socialist while he was in prison for having led the great Pullman strike in 1894. As Debs put it, it was the gleam of the bayonets of the Federal troops called out to put down the strike for elementary rights that transformed him from a union organizer into a socialist: "In the gleam of every bayonet and the flash of every rifle the class struggle was revealed. The capitalist class. The working class. The class struggle."

The passionate belief in a new society free of all tyranny, capitalist exploitation and war, led him to oppose the holocaust of the first World War. Once again he found himself in prison, this time for his anti-war views.

## WENDELL PHILLIPS, ABOLITIONIST

Eugene Victor Debs was proud of the fact that when he was a young man he chaired a meeting for the Abolitionist leader, Wendell Phillips. Debs was then secretary of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and in that capacity had invited the great orator of the Abolitionist movement to speak to his union. Phillips was then 70 years old, but still in the forefront of every social movement. Just as in the struggle to abolish slavery, he had felt that true freedom could be achieved in the South only if the freed men were made the basis of a new South, so now he felt that only labor itself, white and black, could reconstruct society on totally new, truly human beginnings.

"We affirm as a fundamental principle," read Phillips' full body of faith, "that labor, the creator of wealth is entitled to all it creates."

"Affirming this, we avow ourselves willing to accept the final results of the operation of a principle so radical,—such as the overthrow of the whole profit-making system, the extinction of all monopolies, the abolition of privileged classes, universal education and fraternity, perfect freedom of exchange, and . . . the final obliteration of that foul stigma upon our so-called Christian civilization—the poverty of the masses."

## THE ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENT

The real mass organization of the population for a profound political purpose, such as the abolition of slavery, involves all the modern problems, including what we now call the problem of worker and intellectual, and what was then concretely the relationship between the revolts and movement of the slaves and the small group of talented journalists and speakers who headed the Abolitionist movement.

In its own organization the relationship of white to Negro was not what it was outside—the principle and need to abolish slavery. In its own organization that relationship of white to Negro became a relationship, a new relationship, between human beings. For the ex-slave often became a leader of the Abolitionist movement hereofore led by an idealistic white group of intellectuals. Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman are but a few names of escaped slaves who became leaders. In truth, Abolitionism moved from a mere idea to an organization when the white intellectuals surrounded themselves with the bitterly militant ex-slaves.

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF MEN TO WOMEN

A new relationship of men to women was also first worked out in that movement to abolish slavery. From the first, women were active in the anti-slavery societies. The world anti-slavery movement forbade women's participation and this split the movement. The American Abolitionists not only welcomed their participation but some of them, in turn, became involved in the women's movement for their own rights. Frederick Douglass was among the first to come forward and champion the independent movement of women. It was he who chaired the first meeting of the Women Suffragist Movement when the women still felt they needed a man to chair their meeting.

Finally, take the question of a world outlook. William Lloyd Garrison, the founder and editor of the *Liberator*, from the first made the slogan of his paper, "Our country is the world—our countrymen are mankind."

## PAST AND PRESENT

Thus every fundamental modern problem—relationship of white and Negro, new relations of men to women, the uniqueness and the deep-rootedness of the American problem and its world-wide connections—all these were first posed in America on the eve of the Civil War.

For Wendell Phillips Abolitionism was the movement in his time for a new and free society. That is what socialism was for Eugene Victor Debs. Those who today praise Debs for his dedication and struggle in the past, actually besmirch him when they fail to see that the new society for which he fought is not past history but the future still striving to be born.

## NEGRO NEWS

## The Way of The World

By Ethel Dunbar

Word is getting around now about the Negro question since the NAACP is trying to hand the Negro people a lot of stuff about how they are trying to get civil rights and freedom for them.

But we have found out that all the leaders of the NAACP are well-to-do Negroes and when we take our problems to them this is what they say: Go out and raise the money and we will try to solve your problems for you. If you give us time we will try to break up all this discrimination.

### SCARED ERRAND BOYS

But they are afraid to put up a fight themselves, so they will run down to the Mayor of the city and see what he will have to say about our problems. And then the Mayor will say: You go back and tell those Negroes not to start a thing because they will disgrace you.

Then the leaders run back to their office and are ready to answer your questions. This is what you get for an answer: Go home and stay until we can handle several problems like yours. We will call in a few days.

That day will never come. But they will keep the money that you raise to pay for the high officers and to have a place to sit around and gossip and say that they are leading the poor Negro. But the secret is out that the NAACP "ain't nowhere" for the poor Negro people.

### THE UNION'S THE SAME

The UAW treats the Negro people as bad as the NAACP in the way they talk about civil rights and about the killing of Negro people but don't do anything about the words.

It looks to me that the union leaders can't get any help from the president of the union to solve the problems of getting freedom for the Negro people. The president of the union is trying to get hold of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to be part of his organization so that he can be leader of the NAACP. But he still doesn't say anything that matters against the Southern white man for killing Negro people.

We realize that no white man wants the colored man to get in power because they know that we will bring freedom to the black man forever.

## FREEDOM WON'T HAPPEN WITHOUT A STRUGGLE

OSAGE, W. Va. — They pass all those new laws about inter-marriage and no segregation on buses and such—but they know when they pass them that they'll never work. Not until there's some struggle anyway.

I don't think they pass them expecting anything to come of them. All those new laws started after the U. S. got into trouble for sticking their noses into Europe and Asia, trying to tell those people how to be democratic. Those people told the U. S. to clean up their own house first and the Communists told them there would never be an end to discrimination in the U. S. Next thing you knew the U. S. started passing all those anti-discrimination laws.

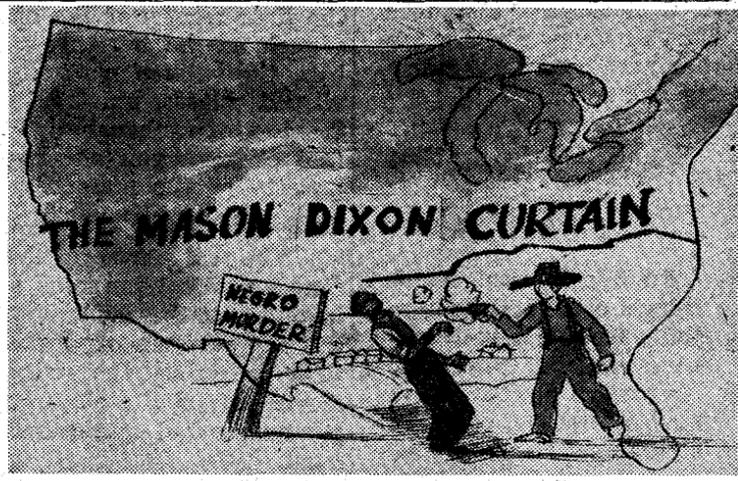
### SEGREGATED HIGHWAY

But a law about interracial marriages could never work down South, when things are so bad that they

even have separate space on the free highways for white and colored. We could hardly believe that one ourselves, until we took a trip South this summer. In Pulaski, Virginia, we started to pull off the highway into a cleared parking area for a rest, and there was a big sign "Parking for Colored." A little ways up the highway was another sign "Parking for White."

### COULDN'T BE STOPPED

I frankly don't see how the people down South can keep on taking it. I couldn't, I know. Even if I got killed for it, I just couldn't take it. Down in Alabama, there were about five Negroes to every white, from what we could see. Surely they wouldn't have to put up with it if they all just stuck together. Nothing could stop them. They could stop it right then and there. All they'd have to do is start dishing it back.



## This White World

DETROIT. — One question that you're bound to have a fight on no matter where you are, is religion. I told my friend at work that I didn't want to talk about it because it would just end up in a fight. But she insisted. She is a pretty devout Catholic. I used to be but no more. So we fought about it.

### STOPS KILLINGS?

She said that if it weren't for the Christian religion everybody would be killing each other for no reason at all.

I asked her if it didn't happen anyhow, religion or no religion, if the Second World War wasn't fought for the money makers? I asked her about the Negro and Jewish people that are killed for just being what they are born. Her answer was that no Jewish people are killed

in this country. Just in Germany and Russia.

I asked about the Negro people. She said they aren't killed for being colored. I asked her about the Till boy, if he wasn't killed for being colored. She said no.

### BLIND AND SKEPTICAL

I told her about an article I read in the papers, about the good Christian whites that couldn't stand to have the laws of God preached to them by a Negro priest down in Louisiana. Here was this man who believes as they; was taught all he knows and thinks by the Church; devoted his life to a profession that is supposedly one of the most blessed for Catholics; but one thing is wrong. His skin is dark. They would rather close down the church than pray with him.

I asked her to tell me about those "Christian" people. She didn't believe it so I brought the article in to her. All she had to say was, "That's how those Southerners are." I wish some one would explain the difference to me.

## INDIGNANT HEART

By Matthew Ward

(Editor's Note: INDIGNANT HEART was first published in 1952. This serial has been specially prepared for NEWS & LETTERS. Here is the tenth installment.)

The second lynching was of Willie. Willie used to buy standing timber off of Negro farms. He'd sell it at a mill. He borrowed money from some white people and couldn't meet a payment. The whites threatened to whip him up. He was working near me. It was rare to see a Negro with a shot gun every day in mid summer but Willie said he was carrying it to keep from being beaten.

One Saturday night Willie went to the store to pay the whites. Another white man was there and they tried to whip him. He wounded two men slightly and was wounded himself. The report went out that he had broken into the store and wounded two white men. He knew the woods and hid in the swamp.

Our mailbox was on the highway and one of us went for mail each day. I got the mail two or three days after Willie had hidden in the swamp and coming back I saw three or four cars speeding on the dirt road to the swamp. As I reached the road I heard shooting, like I'd heard many times when I was hunting in winter after birds, only it lasted longer than this type of hunting. A Negro came along and said they were going to hang Willie and shoot him. I stood for a half hour until they returned with Willie in their car. He'd been shot everywhere. Blood streamed. He was asking for help: he hadn't passed. He kept calling the name of one of the white men. Before he was shot so bad he probably saw the man's face and it was still in his head. It didn't appear to me that he could recognize anyone now. Faber, a white man, was with them. He was living with a Negro woman and had five children with her.

"We should have finished him there. What if he lives?"

"If this nigger lives he's better than a cat and they're supposed to have nine lives."

They said they would take Willie up the road and finish him. They threw his body into the car. I felt a wave of humiliation and shame come over me. I was humiliated that I was part of a race that could be dealt with like they would deal with a ferocious animal. Then I was shamed by a government. This happens year after year and they're helpless to do anything about it. I had one

hundred and one thoughts. How they would stop the Germans but they wouldn't stop a few whites from breaking Negroes like a few sticks to have fun out of them. As I started away it didn't feel as if my feet were touching the ground. I was floating along. It was like I was in a cloud, a dream.

I heard shots and met some Negroes, "They finished lynching Willie."

The next day I talked to Mary, the woman who lived with Faber. She said that Rambert had come for Faber and had told him they had guns and ropes to lynch Willie. She asked Faber if he was going. He said he had to go. That if he didn't, it would be rough on her. The whites would think he was taking her side and come wipe them both out. When he came back he said he was sorry it happened.

This put hate in me. My deepest hate was hating every Negro woman in the South who was part of the white man. I asked Mary how any Negro woman could live with a white man. Did they feel they weren't part of the Negro people?

Mary said that no one understood. She told me that when a Negro woman got tied up with a white man she couldn't break. Only he could break or put her down when he wanted. I knew a Negro woman who tried to leave a white man. She was killed in Dallas County. Mary said that every Negro woman knows, not at first, but after she gets stuck with a white by accepting clothes or money, that she may be killed. She has sold her complete life to a white man. Mary said she didn't know one Negro woman who ever got away from a white man if he wanted her. Once Faber beat Mary all night. She ran away to her folks. He had her put in jail for stealing until he could come for her. Mary used to sleep with every Negro in the place. She had four children for Faber and one for a young Negro. After the baby's birth Faber met the young Negro in the road. He told him that the state of Tennessee was too small for both of them to live in and he was not planning on leaving. The Negro left his home for eighteen years and came back after Faber's death.

(To Be Continued)

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## YOUTH

### Working For Independence

By Angela Terrano

A friend told me a little story about her 14 year old daughter who had been working in a five and dime store for 55c an hour until a few days ago. She worked behind the fountain with a girl friend. When it was not busy they would talk to each other. It seems this natural and human reaction disturbed the store manager no end until he had finally given them a 10-day to two-week suspension.

The only one that will come out of this in a bad way is the store manager I'm sure. He has probably been worried about it for weeks. The girls laughed about it and said there are other jobs for that kind of money.

#### YOUNG & OLD

These places hire young high school girls or older women who can't get other jobs because of their age. I know they treat the students as if they were their teachers in school.

I used to work in a place filing with some friends from my class. You weren't supposed to talk and when you did they came over and asked what you were talking about. All that for 65c an hour.

#### DOLLAR AN HOUR

It wouldn't be so bad if it were just these people but I work with a woman who is 33 years old and a mother and has been working for many years. When the new law was passed for a \$1.00 minimum wage for interstate commerce, she said that it was good. "Kids don't need to make any more than \$1.00 an hour." I asked her about the grown-ups that make just that. She said that anyone working for that was nuts and not ambitious enough to look for another job. I told her she was crazy and just didn't know the conditions throughout the country.

### 13-Year Old Boy Horrified By Murder of 14-Year Old

(Note: We are publishing below an article which we think is a most revealing indictment of the violence and shame of our present society that engulfs every young boy in it.

The adult world which is so ready to talk about what it calls juvenile delinquency would do better to concern itself with the harm it is daily doing to sensitive young human beings. We would especially like to hear adults comments on this article.)

I am 13 years old. I was excited over the lynching of the Negro boy Emmett Till and went to the N.A.A.C.P. meeting in Los Angeles on the murder. A colored man was the main speaker. He told the facts about the Till murder. I learned some

things that were not in the newspapers.

He told of what happened at the store and about the following Saturday when at two in the morning three men came to Emmett Till's grandfather's house.

Two of them were identified later as the store owner and his brother. They took Emmett away.

The next morning, a Negro boy who lived around there and who was riding his bike to the store saw a truck coming in the distance, when it came nearer he noticed that there were two white men in the front and in the back there were three Negroes, one was a boy who seemed to be sitting sort of still. A few yards after he passed them they turned into an old dirt road, the boy followed them out of curiosity. They stopped at an old deserted barn and they all got out and went in.

The Negro boy who had followed them heard shouts and screams. He got frightened and rode to a farmhouse nearby. He knew the people who lived there, so he ran up on the porch and yelled for them to come out. When the couple who lived there came out he told them

that someone was getting killed in the barn. The man went with him to see what was happening and on the way they heard more screams and please to stop. Then all of a sudden they didn't hear any more shouts or noise, they both got scared and went back to the house. About five minutes later the two white men and the two Negro men, but not the boy, came out of the barn. They were carrying a canvas all wrapped up like something was in it. They put it in the back of the truck and rode off.

The trial was obviously a fixed trial. The evidence was all against the murderers. The men who were on trial certainly acted calm, their kids were allowed to crawl all over them, their wives were kissing them and there were no guards around them.

The grandfather testified that they were the men who took Emmett Till away. The boy who had seen them in the truck identified them also. But still they were acquitted.

It's terrible to treat Negroes the way they are treated by some people, just because their skin is a different color.

#### BOY DOESN'T LIKE BOY SCOUTS

There's too much discipline in the Scouts. With our baseball club it's much more fun. We can do anything we want. There's no one to lead or to direct us, to say, "You do this or else!"

I don't like the way Boy Scouts hike at all. They just go in a big line. They eat an apple on a whole trip or something like that. You got to stay in line. When I go

hiking we rest when we want to. If you want to go up a mountain just to see what's on the other side, or down a ravine, you can do that too. You can't take your time in the Scouts. You go directly to a place and that's it.

Maybe it's a lot of fun to camp out. It probably is fun too, but I'd rather camp out with my father or with our baseball gang.

## WOMEN

### Women Search for a New Way of Life

(Editor's Note: The following sketch of women's struggles in the last 15 years, is written to indicate the scope of a Women's Page and to show that women's struggles are not confined to the home but reach into every aspect of modern life.)

#### INTO THE FACTORY

During World War II, women by the millions left the kitchen for the factory. The physiognomy of the labor force changed very considerably and with it the relationships in the home. This is by no means a completed battle. The revolt of the women which began during the war did not end with the end of the war.

Quite the contrary, it has intensified. It is a daily, an hourly struggle in which the woman wants to establish new relations with her husband, with the children, with other women and other men.

The mass movement into the factories was looked upon with suspicion by men in the same manner as the first movement of the Negroes into industry, before the CIO was regarded with suspicion.

Just as the Negroes proved to be loyal fellow-workers so did the women.

The women looked at the men with suspicion too. They wondered if the men in the

factory would try to dominate them as their husbands, fathers, brothers do in the home. They were determined that no such thing should happen.

When the women proved themselves, both at work and on the picket lines, as human beings with a class loyalty, the men loosened up sufficiently in their relations to note that something new had appeared on the American scene. The men began to say of the women, "I didn't know they had it in them."

#### BACK TO THE HOME

But when it came to establishing new relations in the home, there the men stopped. They didn't know that the women workers would "have it in them" to come home and wish to establish new relations there too. The woman was still expected to do all the housework and take care of the children and stay home while the men went out to play poker.

The women, however, took their new role in production seriously. They had gained a new dignity and a new concept of what their relations to their fellow men and fellow women should be and they refused to submit to the subordinate role which had been theirs in the home before they got their factory jobs.

#### FOR NEW RELATIONS

So where they could not work out the new relations they took to breaking up the homes, even where it meant that the woman would become the sole support of herself and of her children.

The politicians thought that all that was needed to reestablish the old "stability" of the home was to give the women a few posts in the government, army, business and to point with pride to the expanding American economy and all the gadgets for the kitchen to make life easier for "the little woman."

Not so the women. They absolutely refused to remain an appendage to the men. They are out searching for a total reorganization of society and that search continues.

### Women Aren't Taking What They Used To

A friend who read the story "Life in a Miner's Family" (Oct. 5), about what life was like in the old days told me, "I'm inclined to think things are better now than before. Society is more complex, of course, and there are lots of new problems. But from what I've heard about family life in the mining camps, it was much worse before than it is now. The men make a little more money now, and a lot of miner's families are moving into town, instead of having to live in the mining camps as they used to."

#### WIFE BEATERS

She said that it apparently used to be common practice for a man to beat his wife. The work in the mines was rough, and the men came home rough and took it out on their wives. One woman she knew said her husband used to come home drunk and beat her. She decided it would take somebody with guts to stop it, and that she had the guts to try. One night when he was out dead, sleeping on the bed, she took a rope and tied him up good and tight, and then beat the daylight out of him. He never touched her again.

I don't think some of these common practices have really changed too much. It still is

pretty "common" to hear about a man beating his wife.

#### GET UP AND GO

That goes on in big cities, too, I know. But in the bigger cities, a lot of women just pick up their kids and leave when that happens. They leave for lots of other reasons than beatings, too. They can get a fairly decent job in a factory and support their families themselves.

That's one of the biggest problems women down here are faced with. There just aren't many jobs for women. A woman can do housework, or waitress work, a few can get jobs as salesladies or office-workers, and for a very few there are two or three small factories to work in. But the average pay is from \$20 to as high as \$30 a week, even for those who can find work.

As a whole, women everywhere aren't taking what they used to. But it's a lot easier for a woman not to have to take it in a place where she can make her own way, than it is in a place like this.

In April, 1954, a Kikuyu girl was sentenced to life imprisonment for having one bullet in her possession. If she were not under 18 she would have been hanged.

Read

NEWS

&

LETTERS

WHAT'S BECOME OF 8-HOUR DAY?

(Continued from page 1)

TODAY'S INSECURITY

Ask any worker, whether he is in one of the highly organized industries or whether he is one of the vast millions of underpaid, unorganized workers and he will tell you that the threat of unemployment, of insecurity, of management's fury for production have him pinned down to the job and to the company's inhuman bidding.

Nor is this insecurity a simple question of employment or unemployment. Reuther boasts that "this is the first time in the history of human civilization where we have the tools of abundance with which to conquer poverty and hunger . . . and man's other ancient enemies." But the insecurity comes not only from the grinding pressure of production; it comes from the world crisis which threatens at every turn.

Ask any worker who lived through the terrible Depression and he will tell you that the tensions and insecurity today are greater than he experienced when 14 million were unemployed and families were starving.

THEN AND NOW

"Before the war," the auto worker said, "a man who accepted overtime was practically called a scab. The phrase, 'What are you trying to do, get rich?' was the standard to show that you can't and to laugh at anyone who tried. The whole emphasis then was to have more time for yourself, for things you cared to do."

"Now, they've even readjusted the credit system to force us to work more. Before the war you had to put a third down and pay up within a year. Now, instead of a third down on a car, you pay \$150 or even less. Many tell you to bring in your old car, even if you have to haul it down there and they'll take it as down payment. Then you have one to three years to pay instead of six months to a year.

"They figure everything out to a 'T' and stretch that to make you get that car or home you can't afford. They will ask what kind of job you have, is it regular, how much do you pay for rent? They

figure every single thing out and then say, 'Well, you can pay \$50 or \$75 a month.' That's the way they're selling cars and that's the way they are selling homes and that's how everyone is in debt so he can't see any way out except overtime and more overtime.

COMPULSORY OVERTIME

"That's another thing. If you refuse to work overtime too often, you'll be looking for another job. First, the union tells you you have to work overtime 'if the production is scheduled.' Well, it's 'scheduled.'

"Then, the company is supposed to give you three hours notice. Sometimes they do. But even if they don't, the steward will tell you not to refuse because 'it makes us both look bad.' This is how he figures: If you refuse overtime, the company will catch you on a minor violation, which they can do anytime they want to with all the clauses they've got in the contract. Then when they call you up to the office he can't defend you. So you better work overtime or else."

WHAT FOR?

A group of young workers, just hired by a big electronics company, were given an "orientation course" by management. Management's spokesman had film strips to illustrate his talk about how tough it was for workers two and three generations ago when they had to work ten hours a day, five and six days a week. Every one of these young workers laughed. They thought the whole thing was crazy because they themselves were working nine and ten hours a day, five and six days a week—and they had no choice in the matter.

"I was surprised last week," the auto worker said. "I had refused to work overtime and the chief steward, who used to be a good guy, hopped on me. He came over and said, 'If you had worked overtime you too would have had this fat check.'"

"I said, 'What difference will it make five years from today?' And he said, 'You're right. All it will do will keep the credit guy off a little longer.'"

LETTER FROM NORTH IRELAND

A reader in North Ireland has sent the following letter about conditions as he knows them:

"I am sure the problems which affect the workers in the U.S.A. are comparable to those affecting the workers of North Ireland.

"We have one major problem, that of unemployment, which is almost seven per cent of the working population.

"The industrial position is in a state of uncertainty depending for its life on export. But with the influx of material from Japan, etc., it hits our industries especially textile.

"I have been associated with the Labour movement for over a quarter of a century and despite all the benefits derived from the working class struggle, we find apathy and ingratitude amongst the rank and file. We have a long way to go in North Ireland to bring about working class unity in order to obtain control of Parliamentary and Local Government.

"Sometimes when we consider Labour's policy in Britain, we can find so little difference from the Tories, that is, on Conscription, Foreign and Colonial Policy, War and atomic dangers. The old right wing of Labour is a bit Tory inclined, but there is a definite move towards the left to bring socialism in our time."

Armagh North Ireland

\* \* \*

LABOR ARISTOCRACY

Clement Atlee, one time Labour Prime Minister of Great Britain, long time leader of the British Labour Party, has finally retired from political life.

He spent many years talking about socialism and working class politics. As a reward, no doubt, for his long service to labor, when he retired the Queen made him an Earl.

\* \* \*

TWO TRAVELLERS

Hardly any attention was paid, at the time of the last Geneva Conference, to the invitation given by U Nu of Burma to the Russian Government.

At the time that everyone was mourning the collapse of the Geneva talks, U Nu openly invited the USSR to take part in the

WORLD OUTLOOK

Asia-Africa talks to be held around spring.

The Russians very modestly expressed their thanks and very piously suggested that perhaps Russia itself ought not to attend since they were really European. But, they were quick to add, it would be most fitting for some of "our Eastern Republic" to attend since they are Asian and know the problems of the area and how to solve them.

Now, just a few weeks later, Khrushchev and Bulganin are touring Asia and Africa, posing in their own name as the champion of colonial freedom from imperialism. At the same time, they are representing their own exploited Eastern Republic—for example, Outer Mongolia — as the voice of Asia.

They sell arms to Egypt, in return for which they get hard gold and good will.

They promise to help India build a dam and praise state capitalism there as a step to socialism.

They imply to Burma, long considered the friend of the West, that should Burma struggle to get rid of British imperialism, there will be help.

They are wine and dined and celebrated as champions of the colonial oppressed. Compared with the State Department and its allies in England and France, anybody can appear as a champion of the colonial oppressed.

Far from giving anything away, the Russians are establishing a base for themselves from which to oppose the U.S. axis of state capitalism in the East-West struggle for total world domination.

\* \* \*

A CORRECTION

In a previous column (November 11), we commented on Molotov's retraction of his statement that Russia is only "on the way" to completing socialism. We said that since 1927, this same Molotov has been saying that socialism had indeed been completed in Russia. To be more accurate, Molotov first formally proclaimed

socialism in Russia in 1932, when Stalin's First Five Year Plan was completed.

\* \* \*

LABOR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Four years ago this month there was a strike of Israel's seamen which deserves remembering. The General Federation of Labor in Israel (the Histadrut) is not only the largest trade union in the country but also owns 16% of the industry in Israel. Out of four Israel-owned stemship companies, the Histadrut owns three in joint collaboration with the Israel government. As can easily be seen by this, the trade union bureaucracy and the government bureaucracy in Israel work hand in hand.

As a result, the Seamen's Union — one of the many unions inside the Histadrut — had to negotiate with its own trade union bureaucracy for a union contract.

There was no dispute over wages or hours, but the General Federation of Labor was concerned with making the Seamen's Union more of a company union. It tried to take away from the Seamen the right to an independent hiring hall and the right to negotiate through its own elected officials.

This question of independent hiring hall is one that has been disputed by company and union on the waterfronts of many countries in the world, including the United States.

In the course of the strike, the Histadrut executive formed a rival company union made up of "volunteers" and scabs, most of them with no previous maritime experience. All of the seaman who went on strike and were of draft age, were drafted into the army by the government, which also owns 50% of these companies. Meanwhile scabs were recruited to man ships that are actually owned by the Labor Federation.

The strike of the seamen was finally broken by the combined weight of the trade union bureaucracy and the government.

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