

WORKERS  
OF THE  
WORLD.  
UNITE

# THE MILITANT



Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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## Workers Slave for Pennies in Penna. Sweat Shops

Paul Comly French, writing in the Nation of May 31, gives an almost unbelievable account of conditions in factories in Pennsylvania: hours of labor of from 50 to 90 hours a week; wages as low as 3 cents an hour; girls in their early teens forced into sexual relations with their bosses, superintendents and foremen to keep their jobs. There is no limit to which capitalist exploiters will not drive their starved and stunted child slaves.

In the earlier days of capitalism, under the banner of "freedom and equality," children were chained to machines so that orderly production would continue. In 1893, as capitalism welters in its decaying stage, under the banner of "rugged individualism" and the "New Deal," girls just emerging from childhood, who are working 55 hours a week for 3 cents an hour, are dragged to New York at night by their masters to give up their half starved bodies to prospective buyers of the shirts their sweated labor created.

At the session of the Plachot investigation committee on sweatshops the following revealing testimony, taken from the Nation article, was made by the bourgeois of the borough of Northampton where a child-labor mill is located: "If I had my way," he told the Governor's commission, "I'd give no food orders to unemployed persons who urged factory workers to strike." And his wife who launders unemployment relief in Northampton, has even more amazing ideas. "I don't believe the strikers should be entitled to any unemployment relief," she testified before the commission, "because they don't have souls."

In Gottlieb's Sewing Factory at York the usual wage is \$3 or \$4 a week; girls in Bernstein's factory at York reported a payment of \$2.90 for two weeks' work—an average of three cents an hour. At the York Suit Co. button sewers receive from \$3 to \$4 a week for fifty hours; York tobacco workers said they received \$2.50 for a week's work totaling fifty hours, while workers in a second cigar factory in this rich Lancaster Co. agricultural section said their wages averaged \$1.50 for fifty-four hours. A silk mill in York charged girls \$10 for teaching them how to become operators. Dressers in the Lehigh Valley Shirt Co. in Allentown receive \$4 a week as against \$14 paid for the same work two years ago. At the Adkins Shirt Co. in Allentown only three girls in the place were over fourteen; their pay averaged from \$1.30 to \$2 a week, while one girl, with seven years' experience, earned the munificent sum of one dollar a week. One boy in an Allentown shop earned ten cents a week for a ten-week period.

## STALINISTS BREAK UP LEAGUE MEETING IN N. Y.

On Wednesday night, June 28, the Communist League of America (Opposition) held a meeting at Pitkin and Bristol Streets where about two to three hundred workers, including a number of party members and Y. C. Leers, assembled to listen to the point of view of the Left Opposition. When the last speaker had concluded his remarks he asked for questions from the workers. Up piped a party member, J. M., and demanded nothing short of the platform for as long as he wanted. It was explained to him that it was our platform and our meeting.

The party members then set up a yelling and hooting that would undoubtedly have brought the police had not the speaker from the platform promised to grant him the three minutes that many from the audience urge that he get. He was asked if he would confine his remarks to three minutes and he promised that he would. When he got the platform he immediately reversed his promise to speak for the time granted him and set about telling the workers gathered there that he was going to speak for as long as the workers (read: party members) demanded: "whether for three minutes or one hour".

This was too much for even some of his own followers. One worker declared: "You will speak over my dead body and I am a party member." He was asked to leave the platform and a general melee began. Cries of shame were heard throughout the audience. Many workers were frankly disgusted with the party and Y. C. L. members' tactics.

The meeting was then resumed. Because of the shouting on the part of the party members it was impossible to conduct an orderly meeting with the announcement that we were not going to be driven away and would return to this corner. Our comrades struck up the Internationale which, to the shame of the workers present, the party members refused to sing, and left in a body. —M. GLEB.

## Return to Narrow Basis at N. Y. Mooney "United Front" Confab

New York, N. Y.—The great promise for the broadening of the united front to free Tom Mooney at the recent National Chicago Mooney Congress was given a deplorable setback by the narrow and overwhelmingly party-packed conference held last Sunday at Irving Plaza in New York. Not only were the delegates for the greater part from the C. P. and its auxiliaries, but the atmosphere of the conference harked back to the old "third period" days when any criticism was met with a hysterical howling from the party followers.

There is a great danger, if the indications at the conference mean anything, that the party will give up its recently adopted united front and reverse to its ultimatum "united front from below" policy.

The Left Opposition delegates were refused the right to address the conference on the ground that preference must be given to trade union delegates. That this was merely a pretext to prevent the Opposition's voice being heard at the conference was plainly evident by the bureaucratic antics of Robert Minor who carefully sifted the speakers' list before anyone was permitted to get the floor. Minor, who was introduced as the impartial representative of the Tom Mooney Molders' Defense Committee and gave the key-note speech was tireless in his efforts to make what was called as a united front conference into a C. P. convention.

When comrade M. Goldman, L. O. delegate, made a motion that representatives from trade unions and political organizations be given preference on the speakers' list,

Minor suavely and demagogically made an appeal that the motion be voted down and that all delegates be given equal opportunity to speak. How much interest Minor had that all delegates have an equal opportunity to speak was plainly to be seen when in the late hours of the conference he introduced a motion that the last speakers be three trade union delegates and spoke against the amendment of the L. O. delegate; that a representative of the Left Opposition who had not yet been included succeeded in getting the floor amongst the last few speakers.

Despite Minor and the bureaucratic procedure of the conference the delegate of the Left Opposition succeeded in getting the floor when the conference came up and read a statement. Comrade Goldman, speaking for the L. O., upon being given the floor for a couple of minutes, made the following statement: "The delegates of the Left Opposition accept the draft resolution for the N. Y. Free Tom Mooney Conference and pledge themselves to carry out all the provisions contained therein. We protest however against the undemocratic procedure of the chairman in excluding our representatives from the opportunity of addressing this conference. We state categorically that unless the conference follows democratic procedure the fight to free Tom Mooney is in danger and a united front of working class organizations which Tom Mooney asked for is irreparably harmed."

This statement was received with some degree of sympathy by some (Continued on Page 4)

## The Textile Code Shows Real Face of the 'New Deal'

The past week has seen the publication of the first few proposed industrial codes drawn up under the National Industrial Recovery Act. The most important one advanced is that by the textile industry. The code as proposed exposes in all its viciousness the present program. Where Roosevelt spoke of a maximum 30 hour working week, the manufacturers propose a 40 hour week. Where Roosevelt spoke of a minimum wage, these shameless gentry translate this into the terms of the inflated dollar, and quote ten dollars for the south and eleven dollars for the north.

Protests against this brazen despicable proposal were heard from even the most reactionary of labor leaders. All these labor fakers who for years have done nothing to better the conditions of the most exploited section of our industrial population, the textile worker, have today decided to attempt to rebuild their lost prestige in officially protesting the miserable proposals. It is thus that we find Thomas F. McMahon of the A. F. of L. proposing that instead of ten dollars the minimum wage be set at fourteen, and instead of the forty hour week, the maximum number of hours be set at thirty five. Today, with the more than 17 million unemployed, with the dollar rapidly falling in value, the proposals of the official A. F. of L. can be looked upon as nothing but an attempt to forestall a real effective movement to resist this starvation program.

Finally, to complete this new deal picture, we see the provisions (Continued on Page 4)

## Roosevelt Program Long-Range Plan to Stabilize U.S. Capitalism On the Backs of the Workers

Situation of American Imperialism in World Economy Forces «New Deal» Demagogues to Reverse Historic Policy - at Expense of Agriculture and the Proletariat. Program Disguised to Enlist Support of Toiling Masses.

Congress has adjourned, leaving in Roosevelt's hands the most far-reaching authority which any American president has ever had in peace-time. How he proposes to use it is becoming increasingly clear—the consolidation of capital into cartels, the beating down of wage standards, the course toward inflation, the aggressive assertion of nationalistic policies at the risk of disrupting the economic conference (allegedly based on international cooperation).

Why is American capitalism, which for so long has raised the slogan, "Take the government out of business" now in need of the Roosevelt program, which does the exact opposite? Why, particularly, is the policy of government intervention in business carried further and further the more evidences accumulate of a temporary and limited upturn in business? Is it not a paradox to see a doctor redoubting his efforts to meet the signs of convalescence in his patient shows? The answer is that the doctor's efforts are not directed to the immediate symptoms which already show some improvement, but to an inner cancer which threatens the very existence of the system. It is not a question of overcoming the

immediate crisis, which had already begun to show signs of slackening a year ago, but of preparing for a long period of violent shocks and disturbances; of economic, social and political upheavals with which the "normal" forces of capitalist recovery are insufficient to cope, but which on the contrary, demand the utmost concentration and mobilization of the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie.

A valuable key is furnished by the famous sentence in the President's inaugural address in which he likened the present emergency to a state of war. The facts themselves clearly show how unlikely it is that he was talking about the immediate banking crisis, or even about the cyclical crisis of business as a whole. The banking crisis began to improve rapidly from the second half of March on; over \$800,000,000 in gold came back to the banks, Federal reserve notes in circulation declined by \$1,500,000,000, and interest rates declined with increasing rapidity. What the Government Accomplished General business, following the sharp slump caused by the banking developments of the month between Feb. 18 (the Michigan moratorium)

and March 15 (reopening of the New York Stock Exchange), resumed the upward trend which had begun as far back as July of last year and had flattened out in the fall, to begin again in the early weeks of the present year. Carloadings, electric power consumption, automobile sales, steel production, and a host of similar indices showed the scope of this improvement. The basis for it is to be found in the establishment of a low level of production costs through the stabilization of commodity prices at a low level; the extensive reductions in wages, leading to an improvement in profit margins; and in the re-accumulation of a substantial fund of liquid capital seeking investment, as the result of far-reaching liquidation and low interest rates. The direct intervention of the government was effective in bringing about recovery, at this stage, only by contributing through prompt action to the reopening of the banks. Since then it began to steer a course toward inflation, which accelerated but did not create the tendency to increased activity.

The emergency with which the Roosevelt legislation is concerned goes further and deeper, and looks forward to a period of years. This can be seen by the scope of the measures themselves, and of the government apparatus which must be provided to make them effective. It involves, in short, the long-term future of American business, that is, an attempt to readjust American economic life to a new set of conditions apart from the "natural" and "spontaneous" recovery which is taking place before our eyes.

Every previous crisis has closed a similar recovery, which has then passed on into the stage of stabilization or definite prosperity and then into a boom, marked by new high records in production and trade. Sometimes the driving force has been the opening of new territory, or new markets; sometimes big crops, or foreign wars which have stimulated American exports; sometimes the growth of new industries.

None of these factors making for peaceful stabilization and prosperity are even in sight today. On the contrary, the outlook is that the whole post-crisis period will be marked by severe shocks and violent readjustments, both within American economy and in its relations to other countries.

## The Long Range Perspective of U. S. Capitalism

When America was changed from the course of the World War from a debtor to a creditor nation, a tremendous readjustment was needed in every single phase of the national economy. A debtor nation is one which has not fully grown up economically; it imports capital, exports raw materials and foodstuffs, needs a large export surplus with which to pay its debts, has relatively small industry and an imperfectly developed or dependent banking system, a shortage of labor and high wages. Exactly the opposite is true of the economically mature, capital exporting (imperialist) creditor nation. America even before the war, while still a debtor nation, had begun to partake of some of the characteristics of the creditor nation, especially in its high state of industrial development.

Since the war, however, its whole economic structure has been shot through with anarchisms and contradictions. Its banking system remained a contradictory two-story affair, on top a few score banks of world importance but with few or no branches at home, and below them, 30,000 country and neighborhood banks, were steadily decimated down to 20,000, by failures in good times and bad. Agriculture, through rapidly giving way to industry, remained the most important single phase of economic life, providing a huge export surplus annually, contrary to the food deficits of every other important industrial power. Industry itself, while rapidly increasing in size and concentration, has been exporting only 10-11 per cent of its output, a much smaller proportion than any other economically advanced power. The huge export surpluses continued, while returns from capital exports were beginning to come in and complicate the transfer of international payments, which the other industrial powers have solved by accepting annually more imports than they (Continued on Page 4)

## The Paris Anti-Fascist Congress ... an Anti-Trotskyite Slug Fest

### Empty Parade is a Complete Failure

Paris.—The specter of "Trotskyism" haunted the organizers of the "Pleyel parade" (Pleyel is the name of the hall where the Congress was held—Ed.) from the beginning to the end of the debates. Defeatists like that of the German proletariat threw a burning light on all the perspectives established by the Marxist wing years ago. In order that the Centrist policy would not be wiped out by such a congress the bureaucracy had to gag us. In order to mask the responsibility for its criminal policy it had to hang out the white sign of such a comedy of the united front.

The bureaucratic measures were in vain. The Marxist wing of the International, which represents the strength and expresses the hope of the proletarian vanguard, showed the way.

Every day the Centrist bureaucracy reveals to what depths it has degenerated. It is a thermidorian bureaucracy in which the term "revolutionary" serves only as

a pretext to express the pressure of the class enemy on the workers' ranks.

The "Pleyel parade" has come to an end. The pseudo-congress has shown itself unable to solve the problems which confronted it. Deep cracks were revealed in its ranks: the illusion of strength which gave the congress thousands of men, optimistic speeches, brutal sergeants-at-arms were nothing else but expressions of Stalinist impotence.

### The Congress Utilized by French Imperialism

Better yet is that if this congress was not under government protection it played the game of the foreign policy of the Daladier government. By means of an alibi of a letter from the police department Daladier took all the precautions of foreign policy by his dealings with the organizers of the congress, he knew how to use the congress as a "national" reserve.

### Soviet Workers Excluded from the "European" Congress

What is more eloquent on this point was the absence, from this European Congress of any Soviet worker's delegation. That demonstrates, once again how low this parade stood in the estimation of

U. S. S. R. government circles and the desire of these circles not to break faith with the Hitler Government and Mr. Daladier in any way at all.

### The Marxist Wing Excluded from the Congress—The Preparation

Roulangue, Gourdeau's lieutenant, the party's confidence man, maneuvered through the medium of several tricks of the organization committee so as to serve as bait for the socialist "rank and file".

We have already revealed how, in the Parisian district, the Oppositionists after being methodically slugged were systematically thrown out of the district "congress". This was only the expression, on a district scale, of a strained international system. The date of the Congress approached; the stitches of the bureaucratic lining drew closer, and more, it appeared that the Organization Committee desired to systematically eliminate the sections of the Opposition and the Oppositionists from the Congress; in fact, every delegation had to receive the stamp of its national leadership, that is, the Stalinists.

In face of all of these facts, the International Secretariat of the Left Opposition sent a delegation to openly pose the question of our admission to the Anti-Fascist Congress. This delegation received an evasive reply. On Saturday, June 3, on the eve of the Congress an official answer was sent us. We publish the letter of the Organization Committee below.

### The Explanations of the Organization Bureau

"TO THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF THE LEFT OPPOSITION OF THE C. I.

"In reply to your letter of May 23, we answer the following:

"The European anti-Fascist workers Congress is a mass congress, to which the largest sections of the toiling masses have given their adherence and have elected, through the prosecution of a common and active anti-Fascist struggle, representatives of the masses of all countries. The groups connected with you do not represent any masses and we know nothing of their participation in the anti-Fascist struggle and in the strengthening of the anti-Fascist front, in connection with the European anti-Fascist Congress.

"The appeal of the organization bureau of February 26 for the convocation of the Congress was addressed to all workers' political and trade union organizations inviting them to adhere to the Congress and to send delegates to it. Participation in the congress presupposes the acceptance of the platform of common anti-Fascist struggle presented in the appeal of the organization bureau.

"We have no communication on the subject of your acceptance of the platform of the Congress and

of your adherence on this basis. On the contrary, Trotsky, your International Secretariat, and the groups connected with you have conducted an infamous campaign against the Congress. (See Unser Wort, organ of your German section). You can no longer ignore the fact that your German group in Paris has made a decision expressly against the Congress and for the boycott of the latter. In your struggle against the Workers Anti-Fascist Congress, that is, against the united front of millions of men for the decisive struggle against the advance of Fascism and for the overthrow of the murderous Fascist dictatorship, the counter-revolutionary Trotskyist group finds itself in a fitting front with the leaders of the 2nd International.

"This is our answer to your request. "Organization Bureau of the Convocation of the European Workers Anti-Fascist Congress." Needless to say, we expected such a maneuver; they had already rejected "political organizations" as well as others, with the exception of rank and file organizations, at Amsterdam. All the delegates of the International Opposition who were present in Paris were at the

### Left Opposition's Delegates Beaten

same time delegates of workers organizations and, as such, had the right to enter the Congress. But there also the bureaucrats were watchful. A note appeared in l'Humanite demanding that those wanting to receive his credential had to appear at the Grange aux Belles (ited Trade Union headquarters).

The Left Oppositionists, at this time, were in possession of credentials of the following organizations: these organizations, for material reasons, were not able to multiply the number of delegates nationally contrary to the Stalinists who multiplied their delegates for each local group.

Spain.—Spanish section of the Left Opposition; Autonomous Building Workers Trade Union; Oil Workers Trade Union of Astillero; United Trade Union of Havana; Belgium.—Belgian section of the Left Opposition; Knights of (Continued on Page 4)

## Stalinists Expel 3 L. O. Youth

New York, N. Y.—On June 18, Joe Elliott, Sam Shabel and George Ray were expelled from the Y. C. L. controlled organization, the Student Forum. Their expulsions, based on the flimsiest and most transparent charges of inactivity, comes as a result of the feeling of alarm among the Stalinists and the growth of influence of the ideas of the Left Opposition among the young workers and students of the locality.

In particular, the Stalinists have become worried over the class on the "History and Principles of the Left Opposition", organized under the auspices of the N. Y. Spartacus Youth Club. This class, led by George Ray, began with an attendance of 18 and has now risen to 30. Joe Ross, president of the Student Forum, attended one session of the class with the aim of "exposing" the Trotskyists. Unfortunately for himself, he succeeded in exposing only his own ignorance.

The expulsions of the three comrades in the Student Forum is only part of the expulsion campaign inaugurated by the Stalinists in the East New York and Brownsville sections. Joe Elliott and M. Layton were expelled from the American Youth Club. Elliott made an application to the Student Forum. The Stalinists wanted to refuse him admission on the grounds that he had been expelled from the American Youth Club. Their proposal was defeated by a vote of 19 to 18. Since then the Y. C. L.

ers have been joining the Forum en masse.

From the Brownsville Youth Club, Morris Shapiro, a member of that organization for seven years, and one of its founders, has been expelled for Trotskyism.

S. Caesar and H. Conroe have been expelled from the Y. C. L., also for Trotskyism. Neither of these comrades has endorsed the program of the Left Opposition, but have been studying it.

In the Student Forum new expulsions have been put on the order of business. At the meeting of June 25 a motion was introduced by a Y. C. L. er to expel Sam Gordon, B. Caesar and B. Lerner for circulating a petition protesting the expulsion of the three "Trotskyists".

20 members signed their names to the petition. The motion was postponed to the next meeting because some entertainment had to be prepared for the evening. However, this was no obstacle to passing a motion barring the 3 expelled "Trotskyists" from appearing in the Forum headquarters. The chairman very democratically allowed two speakers on the motion, one for and one against, each having one minute apiece.

The sum total of all these bureaucratic expulsions is that more and more young workers and students are interesting themselves in learning what actually is the program of the Left Opposition. —GEORGE RAY.

## Scottsboro Decision Reversed

The verdict of guilty brought in against Hayward Patterson one of the nine Scottsboro defendants, was set aside on June 22nd by Judge Horton.

This is the second reprieve granted to Patterson, the first having been obtained some time ago through a decision of the United States Supreme Court.

In his statement of opinion accompanying the order for a new trial Judge Horton merely repeated what the defense has been saying from the first. "The testimony of the prosecutrix (Victoria Price) in this case is not only uncorroborated but it also bears on its face indications of improbability and is contradicted by other evidence, and in addition thereto, the evidence greatly preponderates in favor of the defendant."

The change in the point of view of Judge Horton, who but on last Palm Sunday sentenced the convicted youth to death, was hardly the result of "preponderance of evidence". The frame-up evidence had in no whit changed since that day the sentence of death was read to Hayward Patterson. The change was not one in the "preponderance of evidence" but rather in the tearing to pieces of the crude frame-up by the united efforts of tens of thousands of Negro and white workers in the struggle for the freedom of the boys. For the granting of a new trial,

for the saving of the lives of the framed-up Negro boys, the chief credit goes to the I. L. D. and the Communist movement as a whole. Despite all mistakes in the united front maneuvers, despite the playing up of Tammany Hall lawyers, the International Labor Defense was able to make the "Save the Scottsboro Boys" an international slogan that helped to weld the international bonds of the proletariat.

This temporary reprieve must in no way produce any lull in the building of the only thing that will completely free the boys—a mass movement. The present move on the part of the southern court may be just such a maneuver to foster illusions in the minds of the working class as to the "honesty" of the Alabama Courts. Massachusetts "honesty" sent Sacco and Vanzetti to their death, Calif. "honesty" sent Tom Mooney to 15 years of a living death, and Alabama "honesty" will attempt to send the Scottsboro Boys to their death. As surely as the present reprieve is the echo of the working class shout in their defense, so will their complete freedom be the result of a mighty protest movement demanding their release. This decision for a new trial must be the starting point for a whirlwind campaign that will force the complete freeing of all nine boys. —W. M.