

NEW MILITANT

Official Organ of the Workers Party of the U.S.

VOL. 2, NO. 8 [WHOLE NO. 60]

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1936

PRICE 3 CENTS

Mass Action Forces Amnesty In Spain

Dutch Gov't Clamps Down on Revolutionary Party, RSAP, for Anti-Imperialist Campaign

Fourth Internationalists Strike Back as Police Raid Homes, Party Printshop, Confiscate Issue of 'Nieuwe Fakkell', Party Organ

Dutch imperialism is cracking down on our sister party, the Revolutionary Socialist Labor Party of the Netherlands. Court procedure has been instituted against the party and its organ, De Nieuwe Fakkell and copies of the February 1 issue have been confiscated. The printing office of the party has been searched as have the homes of officers and some of the active members.

The R.S.A.P. replied to this attempt of the Dutch reactionaries, supported also by the so-called "Democrats" in the Colyn cabinet, by putting it: "Emergency Apparatus" into action and promptly getting out a special two-page issue of February 1, number 87-A to replace the confiscated No. 87. At the mast-head of this extra edition of the Nieuwe Fakkell stands the defiant challenge to the reactionary foe: of the working class: "I was, I am and I will be!"

The immediate occasion for the attack of the Netherlands Department of Justice on the Nieuwe Fakkell was an article appearing in the January 24 issue and dealing with the poverty, starvation and tuberculosis in the East Indian possession of Dutch imperialism. Like every other imperialist government the Netherlands government is extremely nervous about the danger of revolt in colonial possession which, as capitalism cracks up, must be exploited ever more extremely and brutally. The government accordingly sensitive to reveal any of this extreme exploitation and repression in the colonies. Besides, articles of this kind tend to draw together into alliance those two foes of imperialism, the exploited colonial peoples on the one hand, and the exploited proletariat in the home country, on the other hand. By no means, therefore, must information of this kind be permitted to see the light of day.

The cartoon in the extra edition of the Nieuwe Fakkell represents a caption in which "Freedom of the Press Lies Buried." The decoration in the margin consist of reproductions of the Dutch equivalent of the dollar sign. The caption of the cartoon quotes ironically a well-known Dutch folk song which speaks of the people "living free and blithe on Holland's precious soil."

Only Shadow of Democracy Left

The leading editorial states: "Of democracy in the Netherlands scarcely a shadow remains after two and a half years of the Colyn government. We have never expected anything else. In a crisis the Dutch bourgeoisie has broken with its past. With unswerving haste it has come forward with its program which unloads the results of the capitalist crisis on the shoulders of the broad masses. The bourgeoisie asks help from the government by way of loans, on the one hand, and reduction in unemployment insurance and other social benefits for the masses, on the other hand.

"At the same time the class government also takes political precautions. Traditions of freedom and toleration, yes, indeed! But everything has its limits, and these limits are now reached when the bourgeoisie, finding itself in ever deeper perplexity, becomes frantic."

Burying the Bourgeois Tradition

The editorial then recalls the struggle of the Netherlands against Spanish oppression in the 17th century, the battles against Napoleon in the beginning of the 19th century and other historical occurrences to which the liberals of the Netherlands have looked back for generations with pride, "But the sons of the battlers for freedom in the past who specialize on what they call national recovery know no greater concern today than the complete annihilation of the rights and liberties which a rising and strong middle class once struggled to obtain."

"Despite the swift attack from a nervous imperialist cabinet, the Nieuwe Fakkell is here! Without any loss of time support was rallied to our 'Emergency Apparatus' and 6,000 copies of this special issue run off and their distribution begun." The editorial calls for renewed financial support, renewed activity of the party in all directions, and for the revolutionary overthrow of Dutch imperialism.

Vigilantes Prosecute Militants

Leader of Cal. Tar-Feather Mob Sues Victims for Assault and Battery

By ERNEST BESIG
Director, A.C.L.U., N. Cal. Branch
SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., Feb. 16.—Jack Green and Sol Nitzberg, Santa Rosa tar and feather victims, have been made defendants in a \$2,500 damage suit filed in the Superior Court of Sonoma County, charging them with assault and battery. The plaintiffs in the case include Fred Cairns, alleged leader of the tar mob, and Harold G. Campbell, said to be a resident of Petaluma. Cairns is a defendant in two federal court damage suits brought by Nitzberg and Green which followed as an aftermath of the tar and feather party on August 21. Federal Judge Roche recently denied Cairns' motion to dismiss Green's suit and a new motion to transfer the case to the Sacramento federal court will shortly come on for a hearing.

The complaint in the present suit alleges that Cairns and Campbell went upon the highways in Sonoma County of August 21 for the purpose of detecting and apprehending such persons as might in Plaintiff's presence be engaged in the commission of crimes and offenses against the persons or property of residents and tax payers of said County. It is claimed that while they were on the streets of Santa Rosa, Green and Nitzberg "did pull, push, jerk, jostle and strike" Plaintiffs. . . threatened to

(Continued on Page 4)

FRISCO CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL CALLS FOR RELEASE OF MINI

SAN FRANCISCO.—A resolution calling upon the California parole board to release Norman Mini and his seven fellow prisoners was passed unanimously by the Central Labor Council last week.

Norman Mini, overworked in the jute mill at San Quentin, collapsed on the job last week. Latest reports indicate that his condition is not critical.

The eight Sacramento criminal syndicalism prisoners, sentenced from one to fourteen years, come up before the parole board on February 25th to have their sentences set. They have been in jail about a year. San Francisco's Labor Council called upon the board to set the sentences at the minimum.

The action of the central body was taken in labor circles here as a repudiation of Paul Scharenberg, reactionary secretary of the state federation, who recently attacked the National Sacramento Appeal Committee's fight for the prisoners.

Another Enemy of Labor Enters Presidential Race

Landon "Balanced Budget" at Expense of Workers, Unemployed and Poor Farmers

By JAMES EVANS
An evasive little Kansas politician is getting a great deal of publicity nowadays. Whenever one picks up a capitalist newspaper, there is some mention of Governor Alf Landon as a presidential possibility. Landon is continually compared to the somewhat lamented Cal Coolidge, who was certainly anything besides a walking brain-storm; but who had the good fortune to serve as chief executive while American capitalism was enjoying a temporary boom.

If Landon should be the Republican nominee, every attempt will be made to capitalize upon popular discontent by his campaign managers. Some slogan such as the "Back to normalcy" cry of 1920, or the "Keep Cool with Coolidge" motto will be used to trick the eleven million unemployed into voting Republican. Landon himself will be portrayed as the greatest exceptive genius who ever banged on empty dinner-pails for votes. At the same time, he will be praised to the Chamber of Commerce as the man who balanced the budget in Kansas.

No Friend of Labor

This man, Landon, is no friend of the workers. I have lived in Kansas, and I know that the main accomplishment of the genial Alf has been to enlarge the bread-lines. When Landon assumed office in 1933, the wages of all state employees were immediately reduced 25 percent. The dismissal of an equal percentage of these employees resulted in a stretch-out system for those remaining on the jobs. The precedent created by the Governor caused a sharp drop in wages and private employment all over the

state.

At a time when the condition of Kansas workers and farmers was insufferable, Landon refused to consider any system of state relief. The entire obligation of feeding the hungry was turned over to local county administrators. During 1934, the 105 counties of Kansas appropriated the total of less than two million dollars to feed several hundred thousand starving people. Evidently, Governor Landon gave the county officials the wink when he passed the buck to them.

"Balancing the Budget"

Then came another of the periodic droughts to which the Middle West is subject. Kansas farmers watched their cattle drop from lack of grass and water. The local merchants discontinued credit, and the bankers swooped down on the mortgaged lands like carrion crows. "This was no concern of Alf's with several million suited away. He continued to "balance the budget."

But in a pinch, one group of the ruling-class can always be depended upon to protect a similar, if opposing, group. Federal Relief Administrator Harry Hopkins growled in his buttons, but saw that relief money went to Kansas. During the crucial period of 1934, \$30,000,000 in relief checks, plus a large amount of A.R.A. funds, went to insure "order" in that state. Mr. Hopkins had helped Alf balance his budget, thus indirectly bettering the latter's chances as a presidential candidate. Once can well imagine what would happen to the unemployed of the nation if Landon were to become president. The very slight relief benefits, now conferred after fierce struggles, would be automatically discontinued.

Ficketts Blockade Akron Co.

Threat of Injunction as Lines Stay Solid in Walkout

BULLETIN
AKRON, Ohio, Feb. 21.—Good-year tire plants remained idle here as large mass picket lines blockaded all gates and kept scabs at bay. Officials, unable to break through the line, in action for four days, have applied to the courts for an injunction. Sheriff James T. Flower declared his readiness to violently smash through the lines in case of a favorable court decision.

By JACK WILSON
AKRON, Ohio, Feb. 16.—Rubber workers at Goodyear threatened to strike this week unless the company took back seventy-five Plant-2 workers layed off last week, thus bringing the crises throughout the tire industry to another open flare-up.

Already the company was forced to swallow its statement that 137 workers who lead the latest "sit-down" at Plant 2 last Friday were permanently fired.

The plant, which ordinarily runs on Saturday and Monday, was closed down by the company until Tuesday, 6 a. m. in the hope that the workers could be pacified in the meantime.

Instead, workers flocked to the headquarters of the Goodyear local of the United Rubber Workers of America, and joined solidly into the growing movement to stop lay-offs and wage cuts once and for all through a strike.

"Calling the Bosses' Hand"

The last "sitdown" was joined by 2,000 firebuilders at Plant-2 and drew sympathetic "sitdowns" from all other departments which have another 2,000 men.

When the company threatened to fire the entire third shift department, a rubberworker took the floor in the factory and told the personnel manager, Fred Cline, "You've been ordering us workers around for a long time, now it's our turn."

The company announced that the 137 men on that shift, "ring leaders" were fired. But when the entire plant made preparations to strike on Saturday, the company officials called the company union together and "negotiated" a rehiring of the men.

One for All, All for One!

A union committee meets Monday at 1 P.M. with the management to demand the rehiring of the 75 men. If the company refuses, the rubberworkers at a mass rally Monday night will vote on shutting down the plant Tuesday morning.

At a rally Sunday afternoon, over 1,000 workers voted their sentiment for strike by cheering speak-

(Continued on Page 4)

Government Compelled To Release 30,000

Following the stormy upsurge of the Spanish masses, which marked the most dramatic return to self-confident activity to be witnessed in the world labor movement in years, the Azana government was today compelled to sign an amnesty decree which will effect the release of some 30,000 class war prisoners.

The thousands of men and women confined to capital's dungeons in Spain were victims of the revenge taken by the ruling class for the heroic uprising of the masses in October 1934 in defense of their rights threatened by the clerical-fascist reaction.

The imposing demonstrations which forced the amnesty are an encouraging indication that the Spanish masses are unwilling to allow their militant sentiments to be wiped out by parliamentary illusions disseminated by their leaders following upon the impressive electoral victory over the reaction.

Nearly two years of reactionary repression have failed to quench the revolutionary spirit of the Spanish workers and peasants. Last Sunday's general elections, the first opportunity the masses have had to register their irreconcilable opposition to capitalism, resulted in an overwhelming vote for a new social order. While the bourgeois-reformist character of the program of the "Peoples Front" for which the votes were cast is an annihilating commentary on the leaders of the workers' parties who signed it, the significance of the election to the masses was expressed by their coming out on the streets to take the first fruits of their victory by freeing all political prisoners.

Force State Wide WPA Wage Rise

Ohio Pay Increase Laid to Organizations

By ART PREIS
TOLEDO, Feb. 18.—In an attempt to forestall state-wide strike action of the W.P.A. workers of Ohio, Carl Watson, W.P.A. head, today announced a 10 percent pay boost for all categories of W.P.A. workers in the state.

The increase is retroactive thru February 16.

Announcement of the pay rise came within three days following the issuance of a twenty-four county conference call to W.P.A. workers and the Unemployed Leagues in Northwest Ohio to organize a widespread move to gain the increase and other concessions. The call was issued by the W.P.A. Workers' Union of Lucas County and the Lucas County Unemployed League, and the conference will be held February 23 in Toledo.

Pressure from all over the state by project and unemployed organizations forced through the increase. A conference of the Ohio Workers Alliance in Columbus last Saturday, with a reported representation from twenty-one counties agreed to take a strike poll if the pay boost was not immediately effected. The combined activities and threat of action on the part of the Unemployed League, Workers Alliance and W.P.A. unions throughout the state is acknowledged by the W.P.A. administration and daily press to have won the increase.

The Blade Concedes Victory

The Toledo Blade stated today: "The announcement of the pay raise, it is expected, may avert a strike of W.P.A. common labor threats of which have been heard not only here but throughout the state. The Workers Alliance and

(Continued from Page 3)

THE STALIN FRAME-UP MILL AT WORK

Editor's Note: The following letter was sent by L. D. Trotsky to Olav Scheffer, connected with the newspaper "Soerlandet" one of the organs of the Norwegian Labor Party, now being violently attacked by the Norwegian Stalinists for daring to defend Trotsky against the slander campaign of Stalin-Yagoda. The contents are self-explanatory.

January 30, 1936
The local Stalinist paper "Arbeideren"—central organ of Stalinist C.P.—has just published a dispatch that Trotsky is waging a war against the Soviet Union. In an alliance with Hearst, the American newspaper magnate, a world famous thief and ally of Hitler. According to this dispatch, I published a series of articles in the Hearst press under my own name. One day before the "Arbeideren" published this sensation, I received a cable from New York, from my friends there, dealing with the fraud perpetrated by Hearst. I sent immediately following cable to Cannon in N.Y.:
PUBLICATION OF TAROV ARTICLE BY HEARST COMMON PRESS GANGSTERISM STOP BUT IMPUDENCE OF HEARST NO EXCUSE FOR CRIMES OF STALIN CLIQUE STOP GAVE

STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS UNDER SIGNED

At the same time I gave a statement to the A.P.
It is most likely interesting that the small "Arbeideren" was immediately apprised by cable from N.Y. about my alleged articles, i. e., the fraud perpetrated by Hearst. It is self-evident that the other papers of the Comintern were even more simply instructed on this matter, so that they could do their best or worst. This shows that involved here is not only Hearst's press trust, but another and much more important "trust".

To make my thoughts clear to you, I will cite another instance: On July 20, 1935 a Polish newspaper "Kuryer Codzienny" gave a prominent display to a leading article allegedly signed by me. This article was a forgery concocted from a few small quotations from an article of mine combined with several of the crudest inventions and supplements by the forger.
The Moscow Pravda immediately published an enormous facsimile reproduction of this article under the heading: "Pilsudski's New Aid". At the same time this article was printed somewhere in "New York City" by an arch-reactionary newspaper. There you I sent a

brief note to Pravda demanding a retraction of its own report, in order not to dupe the Russian workers and peasants. In any case, in the Bulletin of Russian Opposition (of which I am the editor) and in many other papers, I not only disproved this matter but also proved that the "Kuryer Codzienny" obtained the forgery through an agent of the G.P.I. UPON ORDERS FROM MOSCOW, in order thus to obtain sensational material for a campaign of slander.

Matters are not much different today. The revelations of Tarov and Ciziga are highly embarrassing to the Stalinists, for they involve not theoretical or political questions but hard and irrefutable facts. These facts come all the less proportionally to the Stalinists because of the course of the recent months ACCORDING TO THE DATA IN THE MOSCOW PRESS not less than 10,000 (in reality many more) Bolshevik-Leninists have been expelled from the party—i. e., naturally, placed under arrest, and sent to concentration camps, exile etc.

Are we perhaps dealing here with the enemies of the Soviet Union? You may rest assured that in the hour of greatest danger when 99 per cent of the so-called "Friends of the S.U." and perhaps a goodly

half of the Soviet bureaucracy will betray the October Revolution on these men who were arrested will be its truest defenders. Their "crime" precisely lay in their desire to save the October revolution from infamy and degeneration, namely, they were against the social inequality that is growing sky high, against the intolerable pressure on the workers, against the introduction of ranks into the Red Army headed by the Marshals, etc.

To parry these unpleasant revelations Moscow must find some means of diversion, for they are not in position to operate with facts and political arguments. They tried to implicate me in the Kirov affair; they failed, because the terroristic act of Nikolaiev, directed by the G.P.I., took a very serious turn. The bullet was fired before Yagoda and Medved could place under arrest the organization on they themselves controlled. Then they tried the matter of the Zeller postcard. Again, without much success. From now on they intend to let it be known that whoever speaks about the abundant crimes of the Moscow bureaucracy is a brother-in-arms of Hitler. It is self-understood that the world press on will try to put to use every revelation,

Even when the mild Maxton casts a sharp word against the Labor Party in Parliament, the Dzhardz applaud ironically. Are these grounds for Maxton to keep quiet?

In order that reaction be unable to make use of the villainies of the Stalin clique, the villainies must cease and not the revelations.
I do not know whether Hearst lifted certain of my articles directly from the Russian Bulletin or whether his "assistant" who may well be an "assistant" of the G.P.I., at the same time has concocted some sort of a series of articles for him. The gist of the matter is hardly altered thereby. I will try to prosecute Hearst for fraud or literary theft. But this will not alter matters, Hearst's rascality is not a mitigating circumstance for the crimes of the Moscow Bonapartists.
Since the "Arbeideren" also makes mention of my personally in its next exposure, I am supplying you with this information which is completely at your disposal. You can make any use of it you may deem necessary.
At the same time I am sending a copy of this note with the self-same aim to the foreign editor of the "Arbeiderblad".

While the capitalist press carries alarmist reports from Spain that capitalists and aristocrats are fleeing the country, the Spanish communist press editorials, as reported here in the Spanish-American press, indicate little fear of anything more than a parliamentary overturn. Even the organ of the Catholic leader, Gil Robles, continues itself to demand that the present cabinet remain in office until the March 1 run-off of closely contested seats. On Wednesday the labor and left-republican press had not yet commented on the elections, although by that date it was definitely ascertained that the "Peoples Front" had a clear majority.

The only direct vies issued by the workers' parties were exhortations to their followers not to create disorder! When the workers in many cities attempted to translate the victory immediately into action by releasing the 30,000 political prisoners rotting in the dungeons, re-elected Communist and Republican deputies went into the streets to urge the masses to disperse.
Stalinist publicists here and abroad spoke of the Spanish situation as a "revolutionary crisis." This is correct enough. But such an estimate calls for decisive mobilization of the proletariat for a revolutionary offensive, instead of the parliamentary cretinism of the "Peoples Front". However the Daily Worker cable from Moscow of February 18 shows that the So-

(Continued on Page 4)