

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vol. IV, No. 6 Saturday, February 10, 1940

Published Weekly by the
SOCIALIST APPEAL PUBLISHING ASS'N.
at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.
Telephone: ALgonquin 4-8547

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General Manager: Assistant Manager:
GEORGE CLARKE SHERMAN STANLEYSubscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months.
Foreign: \$3.00 per year, \$1.50 for six months. Bundle
orders: 3 cents per copy in the United States; 4 cents
per copy in all foreign countries. Single copies: 5 cents."Reentered as second class matter December 4,
1939, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the
Act of March 3, 1879."FIGHT WITH THE SOCIALIST
WORKERS PARTY FOR:

1. A job and a decent living for every worker.
2. Open the idle factories—operate them under workers' control.
3. A Twenty-Billion dollar Federal public works and housing program.
4. Thirty-three—\$30-weekly minimum wage—\$0-hour-weekly maximum for all workers on all jobs.
5. Thirty dollar weekly old-age and disability pension.
6. Expropriate the Sixty Families.
7. All war funds to the unemployed.
8. A people's referendum on any and all wars.
9. No secret diplomacy.
10. An Independent Labor Party.
11. Workers' Defense Guards against vigilante and Fascist attacks.
12. Full social, political and economic equality for the Negro people.

The New "Recession"

You will recall that barrage of statements by government and business spokesmen which flooded the press the first week of January, heralding a year of unprecedented prosperity. It is interesting to note how deliberate the capitalists are in their duplicity. While holding carrots in front of our noses to keep us plodding along, they don't deceive themselves. While, for example, the New York Times—read by many workers—was printing the abovementioned optimistic forecasts, its own business weekly, the *Analyst* read primarily by substantial businessmen—was telling an entirely different story. The January 4 *Analyst* described the economic tendencies as "almost as pronounced as those which preceded the 1937-38 depression"; two weeks later it was saying bluntly: "The art of business forecasting has become very simple and business activity is declining." Its perspective was, indeed, as black as one could paint it: "The longer we get away from the year 1937," it confessed, "the more that year for some industries looks like a halcyon period of prosperity never again to be duplicated, just as the year 1929 looked for many years." Compare these utterances with what the *Times* was saying for mass consumption!

It is clear we are sliding into a new "recession"—or to be more accurate, into a further dip in the permanent economic crisis. For five weeks the authoritative New York Times business index has been moving downward from 107, dropping about a point a week. *Time* magazine's index, which attempts, with some success, to report "not on business volume but on changes in underlying conditions likely to affect the volume of business," skidded this week from 100.1 to 97.6, the meaning of which is plain from *Time's* comment: "Since this approximates the weekly average for last summer, the Index thus fails to show any net improvement in basic conditions since the outbreak of war." Do you remember Madame Perkins' predictions on New Year's that construction would jump 25%? First figures available are for the first three weeks of the year: a drop of 39% from the same period last year, the drop being mostly due to curtailment of PWA. Steel production, the most important item in any index, dropped to 71.7% from its pre-Christmas high of 94.4% of capacity—and this is only the beginning, for steel orders are reported as coming in at 45% of capacity.

In a word, there are no jobs for the ten million unemployed and their families, and more men and women and their children are being added to the unemployed army every week. Roosevelt proposes, in his budget, to dump some 800,000 of these unemployed, now subsisting on WPA, into the streets; for it is clear he will not be throwing them off the WPA into private jobs. In addition, about 250,000 who worked on PWA jobs during the last year are to have their jobs wiped out under the budget; in fact their jobs are already being wiped out, more than half of those working on PWA in September having already been fired as the PWA tapers off to its complete extinction on June 30. Ten million unemployed, no private jobs to be had, and Roosevelt wipes out more than a million jobs—there's the picture.

We don't believe that Roosevelt and the Congressmen and Senators are going to get away with their starvation budget. The American working class has the strength and the will to throw that budget into the Potomac. To replace that budget at this session of Congress, we propose the program for this session of Congress which we carry beside our front-page masthead. Clip it out and present it for adoption by your union.

After living for more than a year with the Aborigines of Australia, the largest group of primitives in the world, Dr. D. S. Davidson, anthropology professor of the University of Pennsylvania, concludes they are as intelligent as modern Americans. "They have adjusted themselves to their environment as intelligently—sometimes I think more intelligently—than we have to ours," says Dr. Davidson, just returned from an expedition. It seems these aborigines don't go around begging some slave to enslave them, or go hungry with plenty food around.

A Lesson Learned

Perhaps more than any other section of the American labor movement, the union men and women of Minneapolis have learned a profoundly important lesson in recent months—the need for MASS DEFENSE, for WORKING CLASS SOLIDARITY, against the bosses and the boss government.

Minneapolis is the best-organized city of its size in the country. It got that way through STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOSSES AND THEIR POLITICAL AGENCIES. When the federal government struck at Minneapolis labor by indicting 162 participants in last summer's WPA strike, a MASS DEFENSE was organized. The Central Labor Union, together with the Teamsters Joint Council, the Building Trades Council, and the Printing Trades Council, set up an authoritative WPA Defense Committee. It was joined soon by a similarly-constituted committee of the St. Paul trade unions. It was backed by the Minnesota Federation of Labor and the AFL executive council. Equally important, at meetings and demonstrations and tag days, it mobilized the masses on behalf of the indicted WPA strikers. Throughout the country labor unions came to their defense. A great wave of protest rolled up to the White House.

Roosevelt retreated. But he tried to make a virtue out of necessity. In quashing the indictments against the remaining 125 indicted WPA workers, Assistant Attorney General Rogge quoted Roosevelt as saying the indicted men and women had "learned their lesson"—the lesson being "they have no right to conduct a strike." "The President felt the duty of the WPA workers had been made clear . . ."

But that courtroom full of defendants and their union brothers gave the lie to Roosevelt's hypocritical statement. They didn't, they wouldn't, "learn the lesson" that Roosevelt tried to teach them by indicting them and jailing them. Those 125 men and women who were walking out free KNEW that if Roosevelt had been able to go through with it, they would, instead, be marching handcuffed to long jail terms.

Those 125 men and women are free today thanks only to the magnificent MASS DEFENSE organized by the labor movement of Minneapolis.

That's the lesson they learned in Minneapolis!

Sailors Speak Out

In last week's issue, we discussed a pro-Finnish, pro-preparedness resolution adopted at two branch membership meetings of the Sailors Union of the Pacific. We ventured the opinion that the resolution did not speak the mind of the union membership. The Feb. 2 issue of the *West Coast Sailor*, the union's weekly, indicates that we were right.

An editorial, discussing a Stalinist booklet, "The Yanks Are Not Coming," exposes the fakery of the Stalinist "peace" line, and then concludes:

"If we are sincere about staying out of the war we must accept the fact that it will only be done through prolonged and militant struggle on the part of the workers. . . ."

"We have only one road to follow if we are going to keep the politicians and the Wall Street exploiters from sacrificing the lives of thousands of American workers. That is the road of Gene Debs and Bill Haywood. It is not the road that (the Stalinists) Mike Quin and his cronies have in mind for us, because theirs is lined with misinformation and illusions and can only prepare the lamb for the slaughter."

This *West Coast Sailor* editorial expresses the proletarian stand against the imperialist war and is at the opposite pole from the pro-Finnish resolution. If the sailors consistently take this position, they will repudiate the Finnish resolution. The road of Gene Debs and Bill Haywood is not the road of Mannerheim's army.

Kept Press Wants More Funds for
Arnold's Union-Busting Drive

By RUTH JEFFRIES

A drive was launched last week in the capitalist press to increase to two and a quarter million dollars the annual subsidy for the "anti trust" division of the Department of Justice. That is the division, headed by Assistant Attorney-General Thurman Arnold, which is concentrating on a reactionary drive to destroy the building trades unions. Typical of the barrage of newspaper propaganda is a featured series in the Scripps-Howard chain. It pictures Arnold as a crusader who is slashing building costs, spurring the construction industry on, etc.

One need go no further than these articles, however, to see that behind the nice phrases about "eliminating corruption," Arnold's campaign is a direct assault on wage and hour standards of union men. Among the types of "restraints" exercised by unions which Arnold is attempting to outlaw, the Scripps-Howard series lists first, "prevention of cheaper materials, improved equipment and more efficient methods," and, second, "hiring of unnecessary labor in order to make work."

WHAT ARNOLD'S LEGAL
PHRASES REALLY MEAN

An example of "cheaper materials" is the attempt by contractors to bring to a building job plumbing fixtures, completely assembled and adjusted for installation. The assembling and adjusting has been done, after the actual manufacture of the fixtures, by coolie labor. The plumbers unions insist that assembling and adjusting shall be done on the job by union plumbers at union wages. Here is a clear example of a conflict between bosses and unions over wages and working conditions. Yet, under the crooked formula of "cheaper materials"—naturally all coolie-worked goods will be cheaper!—Arnold seeks to rule for the bosses against the unions.

"Hiring of unnecessary labor" becomes a crime under Arnold's ruling. But the whole fight of unions against speed-up, stretch-out, etc., is always countered by

the bosses as adding "unnecessary labor."

That Arnold has already indicted over 400 labor union officials, with many more indictments to come, doesn't begin to satisfy the Scripps-Howard press. It says:

"Results thus far are small compared with what can be done by a widening of the inquiry as planned by the Justice Department, the ultimate large-scale success depending now only upon a grant by Congress of sufficient funds."

BANKS RESPONSIBLE FOR
HIGH COST OF HOUSING

The indisputable testimony—presented last summer before the Temporary National Economic Committee—which proved conclusively that labor is actually the least significant factor in the high cost of housing, and that the strangle-hold of the banks over the industry is by far the most important—is never once alluded to in the newspapers, most of which blandly ignored the testimony when it was given.

The papers buried in their back pages the testimony of Dr. Theodore Krepes of the TNEC consulting staff, who said that the monthly carrying charge dictated by the banks is the really important point to attack, and that housing costs could be lowered more by cutting the monthly carrying charge from 5 to 4 per cent than by cutting wages 50 per cent. The papers never published at all the testimony of Robert Davison, Pierce Foundation housing director, who estimated that a 20 per cent cut in interest and amortization charges would cut monthly fixed charges 16.69 per cent; that 20 per cent off material cost would knock 9.33 per cent off monthly fixed charges—but that alike cut in labor costs would subtract only 4.67 per cent!

The papers never bothered to reveal that the banks, which Arnold declared as "not within the scope" of his investigation, control every important factor, except labor, in the construction

industry—real estate, financing, and even the giant supply and construction companies through closely interlocking directorates.

ONE STEP ALL UNIONS
SHOULD TAKE NOW

Following is an excellent model-resolution, already introduced in unions in New York, a copy of which has just been received by us:

"Whereas, the Department of Justice and other governmental agencies have indicted over 100 union officials under the terms of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, and "Whereas, this persecution of labor constitutes a direct violation of the terms of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, which specifically exempts labor organizations from its provisions and is specifically directed only against the huge industrial monopolies and trusts, and

"Whereas, these anti-union acts of the Department of Justice are part of a large campaign of the present national administration to destroy the effectiveness and fighting strength of the entire labor movement, and thus to destroy the gains achieved by labor through many years of effort, and "Whereas, both the unions affiliated with the AFL and the CIO will suffer if this union-busting campaign is allowed to continue unchallenged,

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That local Union No. . . . go on record protesting the union busting campaign initiated by Thurman Arnold and the Department of Justice, with the aid and approval of the Roosevelt administration, and as opposed to the appropriation of further monies by Congress for this purpose, and be it further

"RESOLVED: That we request our International Office and the CIO (or AFL) to inaugurate a great educational campaign exposing the aims and purposes of this anti-union campaign, and be it further

"RESOLVED: That copies of this resolution be sent to John L. Lewis (or Wm. Green), our International office and the labor press."

SPARKS IN THE NEWS

by Dwight Macdonald

Letter from Canada

A friend sends in a letter he received from a friend in Winnipeg, Manitoba:

"My Dear R. . . . As for your request for news of how people here are taking the war, as yet that is beyond me. I can only tell of one section, of a stroll I took late yesterday on Main Street, along those few blocks north from the city hall to the tracks.

"That was quite an unsavory district late Saturday nights even when you lived here, as I guess you will recall. Last night it really hummed. The worst yet.

"Hundreds of troops packed the sidewalks. Obviously they had just drawn their first army pay. Indeed, for many of them it must have been the first pay day in their hungry, thwarted, distorted lives, and with pennies to jingle, 'patriotism' certainly reached new mad, drunken heights. Boys became base, girls cheap. For you know, dear R. . . . you can't take thwarted kids straight from prolonged chronic starvation, make them murderers above the eyes, stuff their pockets with unfamiliar dollars, and expect them to be angels from the navel down. . . . Along the street, bulging saloons sloped out Polish-speaking 'Scots' in kilts. Waiting prostitutes patriotically set bargain prices for the ejected soaks. . . .

"A little mimeographed socialist anti-war sheet was selling like hot cakes. I got a great kick when I spotted Lucille B. . . . buying one—you remember her? Tom, her boy friend, may yet have to go. It was an inspiring sight—harmless little Lucille red-facedly buying an illegal revolutionary sheet. . . .

"I crossed the street to the 'poller' side to buy some matches. The storekeeper, usually a jolly fellow, appeared very downcast. He'd been watching the 'doings' across the way.

"'Cold tonight, isn't it?' . . . Fellow's just been in, said there'd been 20,000 recruits in Manitoba already. . . . There'll be millions killed again."

"I agreed, and, the War Acts being what they are, merely added that in ancient Egypt the figure 1,000,000 was represented by a picture of a man bent in bewilderment at the enormity.

"But now it's the million who are bent," was the rejoinder.

One thing might be added to this account: it is estimated that 75 per cent of Canada's volunteers were unemployed."

How Much Longer
Will They Be Patient?

Last July and August, 775,000 men and women were dropped from the WPA rolls. On January 25, Col. Harrington announced that of these 775,000, just 100,750 (or 13 per cent) had found jobs in private industry by the end of last November. (And half of these lucky 13 per cent were earning less in their private jobs than they had received on WPA.) Remember this figure, the next time you hear Roosevelt getting off his line about private industry absorbing those dropped from WPA. That is a lie, and Roosevelt knows it.

What became of the 87 per cent who did not find jobs? According to Col. Harrington, 28 per cent of them got onto local relief rolls (where a family of four lives on from \$4.50 to \$34 a month), 27 per cent were taken back onto WPA, "and 32 per cent were without support of any kind except what they could procure through Federal surplus commodities, by the sale of their effects, by doubling up with relatives, or by begging."

The Colonel also pointed out that before the end of June he must drop 700,000 more men and women from the WPA rolls. "Does your report point to a reduced WPA appropriation for next year?" he was asked. "Hardly," answered the Colonel. But his boss in the White House has already indicated he means to slash WPA next year, just as he did this year.

How much longer are the unemployed going to take it in silence and submission? A few really militant mass demonstrations, the sort of thing that scared the bosses and their political stooges in 1931 and 1932, that's what is needed to show Franklin D. he can't get away with it. The White House lawn can be used for other things besides Easter egg rolling!

Their
Government

by James Burnham

John L. Lewis and
The Labor Party

What, exactly, led John L. Lewis to open up against Roosevelt and the Democratic Party at the recent convention of the United Mine Workers? Where does it suggest that he is leading?

There is no doubt that Lewis is a sensitive reflector of mass opinion. He has proved this by his whole career, outstandingly by the organization of the CIO itself. He now feels a groundswell of discontent, or resentment against Roosevelt, beginning to grow among the workers. It is undoubtedly there, though not yet explicit enough to be noticed by the Gallup polls.

Roosevelt is becoming too open and too crude in his drive toward reaction. During the last year, he has had to appear more and more into the open; his budgets propose the slashing of relief; he gives the quotation to help break the WPA strike; his department of Justice smashes down on civil right; he becomes brazenly the head war-monger.

Lewis' speeches at the convention articulated the resentment felt at this lengthening series of actions. He went—in words—farther than the workers themselves have yet gone—in words, and thereby holds on to his position of leadership, at the front of the rising wave.

CIO and the Administration

But there was additional motivation as well. Until a year and a half or so ago, it was undoubtedly the case that the administration favored the CIO as against the AFL. This was shown by many decisions of the Labor Board, by the designation of bargaining units, etc.; and was marked for Lewis himself by his easy personal entry to the White House. He was made to feel very much at home around the Presidential fireside.

It would hardly be correct to say that the pendulum has swung today all the distance to the AFL side, but this has certainly been the trend. Last Spring the private Washington letters had already begun to note that Congress and the White House were paying more serious attention to the AFL leaders than to the CIO.

The Labor Board, with Leiserson replacing Smith, has been handing down frequent decisions with an AFL slant. It is rumored that, in the talks dealing with war plans in their relation to labor, Lewis is not being given much consideration. At the same time, Lewis has more difficulty arranging conversations with the smiling chief of the White House.

Here, then, was a second group of reasons calling for public action by Lewis.

What Is Lewis After?

Lewis seemed to be burning a good many bridges by his remarks. But a careful study of what he said, and left unsaid, shows that there were not so many teeth behind the bark.

For a labor bureaucrat to express the resentment of the workers does not at all mean that he will act to implement this resentment. Indeed, history shows that most often the expression serves to quiet down and divert the resentment: if it were allowed to remain bottled up, it might explode in ways most awkward for the bureaucrat. There is no good reason to imagine that Lewis intended to do much more than carry out this time-worn function of the labor bureaucracy.

In order to keep his hold on the workers, he has got to show more than he has been able to during the past year. Unquestionably his speeches were meant as bargaining threats directed to the leaders of both the Republican and Democratic parties. He is trying to remind them that if they want to get labor votes, they will at the very least have to give more lip-service to labor.

I do not, however, think that he himself took even his predictions of "inglorious defeat" for Roosevelt, if Roosevelt tries a third term, as literally as the words would seem to say. If Roosevelt runs again—and it seems to me the most probable variant—I think Lewis will still want to go along. Roosevelt is clever enough to give him a formula which will help him in re-writing his convention predictions.

There has been much gossip in Washington of Lewis' dickerings with members of the Republican National Committee. Many of the younger men in the administration are convinced that Lewis wants to swing the CIO into the Republican column next November—the Republican Party, until a few years ago, has been Lewis' traditional allegiance.

In the face of the attitude of most of the other union heads, this would seem to be a move almost too dangerous even for Lewis. It is noteworthy that his remarks at the convention were almost all in the mode of a critical, "left" supporter of the Democrats. He was calling on the Democratic Party to "be sensible" about labor.

What of a Labor Party?

There is not the slightest indication in Lewis' actions that he is moving toward a labor party for this year. Here also, his words were, if anything, designed to head off, not to further, incipient labor party sentiment. Lewis remains convinced that a labor party is "unrealistic politics" in this country, with its two-party parliamentary structure.

Nevertheless, Lewis was compelled to say more than he doubtless wanted to. The only possible logical conclusion from his attack was, in actuality, a clean break with both of the boss parties and the building of a labor party. Though he refused to state the conclusion, Lewis really proved that labor cannot make use of the boss parties and must have a party of its own. There must have been many delegates at the convention, and many workers throughout the country, who drew this conclusion for themselves in spite of their not hearing it from the platform.

A first step to put this conclusion into practice will have to be the realization that a fight for an independent labor party now is a fight against Lewis. We must not allow Lewis' bold words to deceive us into thinking that he intends to follow them with bold actions next summer and autumn. If Lewis goes into a labor party, it will be because he sees as the alternative getting out of the labor movement altogether. It would be a fine thing if that choice could be put before him.

ANTI-WAR MEETING

HOW CLOSE ARE WE TO WAR?

Speakers:

JAMES P. CANNON
Nat'l Secretary, Socialist Workers PartySARAH RICE
Former Yorkville C.P. leader

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 8 p. m.

YORKVILLE CASINO, 210 EAST 86th STREET, N. Y. C.

Auspices: Local New York, S.W.P.

Admission: TWENTY-FIVE CENTS