

# LABOR HAS ANSWER TO CONSCRIPTION!

The bi-partisan Burke-Wadsworth conscription bill has the approval of the dominant sections of the capitalist class: that is expressed by the formal approval of the bill by the Roosevelt administration through its War and Navy Departments, by the capitalist press of all shades of opinion, by the bi-partisan Senate Military Affairs Committee, etc.

Speedy passage of the bill is not, however, a burning necessity for the capitalist class and its government. Much must be done in the way of technical preparations before even the first contingent of 400,000 conscripts can be inducted into the armed forces. The present Army and Navy must be transformed into an instrument for training the conscripts, uniforms, guns, camps and camp facilities must be made ready. In addition the White House thinks that much of the National Guard will have to join the Army and Navy in training the conscripts, and therefore first wants the National Guard called out for a year's active duty.

There is a little time, available, therefore. And the powers that be have very cleverly decided to use that time as a period of reducing the steam-pressure of the anti-war forces. They're going to open the safety-valve of discussion; that's what democracy is: "free" discussion, but with the decision remaining as firmly in the control of the ruling class as in a fascist regime. When they don't have time, we don't even have the semblance of discussion: we saw that in the speedy passage of the fourteen billion dollars' armament bills.

Furthermore, the discussion on the conscription bill is going to be carefully regulated and limited. The "voices of the opponents" are hand-picked. Just look at them! Mountebanks like Senator Wheeler and hard-eyed demagogues like Senator Vandenberg! They will "lead" the opposition, precisely in order to mislead it.

## WHEELER IN ANOTHER COME-ON ACT

Anybody who is taken in for one moment by Wheeler must have a very short memory indeed. For about a month or so before the Democratic Convention, they let the leash hang loose, and Wheeler ran around denouncing the interventionists, declaring he would stand for president in opposition to Roosevelt, even making coy threats about a third party, appearing on one platform with fuming John L. Lewis, etc. Then the Convention convened, the leash was pulled tight—and Wheeler announced the phony "anti-war" plank was just what he wanted; he wasn't standing for nomination; he was backing Roosevelt. Now they've loosened the leash again and Wheeler is out digging up some cheap publicity—and will, of course, fold up obediently again as soon as the leash is tightened again.

The spectacle of Republican Senators Vandenberg and Taft playing "opponents" to the conscription bill scarcely requires comment. Since time permits it, they are out to make a little easy and safe capital against the administration. Enough Republicans in both houses will vote for the bill anyway, so Willie's party will be playing both ends against the middle. Vandenberg's main complaint against Roosevelt's war plans for a long time was that Vandenberg wanted first the war against Japan: he was the author of the Congress-

## WORKERS CANNOT AGREE TO CONTROL BY DICTATORIAL ARMY OFFICER CASTE

ional resolution abrogating the trade treaty with Japan and thereby making relations with Japan a day-to-day crisis.

All the Congressional "opponents" of the conscription bill, to a man, voted for the armament appropriations. Logically, therefore, they must go on to provide the manpower to handle those armaments. As a matter of fact, they accept that logical conclusion. *All that they're saying is that the manpower should be recruited by another method.* Thus, Vandenberg proposes that the army enlistment period should be reduced to the one-year term provided in the conscription bill, and is certain that adequate numbers of men would be gotten by that method, making conscription unnecessary.

### ENLISTMENT NO MORE DEMOCRATIC

What, then, is the difference between mass enlistments and conscription? The Vandenburgs claim that the first is more democratic than the second. Is it? Just imagine a national campaign to secure the enlistment of the 1,400,000 men whom the administration wants in the next fifteen months. Every propaganda agency of the government and the capitalist class, movies, schools, radios, press, minute-men speeches, pounding away at the young men of the country. *No contrary voice could be raised, opposing enlistment, without being immediately strangled by the penalties against opposing enlistment.* If enlistments lagged, the pressure would get stiffer: stop-work meetings with employers and recruiting sergeants needling the workers; quiet agreements whereby employers agree to get a given percentage of their men to join the army or lose their jobs; debutantes cruising the streets and pinning white feathers on young men who won't enlist—every fiendish ingenuity would be resorted to for gathering up the necessary victims.

And if all that wouldn't work? Why, then, of course, as the Wheeler and Vandenburgs would agree right now, then they would vote for conscription. So where in blazes is the democratic difference between the two proposals? *Either way the necessary millions will be dragged into the armed forces.*

None of these scoundrels, therefore, is offering a serious and progressive alternative to conscription. Nor are John L. Lewis and other CIO and AFL leaders offering such an alternative. Lewis' proposals are completely identical with those of Wheeler and Vandenberg. One might think that Lewis would have a little more dignity than to be directly associated with Wheeler again, so shortly after Wheeler left him holding the bag on Lewis' demand that Wheeler be nominated by the Democrats; but no, Sunday night Lewis conferred with Wheeler and then announced himself "in full agreement with Senator Wheeler on this thing." And on Monday, in a separate but coinciding statement with that of Vandenberg, Lewis

also urged mass one-year army enlistments as the alternative to conscription.

We have already seen how fraudulent is the Vandenberg case for enlistments being more democratic; and that goes for Lewis too. In addition, two other basic aspects of the Vandenberg-Lewis proposal, not worth mentioning apropos of Vandenberg, become extremely important when Lewis makes the proposal; for Lewis is the head of the CIO and hence speaks for the most important workers' organization in the country:

1. *By proposing mass enlistments as an alternative, Lewis commits himself to unqualified support of a campaign for mass enlistments.* If his proposal were accepted, he would be obligated to make it a success. He would go up and down the land using his prestige and organizational power to pull them in, those millions of young workers whom the ruling class wants as soldiers. *Lewis would be the chief recruiting sergeant for the bosses' government!*

2. Lewis is proposing, yes, actually proposing, that millions of young workers shall willingly deliver themselves into the hands of the officer-caste of the Army and Navy, an officer-caste to which, under the regulations governing the armed forces, these young workers must render unquestioning obedience. It is an open secret that by training, by class composition, by professional bent, the officer-caste is the most reactionary group in the country. It has the mentality of a military dictator, if not of a fascist. If the officers did not already have this by virtue of coming from the most hide-bound and reactionary sections of the capitalist class, and from their choice of a profession, they would develop it in the barracks-regime of the army.

An army under capitalism has not a trace of democratic procedure within it; whatever democracy still exists outside stops at the barracks doors. We have to go back in history to the relation between master and serf to get an analogy to relations between officers and men in the army of "democratic" America. *The army has been that way throughout the history of capitalism and will remain so as long as capitalism is permitted to last.*

It is into the keeping of such a reactionary institution and into the control of such a reactionary caste of officers, that Lewis and other labor leaders propose to deliver several million young workers. *Has Lewis forgotten how the National Guard smashed the "Little Steel" strike in 1937? How many workers in uniform, under pain of court martial if they disobeyed, drove back at bayonet-point the Ohio steel workers' picket lines? Doesn't Lewis know that the armed forces of the state, under capitalism, are always used against the labor movement? And yet he proposes mass enlistments into these armed forces as a "progressive" alternative to conscription!*

### WE HAVE NO USE FOR PACIFISM

A genuinely progressive alternative to conscription and enlistment must and can be found. The opposition of the Fourth International to conscription has nothing in common with that of the whining pacifists. We are as irreconcilably opposed to the pacifists of whatever variety as we are opposed to the Wheelers, Vandenburgs and Lewises. As a matter of fact, you will find that the pacifists are simply hypocritical supporters of enlistment as against conscription; their argument, like Vandenberg's, being that conscription is "unnecessary" they accept unquestioningly all the other evils of this capitalist chaos that we live in, then balk at the last link in the chain: war. *And always, history testifies, the pacifists knuckle under when war actually comes, and deliver their followers to the war-makers.*

Negative protests against conscription and war are of no avail whatever. *The working class requires a positive program which takes the facts of war and militarism, which are the basic features of decaying capitalism, as the starting point for practical actions.* The workers require, to begin with, a positive, progressive alternative to capitalist conscription.

### FOR MILITARY TRAINING — BUT UNDER WORKERS' CONTROL!

We don't want the workers to receive their military training under the reactionary regime of the army. But the workers do believe that military training is necessary in this warring world, and we agree with them; for in this epoch of universal militarism all questions will be decided on the military plane. Therefore we propose universal, compulsory, military training of the working masses, but under the control of the trade unions. The government says it wants the masses to undergo military training? Then let it provide the funds, facilities and technical instruction, but let the workers' own organizations be in charge of the training camps. Not the regime of the barracks but the internal life of the trade union movement is the appropriate atmosphere in which the workers shall learn the military arts.

Nor should the bourgeois officer-caste, with its fascist-minded contempt for the ranks, its callous disregard for the lives of those under them be in control of the worker-soldiers. Let their own leaders whom they have chosen lead the workers in military matters, just as they lead them in industrial matters. *Their union officials, and especially their shop stewards and the men who speak the voice of the rank and file from the union floor, are infinitely more experienced in leading the workers than is the officer-caste.* Let these union leaders, then, be given the special training necessary for officers, likewise under control of the trade unions.

Universal, compulsory, military training under the direction of the trade unions, and creation of a corps of worker-officers from the outstanding workers to whom the unionists look for leadership! That is our positive, progressive alternative to conscription and enlistment!

That alternative can and must become the program of the labor movement!

## Auto Union Convention Opens; Dull Beginning Is Symbolic

Union Leadership Very Much Satisfied With Itself; But Stagnation Of The Union Doesn't Please Delegates

ST. LOUIS, July 29—The fifth Convention of the United Automobile Workers of America concluded its first day's session today after listening to an invocation by an Archbishop, a long meandering speech by a local Baptist pastor and a couple of speeches by some local politicians who promised "two chickens in every pot and two cars in every garage. The convention also conferred an honorary life-membership in the UAW to Allan Haywood, National Organization Director of the CIO, and sang the Star Spangled Banner and God Save the King. This evening many of the delegates are going for a boat ride up the Mississippi river.

The convention proceedings thus far are an accurate reflection of the present apathy of this union and the lack of clear perspective of what the union is to do. The leadership—R. J. Thomas, Walter Reuther, George F. Addes—are satisfied with present conditions. They are officers of a large, important union. Their salaries are coming in quite regularly, and moreover they are now becoming big-shots in the governmental apparatus.

Thomas is on the Advisory Committee to Sidney Hillman, Labor Director of the National Defense Council. Walter Reuther has just been appointed a member of a special committee which will make plans for the training of young workers. Thus, according to the leadership, everything is progressing marvellously.

The officers' reports are filled to the point of nausea with self-praise. Thomas reports "sensational gains on all fronts." Addes, by some peculiar system of mathematics, finds the membership has increased by 93%. Obviously as far as the officers are concern-

ing, everything is on the up and up.

### Delegates Dissatisfied

The convention delegates, most of them fresh from the shops, know full well what rot these reports are. They are, however, temporarily confused bewildered and disoriented.

They grumble and express their dissatisfaction, but they do not yet know how to set the union aright, to restore the marvellous spirit of militancy which characterized the UAW two years ago and which succeeded in smashing through all obstacles to build one of the most important industrial unions in this country.

### Elections An Issue

President Thomas in his short address to the convention today asked the auto workers to support his stand to back Roosevelt for a third term. John L. Lewis, who is due in town tomorrow or Wednesday, is expected to state his position on the current presidential elections. Some of the delegates are preparing to make a sharp fight against the present

policies of supporting the boss parties and for a clear cut program to have the unions build their own political party representing the workers and their interests.

Numerous resolutions have also been submitted on the 30 Hour Week, the organization of Ford and opposition to conscription and the war drive of the government. The Resolutions Committee is expected to begin its report tomorrow and thus open up the debate on the key questions facing the auto workers.

### AIRCRAFT PLANT WORKERS VOTE FOR AUTO UNION

LOS ANGELES—The United Auto Workers (CIO) won the Labor Board election at the big Vultee aircraft plant in Downey near here, by a vote of 1439 to 512.

Union officials estimate a total of 50,000 aircraft workers in southern California.

The election victory in Vultee, the first in a long time, offers a new opportunity to renew a drive to win these 50,000 workers to the UAW.

## Court Upholds FBI's Frameup of Teamsters

7 Midwest Drivers Union Leaders Must Serve 2-Years Terms For Union Activity

ST. PAUL, Minn., July 27—Seven teamsters union leaders from Sioux City, Des Moines and Omaha must enter a federal penitentiary and serve prison terms of two years each, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals here decided last week, when it denied the union leaders an appeal from a conviction in the lower federal courts.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's "G-men" engineered the conviction. The sensational growth of the drivers' union movement during 1937 in the mid-West, when the 10-state North Central Area Committee of drivers unions was formed with Farrell Dobbs of Minneapolis as secretary, centered all eyes there—including the FBI.

The successful fight for the organization of the area found its focal points in Sioux City, Des Moines and Omaha, which the employers looked upon as weak links in the chain of drivers unions, and that's where the FBI moved in.

### A Year's "Investigation"

A truck was allegedly destroyed during a Sioux City bakery drivers' strike in 1938. It was a local affair, but the FBI moved in anyway. They "found" that the truck had been damaged in interstate commerce, giving the G-men and the federal courts jurisdiction. Then they worked for a solid year cooking up a case involving the drivers unions in Sioux City, Des

Moines and Omaha. Scores of FBI agents and untold sums of money were used—for "higher ups" were determined to get those unions.

W. K. Stultz, president of the General Drivers Union of Omaha; Louis Miller, Omaha organizer, and E. L. Carpenter, member of the same local; Jack Maloney, organizer of the Sioux City drivers, and Ralph Johnson and Howard Fouts of the same local; and Francis Quinn, organizer of the Des Moines drivers, were the victims of the FBI frameup.

The seven will probably be confined to the Sandstone (Minnesota) federal prison, where Minneapolis WPA strike leaders and Illinois union coal miners are serving their terms.

### ATTENTION MEMBERS OF NEW YORK LOCAL

There will be a special membership meeting Tuesday evening, August 6, 8.15 p.m. at Irving Plaza to discuss plans for the coming Campaign election.

A report will be made by the City Organizer, Murry Weiss, on the situation in trade union work.

All other assignments for this evening are cancelled.

## U.S. Gets Latin-America's OK On Seizing British Colonies

Seizure Of Latin-American Investments Of British "Ally" Is Main Discussion Point Of Secret Sessions At Havana

By SAM MARCY

Yankee imperialism has succeeded in putting the Latin American countries on record against a transfer of British and French colonies in the Western Hemisphere to Nazi Germany if the latter is victorious.

What the status of these colonies should be in the event that Great Britain is defeated was vaguely formulated as a "provisional administration", instead of a mandate or trusteeship of the possessions, as Hull originally wanted it. The difference in the terminology, over which the delegates are reported to have haggled for hours and hours, was not merely one of form, but of substance, since a mere "administration" signifies a lesser degree of control by the American imperialists, than would a "trusteeship", Hull's new word for a protectorate.

At any rate, the U.S. delegation expects this "administration" of the colonies to serve as a bridge for full control by the United States when she is in a better military position to do so. As a writer in last Sunday's New York Times puts it, the Latin American countries were heartened in their stand against the United States by the testimony of "Army and Navy officers before Congressional committees to the effect that the forces are inadequate...to undertake far-flung operations at a considerable distance from our bases."

### Big Stick Threat

But lest the Latin American countries take too much courage in their opposition to the designs

of the United States and, back in the days before the First Imperialist War, British imperialism was the dominant creditor and capital exporter into Latin America.

British Investments Discussed  
It is the fate of these billions of dollars of British investments in Latin America which caused the conference to be held in secret, behind closed doors. Secrecy could not have been necessitated by the Hull-Berle cartel plan, or the plan for taking over the European colonies in the Western Hemisphere, as these were widely discussed in the American capitalist press long before the convening of the Havana Conference. That also explains in part why Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay showed extreme reluctance in attending the conference, and then only confined themselves to sending mere delegates with limited authority to enter into binding agreements, and not their foreign ministers. These three countries together with Chile, contain the bulk of British investments.

What action do these countries contemplate taking with regard to British property, in the event Britain is ultimately defeated? "To smoke them out" with regard to these investments, "to get the lay of the land" as the United States News puts it, was one of the main reasons for calling the Conference.

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