

By FELIX MORROW

(The following chapter is taken from a pamphlet which will be published this week, for mass distribution, to be sold at 2 cents a copy.)

## Why The Government Wants Conscription

The light-minded way in which the AFL and CIO officialdom have agreed to support the conscription measure as soon as enlistments don't work shows that the trade union movement has failed to understand the fundamental meaning of the Burke-Wadsworth conscription bill. If the workers did understand, they would never permit their leaders under any circumstances to support conscription.

Why is the conscription bill introduced at this time, and with the backing of the government, the dominant sections of the two capitalist parties, and of the capitalist class generally? Neither Lewis nor Green attempt to answer this fundamental question.

About three years ago, the present chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, then ambitiously aspiring to reach the post he now occupies, got a brilliant idea. Thought Senator Sheppard: why not enact into law some of the provisions of the M-Day plans? Forthwith, together with his friend Congressman May, he drew up and introduced the notorious Sheppard-May Bill.

Senator Sheppard "represents" Texas, thanks to the help of a poll tax law and a Jim Crow system whereby the black and many white workers and farmers have no vote. He is therefore not very sensitive to the problem of not offending the masses. But other Senators have that problem. Finally an informal committee took Sheppard aside and told him the facts of life. He and May were arousing opposition to the M-Day plans by their crude insistence on enacting them into law at that time. Why do that when laws like that are not yet needed? Sheppard and May saw the light. They retired their bill into the background.

The moral of this story is that the hard-headed and cold-blooded leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties who have now united in advocating immediate execution of the main M-Day plan, conscription, know just what they are doing. They have thought this thing through with about as much emotion as an adding machine. They need conscription now and they therefore demand a law far more frightful than that which they correctly called Sheppard and May fools for trying to get in 1937. Because then they didn't need it and now they do.

When a demagogue like Senator Wheeler calls the conscription proposal a product of "war hysteria," he is lying, and he knows he is lying. He knows the gentlemen who have commanded the passage of conscription, and he knows they are not hysterical; they are too calculating a crew for that. When a hypocrite like Senator Vandenberg says that conscription is "unnecessary," he is only throwing sand in the eyes of the masses. Unnecessary for the workers and farmers who would be the victims of conscription? Of course! But a desperate necessity for American capitalism and its political agents.

## Why We Oppose The Bill

Conscription, like the gigantic arms program already voted, is called for at this time by the capitalist class because it is preparing for military aggression in the near future on a world scale.

The question whether German imperialism, having conquered Europe, can or cannot "attack" the United States has nothing to do with the real issue. The very existence of one great imperialist power in the modern world is an "attack" on the others. The United States, as an imperialist power having its foundations throughout the world, is "attacked" anywhere a rival power attempts to seize a market, a piece of territory, or a sphere of influence. The very existence of two imperialist powers in this capitalist world means that they "attack" each other and hence must settle the issue from time to time by war. That is why war is inevitable under the capitalist system.

The conscription measure is, therefore, a result of the very nature of American imperialism. John L. Lewis puts the cart before the horse when he says (in his speech at the Auto Union convention) that "by that act (conscription) our Congress is planting the seeds of destruction of democracy and is paving the way for the rise of a new imperialistic nation within the confines of the U. S. A." No, Brother Lewis, the seeds of destruction are already planted, they were planted before the last World War, when the United States was already an imperialistic nation. Because they are imperialists by their very being, the American imperialists want conscription.

Precisely for that reason the workers must fight against conscription by the capitalists not only when it is "unnecessary" but also when it is "necessary." Because it is never necessary for the workers. Any war undertaken by the capitalist government of the United States will be an imperialist war, undeserving of the support of the working class.

Because they fail to answer as we do the question why the capitalist class now seeks conscription, the CIO and AFL fail to put up a consistent, fundamental fight against the conscription bill.

To our analysis, Lewis might retort: "You are a Marxist, a revolutionary socialist, interested in overthrowing capitalism. I am not. Therefore we cannot agree on one approach to conscription."

Very well, then, let us examine the conscription measure from a "Simon pure" trade union point of view. Even from that limited outlook Lewis and Green fail to criticize the Burke-Wadsworth bill deeply enough.

## Why Unionists Should Oppose The Bill

Perhaps the most glaring example of the superficiality of AFL and CIO criticism of the bill is their complete failure to explain to their members the meaning of that provision in the bill which empowers the president to exempt from immediate service those men whose work in industry "is found" to justify exemption. These exemptions are to be determined "under such regulations as he may prescribe."

Green and Lewis know exactly what that means. For the regulations in question are not a matter for future elaboration by Roosevelt; they have been in writing since 1926 when they were drawn up by the Joint Army and Navy Selective Service Committee to await just such a moment as this.

Why weren't they put in the conscription bill, in place of the blanket power given to the president to prescribe the regulations? Because if those regulations were part of the bill, millions of workers who are now not thinking too much about the bill one way or the other, would be aroused to an understanding of what a reactionary anti-labor weapon it is.

The Joint Army and Navy Selective Service Committee

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# DRAFT DEBATE IS A SHAM!

## Senatorial "Opponents" Are Yelling For Millions of Enlistments As "Alternative"

### OHIO UNIONS CLASH OVER AUTO PLANT

#### Fight Between CIO And AFL Pleases Toledo Bosses

TOLEDO, Ohio—Belated repercussions of the old Homer Martin fight in the Auto Workers Union, plus the tragic division in the American labor movement, has bloomed into a minor civil war here.

The AFL Central Labor Union, with the aid of the bosses of the City Auto Stamping Co. and city officials, mobilized hundreds of Building Trades members armed with hammers and other improvised weapons and prevented members of the CIO-UAW from entering the plant during a jurisdictional fight between the AFL and CIO locals of the auto workers.

About 25-30 CIO workers have just been laid off from the plant, for a period of 5-30 days as a measure of company intimidation, since the CIO has elected not to engage in what might prove to be a very bloody fight between union men.

During the Homer Martin faction fight in the UAW, the City Auto Stamping local entered the AFL. This was largely due to the reaction of those workers to the vicious policies of the Stalinist wing of the UAW leadership of that time.

#### Most Workers Indifferent

Since then the CIO, now the dominant union in auto, has had the opportunity to regain the local by demonstrating a fighting progressive policy in the interests of the workers. But the doing nothing, indifferent policy of the leadership, a mere duplicate of that of the AFL officials, led the workers to apathy. Most of the workers in the plant are indifferent to the outcome of the battle, seeing no difference in the union program of both groups.

The local AFL reactionaries are gloating over their costly victory, costly to the workers themselves. They boast that the Building Trades workers sacrificed over \$250,000 in lost pay to go on the jurisdictional picket line and goon-squads. The prestige of the UAW-CIO here has been struck a heavy blow as a result of the capitulation of the leaders to this attack. They could only pass inane resolutions and fulminate behind closed doors.

#### A Bosses' Victory

The bosses, of course, have won the real victory and, by playing up this fatal division with the connivance of the AFL leaders, have succeeded in smashing for the time being an effective union in the plant, plus the fact that they have penalized the best union fighters.

An appeal to the National Labor Relations Board is being made by the CIO, while the AFL leaders, who can't find a dime for a fight against the bosses, continue to rook their membership for a bigger and better war-chest to destroy all unionism by their suicidal onslaught on industrial unionism.

### New UAW Executive Reflects Lewis-Hillman Split in CIO

ST. LOUIS, Mo., August 5—As the fifth convention of the United Auto Workers closed here tonight, it had become quite clear that the union's leadership has divided, taking sides in the sharpening conflict developing between Sidney Hillman and John L. Lewis.

Walter Reuther, Ex-Stalinist fellow traveller, ex-Socialist Party member, has now become the official spokesman inside the auto union for Hillman and his policies. He has in the past few months conferred many times with Hillman in Washington, has been appropriately rewarded with a post in the new Defense Council setup, and was the cheering squad captain for Hillman and for Roosevelt during the convention sessions.

Grouped around Reuther are at least seven or eight other board members, thus giving Reuther the largest single bloc of votes on the new Executive Board elected by the St. Louis convention.

The Lewis men on the Executive Board are grouped around Richard Frankenstein. After the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Stalinist machine began crumbling. The unprincipled opportunistic vote-grabbing machine that the Communist Party had organized got out of its creator's control, until today it has come into the hands of a loose grouping of Lewis men, with the Stalinists definitely pushed into the background.

Both the Reuther and Frankenstein groups voted at the St. Louis convention to support Roosevelt for a third term. Both groups are in favor of giving support to the Du Pont-Morgan "National Defense Council." Both groups are riding the bandwagon of the Wall Street war machine.

They are divided merely in the kind of support they wish to give to Roosevelt. The Lewis men think that Hillman is selling too cheap, and they go along with Lewis in trying to get an extra few crumbs from the administration. On all major issues in the Auto Union the two groups have voted solidly together.

R. J. Thomas and George F. Addes were both reelected to their respective posts as President and Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, by acclamation at the convention. Both of them have attempted to steer a middle course between the Hillman and Lewis groups in the CIO, as well as in their own union, and to keep the friendship of both groups.

#### Stalinists Decimated

The Stalinists, who two years ago, and even as late as the Cleveland Convention, were a major power in the UAW, are today on the decline. Their machine is only a fraction of its former self. They lost many rank and file members as well as a whole group of secondary lead-

ers in the union. Their numerous alliances and vote getting deals collapsed the day after the signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact.

Today, they are bearing the full brunt of the pressure of capitalist propaganda inside the union, but bearing also the hatred, mistrust and opposition of all genuine militants.

Isolated on the floor of the convention, without any real influence on the basic decisions of the union, they are today more isolated than ever before on the International Executive Board.

Their full-blown election campaign to put Travis on the Board as the Toledo Regional Director failed miserably. Out of a total of 17 board members, the Stalinists are reduced to two supporters, Michner of the West Coast, and Leo LaMotte of Detroit, and rather chicken hearted supporters, at that. (Both voted for the Roosevelt resolution on the last Board.)

#### Intermediate Groupings Disappear

The St. Louis convention further revealed the complete disintegration of all "centrist" and "intermediate" political groupings in the union. The Lovestonites are of course nowhere on the scene. Their smelly alliance with Homer Martin has finished them forever in the Auto Union. The Norman Thomas Socialists, who considered themselves a force a year ago, are now out of the picture. All of their leading people have forgotten about radicalism or Socialism or even plain militant trade unionism in their scramble for jobs and their seeking for respectability. Norman Thomas's boys are all lined up behind Roosevelt.

Victor Reuther, the "radical" of the Reuther family, took the lead in opposing the fight for the 30 Hour Week at 40 Hours Pay, Emil Mazey, President of the Briggs local didn't do anything; just kept his mouth shut, except to make a few meaningless innocuous motions. (He thought he would get on the Board that way, but Leo La Motte beat him out.) Joe Ditzel, Norman Thomas's bright light of Toledo in former days, brought in as Chairman of the Resolutions Committee the proposal to unconditionally support Roosevelt for a Third Term. Nordstrom, Chairman of the Constitutional Committee, a former Wisconsin Socialist, brought in and pushed across the infamous "subversive clause" amendment to the union constitution.

Things are thus clearing up in the Auto Union. In place of the welter and confusion of dozens of different groups and political tendencies, there is arising a clear cut division. On the one side is the present union administration, trying to uphold the status quo. On the other side is a still small but determined group of union militants who are fighting to lift the union out of its stagnation.

See detailed auto convention story on page 2 of this issue.)

### Capitalist Army No Place For Workers' Military Training

#### We Are For Military Training—But Only Under the Control of the Trade Unions

The first days of Senate debate on the conscription bill have already demonstrated that, if the workers depend on the "anti-conscriptionists" to save them from service in the army, they might as well pack their bags and get ready to be called.

The "anti-conscriptionists" have spent their time trying to prove that by "voluntary" enlistment they can get as many men into the army as by conscription. And if enlistment doesn't work, they are ready to support the conscription measure quickly enough. All the "anti-conscriptionists" are supporting the Maloney amendment, providing for automatic use of conscription by January 1 if enlistments prove insufficient by then.

This same reactionary bilge is being spouted by John L. Lewis and William Green. An army of 1,500,000 can be raised by the "American way" of enlistment, swears Green, and no doubt he'll be the most energetic recruiting sergeant to raise it. Likewise John L. Lewis calls for shorter enlistment terms and "increase the pay of the army at least until it equals that of the boys in the CCC camps"—\$30 a month—and then the necessary manpower will be forthcoming.

The imperialist role for which this army will be used, and the fact that this army will be run under the same viciously anti-labor set-up as all capitalist armies are run—of this nobody in Congress or in the AFL and CIO leadership says one word.

On the contrary, John L. Lewis tries to find some sympathizing ears among prosperous taxpayers by whining that conscription means to "train our millions of young men in the arts of war at the public expense?"

**WORKERS NEED TRAINING**

What is wrong with training millions of young workers in the arts of war? Nothing! We would like nothing better than to see every trade unionist in the country become an expert in the military arts. In a world dominated by militarism and war the working class must become adept in the arts of war—unless it wants to be the slaves of those who are skilled in military matters.

And what, Brother Lewis, is wrong with training the workers "at the public expense"? Why

#### NOT IN THEIR ARMY

Lewis' semi-pacifist clap-trap fails to touch the real objection to the Burke-Wadsworth bill. Which is that it is a scheme to put the young workers into the straitjacket of a capitalist army, to deliver them into the hands of bourgeois officers who will have the power of life and death over them. Lewis' enlistment proposal would do just what the Burke-Wadsworth bill does.

Instead of whining about the Burke-Wadsworth bill, the AFL and CIO leadership should be demanding passage of a Labor bill to provide universal, compulsory military training UNDER THE DIRECTION AND CONTROL OF THE TRADE UNIONS.

The AFL and CIO leadership weren't worried about public expense when they supported the huge armament program already voted by Congress. Let them now raise a demand that the material be put into the hands of the labor movement to equip training camps to be run by the trade unions. Military appropriations? Yes—but only for the establishment and equipment of such workers-controlled military camps!

#### AGAINST ALL ARMY BILLS

The reactionary consequences of voting for armament bills providing equipment for the capitalist army was graphically brought out in the Senate debate when Senator Lucas mockingly asked the "anti-conscriptionist" Senator Danaher: "why had Senator Danaher voted in favor of billions of dollars for defense equipment for the army and now would not vote it the necessary manpower?" Danaher spluttered, helpless to answer—because there was no answer. He who votes for armament appropriations for the army must, logically, vote also for the manpower that goes with the armament. The conscriptionists have all these "anti-conscriptionists" over a barrel with that argument.

That's why the labor movement must put a halt to any further endorsements of army armament bills by the AFL and CIO leadership.

The only military appropriations the labor movement should vote for are those providing the trade unions with funds and equipment to launch Labor's own military training camps!

## US Imperialism Made Gains at Havana

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Aug. 1 (by airmail)—"The greatest conference in the history of Pan-Americanism," according to the correspondents, has just closed at Havana, having been, according to the same correspondents, "the greatest diplomatic victory in Cordell Hull's career."

As seen from Buenos Aires, the following demonstrate clearly the results obtained at Havana:

1. The road is prepared to seize the European colonies in the Western Hemisphere; that is the purpose of the so-called "Declaration of Havana", which gives continental effect to the recent resolution of the United States Congress.

2. Elimination of the perspective of a renewal of German commerce in Latin America, which (prior to the war) had become a serious adversary of U.S.

commerce; this to establish what Roosevelt has called "economic defense."

3. Concerted measures to be planned and taken to destroy the Nazi "fifth column", the instrument of penetration in Latin America of German imperialism.

4. To assure U. S. commercial and financial penetration by means of such measures as the Inter-American Bank, advancement of credits by the Export and Import Bank, the purchase of surpluses, etc.

5. Creation of a regional understanding, virtually a League of American Nations, which prepares the road to a future military alliance that drags our countries behind the United States into the coming war with Germany and Japan.

6. Coordination of police methods to repress the national liberation movements of the Latin

American peoples under the pretext of repressing subversive "fifth column" activities.

Prudence made it advisable that the military plans for "continental defense", which include the ceding of air and naval stations which will permit Yankee imperialism to go on to take military possession of Latin America, were not directly handled in the Havana conference.

But nevertheless one can anticipate that this will be the principal theme of the next conference which, we can expect, will reveal still further progress in the importance and audacity of the proposals which will be made by the United States.

#### Workers Indifferent

Meanwhile, the Argentine working class, and I believe that could also be said for the South American workers in general, watch these conferences without

understanding them and, even more, with indifference. They see them solely as reunions of governments—governments which are as distant from them as the resolutions which are adopted appear abstract and far away. If, on the one hand, the workers do not believe in the genuineness of the friendship of the United States, on the other hand they have scarcely arrived at the point of penetrating into the significance of the U. S. moves and trying to combat them.

The main struggle here continues, each time more acute, between the pro-English and pro-German camps of the bourgeoisie. The atmosphere is propitious for Wall Street to continue its moves calmly. Nothing is lacking for it. The "democratic" press of the continent repeats endlessly, the better to convince its public, that the United States is going to "defend us from Nazism."