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Editorial Board:
FELIX MORROW ALBERT GOLDMAN
General Manager:
RUTH JEFFREY

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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—30-HOUR WEEKLY MAXIMUM FOR ALL WORKERS ON ALL JOBS.
5. \$30 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.

Crisis in Auto Plants

The lid is off in Flint. The immediate incident which blew the lid off—a company provocation at Fisher Plant No. 1, brazenly trying to resurrect Homer Martin's corpse of an AFL "union", followed by firing seventeen UAW militants—is but a minor incident. By itself it would scarcely have aroused the masses of this auto worker center to the point where they are ready to close down every plant in the industry. The latest incident is but the culmination of a basic collision between the auto workers and the corporations over fundamental issues.

Wages, working conditions, the union's right to limit speed of production (i.e. the speed-up of the workers), the union's right to real collective bargaining—not in the empty formality of signing a contract, but in enforcing the contract in the plant—all these fundamental issues are involved in the present crisis between the UAW-CIO and General Motors in Flint.

If the deadline of one week set by a Flint auto workers' membership meeting Tuesday night for settlement of the immediate grievance is not met by the company, and a strike results, it will spread far beyond the plants immediately involved, and it will from the first day be fought for far more than reinstatement of the seventeen men fired.

If the strike comes now, the very logic of the situation will demand that the auto workers should not narrowly limit their strike demands to the immediate incident which provoked it, but should fight the strike out for all the many grievances which have accumulated.

The corporation's strategy is to wear down the resistance of the workers with bitter fights over minor issues. Each time it provokes the men, rousing them to a pitch of struggle; then the corporation has the invaluable aid of the Reuther-Thomas leadership of the UAW, which steps in and makes a rotten compromise, one which undermines the union a little further, which lets the men down with a feeling of defeat, and simply paves the way for the next corporation move against the workers. If this process is permitted to continue for any length of time, the back of the workers' resistance will be broken, and the corporation will be victorious over the men if they try a last desperate stand at the end of this process.

That is why every decent militant in the UAW wants a show-down NOW. Put an end to the corporation offensive! Put an end to the accumulation of grievances! Get rid of the rotten grievance procedure which gets no settlement of any grievances, and in its place establish a method whereby every grievance arising is quickly settled to the satisfaction of the union membership.

By now it has become clear to the naked eye that the Reuther-Thomas leadership neither wishes nor is it able to lead the auto workers to defend their rights against the corporations. The Reuther-Thomas clique does not take its orders from the men whom they are supposed to represent. They take their orders from Sidney Hillman. And he takes his orders from the National Defense Council of which he is a member. And that Council is in the hands of Knudsen—the head of General Motors! If Knudsen and Hillman have their way, the UAW-CIO will be reduced to the level of a company union.

Fortunately for the auto workers, Knudsen and Hillman have a long way to go before they even begin to achieve their aim. That is demonstrated by the splendid militant spirit of the Flint auto workers during these weeks. They have shown that the spirit of '37 is not dead.

No faith whatsoever in Knudsen-Hillman's office boys, Reuther and Thomas! That is the beginning of all straight thinking today for the auto workers.

If fight we must, then let us have a show-down fight—that should be the guiding thought of the auto workers of Flint and Detroit.

Hershel Grynzspan

The greater tragedy of the war itself shrouds from the public consciousness the smaller tragedies that follow in war's wake. Yet sometimes the fate of these lesser individual victims illuminates the whole broad canvas of human agony.

Such is the case of Hershel Grynzspan, the Jewish youth who two years ago shot a German diplomat in Paris and touched off the bestial pogroms against the Jews in Germany.

Grynzspan, caught by the tide of war in a rotten French prison, has been handed by the Vichy rulers over to the mercies of the Nazi conquerors for their final vengeance.

The hapless Jewish boy, driven to his act by the blind desperation of his persecuted race, was freely given the friendly sympathy of civilized people throughout a world horrified by the Nazi pogroms. But "democratic" rulers of France kept Grynzspan in their dungeons, unwilling to mar the "harmony" of the post-Munich honeymoon by bringing him to trial.

He was still there when the German tide reached Paris. Together with other prisoners, he was taken to the south. The Nazi conquerors demanded his flesh and the French rulers—the "democrats" of yesterday, the guardians of the hallowed principle of political asylum—dutifully handed him over to the Gestapo at Toulouse.

"Nothing—" adds the news dispatch—"has been heard of Grynzspan since."

And nothing will be heard of him living any more. For the name of Grynzspan is thus added to the endless list of the millions handed over by the "democratic" leaders of "democratic" France to the iron grasp of the Fascist conquerors. And soon, indeed, French Jews are themselves to feel the weight of the new regime set up by the "democrats" of yesterday. Like the Italians, the men of Vichy will before long follow in the footsteps of the Nazi masters in this as in other things.

The final fate of Grynzspan also helps re-evaluate the attitude taken at the time of his deed by the Stalinists. While the whole world rang with sympathy for the young Jew, the Stalinists tried to smear him as a "Trotskyist" tool of the Gestapo. Since then the Stalin-Hitler pact has provided the reason. Even then, in the days just after Munich the Stalinists were more interested in turning the wrath from the Germans by muddying the pitiful Grynzspan than in denouncing the Nazis for their brutality.

It was a short road for Grynzspan. His way was not ours but we could sympathize with the desperation that led him to seek in direct action some means of breaking through the iron ring he felt around him. We'll break that ring, but only through uniting in struggle the workers and oppressed people of all countries against the makers of war, against the Fascists and the "democratic" liars and hypocrites.

Browder's Alibi

In Mexico, where the facts about Stalinist responsibility for the murder of Trotsky are well-known, the Stalinist organization and its stooges can only whine pleadingly in answer to President Cardenas' statement pointing at them as the murderers.

In the United States where the capitalist press has seen fit to report practically nothing about the Stalinist band arrested for the May 24 attempt on Trotsky, and the facts uncovered during the last few weeks about the GPU connections of the assassin, the Stalinists are a little bolder. Thus Earl Browder answers President Cardenas in the *Sunday Worker*, September 8:

"In this critical moment in Mexico's history, President Cardenas chooses to make slanderous public statements against the USSR, in connection with the death of Trotsky at the hands of one of his own intimates. What motive could induce Cardenas to adopt this obvious and cheap Trotskyite slander? Clearly, it is a gesture of appeasement toward Wall Street and the Mexican reactionary camp."

This pseudo-radical attack on Cardenas by Browder is an implicit threat of withdrawal of Stalinist support from the Mexican government in its struggle against the semi-fascist Almazan movement. No one can be surprised at such a change. If Stalin can become Hitler's satellite, the Stalinist organizations would consider it a small price to help the Almazan group take over Mexico, if in exchange they could be assured that the Mexican government's investigation of the murder of Trotsky would be erased.

But as an answer to Cardenas, Browder's attack is worthless. It does not even hint at the facts on which Cardenas based his statement. These facts have never been published in the Stalinist press in this country.

Among these facts are: The confession of their complicity of nine Stalinists arrested for the May 24 attempt. The fact that David Serrano, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Mexico, has been in jail since June, awaiting trial as an organizer of the May 24 attack; and that another Stalinist, Mateos Martinez, has confessed that Serrano commissioned him to buy the police uniforms used by the attackers. The fact that David Alfaro Siqueiros, fugitive from justice as the actual and admitted leader of that attack, is a Stalinist, head of the Mexican equivalent of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, from which he recruited the gunmen he used.

We'll stop with these facts for the moment. Let Browder explain them!

Stalin's New Labor Laws

Longer Work-Week, Direct Wage Cuts, Chaining the Workers To the Factories Like Industrial Serfs; But the Younger Generation Leads A Bitter Resistance to the New Laws

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

On June 27, 1940, simultaneously with the news that Rumania ceded Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the Soviet Union, Stalin tersely informed the world, through his official news agency, the TASS, that new labor laws were in effect in the USSR.

TASS confined itself to the statement that the 7-hour day had been replaced by an 8-hour day, and that industry had shifted from a 6-day week (5 working days, one day off) to a 7-day week (six working days, one day off).

The 7-hour day was one of Stalin's trump boasts, served up as irrefutable proof of the "victory of socialism in one country" and the "transition to communism." Stalin himself used to discourse at great length upon it.

As a matter of fact, the 7-hour day did not at all flow from the successes of industrialization. It was originally introduced by Stalin as a political measure, serving as a weapon in the early days of Stalin's struggle against Trotsky and the Left Opposition.

Now comes official admission by Stalin that another of his world-publicized achievements was nothing but a fraud.

STALIN'S LABOR LAWS OF 1938

But the abolition of the 7-hour day and the 6-hour week is only one item in a new body of anti-labor legislation.

The goal Stalin pursues by his new laws is not a new one. It is identical with the goal envisioned by him in his legislation of December, 1938: turning Russian workers into a species of industrial serfs, binding them to the factories, making it impossible for them to leave their jobs, and in this way extricating his regime from the convulsions of its economic life, the inability to fulfill plans, the chronic shortage of goods etc.

The 1938 laws were the bureaucratic solution to the economic impasse in which Stalin's regime found itself on the eve of the second world war. These laws depended for their effectiveness on the exercise of the bureaucracy's economic power, i.e., firing, threat of unemployment. But the opposition of the masses frustrated the bureaucratic calculations. The acute scarcity of labor, the ease with which employment could be obtained, made it actually possible for the mass of workers to utilize Stalin's own legislation against Stalin's own aims.

His official press is now compelled to admit that the Soviet workers, prohibited by the 1938 ukase from leaving their jobs voluntarily, engaged in the practice of deliberately violating the 1938 laws and then insisting that the administration enforce these laws, i.e. fire them from the jobs, thereby "freeing" them to seek employment elsewhere, not infrequently in a different department of the very same plant!

YOUTH FIGHT AGAINST STALIN

The guarded statistical data of Stalin's press indicate beyond any doubt that the labor turnover reached its peak precisely in the months following the 1938 decrees; that productive levels have fallen sharply; and that, most important of all, the leading part in this muted struggle against Stalin's regime is being played by the youngest generation of workers, i.e., those who passed through the Stalinist school, who know nothing of the period of the Civil War and of the October days, and who have just entered industry.

The alarm and fury of the bureaucracy is expressed in brimstone editorials against "a certain section, namely 3-4% of young workers and employees who have recently entered industry; who are seeking to profit from the absence of unemployment which has been destroyed by the Soviet power; who are abusing the patience of the Soviet government by running from factory to factory, undermining discipline, refusing to toil honestly, disrespectfully deporting themselves toward the observation of regulations established by law and approved by the people" (Shvernik's report to the Ninth Plenum of the Central Council of the Russian Trade Unions).

The June, 1940, laws are Stalin's solution to the economic impasse, further aggravated by the demands of war time economy, the vast losses during the Finnish campaign, not to mention the economic commitments to Hitler. The aggravated situation demands an intensification of bureaucratic pressure, the only remedy the bureaucracy knows or can apply. The need now is for new penalties. For these, Stalin has to dig deep into his police armament.

SAVAGE PENALTIES IN NEW LAWS

The new laws make it a crime against the state for any worker to leave his job, come late to work, skip a single work day, fail to produce his daily quota or "norm".

Any attempt to leave one's place of employment, even a mere request to be allowed to seek employment elsewhere, is a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term of 2-4 months.

The penalty for arriving late to work, skipping a work day, or otherwise "dawdling" on the job is equally unprecedented in the history of labor legislation. Any one charged with these "crimes" is subject to a sentence of 6 months penal labor at the place of his or her employment, i.e., the factory, mill, mine or office. In addition, up to 25% of the criminal's regular wages are withheld. The exact period of time over which these wages are to be withheld is not specified in the ukase. It is to be assumed that these sums will be withheld for at least the duration of the sentence. Thus Stalin has turned every enterprise in the Soviet Union into a forced labor camp, or work-jail. The ukase decreeing all this was published in all the Russian papers on June 26. It went into effect on June 27. Kalinin countersigned it, issuing it in the name of the Executive Committee of the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union.

It was accompanied by a supplementary ukase,

in the name of the People's Commissars and countersigned by Molotov, establishing drastic wage cuts.

As Shvernik explained: "In order to further strengthen the defensive power of their fatherland the working class of the USSR must go forward to necessary sacrifices."

"The lengthening of the working day is most closely bound up with the question of wages," continued Shvernik. "An objection may be raised that the proportionate increase of the working day must be accompanied, if you please, by a similar increase in wages. It would be absolutely incorrect to pose the question in this way. Were we to permit an increase of wages proportionate to the increase of the working day, then there could not even be talk of any necessary sacrifices. But we are precisely talking about this, that the working class and the entire intelligentsia must make those sacrifices which are indispensable for the defense of our fatherland." (Bolshevik, No. 11-12, June 1940).

The section of the ukase pertaining to piece-work wages reads:

"That the norms of output be raised and piece-work rates be lowered in proportion to the increased working day."

It might appear at first glance that this implies only an indirect wage cut, that is, a worker may now work longer hours and be paid less per piece but his wages remain the same as before. Not so. In reality, a direct wage cut is involved.

A 14% WAGE CUT!

The "increased working day" includes not only the "extra" hour each day but also an "extra" 8-hour day in the week. A worker now receives the same wages for six days of work and one day off as he did for five days work and one day off. In other words, if the meager wage formerly had to cover six days of existence, it must now be stretched over 7 days. A wage cut of one-seventh.

Workers on monthly or weekly salaries are similarly situated. Let us take a period of 42 days which best illustrates the difference between the two systems. If hitherto there were in this interval 7 weeks and 7 paydays (on a 6-day week basis), now there are only 6 weeks and 6 pay days. But on each pay day the wage received is the same as before, otherwise, according to Shvernik, there would be "no sacrifice". Therefore each worker must now sacrifice one week's wages in every seven.

Thus, in one and the same operation, the Russian workers must not only labor 48 hours in place of the previous 36 hours, but they also find their already miserable standard of living sharply lowered. And this, on Stalin's "threshold to Communism!"

That Stalin's own press, under the ten-fold censorship that has prevailed since the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, is forced to speak out so openly is in itself incontestable proof of the unfolding struggle of the Soviet workers against Stalin's regime.

FIRST RESULTS OF NEW LAWS

The first consequence of the new legislation was the cutting down of the labor force in every enterprise in the Soviet Union. With the "increased" productivity per worker, less workers are now required. In the reports published in the Pravda 40 and 50 per cent cuts in the labor force are not uncommon. This is done, in part, in order to overcome the acute shortage of labor from which Soviet industry is chronically suffering; at the same time, the bureaucracy no doubt hopes thereby to accumulate a labor reserve from which to draw in order to replace those workers who are jailed, and as an added pressure on the recalcitrants already employed.

As Trotsky predicted, under the blows of the war crisis, facing its first real test, the bureaucracy is compelled to strip off its veil and reveal its true self to the masses.

How are the Russian workers reacting to the new legislation? Here too the Stalinist press involuntarily supplies us with facts that disclose the deepening crisis.

The ritualistic peans in the press glorifying the new laws and promising miraculous results (there was even an attempt to raise the slogan "The Third Stalin Five Year Plan in Four Years") were almost immediately followed by fulminations against "rotten liberals" who hesitate to enforce the new laws and who "patronize floaters and laggards". This attack is aimed against the public prosecutors and the directors of plants and heads of departments who have been invested with "undivided authority" and "sole responsibility." The Pravda for July already carries reports of severe jail sentences meted out to prosecutors and to directors of industry who "failed" to exercise their new authority. The real explanation for this "hesitancy" lies obviously in the pressure from below which is being counteracted from above by increased lashing of the apparatus.

The Komsomol (Russian Y. C. L.), an organization now reportedly comprising 10 million Russian youth, is under fire and is being held responsible for the misbehavior of the young generation of workers. Its apparatus is being purged.

It is the dread of this development that impelled Stalin to hasten at all costs his long planned assassination of Leon Trotsky. The Fourth International, founded and led by Leon Trotsky, alone has the political program for the Russian workers, and their brothers the world over. By assassinating Trotsky, Stalin hopes that he has now decapitated the world movement, and especially the politicalization of the opposition in Russia which has now assumed mass proportions, which is developing a young leading cadre but which is still groping for a political program. Today, however, the waves of the rising deluge are lapping at Stalin's feet; tomorrow the tide of the resurgent workers of the Soviet Union and the whole world will engulf him.

More Messages On the Death Of Leon Trotsky

In addition to those messages received by the Socialist Workers Party and Natalia Trotsky on the death of Trotsky which were previously published, the following are among those that have been received:

"Meeting under auspices Edinburgh Workers Revolutionary Socialist Party sends warmest sympathies pledges continued struggle for world socialism in which Leon Trotsky died."
"T. AIT
"EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND"

"Despite political differences we had had with Comrade Trotsky we express our profound condolences on the murder of this outstanding revolutionist and condemn the Stalinist assassin machine. Be assured of our full cooperation in class struggle activity against bourgeois and Stalinist terror."
"HUGO OEHLER
"REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS"

"We share with you your immense sorrow at this irreparable loss. Courageous and worthy companion of Trotsky, we assure you of our invincible determination to continue and to carry to the end the work of his life."
"IKD"
(INTERNATIONALIST COMMUNISTS OF GERMANY)"

"Profoundest sympathies. Deeply shocked by Stalinist perfidy. Blow felt internationally tremendous historic loss. Trotsky will never die."
"FOURTH INTERNATIONALISTS
"CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA"

"Deeply shocked by hideous crime and terrible loss. We shall go forward."
"GOODLATE
"WPSA
(Workers Party of South Africa)
"CAPETOWN, SOUTH AFRICA"

"South African friends and sympathizers deeply regret passing of great and inspiring leader thinker writer heroic fighter for rights of man in all countries. His name will live in our memories."
"KLENERMAN
"JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA"

"On behalf of our many English friends express deepest sympathy and mourn with you loss of dear comrade and leader. Revolutionary greetings."
"HUGO DEWAR
"LONDON, ENGLAND"

"Regret loss. Will go forward."
"ROPER
"AUSTRALIAN FRIENDS
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA"

"Condolences and solidarity in your sorrow that is shared by people in every land."
"LEO MALGRECKI
"BERN, SWITZERLAND"

"Spanish emigrants of Coatzacoalcos, affiliated to the C.N.T., U.G.T., F.A.I., P.O.U.M. and Republican parties protest the GPU assassination of Leon Trotsky. We are with you in the sorrow of your friends and the International proletariat."
"BY THE DELEGATION
"ALCON AUGILAR COSTA GIROMELLA
MARIANO
COATZACOALCOS, VER. MEXICO"

"Deeply deplore dastardly assassination of Leon Trotsky. His life's work constitutes mighty historical achievement. We salute his memory."
"NATIONAL COUNCIL
"INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY
"LONDON, ENGLAND"

"I condemn with utter indignation and hatred this greatest crime of Stalinism, a crime perpetrated through foreign agents and Mexicans—to our shame. "I remain with the firm conviction, which is confirmed by the great personality of Trotsky, who will be recognized and justified by all coming history—that the stature of humanity will rise majestically out of this heap of ruins and treason which today dominate the world."
"CONCHA MICHEL
"MEXICO"

"The depth and bitterness of what we feel makes it all the more incumbent upon us to express ourselves in a practical way, and to let nothing interfere with that, as he would have wished. Please associate us with any message of loyalty and sympathy to his wife and to his closest friends. The wording of which we can leave, as we must, entirely to you, since in all our ideas as well as our personal feelings, we are at one with you."
"It is no mere phrase to say that we write with broken hearts. Any one of his true friends would rather have lost his own life. But it would show a lack of real appreciation to indulge in mourning and tears, or in bitterness alone. Lacking the power (a reference to censorship) to use such concrete phrases as you might use, I can only refer to the legend of the Phoenix—which in and through our labors will take on a new meaning."
"PADDY
"DUBLIN, EIRE"
(FOR THE IRISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL)