

WORKERS' FORUM

Here Are Some of the Anti-Labor Clauses in Roosevelt's Conscription Law

SELLING THE APPEAL

Write to us—tell us what's going on in your part of the labor movement—what are the workers thinking about?—tell us what the bosses are up to—and the G-men and the local cops—and the Stalinists—send us that story the capitalist press didn't print and that story they buried or distorted—our pages are open to you. Letters must carry name and address, but indicate if you do not want your name printed.

New Worker Learns What It Means to Be Chained to a Factory Machine

EDITOR:— I am twenty five and soft. The last few years I have spent in professional life. But now I have become a socialist and a revolutionary. I am trying to remake myself. Our revolution is a factory revolution. That fact is self evident to a Marxist. So I looked for a factory job. I must learn all the problems that confront the working class, the day-to-day ones, as well as the "larger" ones. At last I found the job I was looking for. The foreman put me to work in "production," on a short line, trimming sheetmetal for auto roofs. I couldn't even look around, or notice anybody I was so busy. When there was a let-up and I tried to talk nobody could hear me, because there was such a racket in the place. I wondered when I was going to get a chance to talk socialism. My wrists got awfully tired, and the small of my back began to ache a lot. But I tried hard not to show it because everyone else was so quiet—so hard looking and so uncomplaining. Then the sheetmetal went through my glove and cut a finger so that it bled quite a bit. But it was not much of a cut, and I was surprised that the fellows were so sympathetic (because they seemed so tough). And they made me go to the first aid room. I went, although I was a little afraid of being thought sissyish to take time off for that. I tried not to look tired, so nobody would say I couldn't take it. But I was secretly glad when the cutting machine operator took us to the toilet room where we could rest a minute without the foreman watching. The only subject of conversation was the lousy wages and the poor union in the place. I decided I better go easy about socialism, and I chimed in about the wages very strongly, and tried to tell what I knew of unions in Detroit and why they succeeded when they did. One boy even mentioned what

a shame it was to be working so hard just to pile up money for the boss. He sounds good. But I'm already learning not to go just by the way people talk. At lunch time I just sat down and ate by myself because I didn't want anyone to think I was butting in anywhere. After all I didn't know the fellows. And they all gathered in little bunches. After lunch I was back on the job a minute late and the foreman yelled at me. A couple of the fellows sneaked a grin, and one guy winked. Towards the end of the day, the thing that kept going through my mind was how different it is to go on a tour through a plant (Ford's, for instance) and to work in one. In the first case, what you observe is machinery, endless, expensive and massive—what Marx calls the concentration of capital. You hear its din and you see its products pouring out. But it's only when you work in a factory that you really understand how human beings are chained to the machine—how when the machine speeds up they must speed up—and how much blood and sweat goes into the making of the shining products that the machine "makes." I felt this in my muscles. And I began to want to make a revolution right away. I began to hate the boss with a real hate not just a literary one. I kept thinking how many there were of us, and how strong most of the fellows looked. The main power the boss seems to have is just the foreman, the stool pigeons and a few signs. Of course all the bosses together have all the police and the machinery of state as well.) One sign above the tool-room door reads: "If you don't like our country that you live in Go back to the land from where you came. No one here will ever miss you. And only your ignorance is to blame." Most of the workers are Polish and Italians. Nearly all are second generation. But none of them seem to want to go to Europe. And they all want higher wages. So I guess I'll stick around. NEW WORKER

The principal points in the Burke-Wadsworth Draft Law provide that every citizen from 21 to 36 years of age shall be liable to at least one year's military service. A close study of the law as passed discloses many defects which work to the disadvantage of the ordinary worker. STARVATION WAGES ARE "PATRIOTIC" 2. This is made easier by the fact that the pay for privates is \$21 for the first four months and \$30 thereafter. Few conscripts will be able to save any nest-egg at these pay rates. Moreover, no provision is made for discharge pay to enable the conscript to tide over the period between discharge and employment. ONLY TWELVE MONTHS -IF NOT MORE! 3. The law does not restrict the term of service to twelve months. That is simply the minimum. If the President declares a state of national emergency or in case of war, conscripts may be compelled to serve indefinitely. After completing his year of training, the conscript is liable to be

called up for service any time in the next ten years. 4. The law makes no provisions for dependents. While this may cause only little hardship at first when those with numerous dependents will probably be placed in deferred classifications, it will inflict tremendous hardship when these men are called up later, when war comes. NO PROTECTION AGAINST CREDITORS 5. Insurance policies, mortgages, installment-purchases, and other partially-paid for goods are safeguarded very loosely, if at all. The only provision regarding installment purchases states that the seller may not repossess them for non-payment during the time the draftee is in service, but there is nothing to prevent the seller from taking them immediately after. That is why stocks of finance companies remained unaffected by passage of this law. A PARADISE FOR FINKS 6. It is important to note that

SUPER-ACTIVITY IN YOUNGSTOWN!

One of the most heartening signs of the continued success of mass Appeal work is the flood of rousing reports sent in each and every week. Take this one from Youngstown, as an example of what keeps our morale up: YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio—"We were all pleased at receiving your letter of commendation. But in real American, 'you ain't seen nutten yet.' "At present we handle our Appeals as follows: First—each comrade takes an individual bundle order for his contacts. He reports on them at the following meeting. "Then, considering our fine industrial area we have found it necessary to give up house-to-house work, in order to do justice to our work at union meetings and factory gates. The main factory we are working at is a large rubber plant, where the CIO won a recent election. We cover four other CIO meetings, with more in sight. "In one CIO meeting a worker was heard to remark, with the APPEAL spread out in front of him, 'What's the matter with you guys? You afraid to get one? It's a damn good paper.' "In another meeting some of the officials came out and told us to come around with the paper at the CLOSE of the meeting, as the workers read it constantly during the meeting and this disturbs order. "A third time a CIO official entered into an argument with the comrade standing there with Appeals. The argument centered around union control of military training for the workers. After a long discussion, in which the comrade was supported by the union members standing by, a promise was extracted from the official to propose that his union adopt this program. Sorry to say he didn't keep his promise; but we're still hitting them with the Appeals, and the promise will not be forgotten. "To get 100 copies of the Appeal out in a town this size is far from adequate. We feel we could handle 500 papers a week and pay for them if we didn't have to pay quite so heavily each week on the bill incurred before the split. We feel, as we hope you do, that it is more important to

BOSTON'S RESULTS ON APPEAL WORK

BOSTON, Mass.—"We received our first return on our mass work with the Appeal. We received a letter from a young worker asking for information on the party. Mathews (Boston organizer) and I visited him and found a young worker on the road of independent thinking and thinking seriously about the socialist movement. He is against Roosevelt and Willkie both and is for a workers' party. "He was in the C.C.C. for two years and states the food was lousy and the reason because the officers pocketed plenty and the boys suffered. "We gave him some Appeals and literature and talked with him for an hour or so. We will keep after this contact and there is a good chance to get him into the party. He is about 20 years old and lives in the slums of the same town I happen to have been born and raised in, and where five of us Irishmen in the Boston Branch came from and into the party at about the same time. We hope to get him in; he will help us in our work."

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE IN CHICAGO

CHICAGO, Ill.—"... We have finally come to a point where the whole neighborhood in which we have been concentrating knows of our existence and the name 'Socialist Appeal'. Our thorough method of work has enabled us to do the following things: "1. It popularizes the Appeal in a working class neighborhood. "2. It gives us a contact list from which we can build a bigger branch in that neighborhood. "3. It also helps us to determine whether it's worth while working where we are now or to move into another location. "On September 17th we are holding an open meeting to test the results of our work in this neighborhood."

Labor Control Of Military Training Debated By Union

The Stalinists and the Hillman forces are clashing bitterly in the CIO, but that these two groups are not too far apart was demonstrated when both turned their fire against a militant delegate at the first biennial convention of the United Paper, Novelty and Toy Workers International Union (CIO), last weekend in New York City. The story is significant and worth telling. It throws considerable light on the meaning of the fight between the Stalinists and the Hillman forces which is scheduled to come out into the open in full blast at the CIO state convention this weekend. Hillman Gang's Strategy At the United Paper convention the Hillman forces sought to prevent a serious discussion of the effects on the labor movement of the "National Defense" program. Their strategy was to stall this question until the last hour of the convention and then with a plea for adjournment, refer the question to the International Executive Board, which is completely under their control. Their plans were, however, miscalculated. On the second day of the convention, the fight broke out over the report of the Executive Board. In question was the section of the report dealing with

National Defense, which was merely a duplicate copy of Sidney Hillman's patriotic position "approving the program of national defense now being unfolded..." A severe attack on this section was made by one of the delegates of the United Paper Workers Union of New York. For Workers' Control The local union for which the delegate spoke had gone on record at its last membership meeting "in favor of military training under the control and supervision of the trade unions." In its resolution the local demanded that the government supply the facilities, equipment and instructors necessary to train the workers in the military arts and sciences, to develop the versatile trade union militants to become workers' officers upon election by their fellow worker-soldiers, and that the program of training be under the control of the trade unions. This position had been adopted by an overwhelming vote of the local union. No sooner had the delegate concluded presentation and argument for the resolution which his local had instructed him to introduce, when the Hillman pack started a move—to discredit the resolution by questioning the fact that the delegate was properly seated by the credentials committee! Stalinist Yellow-Bellies And what did the Stalinists do? They started a contest with the Hillman gang to see which of these two groups could outdo the other in derogatory speeches against the resolution for workers' control of military training. The Stalinists took a disgustingly pacifist position on this fundamental question. And these scoundrels dare to claim the heritage of Lenin! The resolution could not pass in the face of this "united front" of Stalinist and Hillman forces. This reporter did witness, however, a group of about fourteen delegates who expressed their agreement and sympathies to the delegate who had introduced the resolution. Incidentally, even some of the pro-Roosevelt supporters protested when the administration railroaded through a resolution in favor of a third term for Roosevelt in crass bureaucratic fashion, permitting no discussion.

Air King Strike Is Over, Judge Smothered It

The strike of the workers at the Air King Rad'co Co., Brooklyn, N. Y., ended last week. The dispute, which has raged for the past fifteen weeks, was forced into arbitration by Judge Nova. The Air King Co. applied for an injunction against Local 430, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (CIO), and Judge Nova before giving his decision, forced the union to arbitrate with the company and Local B-1010 (AFL). The arbitrator, Dr. Lapp, after listening to evidence for four days gave his decision in favor of the company and the I.B.E.W. He maintained that a contract signed by the company with scab-herd William Beddie, International Representative of the I.B.E.W., was legal in spite of the fact that not one worker in the shop voted to accept the contract. He told the workers to go back to work and gave the boss the right to select which of the strikers he would take back. Through a ruse Beddie prevailed upon a member of the strike committee to call a strikers' meeting at the AFL Headquarters last Friday, Sept. 13. He proposed there that before any of the Air King strikers could get their jobs back in the plant they would first have to help him break other shops away from the CIO union and into his own private racket. The workers at a U. E. (CIO) shop meeting on Monday Sept. 16 rejected his scheme and will remain with the U. E. The union will endeavor to place all of the workers who have lost their jobs in other U. E. shops.

WORKER INSISTS WE MUST PREDICT THAT U. S.-SOVIET PACT IS COMING

EDITOR:— I believe the Appeal should carry a steady stream of articles concerning the coming U. S.-Soviet Union pact. We must predict it, we must explain how a Marxist analysis enables us to foresee this, we must denounce the Comintern for not informing their ranks of it, we must demand of the rank and file C. P. why he hasn't been told, and then explain to him why, i. e. because the C.P. line will switch to support of the U. S. government. I am doing this at present to the C. P.'s in my local and it is very effective. Their change in line following the Hitler-Stalin pact confused them terribly—now they feel that anything can happen. Here's some of their remarks when I predict the coming pact—"Who told you, a birdie?" Then I explain the problems confronting American imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy showing them that following the defeat of Britain the interests of both become "parallel." Then I demand of them a categorical answer on whether they will support the U. S. gov't. First they deny that, then they modify that with "well under certain conditions it might become necessary etc." We must follow the development closely and give it wide publicity in our press. Our friend and party comrade, John Brooks Wheelwright, was fatally injured by an automobile and died in Boston, Sunday, September 14. He was forty three years old. Comrade Wheelwright had demonstrated his firmness and loyalty to the revolutionary movement. When, under the impact of the second world war, so many petty-bourgeois intellectuals deserted the revolutionary movement, John stood firm on the solid rock of Marxism. Far from conceding that his background was a handicap in a revolutionary workers' movement—he was born into one of the oldest families of New England, a descendant of the Rev. John Wheelwright who founded Wells in Maine and Exeter in New Hampshire—he used to insist most solemnly that he came to

Auto Workers' Strike Vote

(Continued from Page 1) vote will undoubtedly be overwhelmingly for arming the Fisher executive board with strike power. In the face of this determined stand it is probable that the corporation will be forced to drop its frame-up charges against the 19 Fisher unionists and reinstate them on the job. If they don't, they will be faced with a strike, because there is no doubt that the Fisher Local No. 581 means business. They know well enough that should the corporation be allowed to get away with this action against the 19 key men it will all but destroy the union. The militant spirit of the union has not died down, but has actually increased since the meeting of a week ago. The meeting hall yesterday was full to overflowing. While the UAW membership in Flint and elsewhere is full of fight, the local leadership is inexperienced and in constant danger of being outmaneuvered by the company. The International Board members have shown their inability to get the company to live up to the contract, while at the same time they try to tone down the fighting spirit of the men. Locally, the militants show a tendency to become confused in the face of both the corporation's violation of the contract, and the International leadership's self-satisfied policy of doing nothing. As a result of this, the smoldering resentment of the ranks stores up heat, and suddenly explodes in the face of everyone. Planning Ahead Needed More conscious union militants recognize that it is necessary for those who claim to be leaders to take a firm hold, to plan a campaign that will force the company to cease its anti-union tactics, to live up to the agreement, and will also force the International Board to get off its swivel chairs and undertake to whip the company into line, stop the speed ups, wage

cuts, and general intimidation. The union has a clear case against the Fisher Body. It is only necessary to present the facts to show that the corporation tried to use the AFL issue to smash the union, and get rid of the key CIO men. Alert militants are now convinced of the necessity to bring out the real issues facing the union; they realize it is necessary to pile up a record of evidence to show that the corporation has all but abrogated the contract, refused to settle grievances, intimidated union men, etc. It is not enough to allow these grievances to smoulder in the breasts of the rank and file. The record must be made against the company in black and white, and the union must adopt an impregnable position of attempting to enforce the agreement, while the company refuses to live up to it. Struggle Only Beginning The struggle against GM is only beginning. A great responsibility falls on the leadership. In the next weeks the grievances will pile up even higher. Rank and file militancy will surge up everywhere. But this rank and file courage will ebb and die unless it is organized, unless it is led, unless it is given a program of action based upon a cool understanding of what the union must do. There are plenty of potential leaders in the UAW-CIO. The membership is well-known for its courage and fight. The Fisher events show that well enough. It is now up to the leadership to come forth and show the magnificent fighting membership that it is able to lead a successful fight against the huge GM corporation. The International Board has already been forced to get busy by the Fisher Body Local No. 581. Other locals will follow suit and insist on action to settle the mountain of grievances they have had on the fire for months. The GM contract, rammed down the throats of the UAW member-

ship by the Reuthers and the Thomases, is obviously a poor agreement. The grievance procedure is long and drawn out, the "impartial umpire clause" is a foolish illusion that there can be anything "impartial" in a fight between company and workers. "But in general a union contract can be made as good as the union members can make it by their organized strength. The GM contract has never in actuality been put into effect. The company ignores its provisions, and the union due to its inexperience, and to its cowardly top leadership's, has done little to enforce its provisions, and to make use of it to the fullest degree. The contract provides that wages shall be negotiated on a plant basis; but instead of this the company has been allowed actually to cut wage levels in many plants. The contract provides that speed or time standards shall be negotiated on a plant basis, but this too has not been effectively done. The union is well enough organized to enforce these provisions and force the company to agree to union conditions on wages and time standards. All that is needed is a planned campaign, and serious action to show the company they cannot get away with their present openly arrogant attitude. A start has been made in Fisher Body, where first of all the union is determined to reinstate the 19 suspended men, and when this is done, to follow up with a strong campaign to settle on union terms the multitude of injustices the corporation has up to this point forced upon the men. Keen interest has been shown by workers in other plants in the Fisher struggle. It is to be expected that from now on the union will become more aggressive, under pressure from the ranks.

Jobless Negro Lad Tries To get Into The U. S. Army...

NEWARK, N. J.—For many months, a strong, giant Negro youth had been unsuccessfully seeking work. Everywhere his color was against him. One day last week, impelled by hunger and attracted by a colorful poster which proclaimed "Uncle Sam Needs You—Join the Army Now!" he entered a local recruiting office. The fat, well-fed looking officer, gave him a distasteful look and said, "We don't want no damn black boys in the Army now. You have to wait for conscription." Infuriated, the youth reached over the desk and yanked the frightened officer to his feet. "Listen, Mr. Army Man," he said, "even if you don't want to allow any Negroes in the Army, you better take my name down. When you draft me, I ain't coming. I'll have nothing to do with your J'm Crow army. You'll have to come and get me—and you better bring your lily-white army along with you."

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