

NEGROES FIGHT PHILA. POLICE TERROR

Farmers Union Meets In St. Paul

4,000 to Attend Five-State Convention; Is Most Progressive Farm Organization

ST. PAUL, Minn.—The Farmers Union will hold its annual convention for this region—Wisconsin, the Dakotas, Montana and Minnesota—in this city during the week of December 9th. Some 4,000 stockholders of the Farmers Union cooperative organizations in these five states will be in attendance.

The Farmers Union is undoubtedly the most progressive of the major farm organizations. Several encouraging developments took place at its recent annual convention in Denver, Colorado.

LABOR-FARMER ALLIANCE

The convention reiterated the organization's traditional policy of supporting the struggles of the labor movement, and exchanged telegrams of greeting with both the AFL and CIO conventions. The convention also expressed appreciation for the trade unions' legislative support in the following manner: "We organized farmers recognize that except for the faithful support of those members of Congress representing labor districts, our national farm program would have been whittled down or wiped off the law books of the nation."

However, the danger that certain elements in the Farmers Union would not continue this cooperation was indicated when the newly-elected national president of the Farmers Union said, according to report: "The Farmers Union, in order to get anywhere, has had to trade socks with everybody, including organized labor."

Both farmers and workers in this area do not agree with Patton, for they have had very concrete proof of the value of farmer-labor cooperation. This alliance was an extremely valuable aid to the famous 1934 drivers' strike in Minneapolis; in turn, the drivers union helped the market gardeners in the Twin Cities area to get their own market. Similar cooperation was recently displayed during the troubles of the Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee with the Fargo (N. D.) packers.

Further advances by both farm-

ers and workers require an extension of this alliance, and not its abandonment. In Minnesota a real beginning has been made with the organizing, over a year ago, of the Farmer Cooperative Labor Conference, which has done much in building mutual understanding and support. The Farmers Union nationally has also pioneered in this field with the establishment of a joint committee with trade unionists.

FARMER UNION GROWS

North Dakota's Farm Union has grown during the last two years, now having approximately 16,000 members. It is also of real significance that organization work has been resumed in Minnesota, after virtual stoppage for over a decade due to a factional fight in Minnesota. The more militant farmers in Minnesota have really been without any kind of satisfactory organization since the Farm Holiday Association has become defunct.

It will be interesting to note to what extent the regional Farmers Union convention will be able to show more resistance to the Roosevelt drive for "national unity" than was shown by the national convention.

The most glaring evidence of Roosevelt's war pressure was seen at the Denver convention when it failed to endorse the proposal for a popular referendum on war, which had been for years a staple part of all Farmers Union programs. "National unity" pressure was also able to keep the Denver program down to little more than a blanket endorsement of the "New Deal" farm program—and this in spite of the fact that the masses of the farmers, discontented with that program, had voted against Roosevelt!

The major exception to this policy of submitting to Roosevelt was the reiterated endorsement of the progressive Farmers Union Debt Adjustment Bill, but unfortunately no concrete steps were taken at Denver to organize an effective drive for the bill.

(See Peter Graves' article on the farmers, on page 4 of this issue.)

AFL Convention Blocks Labor Unity By Hostility To Industrial Unions

Anti-Labor Police Chief Is Michigan Home Guard Head

DETROIT, Nov. 30—"Heinie" Pickert, notorious former city police commissioner, who earned the well-merited hatred of the hundreds of thousands of auto workers here for his vicious strike-breaking activities, has just been given a new job fitted to his talents.

He has been named head of the Michigan eastern division of the new "Home Guards," state body replacing the National Guard. The appointment of Pickert is a substantial tip-off that the "Home Guards" will take up the strike-breaking role of the National Guard as its chief function.

The United Automobile Workers—CIO leaders are making strong protests at the appointment. They'd better get busy on a program of Workers Defense Guards and a demand for workers' military training under trade union control.

SAILORS FIRM IN WEST COAST SHIP STRIKE

Steamship Tie-up Deadlocked; Stalinists Aid Bosses

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 1st—The two months old steamship strike remained deadlocked today with the shipowners holding tough against vital concessions to the Sailors' Union of the Pacific.

The SUP together with the Masters, Mates and Pilots (AFL) are the only unions which have not been able to write an agreement with the steamship operators. Their efforts to organize an effective strike and win real gains for all the maritime unions have been continually frustrated by the disloyal game of the Stalinist clique in the "Maritime Federation."

The SUP negotiating committee was bluntly informed by the operators that no concessions beyond those granted the firemen (MFOF&W), the cooks and stewards (MCS) and the engineers (MEBA) would be given to the sailors. They were further informed that these three unions had written a clause into their agreement whereby any additional increase given the Sailors would also be given them!

A few days later the Sailors received another stab in the back from the Stalinist gang. The contents of a telegram sent by the San Francisco Industrial Union Council to Roosevelt and Madame Perkins was made public. For no apparent reason the telegram informed the national government that an agreement between the MFOF&W, the MCS and the MEBA and the steamship operators had been signed; that they were ready to return to work; but that the SUP which had not been on strike at all had suddenly raised demands and was holding up a return to work.

STALINISTS AID BOSSES

In a deliberate maneuver the Stalinists, by what amounts to collusion with the employers, are blocking SUP attempts to get better conditions. At the same time they are inciting the membership of the firemen and cooks and stewards against the SUP for the prolongation of the

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Dubinsky Is a Sorry-Looking Figure As Craft Moguls Push Him Around

The American Federation of Labor craft chiefs intend to ride to labor "unity" over the broken bones of industrial unionism. That was made clear by the just adjourned sixtieth annual convention of the AFL in New Orleans.

Despite William Green's reiterated pious prayers for "peace and harmony" and his self-righteous denunciation of John L. Lewis as standing in the way of unity, the AFL head and his lieutenants failed to make the one simple declaration which might have given substance to their charges against Lewis. All Green had to say in order to clear the path to unity was: "I deny that we intend to obstruct industrial organization or to dismember the mass unions of the CIO in the interests of the craft organizations. The AFL is ready to aid in the building and extension of industrial unions in the mass production industries."

The deliberate silence of the AFL spokesmen on this one crucial point speaks more loudly than all the flowery "unity" talk unloosed on the delegates. The AFL chiefs are ready to "unite" with the CIO only around the funeral pyre of industrial unionism.

The resolutions and proceedings of the convention merely underline the real meaning of this silence.

One of the first acts of the convention, on November 22, was the endorsement of a proposal contained in the report of the com-

Vultee Victory Bolsters Union Aircraft Drive

Boss Press Lies About Union's Gains; No Compulsory Arbitration In Contract

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 27—3700 workers, members of aircraft local 683, United Auto Workers—CIO, returned to work today at the Vultee Aircraft plant, after a twelve-day strike, with substantial gains under their belts.

Despite efforts of the boss press to minimize the extent of the gains made by the Vultee workers and to play up the agreement as "really" a company victory, the actual agreement includes basic gains: a minimum wage of 62½ cents an hour from the previous 50 cent minimum for all the 3700 Vultee production workers now employed, two-weeks' vacation with pay, pay for all principal holidays, and an annual sick leave of five days.

The reports in the local boss papers made a big fuss over an alleged "compulsory arbitration" clause contained in the agreement. The contract, however, the union declares, merely provides for the establishment of arbitration machinery for the 16 months duration of the contract. This machinery is for the purpose of arbitrating differences over the carrying out of the various conditions contained in the contract. The union has not agreed not to strike after the termination of the contract. This type of arbitration machinery is provided for in many union contracts, and the Vultee contract establishes no exceptional principle.

Compulsory arbitration, in the strictest sense, would mean an agreement by a union not to strike during the periods in between contracts. In this instance, the company was unsuccessful in securing such an agreement. In fact, the company was finally forced to reduce its demand for a two-year contract to one for 16 months.

The company statement yesterday about a rigid check-up to weed out "undesirable" elements, implying the possibility of discriminating against union militants, was for public consumption to save face for the management. The union has indicated that there will be real trouble if the company tries to discriminate against any actual employee.

"APPRENTICE" RACKET ENDED

The contract also includes a clause dealing with new employees hired after the conclusion of the strike. Apprentices, with less

Union Men Jailed In Strikes, Kept Out Of Drafted Army

Uncle Sam is trying to keep out of his new army of draftees trade union militants who might stand up to the officers and demand better conditions for the workers army.

Class war prisoners and trade unionists who have been convicted as a result of participation in strikes are placed in a special category—class IV F—together with confirmed criminals, idiots and moral delinquents, and have their service deferred.

Without benefit of trial, these men are not judged good enough to fight for democracy—or perhaps does it mean that they might fight too hard for democracy?

It should be noted that in most cases the men involved would have had their service deferred in any case due to dependents. The reactionary army officers, however make sure that there is no possibility of these class war prisoners coming into the army and also brand them as moral delinquents in order to discredit in advance any protests that they might make.

A choice example of how the AFL craft moguls are setting traps for the industrial unions, in the event of unity, is the resolution passed by the convention, on the endorsement of the Executive Council, giving the Council

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Cops Seized 600 In Street Raids

Boss Political Machine Took This Revenge For Refusal Of Negroes To Support It In The Recent Elections

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 30—The Negro and working-class population of this city is bitterly aroused against the mass arrest of almost 600 Negroes, whom police seized in the streets, restaurants and tap-rooms of the North Philadelphia 20th Ward last week.

128 of those arrested, who were held incommunicado in jail 24-48 hours, without warrants for their arrest or formal charges being placed against them, have already started civil suits for false arrest against 37 police officials and police who commanded or conducted the raids.

The police claimed they had instituted the raids in an alleged effort to "clean up" a series of petty crimes in the area.

But the arrests were really an attempt to intimidate the Negro population of Philadelphia, because of their defiance of this city's dominant Republican political machine. Most Negroes here voted Democratic in the elections.

The Philadelphia political machine is taking advantage of the present political atmosphere—war hysteria, the government drive against striking workers as "saboteurs" and "reds," the brazen Jim-Crowing of Negroes in the army and navy, the refusal of corporations with military orders to hire Negroes—to force the Negroes by terror to support the local bosses in City Hall. Such an attempt would hardly be possible in "normal" times.

A typical example of the arrests was that of Lawrence Bryant, an engineer on a federal project, who was on his way home from work. He happened to walk past a police patrol, was immediately snatched up and dragged to jail. He had to stand all night in a cell jammed with 20 others, and was hauled before a magistrate the next morning with the others. He didn't know what the charge was and had no opportunity to speak; just heard the magistrate declare "800 bail for further hearing next Wednesday."

Unable to raise the bail, Bryant, who has a wife and eight children, went back to a cell. Of the almost 600 arrested, police were able to find only twenty on whom any kind of a charge could be put, although all spent one to two nights in jail. Finally, seven were held for "suspicion" and 13 for "vagrancy" or carrying concealed weapons.

Segregation is rampant in the army post, he discloses, pointing out that even in the post theatre which is run by the War Department, the Negro soldiers are forced to sit in a row of seats, "seating not more than fifteen men." "This," he adds, "is the 'Reserved-for-Colored' section. The Negro soldiers are also segregated in the Post bus, which carries the men back and forth to the nearby town. It is far from any idea I ever had of army life."

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Happy Days in the Army

In a description of the American professional soldier, the *Infantry Journal* for September-October 1940 declares: "Your industrialists cannot get a man to work overtime 15 minutes without giving double pay, whereas the professional soldier in peacetime can work 24 or 48 hours at a stretch."

"Silly and Unscientific"

Advice on war propaganda in the *September-October 1940 Infantry Journal* insists: "Do not say to a soldier that war is silly and unscientific." We agree. Say to him that it's as sensible as Wall Street profits and as scientific as the electric chair.

ON THE WAR FRONTS

by GEORGE STERN

Now that Greece has joined the fight for "freedom" our big newspapers find it convenient to omit any discussion of the character of the Greek regime of John Metaxas. There is good reason for this, because the government of Metaxas is one of the bloodiest dictatorships in South-eastern Europe. It was established by coup d'etat four years ago and maintained itself by the most ruthless terror against all its opponents.

Under Metaxas there has been neither freedom of press, nor freedom of assembly, nor tolerance of political parties. Those opponents of the regime who could, like many of the Venizelists, fled abroad. All others were thrown into vile prisons or concentration camps located in penal colonies on islands in the Aegean. Not a few of our Fourth Internationalist comrades suffered this fate.

Thus Greece's fight cannot be remotely characterized as part of any fight for "democracy." It is part, rather, of the imperialist struggle for power in the Mediterranean. Greece was better able to resist attack first because the attackers were the Italians. Events have already proved that the Mussolini military machine does not match in striking power that of Hitler's Germany.

In the mountains of Albania the comparatively ill-armed Greeks have demonstrated this with the greatest of ease. The second factor in Greek

resistance is British naval control of the Mediterranean. Like all the smaller nations of Europe, Greece was placed between the hammer and the anvil by the development of the war. Had Metaxas chosen to throw in with the Axis, his coastline was at the mercy of the British fleet.

A third factor in determining Greek policy is Turkey. A Greece within the Axis would have become not only the theater of British naval operations but might also have been the object of immediate Turkish operations overland.

As it is, the Greeks have chosen to resist Italy and have secured, naturally, important British support. They can in addition regard Turkey, for the time being at any rate, as a friendly ally at their rear.

Cold and hard self-interest based on strategic considerations govern Greece's role in the war, not noisy abstractions about "freedom" and "democracy." The elements of a genuine national struggle by the Greeks in defense of their homeland are completely obscured within the framework of the inter-imperialist conflict in which Greece is but a pawn. Certainly they are smothered totally by the Metaxas dictatorship.

"Freedom" for Greece cannot be won under Metaxas but against Metaxas. The war doesn't change this fact.