

# OFF THE RECORD

By Dwight Macdonald

## The Wallace Plan

Several months ago, in my New International column, I quoted a Washington "Confidential News Letter" on an embryonic New Deal scheme. "Idea," ran the report, "is to find ways of enabling more people to eat more food. . . . It appears to be a fact that 1-3 of our people, perhaps even 1/2, don't get enough to eat. . . . So, step up consumption, eat up surpluses, thus aid farmers. That's the basis idea. How? One way might be by socialism or communism. Another way is by improving existing distribution methods WITHIN the profit system." What interested me at the time was the frank admission that (1) the American masses don't get enough to eat under capitalism; and (2) communism would mean, for them, more food. But now the "other" way, WITHIN the profit system, has materialized. It makes a neat rounding out of the story.

The alternative to communism turns out to be Secretary Wallace's ingenious orange and blue food card system, which was lately saluted in an Appeal editorial. On the surface, the Wallace Plan is designed actually to give the unemployed, in this seventh year of the New Deal, enough to eat. General Hugh Johnson, an admirer of the Wallace Plan, admitted recently in his daily column: "Government studies of W.P.A. wages have shown that, while the amount available for food for a family of four, for example, is enough to prevent starvation [Who says democracy doesn't work?—D.M.] it is not enough to provide a minimum balanced diet, especially for children, in some of the foods of which there is a surplus—dairy products, eggs, fruit and vegetables." (And let it not be forgotten that W.P.A. wages, just above the starvation level, are much higher than home and local relief.)

For their above-starvation foodstuffs, the unemployed have had to depend on the erratic bounty of the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, which buys up big lots of surplus farm products and gives them to the unemployed. The system is designed to stabilize farm markets rather than to meet human needs, and so the unemployed function as a sort of refuse dump for whatever our insane economic system overproduces at any given moment.

The Wallace Plan continues to use the unemployed as a dump for surplus farm products. But instead of the Government giving the food direct to the relievers, it gives them blue cards, which are exchangeable at their grocers for whatever foodstuffs are officially designated "surplus" that week. The beauty of this new arrangement is that every one—except, of course, the ultimate consumer—gets his cut of profit, from wholesaler to retailer.

Nor is this all. Secretary Wallace has decided that the unemployed cannot be trusted to spend their nickels wisely, and so he also proposes that the amount of each relief check which he and the other New Deal supermen in their all-wisdom decide should be spent for food—that this amount be paid not in cash but in orange tick-

ets. Like the blue tickets—which apply only to surplus commodities—these will be redeemable in any store for food. The same Washington News Letter from which I originally quoted, in a later issue revealed that the Wallace Plan will be tried out first in a few selected cities and then, if it works, will be extended everywhere. "Clothing and other necessities are not included in the plan now, but it is freely said they may be added later, IF the plan works on food." I hope the unemployed workers of the country will show by demonstrations and by other suitable action that the Wallace Plan doesn't "work," that they are still adult enough to buy their own shoes and hats and food even if this cockeyed economic system prevents them from working productively. For their banners, I suggest two inscriptions: "Mother DOESN'T Know Best!" And this sentence from the Washington Letter: "Purpose of Plan is primarily farm relief, secondarily human relief."

## A Luxemburgite Objects

Some one who wants to remain anonymous writes in to endorse, on the whole, my recent remarks in this column on the S.W.P.'s handling of the Anti-Bund demonstration outside Madison Square Garden. But he also adds: "I wish to register, as a Luxemburgite, that the comparison with Fascist showmanship goes a bit too far, because there are limits to left showmanship that do not restrict fascism. These limits relate to the degree to which a genuine social revolution is in its actual occurrence—as distinguished from demonstrations, meetings, etc.—a self-induced mass act, rather than something, as Rosa said, 'led with a baton.' The fascist coup d'etat is always accomplished under the baton, and this is one of the signs that it is not a social revolution. While the socialist revolution, no matter what role the Party plays as a gear, overflows the rim of the ordered and assumes a ragged, uneven character—with even the most conscious elements running around wild and improvising. And this has to be prepared for, too."

"So, while I agree with your general criticism, I suggest you add to it the thought that if all the Party members had been on their toes, thinking of the total effect of their act, they would, even without preliminary preparation, which would have been preferable, have thought of various improvised means for letting the crowds know about the S.W.P., the Appeal, etc. In short, I just want to strike one note for the individual side, along with your chord on the organizational. Both ought to develop together. Of course, this is a big subject, and I'm just poking around in it here."

But I'd like to ask my Luxemburgian lover of spontaneity—and I'm all with him there, myself—just how the demonstrators, on their toes or not, could have improvised banners and placards out of thin air, or could have conjured up copies of the Appeal when none were sent from headquarters?

# Senate Committee Bares Terror Against Workers

(Continued from Page 1)

a law-enforcement agency (read strike-breaking agency) was the Ohio National Guard. It loaded up with \$20,234.59 worth of the poison. But much larger purchases were made by the Republic Steel Corporation, the United States Steel Corporation, the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company, and the General Motors Corporation.

## They Armed the Police

"Over 80 per cent of these purchases were made during or in anticipation of labor trouble," states the report and goes on to explain that corporations not only armed private guards but supplied arms and gas to police departments.

Virtually all the weapons used in the forcible dispersal of a picket line at Monroe, Mich., during the Little Steel strike were furnished to law enforcement authorities by the Republic Steel Corporation.

## Right of Free Speech

The employers exercised their right to free speech in order to bring the workers around to their point of view . . . purely in the traditional democratic American way. During the Little Steel strike, for instance, the La Follette Committee reports that Republic Steel exercised the right of free speech with 552 revolvers, 64 rifles with 1,325 rounds of ammunition, 245 shotguns with 5,874 rounds of shotgun shells, 143 gas guns with 4,032 gas projectiles and 2,707 hand grenades.

These facts, which are as plain and unglazed as a crate of gas bombs, sound more like a violent Hearst editorial denouncing a workers' revolution for its use of terrorism than the cautious understatement of a capitalist investigating committee. But Republic Steel does not stand alone, a unique and isolated instance. "The purchasing and storing of arsenals of firearms and tear and sickening gas weapons," states the report, "is a common practice by large employers who refuse to bargain collectively with legitimate labor unions."

## "Respectable" Business Outfits

The buyers of poison gas listed by the Committee constitute a Who's Who assembly of solid "respectable" American business concerns and organizations. The Chamber of Commerce in many American cities ostensibly exists in order to publish slick paper blurbs to beguile moneyed vac-

tioners, but according to the La Follette lists their basements are filled with enough tear gas, shotguns, and rifles to keep the American flag flying over the cash register no matter how many employees in the district may desert American institutions by asking for a rise in pay or recognition of their right to organize.

The law enforcement agencies listed as purchasers of weapons of violence for use against workers are in almost every instance agencies under the control of corporations in the vicinity. Youngstown, Ohio, Flint, Mich., Salinas, Calif., Kohler, Wis., Mahoning County, Ohio, the Ohio National Guard—each one recalls a spectacular attack by the employers against the workers and the shedding of their blood.

San Francisco, for example, bought \$20,000 worth of equipment during the months of May, June, and July 1934 during the maritime and longshoremen's strike. That purchase of arms was climaxed by Bloody Thursday, the day police shot down strikers in the back of the San Francisco waterfront. Wreathes each year still keep fresh the memory of those stains on the sidewalks.

## Secret Diplomacy in Industry

The employers themselves are proud of their armed struggle for the democratic right to exploit workers—among their own class. But they are more cautious about what information reaches the workers. After all, the workers will soon have to go to war to die for corporation profits and it is smart diplomacy to keep some things secret.

"The fact that industrial purchasers of munitions frequently resort to all manner of subterfuge to conceal their purchase and possession of arms and gas from their own employees," states the report, "is significantly indicative of the purpose for which such munitions are bought."

"The munitions companies, in their business methods, accept this state of affairs and carry on their trade in a manner which approximates the secrecy and evasion that characterizes bootlegging."

## "Public Use" of Munitions

"Deliveries are made and invoices are mailed to the homes of officials far from the plants; records are kept in blind or in fragmentary form; payments are made through disreputable intermediaries and are in cash; invoices are written up in mislead-

## 'Liberty' A La Roosevelt



ing terms, and sometimes the munitions companies are not even informed of the identity of the actual purchasers."

And circumstances surrounding payment for gas equipment furnish "an extraordinary example of political intrigue and blackmail that are latent in the practice of private purchase of munitions for public use." "Public use," of course, is not to be taken as meaning that these munitions are used against the employers.

## The Only Answer

Excerpts from letters written by gas salesmen to their companies show vividly that the business of these munitions outfits depends upon employers creating a labor dispute. Here are a few of the statements: "Wish a hell of a strike would get under way."

"I hope that this strike develops and matures and that it will be a damn bad one; we need the money." "We are surrounded with strikes but they are too peaceful to suit me."

The La Follette Report shows as clearly as the company violence it describes that there can be only one answer to the private armies of the American stockholders—and that answer is Workers Defense Guards.

## PITTMAN SEEKS TO PREPARE U. S. FOR COMING WAR

(Continued from Page 1) hoo, the bill to abrogate existing neutrality legislation was finally introduced into the Senate on March 20 by Chairman Key Pittman of the Foreign Relations Committee. In blandly hypocritical fashion, it was entitled, "Peace Act of 1939."

More frankly, Pittman in a radio speech last Sunday night described its main function as the expansion of the private munitions industry by permitting belligerents to purchase unlimited amounts of arms in this country. If adopted, the bill will immediately result in a vast expansion of the munitions industry, for the British and French governments are ready to place enormous orders but have hesitated for fear that, under existing legislation, the orders would not be delivered if war broke out meanwhile. Likewise munitions manufacturers have hesitated to accept orders under these conditions.

Fake "Safeguards" As a sop to the anti-war sentiment which originally forced adoption of legislation forbidding export of munitions in wartime, Pittman's new bill contains a "cash-and-carry" provision whereby prior to export in wartime all right, title and interest in the war materials must have been transferred to the purchasing government.

It is contended by the bill's sponsors that this provision, plus another prohibiting wartime loans to belligerents, will prevent American interests from becoming welded to the Anglo-French bloc and resulting in a repetition of America's entry into the war on their side as in 1917. But this is not true.

The fact is that the cautionary provisions can in no way prevent a repetition of 1917. First of all, large-scale cash orders from the Anglo-French bloc in the first months of the war will result in American industry organizing its production on the basis of these orders.

Any threat to the continuation of these orders—such as important victories by Germany, or effective submarine warfare by Germany, or for that matter the inability of the Anglo-French bloc to continue paying in cash—would result in irresistible pressure by American financial and industrial interests for American entry into the war on the side of her customers.

Evasion Made Easy Secondly, the "cash-and-carry" provision could easily be evaded from the first. The Pittman bill itself provides a number of loopholes. Although it formally prohibits loans to belligerents, it gives the president the discretionary power, in extremely vague and broad terms, to permit extension by banks and industry to belligerents of "ordinary commercial credits and short-time obligations"; and the bill does not apply to "renewal or adjustment of such indebtedness as may exist" when war breaks out.

"Ordinary commercial credits" can be expanded to mean a great deal, while "renewal or adjustment" of indebtedness enables the Anglo-French bloc to arrange in advance for any amount of bank loans which will actually become operative only when war starts.

Thus, at bottom, the Pittman

## RUMANIAN PACT PLACES HITLER AT SOVIET FRONTIERS

(Continued from Page 1) left in the hands of Hitler and just what his plans are the imperialist chancelleries apparently do not know, if we are to believe Augur, the well-known mouthpiece of the British Foreign Office, who writes in the New York Times.

By his successive coups of the last two weeks, Hitler has placed himself in a position from which he can either continue his eastward drive or else turn, as his ally Mussolini would like him to do, toward the rich colonial empires of Britain and France and press for a new partition of Africa and a revision of the "spheres of influence" in which the imperialist masters hold subject their hundreds of millions of colonial slaves.

## War In Either Case

In either case the end result will be a mad plunge into a new imperialist world war, with its attendant death, privation and misery for the masses of the world. The capitalist war-makers, of the democratic and Fascist stripe alike, are the instigators of this war. The last word will not belong to them, however, but to the masses aroused against the insane butchery for bosses' profits. To arouse, organize, and lead the masses to the transformation of the imperialist war into a war for the liberation of mankind from all tyranny is the task inscribed on the banners of the Fourth International.

bill paves the way for repetition of the events in America of 1914-1918.

The fundamental drive of American imperialism to war in 1917 and now, flowed and still flows from far more basic causes than its status as a creditor of the Anglo-French bloc. To the extent that this factor facilitated entry into war, however, it is now to be repeated again.

## Latin-America In Uniform

Another important Roosevelt administration war move is the Pittman resolution to "assist the governments of American republics to increase their military and naval establishments" by providing them with material unavailable in private munitions factories—in a word, with the most basic military secrets of the American armed forces.

This type of assistance is only given by one government to another on the basis of the closest possible military-political alliances, and indicates the real meaning of the Lima Declaration of "continental solidarity" which government spokesmen use to justify the Pittman resolution.

In hearings before the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate March 22, spokesmen for the State, War and Navy Departments for the first time publicly advocated such "assistance" to the Latin-American governments. It means nothing less than the military organization of the Western Hemisphere under the direction of the U.S. government, placing at its disposal the manpower and resources of the semi-colonial countries in the fight for mastery of the world.

## "Democratic" Dictators

The government spokesmen played upon the phrase, "the twenty-one republics" as though this signified a hemisphere of democracies. Actually the governments which the Roosevelt administration thus proposes to arm, and especially those most subservient to the administration's plans, are almost all military dictatorships—typified by such butchers as Vargas of Brazil and Batista of Cuba. These are the much-touted "forces of democracy!"

The Pittman resolution simply provides the mechanism whereby the enslaved masses of Latin-America shall be employed as cannon-fodder by the puppet dictators at the behest of the Colossus of the North.

## "War Without Profits"

As window-dressing for all this, there appears again the old fig-leaf of war-mongers, a bill to "tax the profits out of war."

Introduced into the Senate in the name of 50 Senators—more than a majority—the lack of seriousness of this move is indicated by the fact that the bill, as drafted, would result in Federal and state income taxes amounting in the higher brackets to a total of more than the income to be taxed. Sponsored also by the reactionary "Veterans of Foreign Wars," the bill is signed by New Dealers, conservative Democrats and Republicans alike—in other words it is a meaningless gesture.

A war tax of 99% on big incomes is a nice bit of pap to befuddle the workers while the enormous appropriations for armaments are being made. Not one signer of the bill really takes it seriously.

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## MEN AND WOMEN OF LABOR

# Out of the Past

BY EMANUEL GARRETT

## JAMES CONNOLLY

(June 5, 1870—executed May 12, 1916)

The newspapers report the resurgence of the Irish independence movement. "Up the Rebels," is again heard in the streets of Dublin—this time directed against a one-time rebel, Eamon De Valera, as well as the British tyrants. The anniversary of Red Easter Week is only a few weeks away.

Jim Connolly was once asked at a lecture how it was that he knew so much about revolutionary and military matters. "You forget," he replied, "that revolution is my business."

And that it was. For though he worked at any number of trades in Ireland and in this country—as baker, shoemaker, tiler, machinist, linotype, etc.—Jim Connolly was primarily a revolutionist, in the words of his biographer, Desmond Ryan, the "first builder of an insurgent barricade in war-wrecked Europe."

## Irish Question Is a Social Question

Himself a worker, and the son of a worker, Connolly sought to free the movement for Ireland's freedom from the petty-bourgeois and nationalist elements who dominated it at the time; he viewed with distrust the official nationalist leaders who had, he said, "bowed the knee to Baal."

A student of Marxism, and proud to acknowledge that, he insisted that "only the Irish working class remains as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland." For "As we have again and again pointed out, the Irish question is a social question, the whole age-long fight of the Irish people against their oppressors resolves itself in the last analysis into a fight for the mastery of the means of life, the sources of production." His great book, "Labor in Irish History," is based on that thesis.

Back in the 90's when Connolly first began his socialist work, the nationalist movement was in pretty bad shape. The British, riding the wave of imperialist prosperity, tossed the Irish a few crumbs and devitalized the movement for liberation into a mere plea for Home Rule. (Connolly was especially bitter against the Home Rulers.) Such revolutionary work as was being done, was done secretly. Connolly broke through this "ridiculous secrecy," and brought the socialist movement into the open. In 1896 he founded the Irish Socialist Republican Party, and became editor of its paper, the "Worker's Republic." (The paper bore on its masthead this legend: "The great appear great only because we are on our knees, let us arise!")

Emigrating to the United States in 1903, he immediately enrolled in the trade union and socialist movements of this country. An industrial unionist all his life, he became in America one of the earliest organizers of the I.W.W. For a time he was a member of the National Exec-

utive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party. Disagreeing with Daniel De Leon, leader of the S.L.P., over some questions of policy, he joined the newly formed Socialist Party, for which he worked as a national organizer.

## England's Crisis—Ireland's Opportunity

Returning to Ireland in 1913, he arrived at the very moment when the great strike battle, led by the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, against Dublin's united bosses was getting under way. 20,000 workers fought for six months to assert their right to join a union. Jim Larkin, a striking figure and orator, was the best-known leader of the strike. Connolly worked as Larkin's right-hand man.

Connolly judged crises according to their revolutionary possibilities. In England's war crisis, he saw revolutionary Ireland's opportunity. Realizing that collaboration of all the independence movements was absolutely vital, Connolly united, in preparation for action, the I.T.G.W.U., the Socialists, the Citizen's Army the Sinn Feiners, and the Republican Volunteers.

Both sides mobilized. April was stormy with preparations and preliminary skirmishes. Finally, the British moved in to disarm the Volunteers and the Citizen's Army. Connolly, who, as the most popular and undoubtedly most able person, had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the revolutionary forces, gave the order for the rising on April 23. The petty-bourgeois leaders of the Volunteers rescinded the order, but the rising went on—their cowardice was too late. The "Provisional Government of an Independent Irish Republic" was proclaimed.

By the morning of April 24, virtually every important point of Dublin was in the hands of the rebels, so carefully had Connolly laid his plans. Facing the ruthless bombardment of British artillery which destroyed the center of the city, the rebels nevertheless fought fiercely for a week with inferior weapons. The uprising was crushed, and the democratic British immediately imposed a bloody reign of White Terror.

## Ours . . . Fighting and Hoping

The moment may not have been fully ripe for revolutionary action. But the valiant action led by Connolly was by no means an ill-considered, valueless stroke. Like the Russian 1905, it was a preliminary battle, preparatory to the final struggle. Weak-kneed traitors, and "I-Told-You-So" cowards can dismiss Red Easter as an adventurist putsch; but in the words of Lenin, "those who can term such a rising a putsch are either the worst kind of reactionaries or hopeless doctrinaires, incapable of imagining the social revolution as a living phenomenon."

Connolly was held prisoner in Kilmainham Jail (Eamon De Valera was privileged to be there with him). On May 12, wounded, carried out on a chair, "fighting and hoping" (he always ended his letters thus), courageous beyond finching, he faced a British firing squad.

## The 'War For Democracy' On the Home Front



## FRANCE SPEEDS TREND TOWARDS A DICTATORSHIP

(Continued from Page 1)

der the direct control of the state, although of course, private capital preserves its full equity and will profit enormously from the terrific speed-up imposed upon the workers.

This week Daladier is understood to be planning to issue a second set of decrees which will under-score the end of parliamentary "democratic" institutions in France, imposing on capital certain rules and regulations in the common interest of all the bosses, and infinitely more rigid and costly restrictions upon the workers—also in the common interest of all the bosses.

Daladier will move steadily, especially as the international situation worsens, toward suppression of all the remaining freedom of press, organization, and assembly. Strikes will become a crime punishable as treason against the State.

Last year when Daladier began his open attack on the 40 hour

week the protest among the workers were so great that the trade union bureaucracy, with the aid of the socialist and communist party leaders, had to call a foredoomed 24-hour "demonstration" general strike in order to help head off and disperse the rising spirit of revolt among the masses. As was to be expected, Daladier crushed that strike, because the workers' leaders kept it from becoming a generalized struggle against the regime. Since then the erstwhile hero of the French People's Front has steadily increased the iron hand of state control.

## No Opposition

Today the official leaderships of the workers' organizations give no sign of even attempting to resist the installation of the Daladier dictatorship. In Parliament the socialist and Stalinist deputies feebly protested and engaged in futile verbal arguments and fist-cuffs with rightist deputies while outside in the mills and factories the millions of French workers, deceived and befuddled and discouraged by this outcome of the two-year People's Front regime, still await a new leadership that will show them the way to save themselves from falling under the heel of Fascism at home on the pretext of "defense" against Fascist dictatorships abroad.

## Cops Admit Frame-Up Was Ordered Against Pickets

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

NEW YORK—Police testifying in the case of Peter Shopes, Murray Nerewitz, and Abe Dollinger, who were arrested at the Feb. 20 anti-Nazi demonstration admitted to the court that the arrests had been made on the order of superiors, that none of the defendants had been seen committing the crimes with which they had been charged.

Magistrate Kross, before whom the case was heard at the 54th Street Court, dismissed the case after the admission of the police. The police testimony adds another segment to the picture of Feb. 20, when LaGuardia's "finest" were ordered out 1,700 strong to protect the fascists, and to prevent the workers from executing their democratic right to picket.

Defense was provided by the American Fund for Political Prisoners.