

# Let the People Vote on War!

At the Moment War Breaks, Every Person Will Be Forced Under the War Machine's Totalitarian Heel

By JAMES BURNHAM

## Totalitarian War

IN PAST civilizations, war was usually the business of a restricted class or caste of the population. The great majority not only took no part in the fighting, but, in point of fact, their lives were very little affected, even indirectly, by the conduct and outcome of wars and battles.

In feudal times, for example, most of the people were serfs and *vileins*, who lived attached to the land where they were born. They gained their sustenance from locally self-sufficient agriculture and simple handicrafts, with scarcely any trade or commerce. They were required to turn over a certain percentage of their crops to their feudal lord, and usually also to work for a certain number of days each year on jobs assigned to them by their lord or his bailiffs. They were not, however, subject to any kind of military service.

With the exception of one or two of the Crusades, wars were fought exclusively by members of the feudal nobility itself, assisted by their personal servants who acted, however, in non-military capacities. Fighting was considered, you might say, to be a "privilege" and prerogative of the nobility. In these feudal wars, not many persons, even of the nobility, were killed. Most weapons were crude, suited not for mass slaughter but for individual, hand-to-hand combat; and fairly adequate protective devices, such as armor and shields, were worn.

The results of these wars, moreover, did not greatly affect the conditions of life of the great majority. Sometimes a chivalric army would commandeer all the crops of a given district, or even lay it waste by fire and pillage. But, since the armies were small and slow-moving, the roads few and poor and scattered, this did not happen often in any particular place. And the question of who won the war was of hardly any concern to the average serf. His duties and obligations were the same whether Baron X or Count Y was his lord.

Even in the first centuries of modern times, the situation did not greatly change. In fifteenth century Italy, for instance, where the first stage of modern civilization reached its height, the powerful cities usually conducted wars by hiring mercenary armies. Most of the citizenry kept busy at its industrial and commercial tasks, and the major inconvenience of war was only an added drain on the treasury.

## Everybody Involved Now

Today, everything is changed. The world-wide division of labor, the development of a world economy, rapid transportation and communication, more or less universal education, have transformed war from the sport of nobles or the profession of mercenaries into a mass enterprise involving every single member of the population. Directly or indirectly, *everyone* is part of the war machine.

In the first place, in our day, vast numbers of the population are *directly* concerned in the fighting of a war. The war armies are not restricted groups of professionals but mass armies made up of millions of individuals. Most of these millions are drafted or conscripted from the broad ranks of workers and peasants and farmers. In the battles of modern wars, great masses of people are killed or wounded. In the war of 1914-18 at least thirteen million were killed, and about thirty million more were wounded.

But with the growth of new methods of fighting, such as airplane bombing and gas attacks, many persons who are not soldiers are killed and wounded in modern battles. A bomb or a gas shell does its work as quickly on old women or children as on men with uniforms.

In modern war, moreover, death and wounds and disease are not confined to the battlefields. Scarcity of food, disruption of medical service, dislocation of hygienic and sanitary measures, all extend the casualty lists traceable to the war by untold millions.

These factors, however, all of them directly bound up with war in its fighting aspect, by no means complete the picture. The war of 1914-18 taught us that in modern war, the *entire* population and *all* activities must be assembled into the war machine. The army is no longer just the soldiers in uniform; everyone belongs to the army. Every factory, mine and mill and farm go on a war basis. Education and movies and religion and art are harnessed to war propaganda. All organizations, such as political parties and unions and clubs and fraternal societies, either line up for the war or are illegalized. No "individual freedom" is tolerated. Everyone must think and act for the war, or be subject to the most severe penalties.

## Includes All Humanity

In short, war has become, in our day, *totalitarian*. War is no longer a matter for some sections of the population, and some types of activities. War dominates and controls the total life and activities of the totality of the population. The governments and general staffs of every nation recognize this to be the case. That is why the war plans of all governments include the organization of the whole country and the entire population along totalitarian lines. In the case of the United States, as elsewhere, these plans are fully prepared. Many of them are included in the famous document known as the "Industrial Mobilization Plan," the provisions of which are scheduled to go into effect on "M"-Day—the day that war begins.

The problem of modern war is, thus, a problem for every human being. With the destiny of each one of us at stake, it would seem wise and proper for us to try to decide ourselves what to do, and not to turn ourselves blindly over to the hands of others.

(Continued in next issue: "The History of the Ludlow War Referendum")

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167

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# Workers! One Hundred Percent Support to the WPA Strikers!



## Coughlin Delivers Fascist Blast Against Workers Defense Guards

Hits Proposal Made By Milton to Local 66 of I.L.G.W.U.

By JOSEPH HANSEN

In a violent one-hour tirade last Sunday over his nationwide radio hook-up, Father Coughlin attacked the formation of anti-fascist union guards, as if he feared that any minute they might mop up the fascist gangs he is organizing. Father Coughlin's attack was specifically directed against Harry Milton's proposal to Local 66 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (that they organize Anti-Fascist Union Guards. Coughlin's attack on Milton should dispel the last doubt which might linger in anyone's mind that Father Coughlin is deliberately planning to introduce fascism in America.

This attack proves once and for all that Father Coughlin realizes perfectly that anti-fascist union guards are the ONE FORCE which can stop him cold.

Father Coughlin began his bitter and slanderous attack against the formation of anti-fascist union guards by reading over the air a resolution which had been introduced in Local 66 of the I.L.G.W.U. by one of its prominent members, Harry Milton.

Union Guard Resolution The resolution urges the I.L.G.W.U. immediately to organize an anti-fascist union guard in order to defend itself from fascist groups and preserve the democratic rights and civil liberties of labor.

The resolution is now under consideration by the International Executive Board of the I.L.G.W.U. Father Coughlin slandered Harry Milton throughout his entire period on the air, asserting that Milton "marched against the people of Spain"

He's Got the Idea!



HARRY MILTON

under the domination of the Stalinists.

Milton's Actual Record Harry Milton served with the Independent Labour Party contingent of the 29th Division of the Loyalist Army, heroically defending on the battlefields the Spanish workers against the attack of General Franco's fascist legions. Milton was arrested by the G.P.U.-Stalinist secret service—and imprisoned with hundreds of his fellow militiamen, anarchists, socialists, and other militants. Only by the narrowest of margins did he escape death at the hands of Stalin's G.P.U.

In introducing the resolution in Local 66 of the I.L.G.W.U. which was attacked by Coughlin, Milton stated:

"We must not wait until our own union is broken into and smashed by fascist gangs, as they will attempt tomorrow or the day after, but to stop the fascists now, wherever they attempt to deprive any worker or workers' organization of its constitutional rights.

"The Coughlin gangsters have already broken into a

Radio Speech Proves Guards Are Way to Stop Coughlinites

workers' headquarters—the Debs School—and have succeeded in breaking up numerous meetings of labor organizations in the city. Last week they tried to break up an American Labor Party meeting where Michael Quill, president of the Transport Workers Union, was the speaker; fortunately the transport workers were prepared."

A few weeks ago beside the above-mentioned attacks against labor, the Coughlinites knifed a school teacher on 14th Street in New York City and attempted to break into the headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party, knifing an anti-fascist who was on guard.

Father Coughlin fears the formation of anti-fascist labor guards more than any other single force which might attempt to stop him in his plans to thug his way to fascist power in America.

"Only one thing could have broken our movement—if the adversary had understood its principle and from the first day had smashed, with the most extreme brutality, the nucleus of our new movement." (Hitler)

"If the enemy had known how weak we were, it would probably have reduced us to jelly. . . . It would have crushed in blood the very beginning of our work." (Goebbels)

Coughlin understands that the formation of anti-fascist union guards will prevent him from introducing fascism in America!

That is why he opposes the formation of anti-fascist union guards with such a deadly fear!

## The Fight of the Building Trades Workers Is the Fight of American Labor

### President Roosevelt--Strikebreaker

Colonel F. C. Harrington, national administrator of W.P.A., sent the following telegram of instructions to all W.P.A. State Administrators: "Those who do not desire to accept employment under these conditions and who absent themselves from work for five consecutive days or longer, shall have their employment terminated."

Colonel Somervell, New York W.P.A. Administrator, has declared that "next Tuesday" (July 11) is "the date for discharge of those who stay off the job."

Colonel Harrington is an appointee of President Roosevelt.

Colonel Somervell is an appointee of President Roosevelt.

The Roosevelt Government—STRIKE-BREAKER!

NEW YORK

MINNEAPOLIS

### Launch Drive to Get Backing of Unskilled Workers for Strike

NEW YORK CITY, July 10—Intensified drives to organize the largely unorganized unskilled W.P.A. workers in support of the strike movement called by the A.F.L. building trades were launched early Monday morning, notably by the Jamaica and Astoria divisions of the Unemployed and Project Workers Union of New York.

In a leaflet issued in the tens of thousands to the workers on W.P.A. projects, the locals called upon the unskilled workers to organize and strike.

The leaflet makes clear the role of the Roosevelt administration. "The \$10,000-a-year stooges of the bosses in Congress have joined

See page 4 for editorial on the W.P.A. Strike.

with \$100,000-a-year President Roosevelt to destroy the living conditions of the W.P.A. workers, to slash their wages and lengthen their hours.

"The entire labor movement of the United States," the leaflet continues, "is keenly aware that this is nothing but the first step to grind ALL WAGES below SLAVE levels and to throw every W.P.A. worker out into the streets."

Calling upon the unskilled workers to join the picket lines of the skilled workers already out, the leaflet concludes by saying: "Your wages, your hours, your livelihood, the very existence of W.P.A. depend upon the successful outcome of this fight. The army colonels are threatening the strikers with arrests. But American labor will not allow W.P.A. to be turned into a concentration camp."

Flying squadrons of speakers have been dispatched to the projects to win workers to the strikers' side. Large numbers of militants are participating in the mass distribution of leaflets.

AKRON

### Unskilled Workers Plan Joint Action With Construction Strikers

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

AKRON, O., July 10—Fighting desperately to defend its organization and wage scales, the A.F.L. building trades unions in three counties surrounding Akron struck the W.P.A. today.

Announcing that they intend to strike until "Congress passes some emergency legislation to correct the situation," the A.F.L. Tri-County Building and Construction Trades Council, centering in Akron, tied up work on all major W.P.A. projects today.

Major Projects Affected Although only 300 skilled craftsmen are immediately affected by the call, their strike will close the major construction projects. The building trades unions ignored threats of mass firings and of criminal prosecution, with which the new W.P.A. law threatens all who interfere with work on the projects.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party-controlled Workers Alliance worked feverishly to head off any genuine protest from the thousands of unskilled project workers. Under complete Stalinist control, the Alliance openly ordered 800

(Continued on Page 3)

### Local 544 WPA Section Joins Strike as Labor Movement Backs Action

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) MINNEAPOLIS, July 8—The Minneapolis Building Trades Council will open strike headquarters Monday morning at the Central Labor Union hall.

The St. Paul Building Trades Council plans to follow the same procedure as the Minneapolis Council and endorse the strike. A Protest Action Committee, constituted by the St. Paul Workers Benefit Association, the W.P.A. and unemployed organization, and the trade unions, has been established to direct the strike in that city.

The C.I.O. in Minneapolis has officially endorsed the strike.

The Minnesota Workers Alliance this afternoon issued a call for a statewide W.P.A. strike, only to take all the guts out of the strike call by lamely suggesting that "workers could meet on projects every morning, discuss next steps and leave after an hour or two."

In Duluth, W.P.A. strikers have threatened to close up city W.P.A. headquarters if an attempt is made to operate projects.

(Continued on Page 3)

ST. LOUIS

### Thousands in Strike Protest Against Gov't Starvation Bill

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

ST. LOUIS, July 7—Nearly 10,000 W.P.A. workers are now on strike in seven southern Illinois counties, and the A.F.L. Building Trades of St. Louis voted today to call its 500 skilled workers off the W.P.A. projects in St. Louis and St. Louis County beginning Monday morning. The strike movement has reached a peak. Workers on W.P.A. projects throughout this region are eager to fight the reactionary Roosevelt-Woodrum Starvation Law, and are proving it by pouring out on the picket lines. The chief demand of the strikers, so far, is the rescinding of the 130 work week under the new relief law.

The action of the St. Louis Building Trades Council came after the inspiring news that 650 W.P.A. workers had walked out on strike

(Continued on Page 3)

ROCHESTER

### Strike Action Spreads Fast as Men Down Tools Spontaneously

(Special to the Socialist Appeal)

ROCHESTER, N. Y., July 9—When the orders increasing W.P.A. hours to 130 appeared on the projects last Wednesday, spontaneously the workers downed tools and walked out on strike. Before the end of the day, about 2,000 workers were on strike and by Friday the number had increased to 3,000. Flying squadrons, in the majority of cases organized on the spot, made lightning trips to projects in the area, while the A.F.L. Building Trades pulled its members out on strike.

Administrator Fires "Agitators" In spite of these threats, which on Friday were added to by the threat of arrest and no relief,

(Continued on Page 3)