Government

The new law which abolishes the prevailing

wage on W.P.A. construction projects by decree-

ing that all W.P.A. employees must work a full

130 hours monthly for the subsistence relief wage

is part of a long-term, deliberate plan to smash

the wage levels in the construction industries. Like

any other similar plan, directed toward a partic-

ular industry, this means the attempt to decrease

the share of the workers in the total national in-

come, and to increase the relative share drawn

This plan has, also, a political as well as an

economic aim. Its author, once more, is none other

than Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt has been

preparing for the present smashing blow by sev-

eral years of skillful publicity and build-up. He

and his aides have been regularly making

speeches, the latest of his own only a few weeks

back, on the problem of what is wrong with hous-

ing. Beneath layers of rhetoric, the answer always

Right now, the Monopoly Committee is conduct-

ing hearings on the housing and construction in

dustry. Time and again the experts and witnesses

The real political purpose is clear. The New

Deal's housing program, to which has been devoted

huge mountains of ballyhoo, is an utter flop.

Roosevelt needs a scapegoat, and he is trying to

The government itself recognizes that at least

one-third of the nation lives in sub-normal housing.

unfit from the points of view both of hygiene and

comfort. Nevertheless, nothing is done about it.

The scattered and advertised projects of the

Roosevelt administration are not enough to make

up for the additional housing that each year falls

Is there any truth that high hourly wages are

It is true that hourly wages-though not at all

annual wages-are comparatively high in the

building trades, and this naturally enters into the

The cost of financing a \$5,000 house or \$5,000 unit

of an apartment dwelling, figuring in primarily

interest and the other secondary bank charges,

runs anywhere from about \$3,000 to \$7,500. The financing charges, that is, reach up to one and

a half or more times the initial cost of the house

itself! And for this enormous sum, the banks, with

their monopoly of credit, do absolutely nothing in

terms of socially productive work. All of this money

is directly or indirectly sweated out of the labor

that goes into building the house and that of the

Labor receives in wages a mere 20% to 40% of

the initial cost. Who, then, deserves to receive

come back to the theme: wages are too high.

seems to be: wages are too high.

find one in the construction workers.

Why Can't Houses Be Built?

below the level of decency.

cost of housing. But consider:

actually to blame?

By James Burnham

Their

by the bosses.

### SOCIALIST APPEAL

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MAX SHACHTMAN HAROLD ROBERTS FELIX MORROW EMANUEL GARRETT Members: JOSEPH HANSEN Business Manager : SHERMAN STANLEY

#### 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-thirty! \$30-weekly minimum wage-30-hour weekly maximum for all workers on
- 5. Thirty dollar 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.

## The Strike Can and Must Be Won

Every decent worker in the United States stands one hundred percent behind the W.P.A

The building trades unions of the A.F.L. have taken the lead in the fight against the infamous Woodrum Starvation Bill.

The C.I.O. is backing the strike to the hilt. Threats and intimidation haven't stopped the strike. They cannot break it. The power of united, militant, fighting labor is too strong to

That power is not merely the organized ranks this strike. of the building trades workers. It is backed by the enthusiastic solidarity of every worker in this country, skilled or unskilled, organized or unorganized, employed or unemployed.

THAT power numbers MILLIONS. All it needs to win is DETERMINATION.

If the building trades workers lose this fight. it will mean a blow, a sharp setback to all labor. But if they win-and they can and must win -they will set an example that will encourage and enthuse workers everywhere.

. Who's AGAINST the strike?

Mr. Starvation Woodrum, and all the Congressmen and Senators who have been working overtime on only one job: how to cut wages and lengthen the working-day. Of course, the gentlemen in Washington have their differences: some want to cut the heart out of W.P.A., while others want to cut it out entirely. None of them proposes to cut his own wages!

President Roosevelt is against the strike.

Roosevelt's Colonel Harrington is against the strike and is ready to use scabs to break it. Roosevelt's Colonel Somervell is against the strike and is ready to use scabs to break it.

All the capitalist newspapers are against the strike and are begging the workers not to "fight the government.'

But why worry about them?

Woodrum and Roosevelt and Somervell and Harrington and all the newspapers put together can't dig a single ditch.

They can't pour a concrete foundation. They can't nail a stud or a shingle, lay a

brick, plaster a wall, install a plumbing fixture or wipe a joint, or frame a window.

They can't put up as much as a shanty with threats or intimidation.

They can wave the Woodrum Bill or any other Bill from the Atlantic to the Pacific-but not one single building will go up as a result.

All power—above all the power to win their legitimate and very modest demands-lies in the mighty hands of the striking workers.

The only way the strikers can lose is if they let themselves be kidded out of that power!

## The Government---Strikebreaker

At 1 o'clock on Monday, the president of the New York and Long Island Building Trades Council, Thomas A. Murray, declared:

"We are not intimidated in the least by the threat of Colonel Somervell that men who do

not return to work tomorrow will be dismissed. "Our work-stoppage protest against the vicious new W.P.A. law will continue tomorrow and thereafter until the prevailing rate princi- initiated that provision. Lick them both, brother ple, which Congress had steadfastly upheld for strikers!

five years until July 1, is restored"

That's the kind of talk we all want to hear! Any labor leader who continues to stick by his guns will deserve the support of labor.

Who is being threatened by the strike-breaking Roosevelt government and its W.P.A. officials?

Labor! Yes, labor!

When election-time rolls around, they all pose as Friends of Labor. They are all Labor's Benefactors. They are Labor's Protectors!

Labor—organized labor, unorganized labor put the Roosevelt machine into office.

Result? The Roosevelt government has acted like any other employer. W.P.A. has been cut to the bone. Millions have been thrown off relief. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been poured into military and war expenditures.

Roosevelt can't find any money for a decent wage. He finds all he needs to prepare for mass

Now, when workers are striking for a modest wage, Roosevelt and his W.P.A. appointees

"You can't strike against the government! Back to your jobs at slave wages and slave hours! If you don't want to work on our terms -then starve! We'll get scabs to take your

The answer of the workers must be:

# "We Fight On!"

"We won't work under starvation conditions for any boss-government or no government. We fought for years to get a decent living wage, and we won't give it up without a fight. And we have the power to win that fight."

The workers put their trust in Roosevelt, and got the double-cross.

The workers put their trust in Congress, in the New Deal, in "Labor's Friends"-and they got the Woodrum Bill.

They got the double-cross and the Woodrum Bill because the Roosevelt Government IS NOT THEIR GOVERNMENT, just as the Roosevelt Party IS NOT THEIR PARTY!

Let that be a lesson for a long time to come: Labor needs a party of ITS OWN. Labor needs a GOVERNMENT of its own. It can get them only by relying on its own

ORGANIZED STRENGTH. And it can win this strike only by its organ-

ized strength. Republican wage-slashers won't lead or win

Roosevelt W.P.A.-killers and scabs won't lead or win this strike.

# How Win the Strike?

In the first place, the workers must not allow their ranks to be divided.

That means: skilled workers and unskilled workers, UNITE!

The enemies of the strikers can win only if they succeed in pitting the skilled workers against the unskilled, using the one to weaken

This is NOT a fight of the skilled workers alone. Therefore, they must do all in their power to bring the unskilled and unorganized workers into the ranks of union labor.

ONE ENEMY, ONE FIGHT, ONE FRONT!

In the second place, this fight cannot and will not be won by staying at home.

Every struck job must be surrounded by a mass picket line so strong and so tight that all the scabs Harrington and Somervell and all the other W.P.A. directors can scrape out of the mud won't be able to pass through.

A mass picket line of all W.P.A. workers, .\.F.L., C.I.O., unemployed organizations-the skilled and the unskilled, organized and unorganized.

Unity of ALL the workers will win the

Militancy will win the strike!

Raise the wage levels of the unskilled! Restore the prevailing rate for all workers! Stick it out till the Woodrum Starvation Bill

## Roosevelt's Silence

The national W.P.A. relief administrator. Col. F. C. Harrington, is an appointee of President Roosevelt's. He has never been known to enunciate an important policy without the president's direct approval.

On May 23 the colonel appeared before the House Appropriations Committee and declared: "It is my recommendation that persons employed on projects of the W.P.A. be required to work 130 hours per month."

He said that with Roosevelt's approval. While Harrington mouthes all kinds of threats against the W.P.A. strikers, the president, by his silence, approves these attempts to intimidate the strikers.

This strike is, therefore, not only directed against Congress, which adopted the 130 hour provision as law, but against Roosevelt who

# Twin City W.P.A. Workers Stage Strike Against Starvation Bill

By CARL O'SHEA

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) MINNEAPOLIS, July 6-A spontaneous walkout of W.P.A. workers, estimated by the boss press to embrace 12,500, developed in Minneapolis and St. Paul Wednesday morning after the Fourth of July holiday. The

The strike began at 8 a. m. on the big W.P.A. project at the State Fair grounds. When the men reported for work they found posted a notice of the new wage rates. Skilled workers in the Twin Cities received a cut in hourly wages from \$1.25 to \$.71, brought about by the lengthening in hours from 74½ to 130. Intermediate workers had their hours lengthened from 80 to 130. The hours of unskilled labor were boosted from 88 to 130, all with corresponding hourly wage slashes.

the State Fair grounds project, unions, refused to start work, as did a large number of unskilled workers. A series of Paul said the same thing. job meetings were held imme- RELIEF BOSSES' THREATS works program. diately, with the result that both skilled and and unskilled roving bands of strikers.

Big Cities Solid By the end of the day, 7,500

## California W.A.A. Exceeds Itself In Gross Stupidity

(Special to the Socialist Appeal) SAN FRANSISCO-It's heads or tails sometimes whether the plain stupidity of Workers' Alliance chiefs is not greater than the deliberate duplicity which leads them to divert the anger of the W.A. rank and file from expressing itself militantly against Roosevelt's slash relief program.

trolled Workers Alliance ordered 30 pickets down to 433 Calfornia Street in San Francisco to picket the United States Chamber of Commerce.

address with placards and began picketing the Chamber of Commerce, shouting appropriate slogans against this arch. ham University, neighborhood reactionary organization, which center of Coughlin's dupes in the Stalinists hold accountable the Bronx. The scattered and the Wicks Bill which aims to for the relief slashes instead of the real culprit, President Roosevelt

erally given off by a den of the avenue Chamber of Commerce. He investigated . . . discovered—that three months ago.

down immediately. The main feature of the walk-

out so far is its unorganized no one has a program. General the movement develops into a able.

fired from WPA to their jobs. and pass a relief bill that will give jobs to all unemployed at union wages, will be determined by the decisions of the Building Trades Council and its sister bodies elsewhere.

law-and-order specialists in St. down on its starvation program

As if to pour salt in the To top it off, State W.P.A.

men in Minneapolis were out administrator Linus Glotzbach and 5,000 in St. Paul. In Duluth announced that "no time lost approximately the same result from voluntary separation will tionally to give leadership to obtained. That is, in the large be considered as allowable this spontaneous strike movetowns where the union move- makeup time." In other words, ment, ment was entrenched, all no strikers will be paid for the other than building trades could W.P.A. work was closed down. time they are off the projects. Thursday morning a number He gave a final dig by breaking their demands. Thanks to the of workers went out to their the news that another W.P.A. Stalinized Workers Alliance, no projects but refused to work, cut of 3,780 will be made July such national organization servand orders hastily came from 10 in Minnesota, in line with ing the interests of the unem-Roosevelt's relief bill.

All day Wednesday delega-

the W.P.A.office that if any tions from the projects were trouble started, any projects visiting Local 544's Federal still operating were to close Workers Section office for advice and directives, or were

phoning in asking for speakers. Wednesday evening the F.W.S. character. Everyone is boiling stewards met and voted to send mad at the W.P.A. slash, but a delegation to the Thursday meeting of the Building Trades Drivers Local 544's Federal Council, where they will press Workers Section, at the invita- for a program of demands upon strike was started by the skilled tion of the building trades Congress to scrap the relief workers, in revolt against unions, will send several dele- siave bill and pass a W.P.A. the Roosevelt-Woodrum relief gates to this afternoon's meet- bill that will restore the W.P.A. bill which has cut wage rates ing of the Twin Cities Building cuts, restore the prevailing Trades Council. Whether the wage clause, and increase the walkout collapses, or whether number of W.P.A. jobs avail-

mass strike demanding that The Federal Workers Section Congress reconsider its dam- has issued a call for a mass nable relief bill, restore the meeting to be held Friday prevailing wage, return those morning, 10 o'clock, in the Drivers Hall.

MOTOR CARAVAN ACTS Thursday morning a cavalcade of 150 cars filled with W.P.A. strikers, mostly skilled workers, toured the cities, seeing that all projects remained Police Chief Forestal of closed. The temper of the work-Minneapolis announced Thurs- ers is very militant. Given any day that he would furnish police sort of a positive program by The 160 skilled workers at protection if it were requested, the union movement, this strike and Sheriff John Wall of Henne- will spread rapidly to a nationmembers of the building trades pin County said his policy will wide protest movement that be "to protect the public." The will command Congress to back

For years the Federal Workwounds of the WPA workers, ers Section has preached to the workers walked off the job. relief heads in both Minne-unions of skilled workers that Strike sentiment spread rapidly apolis and St. Paul announced they must join forces and give to other W.P.A. projects in the that no relief would be granted leadership to the unemployed. Twin Cities, carried along by W.P.A. strikers until at least The lesson is now being driven two weeks after the applicants home with a jolt that will awareceived their last pay check, ke even the most smug union bureaucrat.

and put through a real public

If an honest-to-God unemployed movement existed nathe W.P.A. workers really smash through with ployed exists.

(Later story on page 1)

# Defy Coughlin Fascists at **Bronx Outdoor Meeting**

takable defiance against the Coughlin fascists last Friday Coughlinites for the evening. night at Fordham Road and Valentine Ave. when Michael plight of the American workers Quill, President of the Trans-The other day the head chair- port Workers Union, addressed resist all W.P.A. cuts by the warmers of the Stalinist-con- a huge outdoor street meeting government, but would go to sponsored by the American bat for additional appropria-

Labor Party. "Down with Coughlin's Chrisexhorted his enthusiastic listeners in the very shadow of Fordthat escaped from a few rum-It was only after several bums at the meeting was like a hours that one of the more alert pindrop in the yell that folrank and filers began to detect lowed from the crowd whose an odor stronger than that gen- size gummed all traffic on the

Union Guards Present

"We have a way of taking ble." Quill told the fascists. An meeting.

NEW YORK - Twenty - five | crganized group of 200 Transhundred workers roared unmis- port Worker Union militants were standing guard at the meeting. That finished the

and remarked that the Transport Workers would not only tions. The American Labor Party, he promised, intends to press forward for better houstian Front, Down with All ing, collective bargaining guar-The pickets assembled at the Forms of Vigilantism," Quill antees, and the extension of civil liberties throughout the

Santos, International Board member of the Transport Workers Union, attacked uncertain murmur of protest destroy union status of all sub-Before the meeting closed

Quill assured the huge crowd that peaceful workers' meetings would be held on the same corner here in the future, as well as in the South Bronx, Coughlin stronghold.

The Bronx branch of the Sothe Chamber of Commerce had care of you provocateurs and cialist Workers Party sold 75 moved away from that address | rooligans if you insist on trou- anti-Coughlin pamphlets at the

But the financing charges are only a small part of the story. The profits of the great building materials corporations (U. S. Gypsum, Johns-Man-Quill dwelt at length on the ville, American Radiator, etc.) have continued in the millions virtually all through the crisis. Inflated land prices line the pockets of real estate operators and speculators. In every building operation, contractors and sub-contractors take their big slice of profits. An ever greater percentage of real estate taxes, reflected in the cost of housing and rent, go to interest payment on bonds held by the big banks and the Sixty Families and to other uses of no conceivable benefit to the people.

person who inhabits it.

major blame in this comparison?

In a true analysis, made in the light of social functions performed, labor, which gets no profit and asks no interest, is the least burdensome item in the costs of housing.

The truth is that not labor but a decadent capitalism stands irremediably blocking the road to an adequate, or even one-tenth adequate, housing program. Among all the fakes of the dead New Deal, none has been more hopeless or more hypocritical than its housing plans.

## Will Roosevelt Succeed?

The new regulation, which went into effect July 1st, amounts in effect to a cut of from one-third to two-thirds in the hourly wage rate. As I write this column, the workers concerned are replying to Roosevelt's move in their own proper language: a militant and rapidly spreading strike. All the machinery of Roosevelt's relief administration is being brought into line to smash the strike.

Roosevelt, however, counts on a special factor to aid him. The hourly rates for these skilled workers have been in the past far higher than those for the other W.P.A. workers. Roosevelt thinks that he can exploit this as an apparent "injustice," and drive a wedge between the two sections of W.P.A. workers.

There is an injustice, it is true. But the injustice lies not in the fact that the construction workers have a high rate—it is after all low enough—but in the miserable, starvation rate at which the bulk of the W.P.A. workers are paid. This has been, unfortunately, too often forgotten by the construction workers who have been too narrowly concerned with their own craft interests. A lasting victory in the present battle needs the fused strength of all of the relief workers. And this requires broadening the fight to include the burning demands for the lifting of the wage rate of the lower W.P.A. brackets.

If the construction workers inscribe on their own banner the demand for Thirty-Thirty - \$30 minimum weekly wage, 30-hours maximum weekly hours-for all workers, they will find allies in the millions to back them in their own defense of the living standards of the American working

Says Sir Roger Keyes, retired admiral of the British navy: "The Tientsin events, with support being given to Japan by Germany and Italy, really amount to a declaration of war against Britain, and is a challenge that must be met," that is, by workers torn from their wives and children, and a rifle thrust in their hands with the order to shoot their foreign brother-workers.

# Watch Out for Stalinist Scabbing

The Daily Worker pretends to be behind the W.P.A. strike.

The Minneapolis Journal of July 6 reports: 'The (welfare) board heard Harry Mayville and Jack Lieberman of the Workers Alliance plead that the unskilled workers were 'innocently thrown out of work' by the strike of skilled tradesmen.

Harry Mayville and Jack Lieberman are prominent representatives of the Communist Party-the Stalinists

The St. Paul Pioneer Press of July 6 reports: "Shortly after 6 p.m. Wednesday. Chester Watson of St. Paul, state president of the Workers Alliance, issued a typewritten statement in which he said his organization is not responsible for any strike.

"The Minnesota Workers Alliance has not called a strike. We are advising our members that whenever a project is struck by another union that your members should leave the project in a peaceful manner and send a delegation to the district W.P.A. office demanding that they be transferred to another job and that they be permitted to make up time

Chester Watson is a well-known St. Paul Stalinist-a C.P. official.

The New York Times of July 7 reports: "The strike movement made no headway

among white-collar and professional workers yesterday. William S. Levner, president of the W.P.A. Teachers Union, said the executive board of his union had not acted on the new schedule of working hours, but that he did not believe a stoppage would be authorized. 'Very definitely we will not do anything that will jeopardize or curtail the services of the educational projects to the people of

New York,' Mr. Levner said.' William Levner is the well-known Communist Party boss of the Stalinist-controlled

W.P.A. Teachers Union. A leaflet issued to "All W.P.A. Workers" by the Workers Alliance of New York says: "We are preparing a one-day general protest stoppage for all W.P.A. workers in the State of New York."

The "Workers Alliance" of New York is controlled by the Communist Party. It is "'preparing" a "one-day general stoppage" after which its members are supposed to go back to work . . . and to scab.

Watch out for Stalinist scabbing! The Communist Party leaders are Roosevelt bootlickers. They don't want any "strikes against the government." They prefer starvation wages to fighting. That's why, in their usual underhanded way, they are trying to break

the solidarity of the workers. Watch out for Stalinist scabbing!