

Take the War-Making Power Away from Congress

Let the People Decide!, Says Minnesota Labor

DULUTH, Minn.—The largest convention in the 57-year history of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor voted unanimously Wednesday for a resolution calling upon Congress to prepare immediately a Constitutional amendment providing that any proposal for the declaration of war against any nation shall be submitted to a direct referendum vote of the people of the United States. Of the many anti-war resolutions coming before the convention, the resolution for a popular referendum on war was the one that appealed to the 883 delegates as the most practical and realistic. The referendum resolution was introduced by a group of Twin City trade unionists.

Full Support to WPA Strikers

All in all, the 57th annual convention of the Minnesota Federation was one of the most progressive in its history. When the conservatives in control of the legislative committee made a report calling upon the convention only to move for amendments to the hated Stassen Labor Law, Gene Larson of the Minneapolis Milk Drivers Union made a minority report demanding the Federation work for outright repeal of the atrocious Stassen labor legislation. Larson's report provoked a veritable storm of approval which swept over the right-wingers, and the convention voted by a large majority to work to wipe the Stassen law off the books.

The Duluth convention also voted full support to the hounded Minneapolis WPA strikers and approved the work of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union's WPA Defense Committee. The convention condemned the new relief bill and state secretary George Lawson as well as many other spokesmen placed the blame for the nationwide relief cut and the abolition of the union wage scale directly upon President Roosevelt.

Ten Billion Dollar Housing Program

Other resolutions passed called for a 10-billion Dollar federal housing and public works program; the 30-hour week in private industry; protested the 25 percent cut in food budgets by the Minneapolis Welfare Board, etc.

The convention took a long backward step, however, when it adopted a constitutional amendment dropping the policy of endorsing political candidates. The debate on this issue raged all Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning.

Robert Olson of Duluth and George Lawson of St. Paul were re-elected president and secretary, respectively, of the federation.

Behind the Lines

By GEORGE STERN

What a macabre joke it is to see Stalin's newspaper Pravda suddenly wax pathetic over the plight of the Ukrainian and White Russian minorities in Poland!

One of the characteristic marks of the degeneration of the Soviet regime under Stalin has been the destruction of the free rights won by Russia's many nationalities as a result of the October revolution. One after another the governments of the autonomous Soviet republics from one end of the union to the other were converted in the course of the last ten years into instruments of Stalin's bureaucratic clique. More recently native officials of these republics were mowed down by Stalin's purge in scores and in hundreds.

Consequently we are not to seek in Stalin's sudden, touching concern for the Polish Ukrainians and White Russians for anything remotely resembling the old Bolshevik policy of staunch support for the doctrine and practice of the self-determination of peoples. The Pravda editorial was not an echo of Lenin but of Goebbels. The aim of the policy it shrouds is not the liberation of the oppressed peoples of Poland but their subjection and the protection of the power and pelf of Stalin's ruling oligarchy. It is not a question of freeing the

Ukrainians and White Russians but of determining whether their next yoke will be that of Hitler or that of Stalin.

Whether this is to be carried out by the creation of so-called "independent" buffer states or by outright annexation of territory will soon be known. However, any partition decided upon by Hitler and Stalin in the present circumstances is bound to be of a most transient and unstable character.

On both sides there is a tacit recognition of the fragility of the new axis and on both sides there is the fear—quite justified—that the peoples they are pushing around in eastern Europe will before long join with the masses of Germany and Russia in freeing themselves from the rulers who would strangle them.

Pravda attributed the speedy crushing of Poland to its internal instability, to the repression of the huge minorities that kept the country divided and destroyed that national cohesion so vital in a war. Behind the lines of the Pravda editorial, deep in the shadows of the Kremlin, is the realization that Russia's plight is even worse in this respect. It is not merely the structure of nationalities that make up the Soviet Union but the whole regime and the army itself that have been rent

(Continued on Page 3)

Three-Times-a-Week Socialist Appeal

Official Organ of the Socialist Workers Party, Section of the Fourth International

VOL. III, No. 71

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1939

187

3c a Copy

LET THE PEOPLE VOTE ON WAR

ROOSEVELT MOVES FOR WAR UNDER COVER OF NEUTRALITY

Congress Will Approve Actions Placing U. S. In War Camp of Allies

After a series of rapid-fire actions to line up the United States in support of Anglo-French imperialism, President Roosevelt is now confident of a safe majority for his war program at the special session of Congress, called for September 21.

His immediate objective is the lifting of the arms embargo so that England and France can purchase munitions and airplanes in this country. For this purpose he has already clearly placed the United States in the camp of the Allies by pledging military defense of Canada in case it is attacked. He has sought to create a patriotic hysteria by declaring a "limited state of national emergency," thus making the people believe that there is no real alternative but America's entrance into the war.

Is the Partitioning Of Poland Part of Hitler-Stalin Pact?

AN EDITORIAL

What secret agreement for the partitioning of Poland was arrived at when the Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed?

The answer is not yet available to the public, since secret diplomacy is just as much a part of Stalin's foreign politics as it is of Hitler's. But the developments of the last few days indicate that there is far more likelihood that such an agreement was made in Moscow than might be concluded by the average reader of the Stalinist press.

The official Kremlin press has suddenly launched a frontal attack upon the imperialist ruling class of Poland and its oppressive rule over the national minorities in the Polish Empire. Up to a few days ago, even a hint to the effect that the Polish Colonels and landowners were not a model of democracy, was treated by the same Stalinist press as a base Trotskyist slander. Now the Moscow Pravda has rediscovered Polish imperialism and oppression and its columns are full of reports of "Polish attacks on the Soviet frontier" and "uprisings of the Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-White Russian masses" against the Polish overlords.

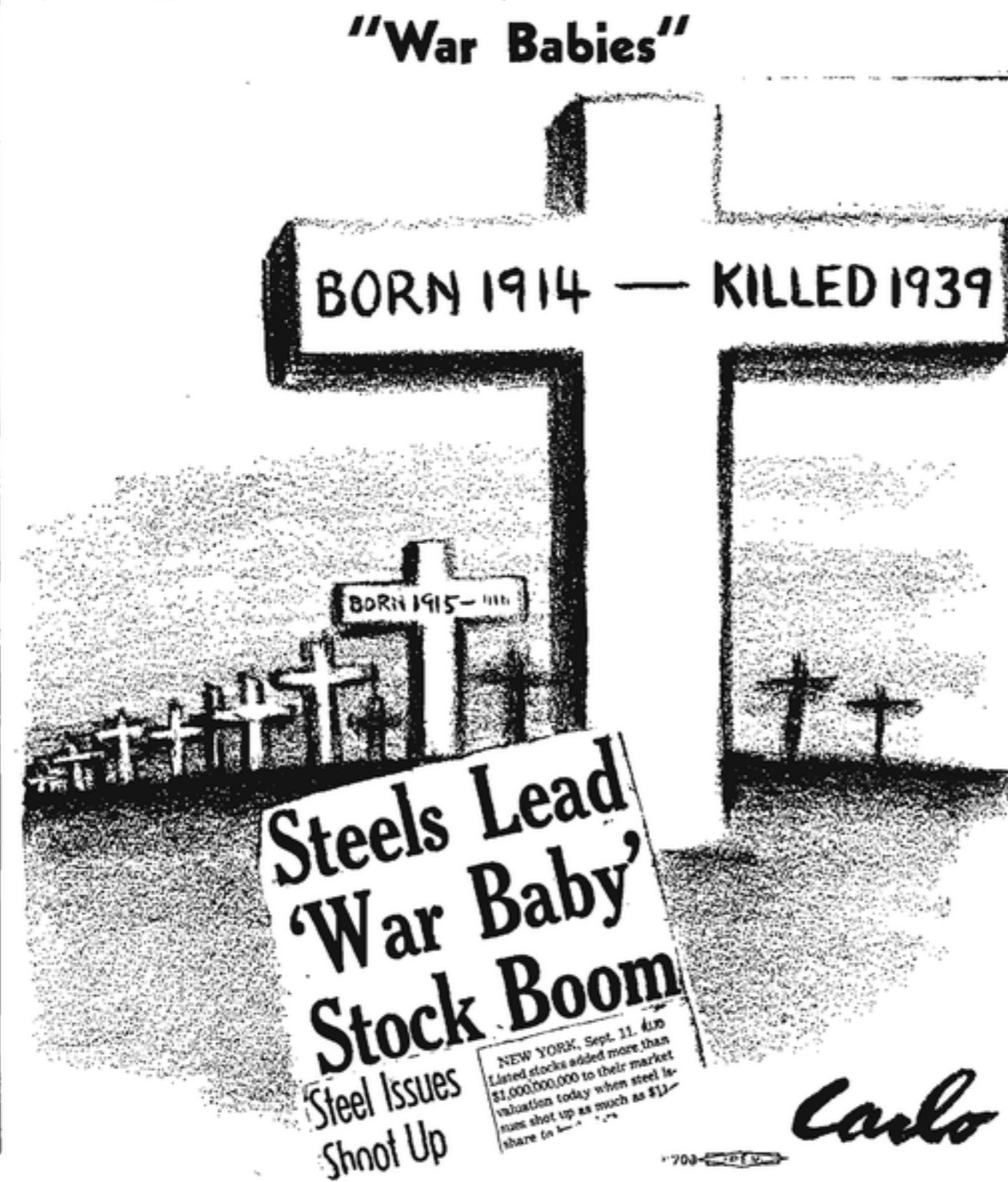
Accompanying this agitation is a tremendous mobilization of Soviet troops along the Polish frontier.

Why?

Is Stalin preparing to protect the frontiers of the Soviet Union from the rapidly eastward marching armies of his recently-found ally, Hitler? Has he come to realize that Hitler has designs upon Soviet Ukraine and, further east, the Urals?

Highly doubtful. That Hitler would like to annex the Ukraine and the Urals has not been a secret for years, and anyone who thinks he gave up his ambition for these territories just because he signed a pact with Stalin, is far more gullible than any human being should be. At the same time, however, Hitler would be a greater fool than his worst enemies give him credit for being if he contemplated making an attack upon the Soviet Union right now. A preliminary to such an attack would be an agreement, a settlement of accounts, with France and England on the western

(Continued on Page 3)



Twenty-five Minneapolis WPA Prisoners Are Released on Bail

SEE SWINDLE IN NEW YORK SUBWAY SALE

Of all the swindles from which the people of New York City have suffered, one of the most scandalous is that now being perpetrated by the LaGuardia administration. For subways that are already owned by the city, LaGuardia has agreed to pay Wall Street a minimum of \$326,000,000!

(Continued on Page 3)

Roosevelt Stooges Now Arresting Women—Labor Unions Map Plans for Fighting Indictments at Sept. 25 Trial

MINNEAPOLIS—Shortly after noon on Wednesday, September 13, 25 of the jailed Minneapolis WPA strikers were released on bail posted for them by the WPA Defense Committee of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union. The bail was raised chiefly through the generosity of the Minneapolis Labor Temple Association which, at a stockholders meeting last Friday night, voted to post the association's property as surety for bail bonds for the victimized WPA workers.

Shortly after noon, the prisoners were marched from the jail to the federal court building where individual bail was posted for each. All were instructed to appear back in court September 26 when the strike trial is scheduled to begin. All were jubilant upon their release, and sent a collective letter of thanks to the Labor Temple Association and the WPA Defense Committee which has worked so vigorously for their

(Continued on Page 3)

According to a United Press dispatch of Sept. 14, "The White House said today that submarine activities and the sinking of the Athenia were factors considered by President Roosevelt in deciding to call for a special session of Congress."

War Notice

Secretary of State Hull has notified the belligerent powers that the government "reserves all rights of the United States and its nationals under international law and will adopt such measures as may seem most practical and prudent when those rights are violated by any of the belligerents."

In these declarations, as in the sharp protest of Anthony Drexel Biddle, American Ambassador to Poland, against German bombing, it is clear that Roosevelt is determined to drive this country into war against Germany. Yet the President is demanding the lifting of the arms embargo as a step for "genuine neutrality."

War Follows Arms

As Senator Borah, leader of the isolationist forces in Congress stated in his speech last Thursday:

"To those who are advocating repeal, I submit this question: Is it not your main purpose in securing repeal to enable us to furnish arms, munitions and implements of war in one group of nations and to deny them to another group of nations, which groups are now in mortal combat?"

"Is not this laying the foundation for intervention—in fact, is it not intervention—in the present European war? Is it not your purpose to take sides through the authority which will be available when the embargo law is repealed?"

What Price Isolationism? While Borah and his colleagues are against lifting the arms embargo—and in this they voice the opinions of the workers and farmers—they are

(Continued on Page 2)

MASS MEETING Tuesday, Sept. 19, 8:30 p. m.

EUROPE IN FLAMES

Eyewitness Report of War-Torn Europe

Albert Goldman, Just Returned from Europe, Will Speak

Irving Plaza, Irving Place at 15th St.

Auspices: Local New York, Socialist Workers Party, Fourth International. 116 University Place, N.Y.C. Admission 25c