

SOCIALIST APPEAL

Vcl. III, No. 84 Friday, November 3, 1939

Published Twice-Weekly by the
SOCIALIST APPEAL PUBLISHING ASSN.
at 116 University Place, New York, N. Y.
Telephone: ALgonquin 4-5447

Subscriptions: \$2.00 per year; \$1.00 for six months. Foreign: \$3.00 per year, \$1.50 for six months. Single copies 2 cents per copy in the United States; 3 cents per copy in all foreign countries. Single copies 3 cents.
Bronx and Manhattan subscriptions are \$1.50 for six months; \$3.00 for one year.
*Reentered as second class matter September 29, 1938, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879.

Editor: MAX SHACHTMAN
Associate Editor: EMANUEL GARRETT
FELIX MORROW
General Manager: MARTIN ABERN
Assistant 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 all jobs.
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.
12. Full social, political and economic equality for the Negro people.

Belated Indignation

The Chamberlain government has just issued an official White Paper which, based on pre-war reports of British diplomats in Germany on conditions in German concentration camps, accuses the Nazis of "inventing tortures almost beyond imagination."

Interesting, eh? The Nazi regime has been in power for more than six and a half years. From the day it took command of the country, its persecutions, arrests, imprisonments, assassinations, frame-ups, and in general its barbaric hounding of workers, revolutionists and Jews, have not only been common knowledge but aroused the almost universal indignation of the people of the world.

But never of the British Imperial Government! Never! At no time did it even take official cognizance of Nazi horrors. The distinguished democrats who rule the Empire had not a single word of comment, much less of criticism, to make concerning the Nazi regime and all it stood for. On the contrary, their whole policy was aimed to coming to a pleasant and amicable agreement with Hitler on the basis of having him direct his expansionist program to the East—that is, towards reducing the Soviet Union to an imperialist colony.

For a series of reasons, the British scheme could not be realized. Again, for a series of reasons, Stalin made the alliance with Hitler that Chamberlain wanted to make. To prevent German imperialist expansion at the cost of British imperialist power, the present war was declared. But, you see; it was impossible to put the real reasons for the war so bluntly and crudely. How could you get the masses to swallow the war (and be swallowed by it) if you told them that they were fighting so that the Indian and African and Arabian and Irish masses might continue to be exploited by the noble British ruling class? That's why Mr. Chamberlain suddenly discovered, with a great shock to his sense of equity, that Hitler is not acting like a real British gentleman towards those he puts in concentration camps.

Of course, the "discovery" is so brazenly hypocritical that even the shameless British lords feel they must make some apology and explanation for their belated indignation. As the New York Times correspondent so delicately puts it: "Declaring that even after the war broke out Britain was reluctant to take action 'which might have the effect of inspiring hatred,' the government said it was forced to disclose the facts so that the public might know that under the present German regime 'the treatment accorded is reminiscent not of Macedonia but of the darkest ages in the history of man.'"

This is most touching and we do not want to deny that we are deeply moved. But we would have a little more faith in the moral indignation of Chamberlain and Co. than we now have (and we now have absolutely none) if the same White Paper, or a supplement to it, contained an account of the "treatment accorded" those who suffer under the lash of British imperialism—the Irish nationalists in Belfast, the workers and peasants in India, the slaves of Britain's colonies in South Africa.

Until that appears, workers would be well-advised to treat Mr. Chamberlain's shocked indignation with the contempt which his war-mongering hypocrisy deserves.

Let's Fight Russia!

Washington is all het up about the way the Soviet Union disposed of the American steamer, City of Flint. Ambassador Steinhardt has the pip, the State Department is verging on apoplexy, and every upstanding patriotic editor is foaming at the mouth.

Now we think they're all right as far as they go, only they don't go far enough. Why confine ourselves so cravenly to editorial diatribes? Why confine ourselves to more or less polite diplomatic notes? Why not declare war upon the Soviet Union, send some of our bully-boy Marines or Army lads to Siberia or Murmansk, and clean up the damned Roosians once and for all—teach 'em a lesson?

We've done that before—in Haiti, in San Domingo, in Puerto Rico, in Nicaragua, in Mexico and elsewhere. If we can't civilize the Roosians with the outdated Krag, as we did the Filipinos, we can do it with the modern Army automatic rifle. Our Honor is involved, by the eternal! And so is our contraband-carrying Fiat, with the fine wages it pays its seamen and the splendid food and conditions it gives them.

And if we lick the Roosians, why, at the same time we can starve the country to bits, take over its raw materials and put its labor to work for the greater glory (plus 6% minimum) of American business.

So let's cut out this diplomatic piddling around and give them a war—with both barrels.

Thirty-Thirty

In our last issue, we published an excellent circular issued by Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, calling for the six-hour day, thirty-hour week in industry. In previous issues we have described the energetic campaign which Local 3 is conducting on behalf of this progressive demand.

Inadvertently, we placed an inaccurate heading on the latest story: "Thirty dollars-thirty hours is slogan of electrical workers manifesto petition." Local 3 is campaigning only on the thirty-hour week. Our copy-writer was thinking of our slogan, No. 4 of our slogans carried below the masthead:

"Thirty-thirty! \$30 weekly minimum wage—30-hour weekly maximum for all workers on all jobs."

We demand a thirty dollar minimum wage, as well as a thirty-hour maximum week because we want not only jobs, but a decent living for every worker. We are sure that Local 3 also stands for that; but its slogan, issued by a union which is preoccupied primarily by the situation in the building trades where the hourly rate is relatively high, only deals with the question of hours.

We believe that the general slogan of American labor in favor of the six-hour day, five-day week, will have the broadest support if that slogan has added to it the demand for a weekly thirty-dollar minimum. Without that addition, it is impossible to secure the support of the lowest-paid workers—and that means the support of most of America's workers.

Czech "Trotskyism"

A dispatch from Prague to the New York Times, Oct. 28, states:

"Labor agitation in Prague, particularly in regard to the threat of a strike, has been branded officially as the work of 'Trotskyite Communists.'"

We are proud to be denounced by the Nazi overlords of Czechoslovakia as the "agitators" responsible for the struggle of the masses of Prague against Nazism. In the interests of accuracy, however, we must record the fact that our Czechoslovakian section is comparatively small, and that the present workers' actions in Prague are probably more spontaneous than systematically organized.

But what is significant is that everywhere reaction denounces as "Trotskyist" the first stirrings of revolt. Coughlin likewise last week devoted his weekly to warning that the Fourth International is the real menace while the Third International "is crumbling into dust." Everywhere reaction understands that spontaneous and unorganized struggles of the masses become a danger to the capitalist system only when the masses become linked to a leadership which is firmly founded on a system of revolutionary theory and practice. And reaction understands, too, that that leadership, that system of revolutionary theory and practice, in this epoch, is embodied in the Fourth International.

When the small gear of the revolutionary party is meshed into the great gear of the masses—that is the successful socialist revolution. Reaction fears that moment, and incessantly seeks, by preventive measures, to forestall that moment. That is the meaning of the Nazi denunciation of the "Trotskyists" in Prague.

British Workers, Upon Whom War's Misery Has Fallen, Are Rallying To the Defense of their Interests

By BRITANNICUS

One most significant difference—which we have often noted in these columns—between the present world war and the last is that the masses have entered it without enthusiasm, without illusions of "glory" and "honor," without the jingoistic spirit which marked the opening phases of the war in 1914.

According to all reports, the workers both in the armed forces and in civil life are silent, sullen and grim—not, as the bourgeois apologists have it, with determination, but rather with disillusionment.

The betrayal of the "socialist," "communist," and trade union leaders is complete, as it was in 1914; but unlike 1914 when, right up to the outbreak of hostilities, the social-democratic leaders made demagogic speeches against the war, their betrayal this time has not caused such confusion and disorientation in the ranks of the workers, for the very reason that the leaders openly deserted to the bourgeoisie not on the outbreak of war but months and years before.

MASS PAY FOR THE WAR

Two things have brought home the meaning of the present war to the working class in the most brutal manner: its cost and the widespread unemployment to which it has immediately led. According to the Economist the war is already costing the British Government \$7 million (\$35 million) a day—the highest figure to which the cost of the last war rose in 1918. And the Economist calculates that next year the war will cost Britain a minimum of \$4,200 million (\$21 billion), or \$56 million a day. This is 60 percent of the total estimated national income. In a previous article we reported what this means in the drastic curtailment of the social services, housing and general standard of living of the working class.

The British Government is doing its best to conceal the full extent of unemployment caused by the war. The Ministry of Labour Gazette no longer publishes its statistics for employment but merely a round figure of those unemployed. Thus it is impossible to see how far general employment has decreased and the residue been absorbed into the armed forces. The figures it does publish, however, reveal that during the first week of the war nearly 100,000 workers were thrown out of work, excluding those who were recruited for the army. The Economist asserts that since September 11 (the last date for which the Ministry of Labour has published statistics) unemployment has greatly increased. The largest proportion of unem-

ployment has occurred in the consumption industries and retail distributive trades, and has naturally affected the London district, where these trades are centered, to a greater extent than any other. The Economist sees no reason to believe that any significant proportion of these unemployed workers can be reabsorbed either into industry or into the army.

WORKERS RALLY TO OWN DEFENSE

These facts, together with the rapidly rising cost of living and the obvious and shameful betrayal of their own leaders, have brought home to the advanced workers that they must take the defense of their interests into their own hands. And they have not been slow to do so. Early in September the railway companies threatened a drastic reduction in wages, amounting in some cases to as much as \$5 a week. Instantly the workers responded with a determined threat to strike; the railway companies had to give way, since the transport of troops and war materials could not be interfered with. (New Leader, Sept. 15)

In October the Economist reports that the seamen's unions demanded compensation for war risk; the shipyard workers demanded an increase of 2/- a week and 4 percent for piece work; the steel-workers an increase of 3/3 a week; and the coal-miners an increase of 1/ a day for adults and 6 pence for youths under 18. In all these cases the demands of the workers, backed by militant determination not to take no for an answer on the part of the rank and file, were granted by the companies involved.

In direct reply to the rising cost of living the cotton operatives demanded a twelve and a half percent increase in pay and the companies were unable to refuse because of the impossibility of holding up production at this time. Altogether something like 2 million workers have demanded and received wage increases. The Executive Council of the Transport and General Workers' Union, although headed by that professional strike-breaker and lackey of the bourgeoisie, Ernest Bevin, was forced by the pressure of its rank and file to issue a strongly worded protest to the Government on the rising cost of living. In particular, the resolution states: "The Council takes note of the fact that, in every price the Government has fixed to date, the cost of the commodity has been increased to the apparent advantage of the trader, and it appears to the Council as if a deliberate policy is being carried out to lower the real value of wages." It warns the Government

that such a policy will be met by determined action on the part of the workers, and calls upon the Labour Party to bring pressure to bear on the Government. (London Times, Sept. 27).

IMPOSING CONDITIONS OF SERFDOM

In a former article we mentioned the iniquitous Control of Employment Act which introduces a species of serfdom by prohibiting the offering or accepting of jobs under penalties up to \$500 and \$5 for each day on which an employee works. George Hicks, a Labour M.P. who supported the Bill, described it as follows: "The object of the Bill is to prevent poaching . . . to prevent the general movement of labour . . . and to prevent enticement by higher wages." Another Labour M.P., who abstained from voting on the Bill, remarked: "The theory of the Bill is to stop a workman from leaving one place and going to another in order that his earnings might be increased." Such legislation has long been on the statute-books of the Totalitarian States; since September 15 it has been on the statute-book of "democratic" Britain. Although the Executive Committee of the Labour Party officially supported the Bill, it could only get 44 of its 167 members to vote for it, the rest abstained. The I.L.P. alone voted against the Bill. (New Leader, Sept. 22.)

The workers, however, have not abstained from showing their determined opposition to this serfdom Act. The Glasgow plumbers union took the lead against it by immediately setting up a strong Shop Stewards Committee to fight the provisions of the Act. Shop Stewards Committees are already springing up in many trades and factories, and there is no doubt whatever that the movement will spread rapidly. This too is an advance over the last war when the Shop Stewards movement did not gain strength or importance until 1917.

BALK AT "SACRED UNION" WITH BOSS

It is clear from these examples and others that might be cited that the British workers are not prepared to make a "sacred union" with the bourgeoisie at the price of their wages and standard of living. Economic opposition to the effects of the war has already begun on a determined scale, and it is certain to spread and gain strength as these effects are increasingly felt.

But what of political opposition to the war? In our next article we shall deal with the Clarkmanby-election—the first contested by-election of the war—and with the various political organizations which are carrying on a struggle against the war.

California SWP Stand on "Ham and Eggs" Plan

The "Ham and Eggs" Plan defeated in the last California election by the small margin of 200,000 votes in a total vote of several million is again before the voters of California. In the statement which we publish below, the Los Angeles Section Committee of the Socialist Workers Party advises the voters to vote YES on the "Ham and Eggs" Plan (Amendment 1) while severely criticizing its inadequacy.

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY, Los Angeles section, advises all its members and sympathizers to vote YES on Proposition No. 1, (Ham and Eggs). We do this in spite of the serious criticisms we have of the plan itself and the method by which it proposes to secure pensions for the aged. Although the plan claims it will finance the pension by taxing no one, the end result will be higher prices. More money will be printed, resulting in inflation and a rise in the cost of living. Moreover, the added weekly two cents per dollar warrant will be made up by the capitalist who will place higher prices upon the necessities of life that the workers use and the few comforts a section of the workers can hope to get. The plan will be financed by a higher cost of living for the poor, and will amount to the poor paying for the poor.

A Protest Against Insecurity

We urge our followers to vote YES, however, as a protest against the insecurity under our present social system of the aged, broken by decades of speed-up and often years of unemployment with its resultant hardships. We urge a YES vote to show the capitalist class of this state and their politicians of the Republican and Democratic parties that the people of the state demand security for the aged. We urge a YES vote without taking responsibility for the plan itself.

We vote YES, despite our opinion that the plan cannot work, in order not to stand in the way of the movement which strives to obtain economic security. We stand with the aged and the workers against the bankers, industrialists and the boss politicians. Our solidarity with our class must not be broken. We must present our criticism within the class movement and not from outside its ranks. It is clear that the vast majority of our class favors the plan. This is evidenced by the vote in the trade unions which have given almost unanimous support to the movement, by the support for the plan found in the working class areas and precincts of the state. Our task is to extend the movement for the demand for old age security into the channels of a correct method. We are confident that in the course of their experience the many workers supporting the measure will learn to fight with the Socialist Workers Party for old age security under the slogan of "Tax the Rich for Old Age Pensions."

Labor Must Be Prepared

The major question that faces us is: After November 7, what? If the plan wins, we urge that labor be prepared to resist the inevitable rise in the prices by demanding a corresponding raise in wages. If the plan wins and the employers attempt to close down their factories, the workers must be prepared for energetic action in defense of their jobs and living standards.

If the plan loses, the pension movement must start all over again but on a healthy correct basis. It must be based on the proposal to "tax the rich to secure pensions for the aged poor." The workers produce the wealth of this society. When they are too old, the capitalists turn them out, free of any responsibility for them; or at best, with only a miserable pittance in the form of the State pension. It is the wealthy who must pay for the pension. If they cannot do so, let them give way to a class which can organize society so as to secure plenty and security for all: Let them give way to the socialist reorganization of society by the workers and producers.

A Program For Labor

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 all jobs.
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.
12. Full social, political and economic equality for the Negro people.

Labor Looks Through The Press
By Arthur Hopkins

Thought for the day: Well anyway, the bosses are beating their swords into shares.

DAILY DOUBT: "It is incredible," says the Minneapolis Star Journal, "that any person or group of persons would through false pride or desire for personal gain advocate a measure involving this country in a risk of being drawn into the war."

The traditional top hats of the Eton boys have been put under a wartime ban because they won't work with gas masks. Which is a fearful blow to culchaw. How can the working stiffs recognize their "betters" without their hats?

Says Herbert Hoover: Woodrow Wilson "met with the pressures of populations and the unsolvable problems of European boundaries and economic life." He means "unsolvable" under capitalism. The Socialist United States of Europe is our solution to the "unsolvable" problem.

Says war correspondent Henry C. Cassidy: "There is as little romance as there is high enthusiasm in this war. The troops rarely sing. After a month of war they have still to find a successor to the World War favorite 'La Madelon.'" But the French bosses have their song. "If only the war, this beautiful war, lasts long enough, I'll make my million, or more or more. Pray God it's more."

THE MARXIST SCHOOL

announces its FALL TERM COURSES to be held at the Cultural Center, Room 201, 125 West 33rd St., N. Y. C.

Classes Begin Monday, November 20th

1. HOW CAPITALISM OPERATES TODAY Frank Demby
Mondays—7:15 p.m.-8:40 p.m. 6 Sessions, \$1.00
A course in Applied Marxian economics, dealing with such matters as the basic causes of the breakdown of the automatic processes of the business cycle, war and intiation, economics under a fascist system, the economics of the farm problem, etc., etc.
2. SOCIALISM AND WAR Max Shachtman
Mondays—8:50 p.m.-10:15 p.m. 6 Sessions, \$1.00
Beginning with the great wars and revolutions of the last century this course will proceed to a consideration of the theoretic and practical problems of today. What are just wars? How can the social conquests of the Soviet Union be defended? Why do Marxists condemn pacifism? How should we act in the present war situation?
3. THE DESTINY OF THE NEGRO J. R. Johnson
Tuesdays—7:15 p.m.-8:40 p.m. 6 Sessions, \$1.00
This course will trace the history of the Negro peoples from their enslavement to their present struggle for emancipation and equality. The chief solutions for the Negro problem will be examined.
4. ELEMENTS OF SOCIALIST THEORY AND PRACTICE
Tuesdays—8:50 p.m.-10:15 p.m. 6 Sessions, \$1.00
A course designed to suit the needs of young people and those in the labor movement who seek an understanding of basic principles.
5. ORGANIZING AMERICAN LABOR E. R. Frank
Wednesdays—7:15 p.m.-8:40 p.m. 6 Sessions, \$1.00
First hand accounts of the great strike struggles in the recent past, close-ups of leading trade union personalities, analyses of current trade union events by one who personally participated in many of the great organizing drives of the last few years.
6. THE WAR DEAL IN ACTION James Burnham-Dwight Macdonald
Wednesdays—8:50 p.m.-10:15 p.m. 6 Sessions, \$1.00
Lectures on the week by week developments in American politics. Consideration will be given to such matters as Congressional legislation, M-Day plans, developments in the business world in relation to the war, etc.

Registrations now being taken at the Labor Bookshop, 116 University Place, N.Y.C. from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Registration can also be made by mail to the school office, 116 University Place. Prospective students are urged to register early.