

## The 150th FIGHT For AMERICAN TRADE UNIONISM

This is the second in a series of six articles on the struggle for the establishment of trade-unions and conditions for the American Worker. (Editor)

After the depression of 1819, the factory system and industry in general began to grow, and so did labor organization. The "conspiracy" convictions against the shoe makers could not stop the American workers from demanding a bigger share in the employers' profits and a square deal all around. Not only the shoemakers and the carpenters, but also the hatters, tailors, painters, stone-cutters, weavers, cabinet-makers, etc. found the answer to their troubles in organization. Factory workers, too, learned from their skilled brothers. As a matter of fact, the word "union" was first used by the factory workers in contrast to the "society" of the skilled workers.

### Dawn To Dusk Work

The working conditions at this time were terrible. We cannot forget that the Trade Union movement got its big start in the fight for the Ten-Hour Day. Yes, twelve, fourteen, fifteen hours a day was the rule. Wages . . . as low as three and four dollars a week. Children were forced to work as young as eight years old. Sweatshops were everywhere. Prison labor competed with wage labor on the open market. The workers, for the most part, could not vote; and there was no free education at all for the children of workers. The bosses and their stooges openly declared that long hours of work were necessary because too much time off would result in sin.

We hear about the wonderful achievements of democratic America, but we mustn't forget that it was the trade union organization and the active role of the people that made America democratic.

### Employers' Courts

Right up to the Civil War, strike after strike occurred for the ten hour day and for higher wages. The employers resorted to their old friends the courts, to stop the union drive. It was pretty hard to fight the equality of the unions, as such, so the Union's fighting methods for the protection of its gains, came under reactionary legislative attack, with attempts to make picketing, striking, and protest against scabs, illegal. In 1823 the New York Hatters were convicted for "combining to deprive a fellow workman of his livelihood".

(It seems history repeats, and the recent attacks on labor have been carried on in a like manner with other words but with the same tune.—Editor.)

### General Strike in 1835

Labor was not to be stopped by the courts or the militia, and in Philadelphia in 1835, occurred the first general strike in America for the ten-hour day. It was won, and marked the beginning of other victories for shorter hours and higher wages. The States were forced, by mass pressure, to pass ten-hour laws, although they were only enforced where the unions were strong enough to back them up. In the 1840's and 1850's the strikes and the mass meetings increased with a good deal of success, but the depression of 1857 and the shadow of the Civil War put the damper on things for a few years thereafter.

The third in this series will appear in the next issue of the News.

## Ball Team Organized - \$50 Bond for Name

Our new baseball team representing the Union has been born, but like every baby it has to have a name. Well, who should christen it? Since the baby's papa is the whole union, we have to let the union members give it a handle. So, how about it? Everybody! Think hard what you'd like your official team to be known as. Send in your names on a penny postcard to the Union. United Electrical Workers, 301 Liberty Street. And . . . to the winner, the union will present a \$50 War Savings Bond. You have till May 8th to send in your names! Just one week! So, better hurry and mail that card at once. The judges will be the Activities Committee and the manager of the team, Buck Ewing.

### Big Turnout For First Practice

The Union ball team's first batting practice at Central Park this Monday was a big success with 27 first rate ball players trying to get into the lineup. The team, when it is finally rounded out, will have some of the best Negro and white players around.

AND . . . if anyone wants to play ball just drop around to the B diamond, Central Park, any Monday, Wednesday or Friday at 6:15 P.M. and try out for the team. Buck Ewing, the great player of the Mohawk Giants, is with us now as manager and coach. So here's your chance, you ball players. Come out and show your stuff. We want the CIO to put out a winner on the ball field as in the shop.

## C.I.O. ON THE AIR

THE TIME: Saturday night, May 2 — 10:15 EWT, 9:15 CWT, 8:15 MWT, 7:15 PWT.

THE STATION: WGY.

THE PROGRAM: "Labor For Victory"—fifteen minutes presenting the viewpoints of C. I. O and all American Labor.

("Labor for Victory" will be on the air each Saturday night at 10:15 EWT, with the program sponsored on alternate weeks by the C. I. O. and the A. F. L.)

TUNE IN ON "LABOR FOR VICTORY"



"I'm filling out my occupational questionnaire, Miss Glimp. What shall I say I do?"

## TELEGRAM BLITZ HITS CONGRESS

The local Postal Telegraph office got a boom in business as the Union Legislative Committee swung into action last week with a barrage of day-letters-to-Congress demanding the defeat of all anti-labor restrictions.

The telegram activity was in response to the first Legislative Bulletin issued by the Legislative Committee, of which Charlie Campbell of Bldg. 73 is chairman, which called upon all committeemen to collect enough money from their men to send two telegrams to Representative Vinson of the House Naval Affairs Committee, and to Rep. May of the House Military Affairs Committee, demanding that the Vinson-Smith Bills now before these committees be killed before they reach the floor of the House. The response of the committeemen and the members was enthusiastic. The boys in Congress who are sabotaging the nation's war efforts with fascist attacks on labor certainly know now how the G.E. workers in Schenectady feel about the matter.

Our demands, along with thousands of others pouring in from all over the country, are contributing very significantly to the delay in the House Committees' reporting them to the floor.

## C.I.O. COUNCIL BROADCASTS

The Capital District Labor Forum, sponsored by the Capital District Council, CIO, is now on the air every Sunday at 5:30 P.M. over F.M. Station W47A of the Capital Broadcasting Company. Sal Vottis, financial secretary of Local 301, and chairman of the District Council, is chairman of the forum; Douglas Campbell, professor of social science at Union College, is moderator; and Joseph Rotundo, instructor of economics at Union College, is the commentator.

Last Sunday the local CIO-AFL unity program was the basis of discussion. The representatives of the A. F. of L., Richard Carmichael, president of the Schenectady Federation of Labor and Herbert Merrill, secretary of the Federation, and S. M. Vottis, president of the Capitol District Council, CIO, pledged the cooperation of their respective memberships to the winning of the war. They further mutually expressed their desire for a more permanent unity between the two great labor organizations in the area.

It is planned to bring men from the production line before the "mike" to give the public specific information on the cooperation of labor and management in speeding the production of the necessary weapons for victory.

The program is being presented through the courtesy of the Capital Broadcasting Company, which is furnishing labor the opportunity to bring its views to the public free of charge as its contribution to the war effort.

"All that harms labor is treason to America. No line can be drawn between these two. If any man tells you he loves America, yet hates labor, he is a liar. If any man tells you he trusts America yet he fears labor, he is a fool. There is no America without labor, and to fleece the one is to rob the other." — ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

# ELECTRICAL

THE VOICE OF THE UNITED ELECTRICAL RADIO & MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA—Local 301. CIO



# UNION ...NEWS

Vol. 4

SCHENECTADY, N. Y. — MAY 15, 1942

No. 4

## MAINTAINING OUR UNION

By SAL VOTTIS, Financial Secretary

### Why the Union?

Local No. 301 came into existence because the G.E. workers in the Schenectady plant got tired of insecurity on their job . . . and could barely subsist upon the wages they were receiving in 1933 when the first steps were taken to build a union.

At that time many men over forty-five and fifty years of age with 15 years service or better were being dumped into the human scrap heap. There were thousands of younger men ready to step into jobs vacated by the older men.

Seniority rights were unknown. If an employee complained about his working conditions or wages he was told to quit if he didn't like it, as there were thousands of men clamoring for his job.

The Union came!

Seniority rights are now a fact!

Decent wages in the G.E. are now a fact!

Vacations with pay are now a fact!

Full representation and protection on the job is now a fact!

Time and a half for over eight hours a day and over 40 hours a week is now a fact!

Is it worth \$1.00 a month to any employee to maintain these conditions?

### Union and the War

Recent events have proven that the war can only be won by the fullest cooperation on the part of organized labor . . . especially on the production lines . . . to give its utmost effort to keep the war materials flowing to our boys at the front and to the free peoples of the world fighting our battle.

We know that the working people of the nations conquered by the Nazi and Fascist hordes have been the first to be enslaved.

We know that the more and faster we produce now the sooner the war will be won . . .

We know that by hitting Hitler hard on a Second Front at this time will save many millions of lives later on.

The Union as a whole is exerting every effort to produce more and more war material.

The Union needs the help and cooperation of every one of its members.

Is it worth \$1.00 a month in Union dues to maintain unity in the Union's ranks and help win the war?

We know the attacks that are being made upon labor by unscrupulous politicians and certain groups of unpatriotic American business men, in order to take away the 40-hour week and do away with unions altogether.

Unions are fighting to maintain their very existence.

Is it worth \$1.00 a month in dues to keep your union . . . and the 40-hour week?

### Postwar Period — The Union

After the war we are going to face a period of general readjustment . . . a conversion from a War Economy to a Peace Economy . . .

It will be a time when only the United Strength of all the working people of our nation will be able to save the country from complete chaos.

Organized Labor should be united enough after the war . . . to assure that in the richest country in the world every American worker will have an equal opportunity to work and earn a decent standard of living.

Is it worth \$1.00 a month in Union Dues to maintain the union for this job and the future for yourself and your children?

## National Office OK's F.D.R.'s Seven Points

The General Officers of the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (CIO)—Albert J. Fitzgerald, General President; Julius Emspak, General Secretary-Treasurer; and James J. Maties, Director of Organization—issued the following statement on President Roosevelt's message to Congress:

"The President's program will be a good one for every group in the United States, provided both Congress and the executive branch itself now put it into actual effect.

"The message shows the extent to which reactionary groups in Congress and elsewhere have been able to obstruct the needed all-embracing, total approach to our economic problems.

"As one result of these obstructions, the wage structure during the past year got badly out of joint with rising burdens on working people, and this is reflected in wage demands now being negotiated by unions and major industries. In addition, many unorganized and recently organized workers are, as the President points out, paid at badly substandard levels. It is true, as President Roosevelt says, that the general standard of living considered as a whole must inevitably go down if we are to win the war. But within this inevitable general decline, the wage demands already made on the basis of past conditions and those aimed to bring substandard wages up to the minimum efficiency level must be granted. The President's program allows for this. These steps will enable the millions of people who are now working harder and longer than ever before to keep on doing so.

### Will Stabilize Wages

"We will expect the majority in Congress to resist obstructionist maneuvers, and we will expect such administrators as Leon Henderson to abandon their spurious economic theories and spineless administrative policies in favor of the practical program advocated by President Roosevelt. Doing these things will mean that from such a point onward, the question of labor policy as to future wage demands can readily be taken care of within the framework of the President's program. This will put an end to distracting economic problems and thus enable the whole people to give their whole-time-to-waging an offensive war against the Fascist governments of Germany, Japan, and Italy.

## Union Action Gets Results

### Smith-Vinson Bill Put on Ice

Well, we dood it! The bombardment of telegrams, and other communications that poured into the House Naval Affairs Committee from labor and liberal organizations all over the country finally convinced some of our labor-baiting legislators that they were playing with dynamite. The Smith-Vinson Bill, calling for stringent anti-labor restrictions, was shelved by the House Committee after a heated debate. And . . . you may be assured . . . the hundreds of telegrams that streamed out of G.E. a couple of weeks ago in response to the Union Legislative Committee contributed materially to swell the national protest. At the last minute Vinson tried to shove his brain-child through without any of the anti-labor provisions so that once on the floor his side-kick, Smith, could stick them all back in again as amendments. But the stunt didn't work —thanks to the united labor action.

### Legislative Committee Meets on Sales Tax

The Local Legislative Committee met last week on the very urgent matter of the Federal Tax Program before the House Ways and Means Committee. President Roosevelt has called for a tax program based on ability to pay but certain stooges of the National Manufacturers Association are trying to make the people foot the entire bill for the war. Their latest wrinkle is a national sales tax which would start prices going up all over again just when it looks as though things would begin to get settled. This proposition threatens the President's entire anti-inflation program and will result in turmoil. The Legislative Committee has issued a bulletin to the committeemen calling for action against this scheme. It is hoped we will get the same cooperation as on the Smith-Vinson bill.

IT'S BETTER TO PRODUCE AS FREE MEN FOR THE MAN WITH THE LONG WHISKERS THAN IT IS TO PRODUCE AS SLAVES FOR THE MAN WITH THE LITTLE MOUSTACHE

# ORIGINAL TORN

## ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

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 WORKERS OF AMERICA, LOCAL 301  
 301 Liberty Street, Schenectady, N. Y.  
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 Benjamin Goersen Michael Tedisco  
 Fred Schoeffler Fred Matern, Chairman  
 Editor — L. IANDREAU

## COMING

— C. I. O. & A. F. of L. —  
**War Victory Rally**

ERIE THEATRE  
 TUESDAY EVENING - 8 P. M.  
 MAY 26th

GUSTAVE STREBEL  
 PRESIDENT NEW YORK STATE INDUSTRIAL  
 UNION COUNCIL C. I. O.  
 Well known to all G. E. Workers will be the Main  
 C. I. O. SPEAKER

## The President's Program

President Roosevelt's seven-point anti-inflation program was a welcome solution to a very pressing problem. Not that the program is a cure-all for all our troubles but it certainly goes a long way toward a much fairer setup than the National Association of Manufacturers would be willing to propose.

Putting a price ceiling on rents and goods has finally been recognized as urgent. We workers have long realized that our wage increase has been wiped out by profiteering and rent-gouging. The stabilization of our purchasing power will mean virtual wage increases. It should be noted, however, that it will be better to begin considering using pre-Pearl Harbor prices as a base instead of the prices of this March which were somewhat higher. OPA will probably realize this soon enough. But the initial step along the path of price fixing is a good one.

It is important, too, that ceilings be put on farm products without injuring the farmer's income. Not until we have retail and wholesale ceilings on all foods will OPA's program be fully effective in stopping inflationary price rises.

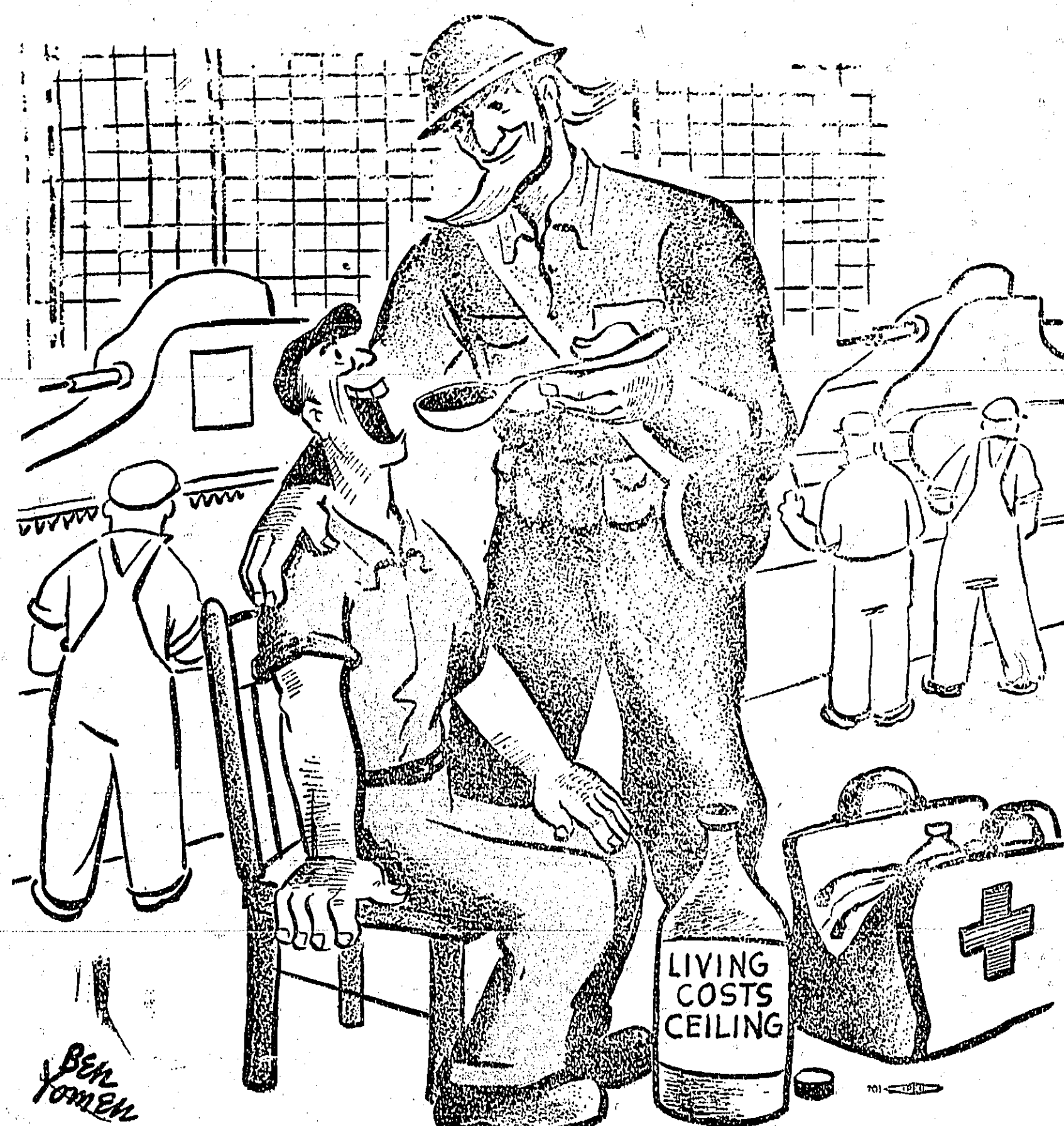
One of the most important phases of the President's program is that covering stabilization of wages. The reactionaries have long tried to crack down with wage freezing legislation, but the President's turning over to the War Labor Board the responsibility of making adjustments where necessary puts the N.A.M. boys in their place. With wages brought to within a respectable distance of prices it begins to look as though we may have a little security for the duration.

The rationing program, too, deserves our support. As President Roosevelt points out, "It is obviously unfair that where there is not enough of any essential commodity to meet all civilian demands, those who can afford to pay more for the commodity should not be privileged over others who cannot. . . where any article becomes scarce, rationing is the democratic, equitable solution." How the profiteers must burn up at that.

It is up to us, as those most vitally interested, to rally support for the President's proposals and to see that Congress backs them up.

## Ten Percent Every Payday

The offensive is on — the War Bond offensive.  
 The time—NOW.  
 The place — every factory, mill, mine, store and shop in America.  
 Who is in? You and me. Every worker everywhere. More than 11,000,000 organized workers. Our country is calling!  
 What is the goal? Ten percent of your earnings this payday and every payday until the fight for freedom is won.  
 What are the stakes? They are high! It is we or they. Democracy versus Nazism. Freedom versus slavery.  
 Our brothers—yours and mine—are fighting in the Far East and on the rolling seas. Bonds every payday will help them win. Let's show America that Organized Labor leads the way. Invest in War Bonds regularly through the Payroll Savings Plan.  
 Save to help win the war.  
 Save to help stop price rises.  
 Save to have a nest egg you can use when the war is won.  
 To protect the gains won by organized labor since the War for Independence — Buy War Savings Bonds every payday!



"Vitamins for Victory"

## LITTLE LUTHER

"Just think" said Little Luther, "of all the bullets that could have been bought with that to shoot at Hitler."

"With what?" demanded his father.  
 "The \$110,000 that Congress voted to give to Martin Dies and the \$385,000 that the Dies committee already has spent."

"Listen, Luther, Martin Dies has been doing his country a great service by exposing fifth columnists."

"Martin Dies has been exposing for several years now, Daddy, and he never touched any real fifth columnists like Coughlin, the Franco agents, George Christians, Deatherage, all of whom are fascists."

"But, my boy, Mr. Dies is holding secret hearings down in Texas right now on Axis agents and spy plots."

"He never showed any such consideration for labor unionists and progressives."

"What do you mean, consideration, son?"

"Well, Father, every time Dies has been prodded into making gestures toward investigating pro-fascist elements, he always does it secretly and always gives people like Coughlin courteous treatment. But when he attacked the members of the Board of Economic Warfare he didn't even consult members of his own committee."

"One of those fellows was a nudist."

"Yes, Father, but who is attacking the U. S. right now—nudists or fascists?"

## C. I. O. FIGHTS SALES TAX

WASHINGTON (FP)—The pending tax bill is "one of the most important to labor ever considered by Congress," the Economic Outlook, monthly publication of the CIO, declared in its current issue released here May 2.

The nature of the tax bill, aside from the fact that some 25 billions of revenue will be raised by the federal government next year, will determine whether or not revenue for victory will be raised from "those who can afford to pay or whether it will come out of the pockets of low-income working people and farmers," the Outlook said.

Greatest threat to a sound program is the pressure from the National Association of Manufacturers and other reactionary groups for a general sales tax, it charged. Such a tax would be "the worst possible revenue measure which could be enacted."

Quoting Senator Robert M. LaFollette (Prog., Wis.), the Outlook said a 5% sales tax would bear four times as heavily on people with incomes under \$2,000 as it would on those with incomes over \$10,000. OPA figures, it added, show that 73.3% of all families got less than \$2,500 in 1941, receiving only 44.5% of total U.S. income. Estimates for 1942 show that 75.3% of families will get less than \$2,500 which is only 39.6% of the total income.

"If it is the intent, as reported, of the new tax bill to mop up the increased purchasing power, it is obvious that the taxes must be placed upon incomes above \$2,500, not below," the Outlook asserted. "It is clear on the basis of these reasons why a sales tax would impair the war production effort."

## Talking Shop

By LEO IANDREAU

## Vocational Training for Women Presents Problem

We note that in the recent issues of the local press and the Works News that the vocational schools will start training for women. It seems to us that this move is premature because it so happens that many men (particularly over forty years of age) are still available who desire employment with the G.E.

Some of these men who at present are engaged on non-war work could be easily replaced by women who would go on more suitable jobs that would not be considered as hazardous. Many young men between 18 and 21 are unemployed. Our office has interviewed many who have already completed vocational training but who are still unemployed.

The problem of upgrading present male help within the G.E. plant is a tremendous one. Many young men who have a high school education are being employed as common laborers. Moreover many men employed in the semi-skilled brackets would be more than willing to have the opportunity of vocational training in order to qualify for more skillful jobs. It seems to us that if a woman is placed in a man's job every male employee working on a lower rated job is going to have cause for complaint.

The employment policy of industry has not liberalized itself to the extent whereby the so-called "not outstanding" male help has been consumed. It seems that the employment of these workers should be the first step along with the upgrading of existing male help. Then train women and employ them when necessary.

We are not advocating anything that will impair the war program. On the contrary, it is the sole object of our union to win the war, and the record of our actions to date confirms this. We do say, however, that there is a job of morale affecting those employed in war industry that will play a very important part in winning this war. The question of morale is far-reaching and it will not be completely solved by posters, bulletins and speech making. The lesser items in the opinion of some may be major items in the opinion of others as, for example, what is a woman's job?

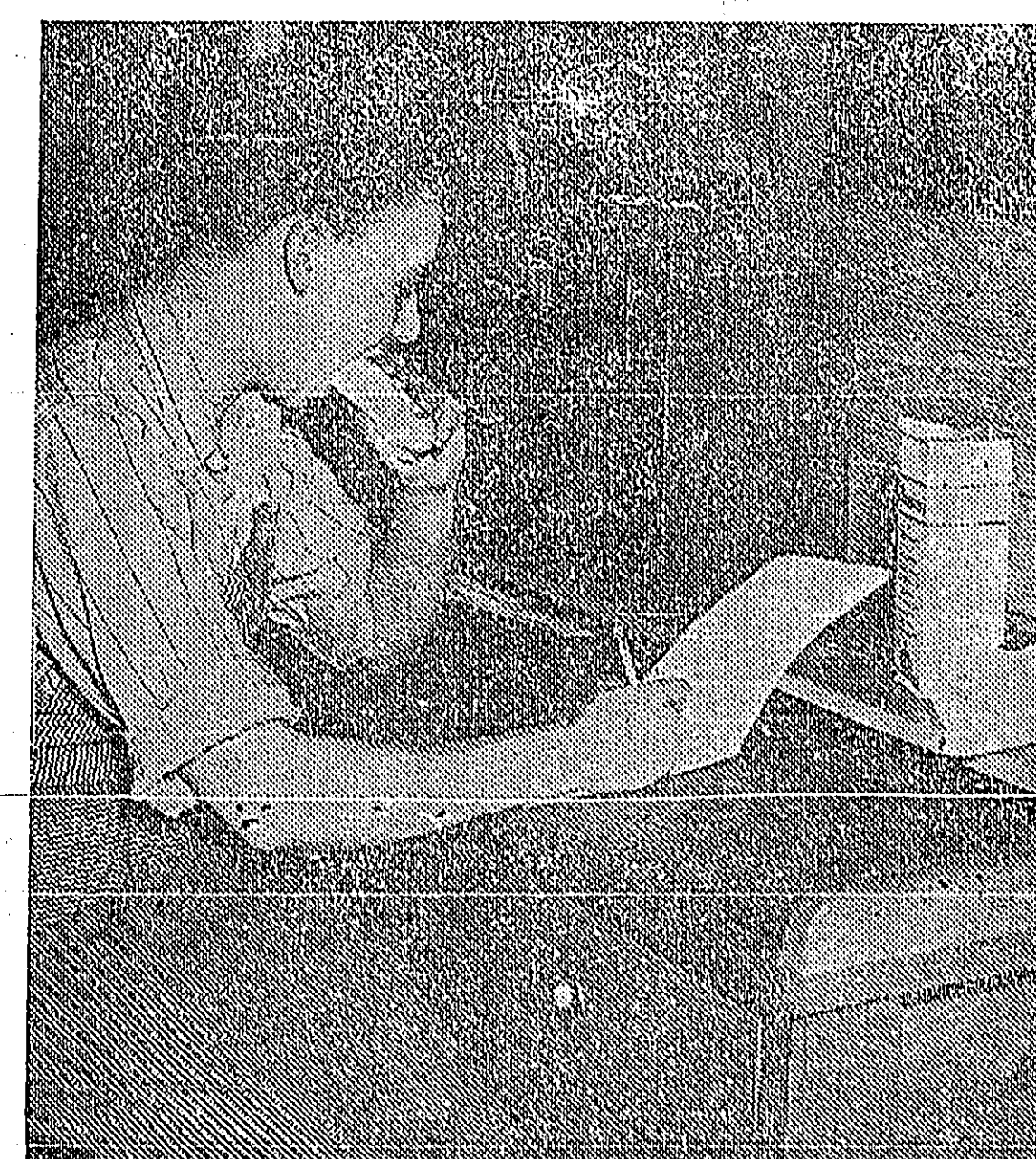
Long service men employed on war work are pointing their fingers at jobs that are being done by women that were always done by men. These objections are not because it is a woman doing the job, but because the rate of the job may be reduced from 35 to 50 percent. There is a job undone, and that is to work out a mutually agreed division line of work for both sexes.

## Union Shows Plant How To Get Out A Month's Production In A Day

CHICAGO (FP)—What labor can do when business-as-usual methods are discarded is shown as the result of the establishment by Local 758, United Automobile Workers (CIO), of a production council at the Illinois Malleable Company plant.

The company had orders for 200,000 war implements. The company had been content to produce them at a rate of 5,000 a month. The first day the production council was in operation 5,796 units were turned out.

Production has not fallen below 5,000 a day since and some times hits 7,000. "This," said the union, "is the way to get the second front under way."



"BLACKIE THE POET"

J. Black of Local 425, United Electrical Radio & Machine Workers (CIO), at the Ford Instrument Co. plant in Long Island City, N.Y., takes time off from his lunch hour to write a poem plugging navy relief. It helped raise \$3,000.

## High Voltage

• It used to be an insult to call a girl a flat tire. Now it's a compliment to be called any kind of tire.

• Sixty-five members of the House voted against giving Dies \$110,000. There are occasional signs that there are still some believers in Democracy on Capitol Hill.

• We bet when Hitler met Mussolini at the border recently, his first words were, "Come across".

• Inland Steel says it will not obey the National War Labor Board. It would, we assume, prefer to take orders from Hitler.

• The latest reports have it that Inland Steel may pool its stockholders on whether to resist an expected WLB order for union security. Hitler calls the Reichstag together every once in a while for this sort of thing.

• What is necessary today is to sandwich Hitler between a slice of Russian bread, English muffin and American rye. Then he can really be smeared.

• The baseball season brings to mind a timely slogan. Open up a second front and make Adolph hit into a double play.

• Wonder who's going to publish Hitler's press releases now that "Social Justice" has been banned.

• We bet a certain radio commentator feels so ashamed these days that every morning he looks in the mirror and says: "Why was Kalten-born?"

## Movies Add Spice To Meetings

"The United Nations at War" was the collective title the Union Education Department gave to a group of four films showing shots from the battlefronts, which was exhibited at several department meetings during the past month. The film showings have been introduced by the Education Department for the purpose of providing the various meetings with some lively recreation and education at the same time.

To date over 1000 workers have seen the films which included first rate views of the actual struggle on the Russian front, British action in Norway and our own vast victory program. Those workers who have been present at the meetings where the movies have been shown have agreed that they certainly add pep and interest to the usual business meeting.

A new bill has been prepared for this month to be shown at the department meetings. Included in this new presentation is "Bowling Aces", a fine picture of how good bowling should look with all the trick professional shots; a complete picture of how a British airplane factory is working; production councils, recreation, etc.; a swell film showing how the Russians have mobilized for victory; and the story of MacArthur, first soldier of America, with first-hand shots of the attack on the Philippines. Ask your committeeman when these pictures will be shown.

## Bulletins From The Labor Front

## Sick Pay Won By Labor Unity in Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE, R. I. (FP)—United Action by the AFL, CIO, and Railroad Brotherhoods compelled the Rhode Island legislature to pass an amendment to its unemployment law to provide workers with sickness compensation ranging from \$13.50 to \$18.00 a week for a period of 20 weeks. Rhode Island is believed to be the first state to provide such sick pay.

## Workers Heroes in Blast

BRIDGEPORT, CONN. (FP)—The heroism of AFL and CIO workers in the explosion which killed seven persons at the Remington War plant here is the talk of the town. The coolness and courage of the union men was praised in an editorial in the Bridgeport Post.

## Council at Sea

SAN FRANCISCO (FP)—The first ocean-going labor-management committees have been established aboard coast tankers of the Union Oil Co. Each committee will consist of the ship's captain and members from the CIO National Maritime Union. The committees will act as safety groups to establish and maintain safety equipment and take blackout precautions.

## The South Is Returning to the U.S.

ROCKWOOD, TENN. (FP) — Down the main street here, where union men once were slugged and kidnapped, 500 CIO members paraded and sang union songs in the first War Victory celebration in Tennessee.

NASHVILLE, TENN. (FP) — A program calling for labor-management cooperation, full use of all southern manpower regardless of race, creed or color, and the conversion of southern industry to war production has been adopted by the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

## Navy Adopts Another Part of Union Safety Program

NEW YORK (FP)—The navy has adopted another part of the anti-sabotage safety program of the American Communications Association (CIO). Vice-President Harry Morgan announced. The proposal requires that each ship be supplied with a portable receiver-transmitter radio which can be carried in a lifeboat in the event of attack or used as auxiliary equipment in the event the regular equipment is damaged.

ORIGINAL TORN