

THE AFL CONVENTION

The sixty-first convention of the American Federation of Labor reflects in spirit, word and action the wartime emergency period. We say wartime emergency advisedly, for while America is not yet at war in a "shooting" sense of the term, the multiple pressures of belligerency have already fully invaded every nook and corner of the national life.

The report of the Executive Council of the federation, which, as usual, contains a survey of its activities for the past year, this time abounds with references stressing the overshadowing significance of the world-wide conflict. America's present, and potential, share in this titanic struggle between renescent barbarism and embattled democracy is directly or indirectly reflected in every page of this comprehensive account.

Nineteen Hundred and Forty-one has been a good year for the American labor movement. As in the booming war years of 1918-1920, the mighty upsurge of industrial activity, chiefly in defense work, has brought hundreds of thousands of members to the AFL. In the older organized industries new agreements have brought higher wages, vacations with pay, the protection of men who have entered military service, and numerous other work improvements.

SIX YEARS OF THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT

By H. A. MILLIS, Chairman National Labor Relations Board

The beginning of the year 1941 marked two significant changes in the activities of the National Labor Relations Board. The number of new cases coming to the Board, which had been declining during 1940, began to increase abruptly. Second, the hitherto normal predominance of cases containing charges of unfair labor practices by employers was shifted to a predominance of petitions for employe elections. More than anything else, the reversal of two such important trends in the activities of the National Labor Relations Act in the field of labor relations.

In the nearly 6 years of the existence of the N. L. R. B. there were only 2 periods in which the Board received more than 1,000 new cases a month. The first time this occurred was in May 1937, immediately after the act had been upheld by the Supreme Court. The second period began 4 years later, in May of this year, when 1,075 new charges and petitions were filed with the Board.

It will be remembered that in 1937 complaints against anti-union activities were uppermost in the minds of American workers. Two-thirds of the issues presented to the Board in May of that year concerned unfair labor practices. In May of this year, however, the workers filed more election petitions than they did charges and were apparently principally concerned with the problem of establishing majority claims for representation at the bargaining table with their employers.

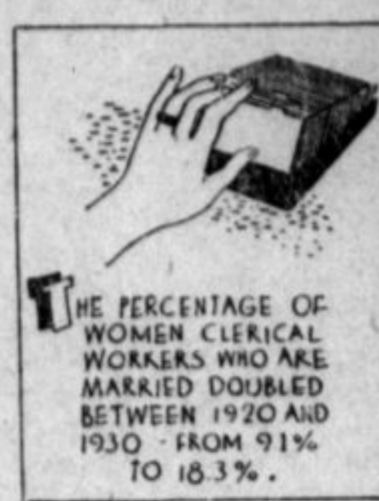
What causes underlie this shift? The answer lies in the growth of collective bargaining as an accepted and living practice in industrial relations. Unfair labor practices are not a part of collective bargaining. On the contrary, they impede and retard the normal processes of collective bargaining. Worker elections, on the other hand, are an integral part and a necessary first step in collective bargaining. The rapid displacement of unfair labor practice cases by petition for elections thus reflects a fundamental change toward sound labor relations during the course of the past 4 years. At the other operations of the National Labor Relations Act seem to buttress that conclusion.

The act has emerged from its testing period, as a seasoned instrument. The Board's interpretations of the act have been largely clarified by the courts. Employers now know their responsibilities under the law, and workers can define the scope and limits of protection which the act affords to them. More and more employers have therefore come to accept the act, not only as a matter of compliance with law but in the affirmative belief that collective bargaining alone can maintain fair and stable relations between American workmen and management.

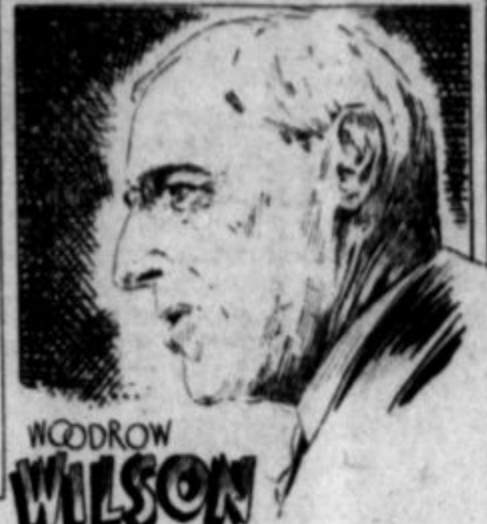
CLARIFICATION BY COURTS

The National Labor Relations Act has probably undergone more legal

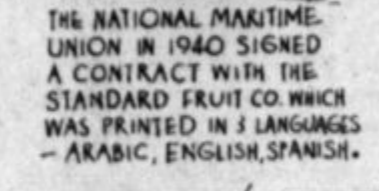
THE MARCH OF LABOR



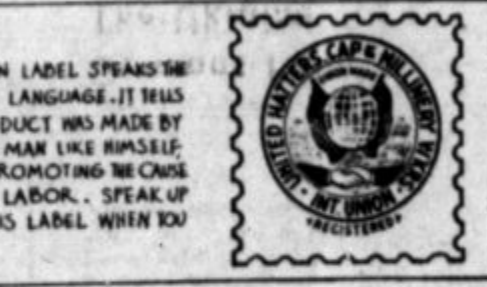
THE PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN CLERICAL WORKERS WHO ARE MARRIED DOUBLED BETWEEN 1920 AND 1930 - FROM 9.1% TO 18.3%.



WOODROW WILSON ON JULY 4th, 1914: "LIBERTY DOES NOT CONSIST IN MERE DECLARATIONS OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN. IT CONSISTS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THOSE DECLARATIONS INTO DEFINITE ACTIONS."



THE NATIONAL MARITIME UNION IN 1940 SIGNED A CONTRACT WITH THE STANDARD FRUIT CO. WHICH WAS PRINTED IN 3 LANGUAGES - ARABIC, ENGLISH, SPANISH.



THE UNION LABEL SPEAKS THE UNION MAN'S LANGUAGE. IT TELLS HIM THAT A PRODUCT WAS MADE BY ANOTHER UNION MAN LIKE HIMSELF. INTERESTED IN PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF ORGANIZED LABOR, SPEAK UP AND DEMAND THIS LABEL WHEN YOU BUY EGGS.

The Slavs Refuse To Be Slaves

REVOLT IS SPREADING AMONG THEM IN SPITE OF NAZI TERROR

The recent news dispatches from former Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia, as well as from the subjugated Bulgaria is as loud a voice as the world can hear against the brutal oppression of Hitlerite Germany. It is the voice of the rebelling Slavs telling the world at large that in spite of the inhuman terror that constantly hangs them they refuse to be slaves. It is the voice of freedom-loving people telling the world with unmistakable clarity that no matter how costly or how difficult is the struggle for independence, it will go until the Nazi monster is crushed. Then the slav countries will again be resurrected with flags of liberty unfurled on their citadels proclaiming to all the world their love of the self-determination of their lives and destiny.

The horrible destruction of the Serbian town of Uzebe by the Nazi Stuka-bombers, the execution of hundreds of Serb, Croat and Slovene rebels in the shackled towns and villages of Yugoslavia is a very poor reflection on the problematical operation of the infamous policies of Hitler's so-called "new order" but is a shining example of the people's heroism and desire to trample that "new order" in the dust.

The mass arrests and tortures in Bulgaria, coupled with an official proclamation at Sofia regarding a special tribunal which began a series of treason and espionage trials in the third week in October, proves that Bulgarian people too, are doing their share against the Nazis in fearlessly proclaiming that not one bullet will be fired against our Slav brothers.

The sudden flare-up of the Gestapo firing squads in Czechoslovakia has again shown the detested "protectors" that this Slav country is anything but part of the Hitler's Reich and that its brave men and women do not fear to pay the supreme price in untiring struggle against their oppressors. As Dr. Eduard Benes said recently in London—"A state of emergency is proclaimed and the most sanguinary of Hitler's and Himmler's lieutenants is in Prague. A new wave of terror will follow."

"The destruction of more than a million German lives in Russia was as vain as it was callous. But in all struggles between individuals and State tyranny, individuals have finally won decisively."

The underground anti-Nazi movements of the Polish people, the daring guerrilla attacks of the Russians and Ukrainians that came under the rule of bloodsoaked swastika, all these are certain signs that the day of judgement for Nazi tyranny is getting nearer and nearer and that out of the debris of Nazi collapse, a new day shall dawn for all Slavs who are proclaiming so clearly to the world at large that regardless of the sacrifices they are forced to make—they shall not be slaves.

—Slavonic Bulletin.

How about it, F. D. R.—making your next one a kitchen range chat dealing with the savage aggressors against the American grocery dollar?

Poland-in-Exile Marks Symbolic Break with Anti-Democratic Past

LONDON (JONA). — The Polish Government-in-exile signalized its break with the totalitarian character of the pre-war Polish Government by a symbolical act decreeing dissolution of the notorious Kartuz-Bereza political concentration camp.

The Polish Cabinet solemnly announced the annulment of the 1934 order establishing the camp, and Premier General Sikorski declared that the annulment should manifest the present Government's "determination to show that it has nothing to do with the internal order of the past and is sincerely devoted to the ideal of democracy."

Dr. Herman Liberman, Minister of Justice and noted Polish Socialist leader, who had been himself a victim of arbitrary political imprisonment, pointed out that the old Polish Government's law victimizing those who differed politically from the Government had been unconstitutional, violating the principles of personal freedom and the security of the citizen.

It's All Right to Defend What One Has—But—

It is altogether understandable when Socialists, like most other people, agree with the general proposition of national defense. To defend what one has is somewhat more than merely human; it is an instinctive reaction, manifested by lower animals as well as by man.

It is, however, the manly thing to take stock account with an eye to better things, rather than merely to accept the proposition that merely holding fast to what one has is of primary importance. A dog, no less than man, will defend a bone if that is all he has. But men should ask why it is that the meat is missing from the bone and, since they understand the natural law of cause and effect, should establish and maintain as their chief task the business of advancing from a bone economy to a meat civilization.

(From Reading Labor Advocate.)

Foreign Language Press Campaign for Defense Savings Bonds

At a conference at the foreign language press editors, called recently by Norman B. Collins, State Administrator of the Defense Savings Staff of the United States Treasury, plans were made for co-operation by the press with the government's defense savings program and a permanent committee formed, headed by John R. Palandech of the Foreign Language Press Association, chairman, and Mrs. J. F. Govan, of the Defense Savings Staff, vice-chairman.

John G. Gallaher, Deputy State Administrator, addressing the meeting putting special stress on Secretary Henry Morgenthau's plan to encourage savings from current income, sell citizens a part of their own defense, put a check to inflation and build a bulwark against financial stringency after the emergency passes.

Approximately 85% of the national bank in Illinois, and 66 out of the 67 state banks, are not only selling these bonds as a voluntary patriotic service, but themselves pay for advertising and otherwise promote the sale of the bonds," said Mr. Gallaher. "Go to your bank for Defense Savings Bonds."

Administrator Approves 40 Cent Minimum for Shoe Industry

An order establishing a 40 cent minimum wage in the shoe industry on and after November 3 will be issued shortly, General Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, U. S. Department of Labor, announced on October 10.

The order will increase the hourly wage rate of about 96,000 workers. More than 250,000 workers are employed in the industry as defined for the purposes of fixing the minimum wage. This definition includes the manufacture of cut stock and findings.

The 96,000 workers in the industry (the majority of them women) now earning less than 40 cents an hour are located as follows: New England, 36,000; Middle West, 24,000; Middle Atlantic States, 30,000; Southern States, 5,000.

The industry has been operating under a 35 cents-an-hour minimum wage order since April 29, 1940.

Railroads Report 10-Year Profit Peak

CHICAGO. — The Association of American Railroads reported net income for the first eight months of 1941 broke all records for more than 10 years and was 1,000 per cent above the net income for the same period last year. The totals were \$29,350,000 for last year, and \$298,524,000 for this year.

To Whom The Victory

"I am not a labor leader. I do not want you to follow me or anyone else. If you are looking for a Moses to lead you out of the capitalist wilderness, you will stay right where you are. I would not lead you into this promised land if I could, because if I could lead you in someone else could lead you out."

"I would be ashamed to admit that I had risen from the ranks. When I rise, it will be with the ranks not from them."

These two quotations from speeches of Eugene V. Debs have a queer ring in this era of "Beloved Leaders." The speeches in which they occur were made during the First World War and they were expressions not merely of a man's modesty and sense of kinship with his fellow-men, but of deep prophetic insight.

In the year Debs died (1926), the leadership cult had already cast its shadows over Europe. Mussolini, Stalin and lesser dictators in Poland, Hungary, Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria had consolidated their power. Hitler had become the fuhrer of a brown-shirted rabble in Germany.

In the United States we had a horde of little leaders—leaders of labor, industry, politics, etc. But none of them had been vested with an aura of infallibility, to none of them did the common man pin all his hopes and fears. Not until the 1930's did a full-bloom leadership cult begin to develop in the United States.

Though Debs did not live to see this development, he knew that its roots lay in the willingness of men and women to let others do their thinking and acting for them, in the lethargy, the lack of pride and self-confidence of the common man. And so he sought to inspire that pride and self-confidence, individual and collective, in the people he talked to, to give these people a sense of their own common responsibility and power. He sought not to lead them but to march with them—not to "tell" them but to inspire them to find their own way.

That, of course, is not the way of the conquerors and destroyers who march through the history books. But it has been the way of the truly great men who have worked and fought to bring mankind out of slavery and darkness into freedom and light.

A JOLLY JUNKET

Always anxious to be helpful, we have drafted the resolution which appears below, all ready for introduction in Congress by some servant of the people. If any crudities or deviations from the traditional recipe for resolutions are detected, please excuse, as we are not lawyers (a fact which the reader may deplore or thank God, according to taste). Here goes:

"Whereas, it has been charged by dignitaries of the highest respectability and obesity that the Christian church is not sufficiently honored in the domain of our noble ally, Joe Stalin, and

"Resolved, that a joint congressional committee consisting of 96 senators and 96 representatives be appointed to investigate on the ground the status of religion in Russia, especially to learn whether or not a monstrous attempt has been made to put Christianity in practice; and be it further

"Resolved, that an appropriation of \$1,000,000 be made to cover the living and traveling expenses of such committee; and be it further

Resolved, that accredited servants of God be employed by aforesaid committee, to-wit: Two such servants of Italian extraction who shall be commissioned to inspect and purchase wines of the Caucasus and Crimea for use of the committee; and two such servants from hard-liquor drinking states of the Corn Belt who shall be commissioned to inspect and purchase vodka for use of the committee; and be it further,

"Resolved, that due to reliable information the Soviet Union has degraded women by denying them full rights in choice of occupation, namely by abolishing the world's oldest profession, maintained from time immemorial in Christian lands, chairman of said committee shall set an example to the nation under investigation by having the committee accompanied by free women, and to this effect shall recruit and employ at Hollywood, Calif., and transport to Vladivostok, one female companion of attractive face and figure for each and every member of said committee; and be it further

"Resolved, that the further sum of \$500,000 be appropriated for the purpose of employing a staff of men who can read and write to prepare report of aforesaid committee and publish the findings of same.

Just in case some incredulous person considers the above a slander upon our noble statesmen, we suggest he consult Carl Crow's book "Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom" upon the subject of a certain congressional junket to China.

REASON FOR ALARM

The squabble over Russia's religion or irreligion is due to the fact that the Soviets have relegated the church to the category of small business, and though they may have a considerable number of priests and rabbis left, the theologian is virtually extinct.

The concern of our politicians is understandable, for just as the politician's job is to explain away pledges, campaign platforms and the promises of immortal documents such as the Constitution, the theologian's business is to explain away such Biblical passages as verses 44 and 45 of the second chapter of the acts of the Apostles, to-wit: "And all that believed were together and had all things common; and old their possessions and goods, and parted (divided) them to all men, as every man had need."

EUGENE V. DEBS MEMORIAL DINNER SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26TH 6:30 p. m. YOUNKER'S RESTAURANT 51 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago. One Dollar Per Plate MAYNARD C. KRUEGER will speak on "The Heritage of Debs" PROF. J. R. SHANNON of Terre Haute, who lives in the Deb's home, and has material from sources not available to earlier biographers, will speak on "Debs, The Man Unafraid."