

The League for Industrial Democracy in 40th Year

On September 12, 1905, in Peck's restaurant, 140 Fulton Street, New York, a small group met together and observed that "the recent remarkable increase in the Socialist vote in America should serve as some indication to the educated men and women of this country that socialism is a thing concerning which it is no longer wise to be indifferent." On this note of academic optimism the Inter-collegiate Socialist Society was born. Jack London was the first president, Upton Sinclair one of the two vice-presidents, and Harry W. Laidler undergraduate representative on the executive. Forty years later the League for Industrial Democracy, successor to the I. S. S., is holding an anniversary dinner—on February 3, at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York. Upton Sinclair will broadcast a speech from California. The league's indefatigable director, Harry W. Laidler, will be honored with a presentation. Chief speakers will be Professor Frank Scott, national chairman of the Canadian C. C. F., a Socialist party headed for power, and Arthur Creech Jones, Labor Member of Parliament from England. The "recent Socialist vote" of 1944 looks small in comparison with the 400,000 polled in 1904, but the forces of progress which are cutting new channels through walls of tradition and dogma, more than justify the vision of the pioneers of forty years ago. The Nation congratulates the league and its director and urges its readers who are in the New York area to attend the celebration of its fortieth year.—The Nation.

Shed a Tear for Peter

Young King Peter of Yugoslavia is almost admirable, in a way. Even if he did what Winston Churchill told him to do, he'd be an extremely poor bet for holding his throne. Practically everybody seems to know that except Peter. But his faith is monumental. He may be the last man alive this side of Tokyo who really believes in the divine right of kings. Royally he defies the advice of Mr. Churchill, chief remaining prop of Balkan royalty. Royally, without consulting his British protectors, he announced at his London "court" two weeks ago that he couldn't accept the regency arrangement reached by his premier, Ivan Subasitch and Marshal Tito, with the blessings of Moscow and London. Now—despite Mr. Churchill's warning of Jan. 18 that events can't wait for Peter—the 21-year-old monarch regally dismissed his cabinet, Subasitch and all. His "chancellery" explains that the king has "lost confidence in Dr. Subasitch," so "collaboration in any serious matter is out of the question." As we said, Peter was in any event almost certainly heading for a knockout. But it's sort of gruesome, the way he and his little royal court lead with the chin.—The Chicago Sun.

WHO ARE "SOCIAL FASCISTS" NOW?

Our memory harked back a number of years when we learned last week that the "Daily Worker," organ of American Communism, gave its editorial blessing to the Roosevelt proposal for a labor draft for private profit. These are the same people, we recalled, who once stigmatized us Socialists as "yellow" and called us "social fascists." Well, times do change—but not so often as do the Communists. Possibly the same typewriter which first pounded out the slogan, "The Yanks Are Not Coming,"—remember, when Hitler and Stalin were working together under a sort of economic aid agreement?—was used to write the words, "National Service for Victory" which appeared at the top of the Communist crafty surrender of a freedom of which America's Stalin-stooge always had sneered. Unfortunately, few Americans understand why it is that the Com-mies are now so eager to see American Labor subjected to the rule of a supper state. But we Socialists understand: Some day—very soon now—the props that are being placed under the capitalist economy will collapse. That will be the catastrophe that will give the Com-mies their chance. Perhaps then they will inherit the absolute power that is now being established over the working class. That will be harvest time for the apostles of dictatorship—they hope!—Reading Labor Advocate.

NOT ALL FARMERS ARE PROSPEROUS

Cash Income of Agriculture
Largest in History, But 88
Per Cent of Total Goes to
Half of Operators

The Federal Reserve Board took a year-end look at agriculture and came up with these interesting conclusions: As a whole, the industry is more prosperous than in any other period in history. Higher prices and increased production have raised cash income 180 per cent above pre-war levels. The top 40 per cent of farm families had cash incomes ranging from \$1,600 to \$3,370 and over. Fifty per cent of the farmers received 88 per cent of the total income. Ten per cent had incomes of less than \$130 and 40 per cent had incomes under \$700. These figures, the board said, "make it obvious that rural poverty has not been eliminated." It added that many low-income farm families are worse off than before the war. The more fortunate farmers happy position is due mainly to the fact that the prices they received for their product increased 99 per cent since 1939, while the prices paid for the things they bought increased only 35 per cent. The figures will probably be challenged by farmers, but they are vouched for by Reserve Board "experts." During the war production has increased about a third, notwithstanding a shortage of labor. This was accomplished by a very sharp increase in the use of machinery. After the war the needs of the nation, according to the board can be supplied with a few million fewer workers than were employed before the war. The value of farm land has

jumped 44 per cent, and the board says this is a grave threat to continued prosperity after the war, when the "boom-and-bust" experience of the last war is likely to be repeated.

SHORTAGE OF COAL IS HELD EXAGGERATED

While administration officials were raising a scare about coal shortages and ordering reductions in consumption, a United Mine Workers spokesman declared "there's no ground for hysteria." "There's no over-all scarcity of coal," he said. "Our reserves are adequate and our members stand ready to produce all that's needed." "Shortages impend only in certain types of coal, and we can easily lick those. For example, supplies of coal for steel mills are running low." "So take care of that situation, our people in the mines of Southern West Virginia, Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee have agreed to do extra work on two Sundays—January 28 and February 11—to build up stocks. We will do it in any other instances of emergencies that may arise."

NATION'S DRINK BILL IS RECORD-BREAKER

Americans last year spent a record-breaking seven billion dollars for alcoholic beverages, about a billion more than in 1943. That figures out at the rate of about \$54 for every man, woman and child in the country. This doesn't mean that drinking is on the increase. In fact, consumption of whisky was 25,000,000 gallons less than in 1942. The greater outlay was due to higher taxes and prices. Ostentation is the signal flag of hypocrisy.—E. H. Chapin.

THE MARCH OF LABOR



About Sub-Standard Wages

What, by the way, is a sub-standard wage? The National War Labor Board is trying to make up its mind. Dr. George W. Taylor, public member, thinks 55 cents an hour is the point below which no one should be required to work, though there are millions of toilers in this country getting much less. The Labor members have suggested 72 cents an hour as the proper figure. How would you like to live on 55 cents an hour? Or 72 cents an hour? How many War Bonds would you be able to buy on that kind of money? What kind of a home would you have? How well would you be able to care for your family? A standard wage is one that permits ordinary, decent American living conditions. A sub-standard wage is something below that. Well, isn't that plain? Apparently the WLB doesn't think so, for it is toying with the idea of fixing the sub-standard mark at something like 60 cents, according to the newspapers. Meanwhile, down in the deep South some scores of non-compliance cases are still hanging fire. The Board has been unable to convince many southern employers that they should pay more than 30 cents an hour. Even in the New England states some of the textile mills pay less than 50 cents. The WLB Labor members had this to say about it: "To date, the Board has refused to attack this problem in a forthright fashion. It has evaded the issue and sought to circumvent or postpone an adequate solution by creating wholly unsatisfactory administrative stopgaps. The Board has persisted in this conduct... despite powers granted in statutes and executive orders, despite its own brave words that action would be taken to meet the problem of eliminating substandards of living. It is late indeed—but not too late—for the board to act courageously and effectively." No, it is not too late for the Board to act, but there appears to be very little likelihood that it will act effectively or that it will eliminate substandard wages. Which brings us back to the fundamental fact: Decent wages, honest American living standards, will not be obtained by government fiat. Neither the War Labor Board, nor Congress, nor any other agency of government will abolish poverty wages. Only by organizing into strong Labor Unions can working people do that. The working people themselves must lead the way, statutory help comes later—usually much later.—Washington Teamster.

STATEMENT OF THE SERBIAN DEMOCRATS IN THE UNITED STATES

The petition of the Serbs National Federation and the Serbian National Defense submitted to the Acting Secretary of State Mr. Joseph Grew and Pres Roosevelt by Bishop Dionisie, of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of the United States and Canada, Mr. Louis Christopher, president of the Serbian National Federation and Mr. Michael Duchich, president of the Serbian National Defense on January 23, 1945, has neither the approval nor consent of the democratic Serbs in America. It is well-known that Serbs in Yugoslavia not only support the National Liberation Movement under leadership of Marshal Tito, but also compose the majority of that movement.

A group of former adherents of the discredited pro-fascist regime of Milan Stojadinovic formed in this country a chauvinistic organization which was supported by former Ambassador Constantine Fotich. At the Congress of this organization, held in Chicago on June 28, 1943, they submitted to the government of the United States a resolution demanding withdrawal of recognition of Yugoslavia as a state. That group propagates hate and disunity among the Yugoslavs and calls for the creation of a "Greater Serbia" in which Croats, Slovenes and others would be subject peoples. They oppose Marshal Tito because

the National Liberation Movement carries democracy, unity and equality of all South-Slavic peoples in the Balkans. The Serbian people in Yugoslavia support the National Liberation Movement. Exceptions are only Hitler's collaborators and former pro-fascist office-holders. The chauvinistic propaganda of this group is harmful to the United States and to Yugoslavia, and is contradictory to the ideals for which this war is being waged.

Zarko Bunciek, President Serbian Democratic Congress "Vidovdan." Rev. Strahinja Maletich, Exec Secretary United Committee of South-Slavic Americans.

JUST ONE POUND OF COAL

Just one pound of coal, it's true, but as the Norfolk and Western Railway so ably points out—look what it will do: It will produce enough energy to produce steel to make one 2,000-pound aerial bomb, or nine 3-inch trench mortars, or nine 20 mm. aircraft cannon, or sixteen 5-inch shells, or twenty 1,000-pound aerial bombs, or twenty-one 4-inch shells, or 833 hand grenades. Coal miner, remember, the next time you load your car, what that coal can produce. There are depths in man that go to the lowest hell and heights that reach the highest heaven.—Carlyle.

IN THE WIND

From THE NATION

Man-power: While the press bemoans the "exodus" of workers from war industries, the War Production Board estimates that war shortages are due to the following causes: Step-ups in production schedules, 46 per cent; design changes, 26 per cent; labor shortages, 22 per cent; facilities shortages, 12 per cent. And the conservative Bureau of Labor Statistics announces that the "quit rate" in all manufacturing for August, September, and October of 1944 was lower in war industries than in manufacturing as a whole.

Politics: This advertisement appeared in the Savannah, Georgia, Morning News of December 19: "For Congress, First Georgia District. Vote for H. W. Shepard, White Jeffersonian Democrat, in Real Election November 5, 1946. Favors restricting the franchise to the white race. Opposes policing the world with American conscripts."

Ballyhoo: On the day we learned that the British Broadcasting Corporation, acting on orders from the government, has refused to permit Juan Negrin to broadcast his address to the anti-Franco meeting in New York January 2, a reader called our attention to the fact that the dust jackets of books from England carry a blurb for the B. B. C. that ends with these words: "The voice of British is the voice of freedom."

Journalism: The Baton Rouge State-Times of December 20 ran Westbrook Pegler's column thus: "The Dies committee educated the public in many ways. The terms 'fellow-traveler,' 'Trojan horse,' and 'transmission belt,' all part of the Communist jargon, entered the common language, designating conspirators or dupes who col-(Continued on Comic Page)."

Festung Europa: A Copenhagen woman, watching some new German recruits, remarked: "They're only children!" As punishment for her insult to the Wehrmacht, the Gestapo forced her to stand at attention for three hours, repeating, "They're not children, they're heroes."

MANY BILLS OF IMPORTANCE TO LABOR INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS

WASHINGTON.—Already more than a thousand new bills have been introduced in the new session of Congress—many of them of direct and vital interest to labor.

It is significant that more than half of the measures deal with affairs of veterans of the present and past wars. Mostly they increase present benefits or propose new ones.

Of especial interest to labor is a bill by Rep. Ludlow of Indiana repealing the Smith-Connally Act and another by Rep. Harless of Arizona repealing that section of the act which makes it unlawful for unions to contribute to political campaign funds.

Congresswoman Mary Norton of New Jersey has a bill requiring payment to women of equal wages for equal work, and another for cooperation between the states and the Federal government in establishing and maintaining safety regulations and proper working conditions.

Rep. Woodruff of Michigan and Rep. Randolph of West Virginia would prevent aliens from voting or holding office in trade unions.

Rep. Hobbs of Alabama reintroduced his amendment to the anti-racketeering law so as to make it apply to the activities of labor unions.

A score or more bills call for higher old-age pensions, while Dingell of Michigan reintroduced the Wagner-Dingell bill for a complete overhaul and liberalization of the Social Security system. This has the backing of the American Federation of Labor.

MAY BE NEEDED

Columbus, O.—The Bureau of Unemployment Compensation closed the year 1944 with a \$422,627,000 balance and its reserve fund available for the payment of unemployment compensation benefits.

Grace is to the body what good sense is to the mind.—Rochefoucauld.

MORE SCARCITY TALK

James F. Byrnes, assistant president of the United States, is scaring the daylight out of the people on the coal question again. He fears a serious shortage of fuel, and he therefore wants offices and homes to keep the temperature down to 68 degrees. He is also investigating excess runs on railroads and other excessive uses of coal in an effort to curb them.

If Mr. Byrnes only knew the true situation in the nation, he would have no fears—and that is: give the miners the chance to dig coal and they'll dig all the country needs, and more.

Working four or three days a week won't produce the coal this nation needs. The operators won't work much more because they say they haven't got contracts for coal. It looks as though something went haywire somewhere, especially in view of the fact the operators got a 17-cent per ton increase in their coal prices in order to keep the miners busy six days a week.

Mr. Byrnes, why not investigate a little deeper? Why not order the mines to be operated six days a week, as other industry is doing? Why try to solve a problem by ignoring the source of the trouble. Temporary expedients won't work.

If 625,000,000 tons of coal will be needed in 1945, the miners will produce it—if given the chance by their employers.

There are no ifs, ands, or buts about that!—The Progressive Miner.

TRIVIA POLITICA

When Pope Pius XII says that a return to the past is vain we had all better begin looking ahead. Those were his words to the Roman nobility when they presented him with a traditional New Year's gift. But, said the Pope comfortingly, "even the nobility has its task" in the brave new world... EL SALVADOR'S fake election last week had the expected result: it was won by General Salvador Castaneda Castro. Provisional President Aguirre's man, who received 312,754 votes. Several hundred courageous Salvadoreans registered their protest against the dictatorship, however, by casting votes for the four opposition candidates, who had withdrawn on the ground that they could not combat the machinery established to insure General Castaneda's election. Elections were staged in the hope of fooling hemisphere republics into thinking that El Salvador had gone democratic... IN SWITZERLAND German war books have taken a sharp drop in price. "Break-through in the West" has been reduced from \$1.75 to 60 cents. "Victory over France" and "From the Karawanken Mountains to Crete" have been similarly cut. "In Defiance of All Powers," which contains the high command's philosophy, is now selling for 30 cents... "RUSSIA BARS Entry of Catholic Priests," a headline in the New York "Times," no longer indicates that religion is considered an opiate for the masses but simply that the Soviet is meeting its own clerical requirements. "I am confident," said Ivan V. Polyansky, chairman of the Soviet Council on Religious Cults, "that Russia's own talented and hard-working clergy is capable of serving the needs of the faithful, especially as the training of new priests is already proceeding"... "GREATER GREECE and George for King" was one of the songs sung last week's allegedly spontaneous demonstration in Athens, which was actually organized by the Greek Chamber of Commerce. Street hawkers did a rush business in King George lapel buttons, and one of the banners showed King George bearing a can of bully beef, a bottle of wine, and a loaf of bread in his outstretched hands... FRIENDS OF FASCISM will be glad to know that Jorgo Ubico, ex-dictator of Guatemala, is safe in New Orleans. He says he will remain in the United States until the end of the war, when he will take up residence in Spain. Ubico's regime was overthrown last year after a fourteen-year reign of terror in which civil liberties were ruthlessly suppressed—and schools and highways built to create a facade of democratic progress.—From The Nation.

NATION'S HEALTH A DISGRACE

Disgraceful health conditions in this country are exposed by a sub-committee of the Senate Committee of Education and Labor in a report to Congress. Signed by Sen. Claude Pepper, Elbert D. Thomas and Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., the document summarizes what the committee discovered in a study conducted last year.

The report declares that, because of defects, injuries and illnesses which could have been prevented had medical care been available to all the people, the nation has suffered heavy losses in manpower, both for the armed services and for industry.

More than 4,500,000 young men "in the prime of life" were found to be absolutely unfit for military service, and more than 1,000,000 have been discharged from service because of defects other than those sustained in battle, the report says.

Another 1,500,000 men now in uniform were rendered fit for service only through medical and dental care given after they were inducted.

In all, the committee estimates at least 40 per cent of men of military age are handicapped by preventable defects, or more than twice the number of men we now have overseas.

In 1943, the committee says, illness caused a loss of more than 600,000,000 man-days of labor—forty-seven times the amount of time lost through strikes and lock-outs of all kinds in that year.

The committee suggests that health insurance is one way—perhaps the only effective way—of dealing with the health problem.

"Full employment and adequate social security are indispensable to a truly effective health program," the report says. "We should begin planning now for the reconversion period. We have seen what neglect of opportunities for health and physical fitness has cost us during the war."—American Federationist.

U. S. Coal production in 1944 was more than all the rest of the world put together.

THOMAS HEAD OF U. S. DELEGATION IN LONDON PARLEY

Philip Murray announced that he will not be able to head the CIO delegation to the London world labor meeting Feb. 6. Negotiations on the steel wage case will force him to remain in this country, he said.

R. J. Thomas, president of the UAW-CIO and a delegate to the preliminary meeting last December, will head the CIO group, Murray said. Sidney Hillman will also be a delegate, taking the place of Frank Rosenblum, vice-president of the Clothing Workers, who was designated earlier.

CIO will leave a two-man continuations committee behind in London, Murray said, to work out details on the new world labor federation expected to come from the meeting. These two men will be Michael Ross, of the Marine and Shipbuilding Workers, and Martin C. Kyne, vice-president, Retail & Wholesale Employees.

"WHERE WAS YOU WHEN WE NEEDED YOU?"

The sheriff's office in New York county urges jail sentences for O. P. A. violators. Attorney General Biddle tells the Judiciary Committee of the Senate that those who speculate in railroad transportation should be put behind the bars and that he is preparing legislation to crack down on other black marketeers with equal severity.

This is all very interesting, but we feel like the old darkey working in a cotton field on an unusually hot day. He looked up at the blazing sun and exclaimed: "Where was you last January when we needed you?"

We agree with the sheriff of New York county, but we wonder why the Attorney General didn't develop his enthusiasm for jail sentences when the O. P. A. was first launched.—Labor.

A DEFINITION

An optimist is a man who expects a home atmosphere in a hotel and hotel service at home.