



SNUBBED by CIO President Phillip Murray (R.), Rep. Clare Hoffman (R., Mich.) holds session with himself. Labor leader defies subpoena to appear before the congressman, who constituted himself a one-man investigating committee to probe a steel-worker's strike at the Shakespeare Products Co. plant in Kalamazoo, Mich.

Progressives to map '49 county program

A major campaign to repeal the Illinois sales tax is expected to emerge from the Cook County convention of the Progressive Party, Sunday, Jan. 9.

A weekend of planning, to include a meeting of downstate party leaders on Saturday, also will map drives for a

he declared: "We have taken a very benevolent attitude toward Kennelly. We will make him a subject of attack if he fails now to produce on major issues."

Sessions will take place in Temple Hall, 330 S. Marshfield Ave.

In addition to a legislative blueprint, the convention will draw up a plan for streamlining the party's county structure, according to William H. Miller, state director. Miller expressed the hope that party workers who gained experience in ward activity during the election campaign will be elevated to top positions of leadership.

TO HEAR VARIED REPORTS

The convention will hear reports from labor, Young Progressives and the nationalities council.

Miller said this week that a key function of party work will be to keep the public abreast of delivery on campaign pledges by elected candidates.

"It is our intention," Miller asserted, "to make Truman and Stevenson deliver on their promises. We will be exceedingly happy if they do. If they don't, we must see that the people know about it."

Miller pointed a warning at Mayor Kennelly in addition to those elected last November, as

Decatur shop owner fined

DECATUR, Ill.—Four Negroes, who were refused service in an ice cream shop last February, have finally won their civil rights suit against the owners in Circuit court. The plaintiffs originally asked \$2,500 damages, but each of the four will receive \$25, the minimum provided by statute.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Block, owners of the shop at 150 Merchant st., were accused of ordering their waitress not to serve Negroes. Those denied service were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Slaw, James Smith and Marshal Brad-dix.

After the jury had remained deadlocked for 22 hours, Circuit Judge Martin E. Morthland acted on a motion asking for a directed verdict in favor of the plaintiffs. The amount of damages had not been set and there was no indication whether the defendants would appeal the verdict.

The 1948 story: profits, profits and more profits

The biggest hidden news story of 1948 was the continued sensational rise of corporation profits. After payment of taxes, 1948 profits stand at the all-time peak of \$21.7 billion.

Old hands at concealing the real news, the press as the year drew to a close played up testimony before a Senate investigating committee by big business' hired economists who tried to make a mole hill out of mountainous corporate profits. Favorite word used by the slick economists to describe profits as "illusory."

If it was just a dream, it was big; beautiful and large as life.

What big business cannot explain away is that corporate profits have shown a spectacular increase since the war, with millions of consumers footing the bill.

Estimated profits for 1948 before taxes are \$35 billion, compared to \$20.1 billion in 1945, an increase of 74.1%. The picture after taxes is even more striking. Estimated profits for all of 1948 are \$21.7 billion, compared to \$17.4 billion in 1947, and \$8.5 billion in 1945, the year the excess profits tax was repealed.

ENORMOUS THREE YEAR JUMP

The jump from 1945 to 1948 post-tax profits was 155.3%.

Despite industry's tear-jerking advertising campaign in 1948, peddling the line that it makes penny profits per sales dollar, the truth is that out of every dollar of goods sold by the corporations, about 30c goes into profits, bonuses and salaries for the upper-crust company officials. For every dollar the corporations paid out in wages in 1945, they made 33.7c in profits. By 1948 the take had increased to 42.2c.

A breakdown of the over-all profit picture shows the nation's key industries leading the big parade. The November 1948 newsletter issued by the Natl. City Bank of New York reported the following profit increases for the first nine months of 1948 compared to the similar 1947 period:

Sixteen petroleum companies, a 74.9% profit increase; 12 auto and truck firms, 49.6%; 30 iron and steel companies, 19.8%; 14 electrical equipment and machine companies, 18.8%; 27 textile firms, 17.9%; and 38 chemical and drug companies, 15.6%.

These profits were piled on top of steady increases amassed since the beginning of the war, with each year setting up a new

45% more needed

According to the Heller Committee, a healthful and decent standard of living for a worker, his wife and two children requires an income of \$78.50 a week.

But in this year of high profits and high prices, the average worker was earning \$54.06 a week—before taxes. He'd need about a 45% wage increase to meet the none-too-high standards of the Heller budget.



ANTI-LABOR FUND of \$1 million is admitted by General Electric Co. President Charles E. Wilson, who told joint profits subcommittee in Washington his firm spends that amount yearly fighting the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers (CIO). Profits of GE this year will top \$111 million, Wilson testified.

record.

WORKERS GET DRY CRUSTS

While industry was swimming in gravy, more and more workers were getting tossed dry crusts. Despite three rounds of wage increases since V-J day, price increases of 35% brought an actual cut of 15% in the real wages of workers. Again the press sought to cover this up by exaggerating the importance of slight drops in the government's cost-of-living index, which every housewife knows has little resemblance to what she pays out to the grocer and

butcher.

In an attempt to head off rising demands for restoration of price control, business papers at the year's end jubilantly reported that prices were leveling off. They didn't report that the level was still way over the heads of working families.

Sixty percent of American families are earning under \$3,000 a year, in contrast to the \$4,100 the Heller Committee says a family needs to get along. By the end of 1948, great sections of the American people were facing real hardship. Roughly 50% of the nation's families had less than \$200 in savings and, as reports of layoffs and production cutbacks gained in prominence, the absence of savings was bringing many families close to a crisis point.

FOURTH ROUND READIED

The bells ringing in the new year of 1949 were also ringing in demands for a fourth round in wage increases. One fact could not be engulfed by the torrent of excuses for exorbitant profits. Industry can afford to pay a wage increase of 25% to all wage and salaried employes without raising prices and still have \$14.2 billion in profits before taxes. After taxes, its profit take would be \$8.8 billion, or 120% more than the prewar average.

Big business didn't have to wait for handouts from Santa Claus this year. It played Santa Claus to itself all year 'round.

VICTIM OF CHICAGO HOTEL FIRE



SEASON OF FIRES finds Chicago slum flats and hotels main targets. Four major fires have occurred since Dec. 1, latest in an apartment building at 4600 S. Paulina St., this week. After fires at Hotels Hubbard and Lorraine, flames swept the Victoria last week, where fireman, above, vainly applies oxygen mask to victim of fifth-floor blaze.

U. S. turns clock back

In Japan

TOKYO — Japanese labor is catching the brunt of the heavy strikebreaking club being wielded by Gen. Douglas MacArthur's occupation headquarters here. Latest anti-union blow was the Dec. 20 decree halting the three strikes involving some 812,000 coal, textile, maritime and electrical workers.

Reason given was that the work stoppages "interfered with production." But Japanese workers have long been aware of the close link between the occupation and big business.

The occupation, which banned strikes of Japanese government workers some months ago, has now assumed the power to outlaw strikes in private industry. Such interference with union rights is a direct violation of both United Nations and State department policies on Japan announced directly after V-J Day.

In France

PARIS (ALN) — The French government has returned the great coal mines at Le Creuzot, nationalized after V-E day, to the Schneider trust which owned them before the war. The Schneider interests were deeply involved in collaboration with the Nazis during the wartime occupation.

U. S. pressure has been instrumental in reversing the French trend toward full nationalization of basic industries, which was at its peak in 1945. Nationalization already decreed was administered in a very half-hearted manner after Marshall plan aid began.

In the mining industry, for instance, former owners remained in top management posts and were paid a bonus on each ton of coal extracted. The process of returning them to their previous power has now begun openly.

In Germany

FRANKFURT — Giant industries that backed Hitler's rise to power with marks and munitions have been given the green light by U. S. occupation authorities in their bid for cartel agreements to control world markets.

The full story of the resurgence of German trusts is being unfolded before a special U. S. Army commission here. Witnesses testified that the mammoth Robert Bosch Combine, makers of electrical machines, was given an OK on one such agreement, by Richardson Bronson, head of the military government decartelization group. American and British legal opinion holds the pact is illegal.

The commission is also probing action of Gen. Lucius D. Clay and some of his staff, who decided not to break up the big German VKF ball-bearing trust