

Steel Strike Victory Prospects Now Greater Than 1919---Foster

"STEEL WORKERS! TAKE STRIKE IN YOUR OWN HANDS! PUT NO TRUST IN OFFICIALS OF A.F.L. AMALGAMATED ASSOCIATION!"

William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., national secretary of the Trade Union Unity League, and leader of the great Steel Strike of 1919, has addressed a statement to the steel workers who are now on the eve of their second great offensive. Foster, now convalescing in a sanatorium in the state of Washington, draws from his wealth of experience in strike struggles and tenders his earnest advice to the steel workers.

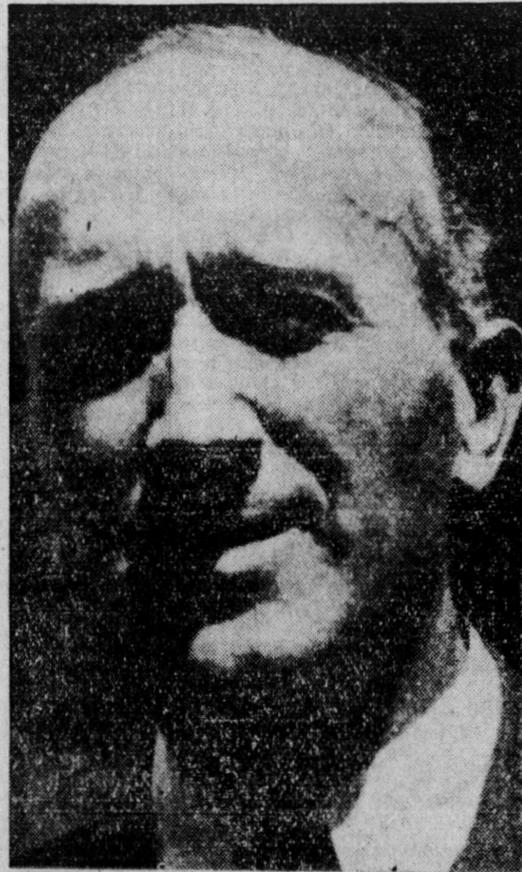
By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

IT IS with the greatest joy that I observe the huge and growing strike movement among the steel workers. In 1919 the steel workers showed that they could organize themselves and bring the great steel mills to a standstill in spite of all the Steel Trust's company unions, spy systems, terrorism and the treachery of the reactionary labor leaders and the government. That was the opening general battle. In 1934 the steel workers will carry this struggle on to victory.

The situation in the steel industry is very favorable for such a victory, far better, in fact, than in 1919. The most important factor is that the workers are in more of a fighting spirit. In 1919 the organization campaign had to come from outside the industry proper; this time the steel workers themselves have done the job of organization. The 1919 strike was led almost entirely from the top; now the rank and file steel workers are pushing forward.

The coming strike can be won. But it will be a hard struggle. We may be sure, as is now evident, that every weapon of the Steel Trust, the government and the reactionary labor leaders, will be used against it. Only by a policy of militant mass struggle can all these enemies be defeated and the workers' demands carried through.

Steel workers! Take this strike into your own hands! Put no trust in your union official leaders. In the 1919 strike the A. A. top leaders, the Tighe,



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Davis, Leonards, etc.—acted like agents of the steel corporations. They were against the organization campaign and strike from start to finish and they betrayed the struggle times without number. And their treacherous course in this present strike movement, trying to sabotage and sell it out, is fully in line with their years-long course as bootlickers of the steel bosses.

You must realize that the A. A. head leaders are your enemies. No less than the employers and the government, they are out to break your strike. If you fail to understand this vital fact and neglect to keep the strike in your own hands, then they will surely sell you out and defeat your efforts. And these statements apply to the top A. F. of L. leaders as well as those of the A. A. They are all tarred with the same brush of labor treason. They supported Tighe's sell-out policy in 1919 and they are doing it again in 1934.

Steel workers! Also put no reliance in the Roosevelt government. President Roosevelt is the representative of the big employers. He is not your friend. He talks much of friendliness to Labor. So did President Wilson in 1919. But Wilson showed his true capitalist colors in the steel strike. With the approval of the Federal Government, troops, police, courts and every means of force and suppression were used against us in 1919. Roosevelt has already amply shown that he is the enemy of the working class. His betrayal of the steel workers in Weirton is only one of many such acts all over the country.

Many bitter lessons we learned in the 1919 strike. Let us profit by them now. These lessons may all be summed up in one phrase: "Take the strike into your own hands." Beware of your corrupt official leaders and of the hypocritical Roosevelt Government. Be on your guard against every maneuver to postpone the strike as that would paralyze your fighting spirit. Don't be trapped into government arbitration as that would surrender you helpless

into the hands of your enemies. This strike must be won on the picket line. Strike 100 per cent on June 16th and then stay on strike until your demands are met. That is the way to win.

May I, as one who fought side by side with you in the great 1919 strike, offer you the following proposals based upon the experience gained in that battle:

1. Let a broad workers' committee take full charge of the strike so far as the A. A. is concerned, pushing the Tighe clique of misleaders aside.
2. Then form a united front between this committee and the Steel & Metal Workers Industrial Union and jointly conduct the strike.
3. Draw the great masses directly into strike activities, such as mass picketing, broad strike committees, etc., and permit no settlements to be made without the vote of the striking masses of steel workers.
4. Play fair with the Negro steel workers. Draw them into the strike leadership and see to it that their demands are furthered and their jobs protected. They will prove the very best of strikers and fighters.
5. Reach the railroad workers and coal miners with mass delegations, and win their support for your strike, so that when the strike comes no materials of steel shall be produced or hauled to and from the mills.

Steel workers! Your victory will be the victory of the whole working class. Strike solid on June 16th in every steel center in the United States. Solidarity will defeat the Steel Trust and all its government and reactionary labor leader allies.

P. S.—My only regret is that due to my prolonged illness from which I have not yet fully recovered, I am not able to take an active part in your fight. You can be sure however that I will do all in my power to assist.