

THE DAILY WORKER

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FROM PORTLAND TO DETROIT

ARTICLE XII (Conclusion).
By WILLIAM F. DUNNE.

The complete liquidation of the pre-war revolutionary movement puts all the burden and responsibility for giving the labor movement of the United States a class morale upon the Communists.

That the pre-war revolutionary movement has disappeared is brought sharply to our attention by the death of Eugene Debs—the last symbol of honest working class militancy left to the socialist party—and by a number of other instances such as:

- 1) The bankruptcy and demoralization of the I. W. W. leading to a rapid disintegration of this once militant organization of workers.
- 2) By the fact that such revolutionaries as Scott Nearing, Robert W. Dunn and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, survivors of the pre-war period, stand alone and no matter in what direction they move (seemingly towards our party, fortunately) they can bring no masses with them.
- 3) The total absence of any organized distribution of propaganda and agitational literature on a mass scale except by our party.

Working class of America has no revolutionary leadership and no other organized class political expression outside of our party with a full knowledge of what that means for our party in this period of slow development of the class struggle.

Our party, in a country which has no revolutionary traditions of a purely working class character (albeit the war of independence and some aspects of the Civil War furnish valuable analogies) must now begin in earnest, to use a well-worn phrase, to plow virgin soil. We must make contact with those masses of workers who have come into industry since the world war (the last twelve years most of them young and therefore the most hopeful and militant section).

THIS is not to say that we can or will neglect any category of workers, but simply to emphasize that there are no important sections of the American working class possessed of class consciousness who are under the influence of other working class parties other than the Communist Party and upon whom we must concentrate as the most likely source of recruits for our party or with the idea of splitting off sections closer to us.

There is no such group of workers in this country and the overwhelming bulk of our work is therefore among workers whose contact with revolutionary theory and practice is nil or of the most casual kind.

WE must and we will in this period (whose length we can only guess at since we are but in the beginning of it) devote far more time to the elementary tasks of winning the masses from capitalism. As has been said, there is no group standing between us and the capitalist class and their outright agents such as the trade union bureaucracy whose utter sub-

servience to their imperialist masters is becoming better known each day to the working class and as to whose real role in the period of imperialism the recent A. F. of L. convention furnished plenty of proof.

OUR party, therefore, finds it possible to become, by working thru and adding the slowly developing left wing, the teacher and organizer of substantial sections of the American working class.

At this time there are no great political struggles appearing on the horizon of the American labor movement. Even the severe distress and discontent among large numbers of farmers has not been sufficient to prevent the practical liquidation or the stultifying of the farmer-labor movements which appeared three years ago and as has been shown already, there are no large movements in progress among the workers and no sure signs of their developing in the immediate future with the sole exception of the soft coal mining industry where a strike appears probable next spring.

OUR party must turn surely and certainly to the hewing of wood and the drawing of water in the American labor movement. By actual accomplishment and achievement in these tasks we can broaden greatly the base of our party, entrench it among the masses in basic industry and the trade unions, become known, respected and loved because of our energy, ability and willingness to do the "dirty work," but the work that must be done, and done far better than it is now being done, in the labor movement.

Our shop bulletins, issued by our nuclei, have already given some proof of their possibilities as methods of lifting the workers out of the mire of company unionism and trade union reaction, but in this field we have not even scratched the surface. These bulletins must become organs of a systematic plan for the organization of the unorganized and be linked up much more closely with general trade union work of the party.

WE have not given sufficient attention to the formation of shop committees as a method of broadening the activities of our nuclei, of developing initiative among workers in basic industry and as an indispensable section of the left wing.

I mention these two fields of work because they are the ones with which we can approach effectively especially those workers without previous or with very little trade union experience and who are not weighed down by official reaction.

By actively prosecuting these two tasks it is entirely possible, as the gap widens between the labor aristocracy, trade union officialdom and the masses of the workers, as it already is occurring, for the Communists to become the organizers of the new militant trade unionism with its basis in the class struggle which the inevitable pressure of capitalism and the continued betrayals of the masses by their leaders will put on the order

of business of the American working class.

THE present situation undoubtedly holds great dangers for our party and the whole labor movement. The deadening effect of this period upon the general labor movement has been previously outlined but it is evident also that our party has not escaped entirely a similar effect.

It would be the greatest mistake imaginable if, on the basis of the possibilities for organization work among the unskilled and semi-skilled workers we should elevate this work to the level of revolutionary political activity. Such a course would inevitably relegate us to the status of a trade union party, intent only on immediate reforms reminiscent of the Bernsteinism of the social-democracy.

THERE is the second danger that is attempting to evade the first our party will become the originator of and instrument for the uttering of revolutionary phrases without any connection with the life and struggles of the American masses and thereby isolate itself from the broad stream of the American labor movement.

Only a clear understanding of the united front tactic directed toward getting masses of workers into motion on the issues of their daily struggles and isolating, not our party, but the agents of imperialism within the labor movement, the trade union bureaucracy, because of their deliberate betrayals which we must be able not only to point out but explain to the masses on the basis of Leninism, will prevent our party succumbing to either one of these two dangers.

WE must develop an understanding and a method whereby we can secure for the workingclass and our party the maximum results from any given situation.

More than ever, when there are such large sections of the workingclass corrupted by the sops thrown to them by immensely powerful and wealthy rulingclass of America, it is necessary that there be no separation of the economic and political struggles and that in every struggle the maximum effort be exerted, without jeopardizing the possibility of immediate substantial achievement, to broaden and connect isolated conflicts with the general struggle against capitalism and the capitalist state.

THAT this demands a party solidly rooted in the American labor movement and conscious of the traditions of that movement without being rendered incapable of flexibility and of devising and adopting new methods of struggle by the weight of tradition, it seems almost needless to state.

Our party cannot by itself produce great political struggles nor can it lead these struggles when the situation arises unless it has won the loyalty of the workingclass because of its achievements.

ALL the facts of the present situation point unerringly to the conclusion that the line of our party is that of a revolutionary party which has a correct program, has developed some skill in maneuvering, organizing and inspiring certain sections of

the workers in their daily struggles, but which has not as yet developed the strength and following necessary to exert a decisive influence on the American labor movement.

Even tho we had here in America a revolutionary situation our party could not lead the masses in the right direction because of its weakness. If the British Communist Party was not able to overcome the dead weight of the reactionary leadership of the labor movement in the general strike and prevent a betrayal in a situation a thousand times more favorable than that existing in America, how much more difficult is our problem and how much more routine work in the labor movement lies ahead of us.

AS the subjective factor in the American class struggle, we cannot wait for great political struggles to develop with the hope that in their difficulty the masses will come flocking to our banner. The reverse is true. In this period we must build and consolidate our influence while at the same time gaining in the daily struggles the skill, knowledge and stamina which alone enable Communist parties to turn revolutionary situations into actual and victorious revolution.

We must be content with smaller achievements conscious that they are of a solid character and represent real steps on the road to building an American mass Communist party.

THE survey of the labor movement from the Portland convention of the A. F. of L. in 1923 to the recent Detroit convention shows:

- 1.) That the trade union leadership has been going steadily to the right and is acting as the agent of the capitalist class in the labor movement.
- 2.) That large sections of the trade union membership has been going steadily to the right under the influence of (a) the concessions made by a dominant American imperialism and (b) the worker-cooperation policy of the trade union leadership.
- 3.) That certain sections of the unorganized workers are also being lured into quiescence by various kinds of profit-sharing, welfare, social insurance, pensions and company union schemes.
- 4.) That as a result of this the labor movement has reached the lowest point in its history judged by the standard of class-consciousness, militancy and effectiveness.
- 5.) That in spite of the extraordinary efforts made by the capitalists and the trade union leadership to destroy all will to struggle, there is a still weak but definite leftward pressure from below.
- 6.) That this leftward tendency can be mobilized by the left wing and our party to force action from the leadership in support of trade union struggles like those of the Passaic textile workers and the garment workers.
- 7.) That there is in a number of both light and heavy industries a response to such slogans as "Organize the Unorganized" and "An Increase in Wages."
- 8.) That it is possible in this period for Communists to organize and

lead struggles based on the urgent needs of bitterly exploited workers but that this is still accompanied by enormous difficulties.

9.) That Communist nucleus work and shop bulletins, considering the lack of forces available for these elementary tasks, meet with a gratifying response from workers in basic industry and hold great possibilities for the workingclass and our party.

10.) That the left wing is still very weak, has little organizational character and can develop a mass character at present only by concentrating on immediate elementary demands.

11.) That the political consciousness of the masses is at an extremely low level as shown by the lack of response to labor party agitation and the almost complete liquidation of the farmer-labor party movements.

12.) That the pre-war revolutionary movement has been definitely liquidated, nothing remaining of it except small isolated groups and individuals here and there without mass influence.

OUR party, as already stated, alone makes a challenge to American capitalism.

On the basis of this fact and on the concrete facts of the present situation, the chief factor in which is the dominant position of American imperialism, faced nevertheless with renewed and merciless competition for world markets, as indicated by the recent free trade manifesto signed by J. P. Morgan and other finance-capitalists, and which will place inevitably new and intolerable burdens on the American masses, we must and we will intensify our work of basing our party firmly in the American labor movement and preparing the workingclass for victorious struggle for a workers' and farmers' government under the banner of the Communist International.

U. S. Women to Fight for Reenactment of Maternity Aid Law

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24.—Pressure by 4,000,000 women, represented by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, National League of Women Voters and other national women's organizations will be brought to bear to secure the re-enactment of the Sheppard-Towner act, the maternity act, which expires June 30, 1927.

Chief opponents of the bill are Senator Reed, Missouri, and Senator King, Utah.

The bill provides for an appropriation to be used for the advancement of maternity and infant welfare work. **THE 1921 Act appropriated \$1,240,000 for this work for five years.**

3 Killed in Crash.
JOHNSTOWN, Pa., Oct. 24.—Three persons were killed and two others were injured, one perhaps fatally, when a truck and a passenger automobile collided on the William Penn highway near the Indiana-Cambria county line early today.

BUILD THE DAILY WITH A SUB.

MINERS' CONVENTION VOTES FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO PASSAIC

(Special to The Daily Worker)
SHAMOKIN, Penn., Pa., Oct. 24. — After B. K. Gebert, Polish speaker and organizer spoke at a miners' convention here the delegates voted a donation of \$500 to the relief of the Passaic strikers.

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READ this testimonial and think and act.


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October 1st

Dear Mr. Lovestone:-

As a believer in free speech, absolute, universal and unlimited, I am delighted to see the Daily Worker making its way. I am, of course, no advocate of communism. It seems to me to be so unsound as to be almost insane. But I am glad that you have set up so energetic and interesting a paper to argue for it, and hope that you get enough support to keep it going.

Sincerely yours,



“I am delighted to see The DAILY WORKER making its way up.”


THIS is what Mencken says. It is very seldom that Mencken has words of praise for anybody or anything.

NOW do you want to see The DAILY WORKER continue making its way? Then KEEP The DAILY WORKER. Do you want to keep The DAILY WORKER—and make it even more energetic and interesting than it is today?—

THEN give today to Keep The DAILY WORKER

GET on the Honor Roll today to Keep The DAILY WORKER.

SIGN—Cut, Attach Remittance SEND TODAY


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