

NOVEMBER, 1921

# Labor Age



Millions  
of Idle Men



The Miners  
Step Forward



The Steel Trust  
vs. Labor



The Strength  
of the  
Amalgamated

The  
Next War  
In Mingo

Labor's  
Challenge  
To the Dis-  
armament  
Conference

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## A Composite Picture of What American Labor is Thinking and Doing

**L**ABOR AGE is begun, to fill a well-defined need. There is to-day a real demand for an aggressive and general magazine, presenting all the facts about the American labor movement from a viewpoint distinct from the interests of any party or section.

LABOR AGE will attempt to be this magazine—reporting and interpreting the up-to-date happenings from the battle-line of the struggle, as secured from original sources and as discussed and explained in the ranks of the labor movement and in its publications. In brief, it will aim to be a vivid, composite picture of what American labor is thinking and doing.

Every event in the labor struggle which is of value to labor men and women and those interested in the study of labor problems, and every significant expression of opinion by the labor press, will be included in our columns. There is a wealth of information appearing regularly in the organs of international unions, local labor papers and liberal and radical publications, which is available to only a limited group of readers—the members of a particular craft or the followers of a particular sectional idea—that should be available to a much wider audience.

To make these accounts more vivid and instructive, LABOR AGE will make increasing use of photographs of the labor struggle. These will be obtained from both this country and abroad, wherever a group of workers

has anything of interest to offer or wherever any striking industrial event occurs.

LABOR AGE believes that the goal of the American labor movement lies in the development of a system of production for service instead of for private profit. It believes that this is to be attained through the social ownership and democratic management of industry. As paths to this goal, LABOR AGE will discuss, through their leading advocates, the organization and strengthening of the workers on the economic field, through labor unions and cooperative enterprise; on the political field through independent political movements and on the educational field, through workers' educational efforts.

LABOR AGE will support all efforts on the part of labor to develop the solidarity of the workers, to the end that labor may come into its own. Its chief effort will be to draw together all groups and sections of opinion within the labor movement, by furnishing a forum where all groups may freely speak their minds.

At this hour, when the workers are so beset by industrial depression and the attacks of the employing interests, each group of them can well look the other in the face and consider what the situation is and how it can be met for the good of all. LABOR AGE will seek with each succeeding number, to contribute more and more toward this end, by graphically displaying the leading issues and events in the world of labor in the United States and by interpreting their meaning through the eyes of every section or group.

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## The Next War—in Mingo

By ROGER N. BALDWIN

*The injunction issued by Federal Judge A. B. Anderson at Indianapolis against the efforts of the United Mine Workers to organize Mingo County is the greatest menace and challenge to organized labor in the country. Upon the outcome of the conflict is staked the whole national organization of the miners. Something of the conditions of the struggle in Mingo may be seen in this sketch.*

THERE'S no doubt about it,—hell is going to break loose again in West Virginia. All the factors that have made intermittent warfare for two years are there unchanged, held in check only by military force.

Mingo County is the trouble center. You don't have to hunt for the evidence of trouble there. It jumps at you from every side. If you aren't impressed by the lithe youths in khaki who get on the train as you enter Mingo County,—displaying shiny six-shooters in ornate leather holsters,—you are by a conspicuous sign in an enterprising insurance company's window on your way from Williamson depot to the hotel, "Riots and Civil Commotions a Specialty." Or, if you tried to get an accident insurance policy before you come in, you might be impressed by the refusal of the companies to write any policies for Mingo.

The streets of the bustling little city of Williamson swarm with state police,—mere boys, fraternizing with civilians, smoking and storytelling on street corners, their guns hanging conspicuously from full cartridge belts.

Over at the hotel when I came down from my room, a newspaper man in the lobby, versed in West Virginia ways, inquired in a whisper if I had locked my windows. "Better do it," said he, "papers disappear mysteriously." I started right upstairs. "And say," he added, running after me, "don't mail your letters in the post-

office if you want to be sure they go unopened. Use the railway mail box at the station."

I began to feel as if I were back in the early days of 1917,—like any radical or pacifist getting initiated into the tactics of war on the home front.

Down in the lobby two long rows of easy chairs were filled by what seemed to be professional loungers. "Gunmen and company dicks," my newspaper adviser whispered, "the town is lousy with them. Don't talk to anyone you don't know. If you are seen with any friend of the United Mine Workers you'll be spotted and followed and like as not run out."

A short, fat man hustled in through the hotel door, giving the impression of being both out of breath and too stout for his clothes. A number of loungers jumped to greet him. He was evidently a prominent citizen. I asked. "Why, don't you know him? That's Major Davis, military commander of the county. What he says goes. He can take you out and shoot you if he takes a notion. He's the whole works here now,—police, court, jailer and executioner. The Supreme Court just said he had power to take a passenger off a transcontinental train, try him by court-martial and shoot him,—and no appeal to anyone in the land."

"Oh, come off. That can't be so," I protested. "Try it and see," said my neighbor. "Go over to jail and see what he's done. Place



Underwood and Underwood.

Made by I. P. E. U., 546

**HASTILY SUMMONED STATE POLICE**  
In the Streets of Logan, W. Va., on their way to Blair  
Mountain front early in September

is full of men on no charges at all,—been there months, some of them.”

The attorney for the United Mine Workers stepped up to Major Davis. “Major,” said he, “I wish you’d do something to make this martial law clearer. The boys tell me that they don’t know where they’re at. One day you arrest them for unlawful assembly when three of them get together, and another day when only two get together. Can’t you codify your rules?”

“Oh, no, that’s just the beauty of it,” replied the Major, “it wouldn’t be martial law if you knew the rules. I change it to meet conditions from day to day.”

The Governor’s martial law proclamation of last May greets you frequently from walls and bulletin boards. It elaborates all the powers needed in a war zone, and hands them to the Major with throne and scepter. He adds any provisions the Governor left out. Of course, the proclamation is directed against the miners and enforced only against them. Major Davis makes no pretense of being impartial. The State is openly aligned with the coal operators to enforce their law and order against the striking and locked-out miners.

A block away from the hotel, the county court house raises an imposing bulk against the Kentucky hills across the little river. Around it swarmed soldiers. A murder trial was going on,—the second trial of the miners involved in the battle at Matewan over a year ago, when seven Baldwin-Felts detectives, the mayor and two citizens were killed. As I went in, I was

stopped by two soldiers, deftly searched for a gun, and my brief-case politely taken for safe-keeping. I asked one of them if they really ever found guns on anyone going into court. He gave me a you-poor-simp look, and explained that hundreds of men carried revolvers by permit from the courts, and of course they had them on. “If they don’t want to give them up, they don’t go in,” he said, pointing to a crowd of some twenty men out in front. They even searched Senator Kenyon, chairman of the federal investigating committee. Everyone is properly suspected of gun-toting in West Virginia.

Next morning over in the hotel lobby one of the newspaper men took me aside. “See that hard-boiled guy over there? He’s ———, son-in-law of the proprietor, and a gunman. He took a machine-gun over the mountains to Logan for the battle in August. He’s laying for ——— (another newspaperman who was in Logan at the time) because he wrote him up right in a New York paper. Says he’ll get him if he sees him. He’s upstairs in his room, locked in. We’ve got to get him out of town quick.”

We knew an appeal to Major Davis would be useless, even with a Senatorial committee in town. And we knew enough of West Virginian etiquette to take a gunman at his word. So we successfully conspired to get the object of his attentions out the back way and out of town by auto, unseen.

As I was leaving the hotel, a local lawyer stepped up to say good-bye. “I’d like to be leaving this place, too,” he said, “never to come back. It’s getting on my nerves. You go along day after day without realizing how dangerous the place is. My wife has been after me for a long time to get out,—says she wants me alive anywhere rather than dead here. I guess we’ll be moving soon. It’s no place for an American.”

Everywhere in Mingo is that apprehension. Behind it is fear born of conflict open or suppressed, now dominated by the guns of the military dictatorship. All the evils of war are eating out the life of a community superficially peaceful and typically American in appearance. Serene green mountains overshadow the picturesque little city of brick and stucco wedged in between the railroad and the river. But in the hearts and minds of its people there is no serenity. There are the passions of conflict, with hundreds of hands ready to strike again when the chance comes.



# The Miners Step Forward

By POWERS HAPGOOD

OVER two thousand delegates, the majority of them fresh from the darkness of the coal mines, gathered at Indianapolis on the 20th of September for the National Convention of the United Mine Workers of America. They represented local unions of coal miners from all the important coal-producing sections of the United States and Canada, and for nearly three weeks smoke-filled Tomlinson Hall resounded with their voices in one of the stormiest meetings in the history of the union.

To many casual observers from the outside, the convention appeared to be nothing more than the scene of intense political wrangling between opposing factional leaders. Many of the delegates themselves were disappointed at the amount of time wasted in fighting over personal issues.

Signs of progress, however, were visible amid the battle of words. The most important of these were the growing revolt of the rank and file, as the convention wore on, against leadership by "politicians," and the strong demand for public ownership of the mines.

## Howat of Kansas

For the first three days of the convention the stage was held by a factional dispute that centered about the political aspirations of the president of the eighty thousand miners of Illinois, Frank Farrington. This was followed by the long five-day fight over the effort of the international officers to discipline Alexander Howat, the leader of the Kansas miners. Both debates resulted in victory for the international administration. The Executive Board had commanded the Illinois executive to itemize an account of \$27,000 spent during the outlaw strike of 1919. The convention overwhelmingly upheld this action.

Howat's defeat was less decisive. The question was: should the Kansas President be compelled to order back to work 30 or 40 men on strike in two Kansas mine operations? The Southwestern Interstate Coal Operators' Association had issued an appeal to the International Executive Board that this be done, on the ground that the strike was in violation of a contract. President Lewis had upheld the operators' request, and asked the convention, in an eloquent appeal, to sustain him on the principle of sanctity of contract. His

ability to express himself clearly and his domineering personality held him in good stead.

Howat, in contrast with Lewis, is quiet-voiced and matter-of-fact in speech. He appears to be anything but the rash leader reputation has made him. In his defense he maintained that he had not called the strike, but that the operators themselves had closed down one of the mines. John Walker, President of the Illinois Federation of Labor, speaking in behalf of Howat, claimed that the fight against the Kansan was merely a scheme of the operators to eliminate him from the state organization. Some years ago the Coal Operators' Association had accused Howat of accepting bribes. The accusation led to his forced resignation from the presidency of the Kansas miners. Howat thereupon returned to work in the Kansas pits, and remained a miner two years until he was able to produce evidence of his innocence. He subsequently sued the Association for defamation of character, won his case, and was re-elected to office.

Over \$30,000, it was admitted by the President of the Association, had been spent to discredit the name of the Kansas leader. Many delegates at the September convention felt that this was a similar case, and voted against commanding Howat to order back his men. Others, however, who believed in Howat, voted against him, fearing to oppose the administration on a matter which might be construed as a violation of contract relations. The final vote stood, 2,753 for the administration, 1,781 against it.

## Rank and File Rebel

In the meantime, the rebellion of the rank and file grew, and on more than one occasion, when the officers indulged in personal attacks, the delegates howled them down. William Green, the secretary-treasurer of the union, was unable to begin his speech for at least a half hour because of the objection raised by the rank and file to the procedure of the chairman in giving the floor four successive times to officers of the board. Old timers stated that they had never witnessed such a tense situation. During all of this time, however, no leader appeared possessing sufficient idealism, bulldog determination and magnetism to mold this rebellion into a constructive opposition. Howat, it

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may be added, had returned to Kansas after the first few days, to begin serving his jail sentence, imposed for violation of the Kansas Industrial Court law.

### **The Mines for Public Service**

This awakening of the rank and file, while a step forward, cannot be measured in concrete terms. The convention, however, in its final days, made several advances of a very definite character. Undoubtedly the most important single accomplishment was the mine nationalization resolution. The resolution reaffirmed the miners' endorsement of public ownership at the Cleveland convention two years before; declared that the natural resources, particularly timber and coal, are now being despoiled "under a system of production which wastes from 33 to 50 per cent of these resources" for the sake of maximum dividends, and held that "the coal supply of our nation should be owned by the commonwealth and operated in the interest of and for the use and comfort of all the people in the commonwealth."

It demanded immediate nationalization of the coal industry of the United States and instructed the international officers of the union to prepare a bill for the purchase of all coal properties at a figure representing actual valuation of these properties, and for the operation of the mines by governmental commissions on which the mine workers are given equal representation. It further instructed the union officers to appoint a committee to prepare a treatise showing the savings of public ownership, and to carry on a campaign of education on nationalization among all people whose support is necessary to achieve this end.

President Lewis later appointed the best possible committee that could have been chosen to draw up the nationalization statement. The chairman of this committee is the one great outstanding figure in the fight for nationalization, John Brophy, president of the 45,000 coal miners of district No. 2 in central Pennsylvania. Through his enthusiasm and leadership the miners of district No. 2, at a special district convention, declared themselves in favor of the "larger program" of the miners, a program which includes public ownership of the mines and other progres-

sive steps and which deplors the old "worn-out policy" of "grievances and small demands." The other two members are men who have long been favorable to the nationalization idea—William Mitch, the secretary-treasurer of district No. 11 of Indiana, and Christ J. Golden, President of district No. 9 in the anthracite region. The appointment of this committee with power to use the columns of the Miners' Journal and to spend funds of the organization in an educational campaign, gives the greatest encouragement to advocates of this forward step.

### **Howat Chosen Delegate**

Of importance also among the actions of the convention was the selection of Alexander Howat and William Mitch, as delegates to the International Miners' Conference to be held next year in Europe. At the last international convention, attended by delegates from every important country in the world, plans were formulated for the calling of an international strike in case of threatened war, regardless of what government chanced to be responsible for the war. This congress also urged socialization of mining and other public industries. While Howat and Mitch will have no power to commit the American miners to international action for the prevention of war, they undoubtedly will bring back to America a message which will assist in future action on that vital problem.

### **Labor Party Favored**

A score or more of other resolutions were passed dealing favorably with such principles as the freeing of all political prisoners, co-operative banking, labor dailies, self-determination of Russia and Ireland. The formation of a new political party combining the forces of organized labor and the organized farmers, was also called for; and Samuel Gompers was requested to call a conference of labor unions and farmers organizations to effect this purpose. It is too much to expect, until the education and the sense of values of the workers become broader, that any convention will take more than a few forward steps. Each succeeding convention is an act of education for the delegates and for the membership at large.



# Labor's Challenge to the Disarmament Conference

By MAX D. DANISH

**I**N a few days the Harding Disarmament Conference will come into being. The British Empire, France, Italy, and Japan will meet with the United States in Washington on November 11, 1921, to discuss the problem of the limitation of armaments. Questions of Pacific policy will also be considered; and China, as a nation vitally interested in those questions, and furnishing her share of them, will assist in this part of the discussion.

How does the labor movement view this forthcoming conference, and what results does it expect from it?

With a national debt of almost \$25,000,000,000—twenty-four times as great as six years ago—American labor, no matter how conservative, cannot regard the future with equanimity. In 1920, the bill for the military expenses paid by the people of the United States was over \$5,000,000,000, and the 1921 military budget, while somewhat smaller, is no less staggering in its ratio to the general expenses of the government. According to the analysis prepared by the United States Bureau of Standards, 93 per cent of the total expenses of the government in 1920 went for military purposes, covering liabilities included in past wars and in preparation for future wars. On the other hand, only 7 per cent of the nation's 1920 income was apportioned to general expenditure, which included agriculture and development of natural resources, education, public health, harbors, rivers, roads and parks. Labor received only one-hundredth of 1 per cent.

The burden of armaments in Europe is, of course, no less crushing. England's national debt today is thirteen times as large as seven years ago. The debt of France is one-half the total material value of the French nation and that of Italy is even more appalling. In addition these countries are now spending for armies and navies vastly more than they did before the war.

## Labor's Attack on Militarism

The labor movement has, since its early days, unalterably opposed the principle of large stand-

ing armies and of militarism. The staggering burdens of direct and indirect taxation which war and preparation for wars saddled upon working and tax-paying humanity has been, of course, the most obvious reason for this opposition. It has opposed competitive armament increases quite as strongly on the ground that these inevitably breed national hatreds and animosity and erect artificial walls between the working masses of one country and another, thus serving as a screen for schemes of commercial and industrial imperialism.

There is, however, one more aspect of militarism which directly affects organized labor and to which the middle-class or the liberal-minded advocates of armament reduction generally give but little attention. It is the employment to an ever-increasing extent of the national military establishments in an attempt to break down large-scale strikes and other concerted efforts of the workers to improve their conditions and increase their power. Here in the United States, for instance, it can be safely asserted that no general strike in any essential industry, since the railway strike of 1894, has passed by without either the actual application of military coercion or an equally effective threat of force.

## A. F. of L. Against Standing Armies

In America the position of the labor movement in general on the question of disarmament was set forth in the declaration adopted by the 1919 Convention of the A. F. of L. and reaffirmed at the Denver Convention in 1921:

"The trade union movement is unalterably and emphatically opposed to militarism or a large standing army. Militarism is a system fostered and developed by tyrants in the hope of supporting their arbitrary authority. It is utilized by those whose selfish ambitions for power and worldly glory lead them to invade and subdue other peoples and nations, to destroy their liberties, to acquire their wealth and to fasten the yoke of bondage upon them. The trade union movement is convinced by the experiences of mankind that militarism brutalizes those influenced by the spirit of the institution. The finer elements of humanity are strangled. Under militarism a deceptive patriotism is established in the people's minds, where men believe that there is nobility of spirit and heroism in dying for the glory of a dynasty, for the maintenance of institutions which are inimical to human progress and democracy.

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"Militarism is the application of arbitrary and irresponsible force as opposed to reason and justice. Resistance to injustice and tyranny is that virile quality which has given purpose and effect to ennobling causes in all countries and at all times. The free institutions of our country and the liberties won by its founders would have been impossible had they been unwilling to take arms and if necessary die in the defense of their liberties. Only as people are willing to maintain their rights and defend their liberties are they guaranteed free institutions.

"Conditions foreign to the institutions of our country have prevented the entire abolition of organized bodies of men trained to carry arms. A voluntary citizen soldiery supplies what would otherwise take its place, a large standing army. To the latter we are unalterably opposed as tending to establish the evils of militarism. Large standing armies threaten the existence of civil liberty. The history of every nation demonstrates that as standing armies are enlarged the rule of democracy is lessened or extinguished."

The American Federation of Labor is now utilizing the Washington conference for a nation-wide agitation to "impress upon the International Conference for the Limitation of Armaments the overwhelming world determination to stop conducting international affairs on a military basis." To that end it has organized a network of Armistice Day demonstrations and parades from one end of the county to the other. In its call for a national demonstration, the Executive Council of the Federation realizes that "the conference may easily become entangled by tactics of the 'old diplomacy' and hamper itself with problems growing out of the 'balance of power' theory. We want to bring into that conference the vitalized power of democratic idealism—a practical idealism that insures for men and women the greatest opportunity for creative effort."

It is characteristic, nevertheless, that even in this declaration the spokesmen of the Federation endeavor to fence themselves off from the "pacifists" and admonish all affiliated bodies to "put the bars up absolutely against pacifist organizations, since the American labor movement in no sense countenances pacifist activity or the philosophy which is inevitably an accompaniment of pacifist activity."

We have not come across any statement from the authorized spokesmen of either the French or the Italian labor movement with regard to this conference. The labor movement in both these countries is at present torn with strife and the energies of its leadership and rank and file are almost completely consumed by fratricidal warfare.

### Labor Not Represented

The Labor Party of England, however, has issued the following statement, defining its attitude

towards the conference and what it anticipates from it:

"A few weeks hence the Washington Conference will assemble to consider the important question of disarmament. The Paris Conference was regarded as the occasion for liquidating the war. The nations of the world have since been faced with the question of liquidating the failures of the Peace Conference and one of the most urgent and important of these is unquestionably the need for international disarmament. The projected conference at Washington is intended ostensibly to bring about an agreed extension of disarmament by the Allied and Associated Powers, who have so far only succeeded in agreeing to the imposition of disarmament upon the nations least capable of competing in the race for armaments.

"The conference will, no doubt, be productive of many eloquent discourses on the need for limitation of armaments, but it would be unwise to be unduly optimistic concerning its probable results. Those mentioned as likely British delegates are, for the most part, firm adherents of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance—a military convention which is viewed with real disquiet by the American nation. They represent that school of thought which in the past has been very vocal in its demand for British naval supremacy, military conscription, and 'the maintenance of peace by preparation for war.'

"It was Mr. Churchill who declared only a few weeks ago that if Britain did not continue with her naval construction 'it would be known that this island was powerless to keep itself alive except by goodwill,' which, to his mind, would be 'a melancholy sequel to the glories of the Great War.' Naval power and not goodwill is what the government regards as necessary to enable Britain to keep itself alive, and those who accept that view are to be the British representatives at the Washington conference.

"Labor, on the other hand, which does believe in disarmament, not only for Germany but for Britain and for the other powers, and does regard a policy of universal disarmament not only as practicable but also as imperative, is apparently not to be given an opportunity to contribute to the formulating of a definite disarmament scheme at Washington. None of our nation's representatives will be drawn from the ranks of labor, although British labor represents the most powerful body of organized opinion in the world in support of universal disarmament. A conference which consists merely of representatives of the old governing caste, with its prejudices, fears and narrow outlook, is foredoomed to failure because of its lack of moral authority."

These two authoritative statements of the labor movement of England and America, while seemingly distant from each other, are, nevertheless, permeated with the same note of distrust and richly-deserved lack of confidence. Behind the rather flamboyant pronunciamento of the Federation's Executive Council and its rich verbiage, there lurks the admission that neither here nor abroad has labor risen to the power of dictating or enforcing disarmament upon "old diplomacy." The pessimistic view of the British labor movement with regard to the conference is, perhaps, even more justified when one realizes that it will be practically the same group that engineered the Versailles Treaty that will foregather in Washington, principally to partition "spheres of influence" in the Far East, China and Siberia and, perhaps, to effect thereby the elimination of some immediate war causes in the Pacific.

# The Steel Trust's Grip on Pennsylvania

*The Interchurch World Movement Writes an Interesting Postscript*

By LOUIS F. BUDENZ

A THOROUGH inventory has been taken by the Interchurch World Movement of the state of liberty in the sovereign state of Pennsylvania. First, there was the report on the great Steel Strike, published in 1920 after "certain rich men" had sought to have it suppressed. Now, during the week of October 3, a series of supplementary reports is made public which are appearing in book form under the title "Public Opinion and the Steel Strike of 1919." Labor, as a result, is furnished with a yardstick with which it can measure the chances of democracy in the steel region in the future. Press, pulpit, state and local government, the Steel Trust and its methods, the labor spies, have all been analyzed in the light of their acts in the crisis of 1919.

What does this survey by impartial churchmen show? That Mr. Gary and his colleagues in the United States Steel Corporation are the State of Pennsylvania. They are its press, pulpit, state and local government. They are the directors of its police—both publicly and privately employed. They are as certainly the masters of that state in its relations with their industry as the Bourbons were masters of 18th century France or the Romanoffs, of old Russia.

If these statements appear sweeping, examine carefully these items of the Interchurch's inventory for their verification:

1.—*Pulpit.* Inquiries of 600 ministers in the strike region indicate a minority opposed to condemnation of the strike. This minority found itself powerless to express its views, because of economic pressure and the attitude of the local press. Of the majority, a great number joined in attacking the strike and strikers in savage and unwarranted terms.

2.—*Press.* In Pittsburgh there are seven daily papers. These papers during the strike published 400 issues in all. In only one of these 400 issues did an article of original investigation appear. All other articles were based on second-hand information, often Steel Trust propaganda.

In none of these issues did any sympathetic interview with the strike leaders appear, nor did the papers attempt at any time to get their side of the

case. Nothing was said about the grievances of the men—the twelve-hour day or the low scale of wages for the unskilled.

On the other hand, column after column was given to attacks on the strikers and strike leaders. Inflammatory stories were printed, without confirmation, charging that the strike was connected with Bolshevism. Participation in the strike was represented as disloyalty to the United States Government. Acts against the Steel Corporation were interpreted as acts against the government itself. Great stress was laid upon the fact that the majority of the strikers were of foreign origin.

Statements of officers of the Steel Corporation were given full publicity. Advertisements and statements were repeatedly printed, at the height of the strike, saying that it would fail and had already failed.

3.—*Local Authorities.* Meetings of the strikers were suppressed by the local authorities throughout the strike area. These petty officials owe their positions to the "influence" of the Steel Corporation, the fear of dismissal preventing any effective political revolt. They arrested union men in batches on vague charges, many of which were never pressed. In practically no case was any effort made to deal with the company gunmen for illegal acts.

4.—*The State.* In accordance with their past history, the state constabulary searched houses without warrant, beat men and women without cause and killed organizers and strikers. When these acts were called to the attention of the Governor of the State he took no effective action to check the constabulary, but rather sanctioned their methods and practices.

5.—*Labor Spies.* The Corporation auxiliary Company and another detective agency hired out "under cover men" to the steel corporations. The former company claimed to have 500 operatives at work in the steel districts. A number of these men were members or officers of the unions. Most of the "under cover men" were foreigners. They are also largely illiterate. The spy system is a permanent institution in the steel region. As the spy's job depends on the trouble he can "unearth," he is not slow at reporting the



## LABOR AGE

men's slightest discontent, or at manufacturing such if necessary.

Three hundred affidavits support the findings of the Interchurch Commission in regard to the terrorism of the police. The substance of these affidavits is summarized as follows:

"The charges brought against the state constabulary, deputy sheriffs and company police deal with the murder of men and women—one as he was in his own yard—and the wounding of hundreds of others; the clubbing of hundreds; the assaulting of men while lawfully and peacefully pursuing errands on the streets, and of prisoners while they were locked up in their cells; the arresting and holding of men and women for long periods in the jails and police stations without provocation, and even without definite charges being lodged against them; the excessive punishment meted out to these strikers by the different Justices of the Peace, Burgesses and Police Courts, and the frank discrimination of the courts between those who were at work and those who were out on strike; the frequent surrender of law and its administration by the public authorities to the local company officials."

The officials of a few towns flatly denied the charges of unwarranted arrest and of misconduct, as did also the head of the state constabulary at Braddock. But this same police officer was arrested less than a month after his denial of illegal acts and held by the court in \$2,000 bail for assaulting persons under arrest in their cells. A number of other officials admitted arresting and holding persons without warrant as "suspicious characters."

But these facts did not find their way into the newspapers. Deep silence was maintained on the subject of the strikers' civil rights. The editorial pages were particularly reticent about the whole upheaval. On this point the report says:

"A feature of the strike was the fact that no newspaper in Pittsburgh took a stand for freedom of speech and a just enforcement of the law by the regularly constituted authorities. The Pittsburgh newspapers' silence in the past regarding the discriminatory conduct of officials of the city and county has been interpreted by many residents of Allegheny County to mean that there exists a fundamental solidarity of interest between the media of public opinion, the officers of the law and the steel industry, such that even flagrant violations of the rights of individuals belonging to labor unions can occur without awakening protest or effective comment."

No less than 150 stories of violence on the part of the strikers appeared in the papers during the strike. The Commission places side by side the account of the killing of Nick Gratichini at Sharon, Pa., as reported in the Chronicle Telegraph of September 25th and as it was given by two witnesses. According to the newspaper story, the man was an "alleged sniper" and he was killed while putting up a fight against the police, as they sought to arrest him. According to the witnesses, the slain man was peacefully working in the yard of his brother's home, when the state police issued from the neighboring steel



—St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Made by I. P. E. U., 544

The Inter-Steel Trust Movement.

mill, firing shots in all directions. One of the shots struck him in the leg and another killed him. The brother, trying to rescue his little child, also in the yard, was shot in the leg and seriously wounded. He was the father of seven children, and his wife was about to give birth to another child.

In Ohio and West Virginia, where meetings were allowed by the authorities, peaceful conditions existed in comparison with the situation in Western Pennsylvania, where the right of assembly was denied. It is significant, as the report points out, that it was the great basic mills of this latter region—the Pittsburgh district—that had to be kept running if the Steel Trust hoped to break the strike.

In these supplementary reports the Interchurch Commission has written an interesting postscript to its previous work. The conditions they show are a challenge to America to re-establish in fact those civil rights it guarantees in theory. They are the conditions which prevail under the much-advertised "Open Shop," which has been heralded throughout the land as "the American plan." The Steel Trust is the head and front of the "Open Shop" movement. If that form of industrial organization is American, then America has repudiated its Constitution and Declaration of Independence. Undoubtedly, the time has come for an inventory of the country as a whole as well as of its chief industrial state.

# Why the Steel Strike Failed

By JAMES H. MAURER

**T**HE question is often asked: "Why did the great steel strike of 1919 fail?" As a matter of fact, the strike was not a failure. It taught the Steel Trust a lesson that that corporation will never forget. It gave the workers of the steel industry a taste of their own power, when used in cooperation with their fellow-workers. They will, from now on, never give up the idea of freedom in their work, which can only be attained through unionization.

As a result of the strike, also, we in the Pennsylvania labor movement found out who was who. Many men who had posed as loyal union men were proven traitors during the strike—actually employed as spies on their fellow-craftsmen. Some of these spies were officers of the unions. We know them now, and what is still better: they know that we know them.

If it was a failure, as some people think, then the cause can be attributed to several incidents:

- (1) Premature nature of the strike.
- (2) The unwillingness of the higher paid steel workers—mostly Americans—to cooperate with their less fortunate comrades.
- (3) The denial to the strikers of every constitutional guarantee, which meant that they had opposed to them not only the steel trust but the government, municipal and state as well.
- (4) The legalizing of every act of imported thugs; the beating and murdering of strikers and the outlawing of strikers, their wives and sympathizers.
- (5) Last, but most unfortunate of all, the failure of certain organized crafts sincerely to cooperate.

Let us look at the background of the struggle. Folks not acquainted with Pennsylvania can hardly realize the extent of the steel industry there. This is particularly true of the Pittsburgh steel belt, which covers a radius of perhaps 100 miles. One can ride down the Allegheny River and up the Monongahela on express trains for three hours through a solid mass of steel mills. And east as far as Johnstown, west into Ohio. The workers in these mills are mostly foreigners. They have been imported because of their ignorance of American conditions, and because they work cheap. They speak almost every language on earth. One-third of them work seven days a week, twelve hours a day. War-time wages averaged 55 cents an hour.

For years efforts were made to organize these people. President Lewis of the United Mine

Workers spent two years at the task ten years ago, for the American Federation of Labor, and failed. Others met with like success. As soon as anything like a local union was formed, all those joining it were discharged. Fully 50,000 men were discharged, in the ten years before the strike, for having joined the union.

The fact that the workers spoke so many different languages made the task of organization especially difficult. In a group of 500 men employed in a steel mill one might find ten different languages spoken. To reach these men with a message, therefore, it was necessary to send in ten different organizers or print circulars in ten different languages. The corporation—for most of these mills are owned or controlled by the same corporation, United States Steel—very cleverly played one group against the other, just as had been done in the coal regions for the past 75 years. As soon as one group of foreigners became Americanized sufficiently to demand their rights, a group of another nationality was imported to take their places. As the old workers and the newcomers were unable to speak to each other, it is clear that the company had a decided advantage.

The longer the foreigner lived here, the greater his effort to raise his standard of living. He would live in better houses and dress better. With the arrival of each new group there was, naturally, a tendency to reduce that standard. These foreigners lived in the most miserable shacks. In many instances, several families lived together in a small four-room house. "Pluck me" stores owned by the companies robbed them when spending the few dollars they earned. The shacks they lived in were often owned by the companies, and rents were exorbitant. Often a company would persuade its men to buy these "houses." The poor fellows believed that this would assure them at least steady employment, and agreed to buy. The price of the house sold is usually 100 per cent more than its worth. A few hundred dollars savings is usually paid down. When there are no savings, nothing is required at first. The monthly payment is deducted from the men's wages. This payment is usually much more than what the rent would be. With the men's small savings tied up in these houses, the company feels that it has an



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**THE STRIKE AT MONESSON, PA.**  
Mother Jones, J. H. Maurer (under flag) and Vice-President  
Phillip Murray of United Mine Workers (left  
of flag bearer).

extra grip on them. They naturally will not wish to lose their employment in that place and can be driven more severely and heartlessly than ever before. It is hard to get such men to strike. As a matter of fact, it is seldom that any of them ever live long enough or retain employment long enough to finally own their homes. They thus lose all their savings. The houses are sold over and over again to many different men. As you pass west through Johnstown you can see, on the right side of the Pennsylvania main line, many of these poor houses, row upon row.

This is only bird's-eye view of the conditions that Foster and Fitzpatrick found when they came to Pittsburgh to organize the steel workers.

In my long experience with organizers I say unhesitatingly that these two men have proved themselves the best organizers that this country has ever produced. They did what many other able men tried to do and failed. They did what Gary and his group thought was impossible. In fact, there were few people but who believed the steel industry to be impregnable. Foster and Fitzpatrick demonstrated that the steel workers could be organized.

The task they set out for themselves was no easy one. Every move made by them and their organizers was met by counter-attacks from the representatives of the Steel Trust. As an illustration, I went to Johnstown to address the steel workers there in a hall above the fire engine house. The meeting had been advertised by small

handbills. On my way to the hall—when within about a hundred feet of it—I met an army of Cambria Iron Company gunmen and “private police.” These men were lined up on both sides of the sidewalk, over which I, and everyone else who attended the meeting, had to walk. At the door of the hall these “bulls” formed themselves into a wedge shape, which made it almost impossible to enter. Upon entering the hall, I found it crowded with steel workers. Every one of them had had to run the gauntlet. Of course, within the hall, there were plenty of company spies. This illustrates some of the circumstances under which these men had to be gotten together. When this illustration is stretched to cover more than 300,000 employees, the size of the job can be seen.

The day following any meeting, many of the men who had attended were discharged. This was done to frighten others and keep them away from meetings or from joining the union. Among those discharged was an employee of the Cambria Iron Company, who was deaf and dumb, and had worked for the company thirty years. Upon inquiry as to why this man was discharged, we were informed, “Because he was an agitator!”

Time and again were our organizers attacked, beaten up, and others arrested, but the work went on. Thousands of steel workers stormed the headquarters of the organizers for a chance to join. I have seen them lined up half a square long, awaiting their turn. As the organization grew in numbers the attacks became more intense. Discharges multiplied by leaps and bounds. The men began to want a counter-move, and strike demands were being made by them months before the strike really took place.

The referendums resulting were overwhelmingly in favor of a walkout despite the efforts of those in control to delay such action for a time longer. The strike began September 22, 1919.

Then followed that long series of outrages, sanctioned in the main by press and pulpit, which the Interchurch World Movement has exposed. The answer of the State Federation of Labor to these attacks was to vote for a general state-wide strike, until civil liberty should be restored to Pennsylvania. Such a strike would have been called had not the steel struggle ended.

When the steel workers organize again—and this will be not long from now—they will profit by the five points of weakness shown in the last walk-out, and arrange their organization methods so as to bring complete victory.

# The Strength of the Amalgamated

By SOLON DE LEON

**A**S this article is being written, the steamship "Margus" is clearing from the port of New York for Petrograd, bearing the first contribution of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America to the Russian famine relief. That shipment includes 65,000 bushels of wheat and a carload of condensed milk. As man, especially in cold climates, does not live by bread alone, the ship also carries 2,000 pairs of corduroy trousers and 2,000 mackinaw jackets, made up as a voluntary gift by Amalgamated members from cloth purchased by the organization. The cost of the relief so far undertaken is around \$150,000, and more is in contemplation.

Yet the Amalgamated membership, like every body in the United States except bank presidents and baseball stars, has been hit by the unemployment crisis which has plunged millions of workers into destitution. Probably not more than half the cutters and tailors are working at all. Wages of many others are affected by part-time. Moreover, only last winter this organization went through a lock-out in New York, Boston, and Baltimore, which drained it of about \$2,000,000 in fighting funds, not to speak of the loss in wages.

Whence comes this remarkable power of recovery, this spirit which can go on doing such big things in spite of such obstacles?

The strength of the Amalgamated seems to be based on four pillars—its form of organization, its educational activity, its underlying purpose, and its leadership.

## Industrial Unionism

In form, the Amalgamated is very nearly industrial. It believes that the only effective way to organize is to bring into one union all those who cooperate in the production of a given product. Says the preamble to the union's constitution:

"Modern industrial methods are very rapidly wiping out the old craft demarcations, and the resultant conditions dictate the organization of labor along industrial lines.

"The history of the class struggle in this country for the past two decades amply testifies to the ineffectiveness of the form, methods, and spirit of craft unionism. It also shows how dearly the working class has paid for its failure to keep apace with industrial development.

"The working class must accept the principles of industrial unionism or it is doomed to impotence."

As a result of this position, the Amalgamated takes in all workers, "male or female" who are "not less than sixteen years of age and employed in the manufacture of clothing." By clothing is here meant men's outer garments, and shirts. Cutters, tailors, "bushlemen," all who join in the production of men's or boys' trousers, vests, coats, overcoats, reefers, and shirts are included. In New York the stock and shipping clerks are also covered. One of the brilliant strokes of the Amalgamated was getting protection for these last named workers, although they were not formally covered by the agreement which brought last winter's lock-out to a close.

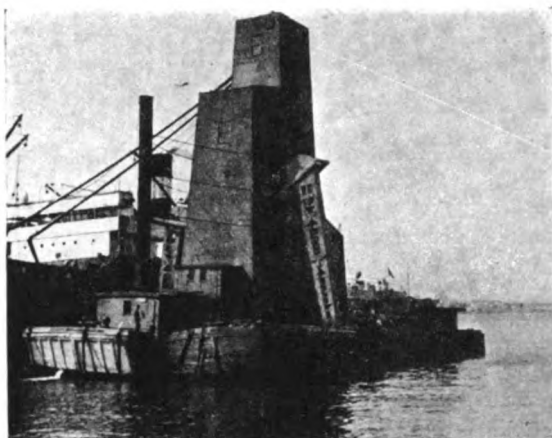
The advantages of this industrial form of organization are many and obvious. It permits the workers in any one shop to meet together as one body for the discussion of shop affairs. It makes easier the election of shop officials, and through them the representation of the workers in discussions with the employers. It assists discipline. It creates the spirit of unity. In case of need, when one branch of the trade is threatened with a reduction of standards, or when an advance is to be made, all branches can consult and act together. There are no separate craft "contracts," with different expiration dates, to interfere with united action. There are no half-dozen or more sets of national officers to convince of the necessity of doing something. One general staff carries out the wishes of one unified membership.

## The Part Education Plays

It is conceivable that even an industrially organized mass of workers might be lacking in the spirit or the ability to use the power which its form of organization put in its hand. Such locomotor ataxia is prevented in the Amalgamated by the consistent educational activities carried on by the union.

One of the most noticeable phases of this educational work consists of the regular weekly or bi-weekly mass meetings of the membership held throughout the fall and winter months in the larger centers: Chicago, Rochester, New





Made by I. P. E. U., 546

#### THE STEAMSHIP "MARGUS"

Being loaded with grain for famine victims in Soviet Russia.

York, and Baltimore. Speakers of national and international reputation address these gatherings on labor and economic topics. Questions and discussion after the talks are eagerly followed by audiences of from 3,000 to 5,000. Occasionally the program is varied by staging a debate on some burning question of the day. Dancing often follows the intellectual feast; but no one is allowed in to trip the fantastic, who has not occupied a seat at the lecture. In Rochester, in order that wives and women members may not be shut out, a special room has been set aside in the headquarters as a huge kiddie coop. There from 50 to 100 youngsters are delighted with stories by a capable young teacher, while mother and father discuss the open shop movement or labor control of industry in the lecture hall. Mass singing of working class songs by the audience is made a feature of these meetings.

Less ambitious lectures are often held before locals, in connection with their regular meetings. For those who are prepared for consistent study, small classes are formed which meet once a week for investigation or discussion of a stated topic. Classes in trade union history and methods, economics, psychology, English, public speaking and especially current events, have been held with conspicuous success. For several years the Amalgamated has supplemented its own educational work in New York by offering scholarships in the Rand School of Social Science for properly qualified members.

An attempt is in progress this fall which

will be watched with interest. That is the attempt to reach the members in the smaller towns, and a stay-at-home element in the cities, by correspondence courses. A well planned series of pamphlets dealing with such topics as "The Rise of the Clothing Workers," "The Open Shop Movement," and "Recent Developments in Trade Unionism," is proving of assistance.

No factor is of more importance in the Amalgamated education than the organization's own press. Papers are issued in eight languages—weeklies in English, Italian, and Jewish, bi-weeklies in Polish, Bohemian, and Lithuanian, a monthly in Russian, and a French page in an edition of the English paper which goes to Canada. Each person who joins the union is given a choice of which paper he desires, and though there are about thirty nationalities represented in the Amalgamated membership, hardly any one is unable to find a paper which he cannot read. These official organs, arriving regularly at each member's home, carry the latest news of the organization, as well as general articles on the labor movement as a whole. Many persons outside the union subscribe to one or another of these journals because of their high quality.

#### The Goal

And toward what is all this industrial organization, with its effective educational work by word of mouth and by the printed page, driving?

It has gone into a poorly organized trade, and raised wages and shortened hours to human limits. It intends to raise standards still further whenever opportunity offers. As means of realizing this intention without unnecessary friction, it has assured collective bargaining agreements and the establishment of impartial arbitration machinery with the largest clothing firms and with the strongest associations of clothing manufacturers in the country. It has improved conditions to the point where American workers are returning to an industry, which for a time was the refuge of only the most helpless and hard driven new-comers.

But all this is incidental. The goal which the active minds in the union have set for themselves is no mere padding of the yoke of capitalism. It comprises nothing less than the complete emancipation of labor from private exploitation and the profit system. As the preamble states the matter:



"The industrial and inter-industrial organization, built upon the solid rock of clear knowledge and class-consciousness, will put the organized working class in actual control of the system of production, and the working class will then be ready to take possession of it."

The organization is not committed to any particular plan for reaching this goal. It is perfectly plastic in its tactics, always doing at any moment the thing that needs to be done then to protect its gains and its members. Tactics followed today may be discarded tomorrow if they prove worn out or inapplicable. But every step it takes is taken with the hope of the workers' commonwealth in mind. The inspiration of that hope, consistently striven for, bind together the 175,000 Amalgamated members in one iron ring of solidarity.

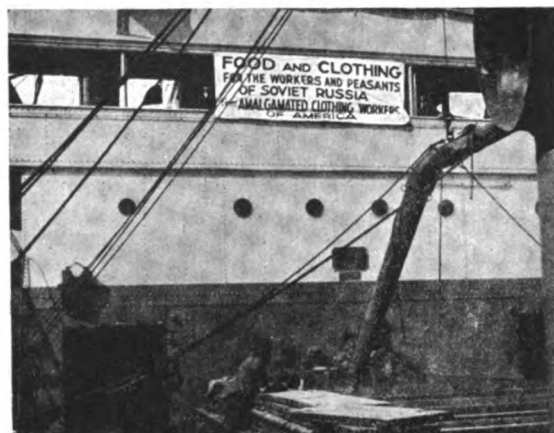
#### "The General Staff"

The economic fatalist is quite sure that people do not count in social progress. All that matters, according to him, is the technical advance of industry; each popular need will inevitably bring forth the person to meet it.

On the other hand, no one who has ever engaged in a practical step of the forward movement can escape the conviction that people do count. They count in knowledge, in clearness of purpose, in ability, in honesty.

For that reason it seems only sensible to credit much of the Amalgamated capacity and achievement to the type of leaders it has been fortunate enough to select.

The members of the general executive board, the governing body of the union between biennial conventions, have one and all come up through the ranks in years of stress and struggle. They have come up by organizing ability, by power to analyze the essential elements of a situation and go straight to its solution, by rugged probity, and by tireless energy. In appearance they are working men, with none of the mannerisms or pretensions of the professional labor union office-holder. In thought and action they are a match for any equal sized body of business men in the country.



Made by I. P. E. U., 546

#### THE LIFE-GIVING GRAIN Pouring into the hold of the "Margus."

Joseph Schlossberg, the general secretary of the union, received his early economic training in the old Socialist Labor Party. The firm grasp of economic principles and the staunchness of purpose which he learned there have stood him in good stead since in many a union battle.

His team-mate in the day-by-day guiding of the destinies of the organization is Sidney Hillman, the general president. Not many years ago Hillman was a poorly paid employee of a Chicago mail order house. He learned tailoring at his own expense, and then began to see to it that he made a decent living at his trade—by helping to unionize it. He rapidly forged to the front in union affairs, and has been president of the Amalgamated since its formation in 1915. Matter-of-fact, resourceful, fiery or conciliatory as circumstances require, he is a negotiator who has brought victory out of more than a few apparently hopeless situations.

An industrial structure, qualified most successfully to meet the requirements of modern large scale industry; never-flagging education which labors year in, year out, to build a unity of spirit in the membership; a goal worthy of the best endeavors of humankind; and an able, fearless, honorable leadership—such are the four pillars of Amalgamated strength.

# Millions of Idle Men

*What Shall be Done About Unemployment?*

By LEO WOLMAN

The  
President's  
Unemployment  
Conference



Which  
Was Unable  
to Relieve  
Situation

*Underwood and Underwood.*

*Made by I. P. E. U., 546*

**T**HE present industrial depression with its millions of idle men and women is a social fact of great complexity. Its causes are obscure. The manner in which depressions of this kind pass into business activity is not clear. It does not follow from this, however, that those responsible for shaping the country's public economic policy, are justified in sitting idly by, waiting for conditions to adjust themselves. For, while results are uncertain, an administrative expedient, applied courageously at this and that point, may give just that urge to industry for which it has been so patiently waiting.

The needs are clearly courage and resources. Resources alone, without the will to use them promptly, will not do the job.

It should be reasonably clear that in the course of a serious business depression like the present one, little is to be hoped from the voluntary action of business men. Many have gone through bankruptcy or been forced to make sacrifices to meet their debts. Others have hung on by the skin of their teeth. And still others, who may have come through with their financial resources in good shape, are still pursuing a policy of watchful waiting. For this is no time to take chances. Expansion, the employment of the unemployed, are measures which the typical business man will use only when he is reasonably certain of the outcome. That reasonable certainty very few business men have at the present time.

## Up to the Government

Where, then, is there in the community an agency which is not moved by the same considerations as the private business leader and which, by its very position and outlook, can afford to take the step to ease up a business situation, so disastrous to all members of the community? Such an agency is the government. In spite of the business lull, the fall in profits and the large volume of unemployment, there still remain to the Federal Government resources which it can tap, not easily to be sure, and which it can utilize to the advantage of the general community.

Furthermore, the outlook of the Federal Government is or should be such as to encourage the immediate utilization of its resources. To a government of all the people the presence of four or five millions of unemployed, anxious to work, is as serious a matter as is a deficit on the balance sheet to the individual business man.

Just as the latter works valiantly and uses every resource at his command to convert his loss into a profit, so the government, the representative of all the people, should be expected to turn its thought and energies to finding work for those who wish work and can't find it. No one, at this time, would challenge seriously the notion that it is right and proper for our government to do all in its power to maintain the American standards of living of our workmen, of which this country has so long been so proud.

### Unemployment Conference Marks Time

At the Unemployment Conference in Washington in October, everyone agreed that the stimulation of activity on public works and on the railroads would produce notable results. Such results would be obtained not only by giving employment on a substantial scale in these enterprises themselves, but also by spreading employment to a large number of smaller and dependent industries, which would otherwise continue to lie stagnant for an indefinite period. Clear as was the case for such a step, the conference, nevertheless, made little progress in drawing up a comprehensive program of federal public works. Practically no progress was made, also, in forcing the resumption of railroad work.

Why is it, then, that a program, on its surface so simple and desirable, met with so little favor? The answer is that the economic problem of depression is seldom considered by itself, as a separate and distinct problem. Discussion of the policy to be adopted in meeting the problems of a depression soon becomes involved in a series of disputed issues, political and economic, and what was at first simple and straightforward finally becomes intricate and tangled.

To the proposition that an extensive program of public works will give employment to thousands, everyone will agree. But when it is found that application of the program carries with it the collection of taxes and perhaps a raise in the tax rate, opinions begin to differ. The political party in power must then estimate its chances at the next election. Which policy is, in the eyes of political leaders, likely to hurt the party least? Is the opposition to further increases in the tax rate great enough to outweigh any gain in the labor vote, or is it not? These, fundamentally, are the kinds of questions which contemporary political leaders must and do consider. And in the answer to these questions is rarely found a satisfactory solution of the economic problem of depression and unemployment.

### Why the Railroads Do Not Act

The railroad issue in the present depression is more interesting in this connection and its ramifications are considerably more subtle. Aside from the merits of any specific proposals to finance the railroads, two facts about the present railroad situation are admitted with-

out question by everyone. One is that a vast amount of work in repair and in building extensions has accumulated during the past ten years. The second is that the railroads are having difficulty in financing their enterprises and like other private businesses will hold off with improvements and extensions until they are assured that business conditions are reasonably stable.

It follows from this that if the railroads embark on a constructive program, the effect would be a marked improvement in employment, first on the railroads and next on the basic material industries. The latter, with few exceptions, have been hit hardest by the depression.

If, then, the goal is employment and if the railroads are holding up their plans until they can command financial security and backing, why is it not good public policy to grant to them substantial subsidies? Here, again, as in the case of public works, it is only necessary to state the problem in order to make its implications obvious. A state subsidy should carry with it a measure of control. Useful as a subsidy would be, it is probably impossible in this country to win the public to a program of public gifts or loans to the railroad companies, unless these carried with them greater public supervision.

The railroads, on the other hand, are jealous of their rights of ownership and would, only with the greatest reluctance, accept aid, financial or otherwise, which would lead to measured public control. So the simple problem of railroad improvement and plans for employing people in railroad shops, in steel mills, and in lumber camps becomes, almost without notice, a question of public versus private control, of public versus private ownership. The matter of employment, it is safe to say, will remain untouched until these larger issues are settled.

So far as the great mass of workmen are concerned, the problem of unemployment, like other economic problems of the day, becomes a question of political and economic power. It is a simple matter to enumerate many measures which, if honestly adopted, would do much to explain the nature of depressions, to reduce the volume of unemployment, and to lessen its evils. But it still remains a fact that the urge to adopt these measures is not yet strong enough to count. That urge can only be made strong through action by labor.

# Labor Opinion

## Significant Expressions on Current Issues by the Labor Press

### THE PERIL IS HERE

(*United Mine Workers Journal*, Oct. 1921)

Injunctions have been issued in many parts of the country that impede the lawful conduct of the affairs of the United Mine Workers of America. Martial law has been in places where martial law was not needed, the only purpose being to break up the union. Hired gunmen have shot down and murdered members of the United Mine Workers of America in order to put an end to their activities as union men. Witness, Mingo county. Wages have been reduced and the reductions enforced with bayonets and rifles. Witness, Alabama. Wages have been reduced and the reductions enforced with the lockout and attempts at starvation. Witness, the State of Washington.

And now comes the Borderland Coal Corporation of West Virginia, with a demand for an injunction which, if it were to obtain its full demand, would throttle the United Mine Workers to death. It asks that the union be prohibited from levying or collecting any dues or assessments for any purpose whatever. It asks that the union "check-off" be abolished and prohibited. It asks that the union be prohibited from carrying on its campaign for the organization of the poor, intimidated non-union mine workers of the Williamson field. It asks that the closed-shop conditions which now prevail and which have for many years prevailed with satisfaction to the miners, operators and the public in nearly all of the coal-producing fields of the country be declared illegal and wiped out.

These demands strike at the very root of the American labor movement. They embody all that the United States Steel Corporation has sought for years to accomplish. And it may be regarded as significant that the Borderland Coal Corporation says in its bill against the United Mine Workers of America that it represents in this complaint not only itself but the other coal companies operating in that field. The United States Steel Corporation is said to own 53,736 acres of coking coal and 32,662 acres of surface coal in Mingo and McDowell counties, West Virginia. So the hand of the United States Steel Corporation may easily be seen in the attack of the Borderland Coal Corporation.

### AN EXPOSE

(*Machinists Monthly Journal*, October, 1921)

The friendly relations existing between high officials of the Mexican Government and the International Association of Machinists apparently are not only a source of worry to the United States Chamber of Commerce and many of the affiliated bodies but have also aroused some of the parasites of these organizations to a state of frenzy that is really pitiful.

In this class can be placed the owners and publishers of an insignificant sheet called "Industry," a semi-monthly interpretation of industrial progress. This magazine which is published in Washington, D. C., in its issue of September 1, 1921, takes occasion to vent an outpouring of vituperation upon the International Association of Machinists under the caption of "The International Machinists' Union and the Radicals of Mexico."

The editor of "Industry" states, "This issue contains

the amazing details of an attempt by an American labor union through its president and other officials, to give aid and comfort to the radical element of a neighboring and friendly country." He then proudly refers to the fact that in its issue of June 1, 1921, "Industry" contained an article describing in detail "a remarkable agreement between the International Machinists' Union and certain important officials of the Mexican Government by which the latter would restrict their purchases in the United States to those manufacturers approved by the International Machinists' Union."

He states that this organization is still under indictment "because of its efforts to strike hands with the Bolsheviks of Mexico and thus insure that only union made goods be purchased in the United States by the Mexican Government."

This is interesting if true, and we can only say to the editor of "Industry" that, call it Bolshevism or what he will, if such an achievement were possible by the I. A. of M., then we would gladly be termed Bolsheviks, for after all, what's in a name? However that may be, and regardless of the roarings of this wild editor of "Industry," the I. A. of M. will do its utmost to influence Mexico to purchase supplies from the United States which it knows to be made under fair conditions.

### AN AMNESTY FOR ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

(*International Molders Journal*, Sept.-Oct., 1921)

The United States Government has earned an unenviable reputation in its treatment of political prisoners. Practically every man in Europe imprisoned for political crimes during the war was released shortly after the armistice. But the United States still keeps imprisoned men whose crimes were of a purely political character.

These individuals were imprisoned during the war; the menace of their agitation was removed when the war ended. They had been compelled to appreciate the fact that a wartime law cannot be violated with impunity. But the war is over and their retention in prison now assumes the character of persecution, in many men's minds.

Public officials are responsive to public opinion and every member of the present administration and, in addition, every congressman and every senator should know how the people feel upon this question of keeping men imprisoned for political beliefs expressed during war time and when all other countries have long ago released this type of prisoner.

Business—Big Business—the representatives of the "open shoppers" follow up their interviews with the President and other officials by an avalanche of communications. The trade union movement can well afford to adopt the practice of continually reminding public officers, from the President down, relative to those questions in which it is interested.

Let the President know that your local union is in harmony with the policy of the American Federation of Labor and the efforts which its officials are making to secure the immediate release of all prisoners now being held because of their political beliefs.

# No Strike!

## *The Railway Crisis Is Temporarily Postponed*

By STUART CHASE

**T**HE threatened railway strike will not be—at least for the present. On October 28 the national heads of the Railway Brotherhoods called off the walk-out. Some points had been gained by them. The Railway Labor Board had agreed to take up a consideration of the working rules, which the men particularly demanded. The board also provided that no further wage cut should come until 1922. By this action, however, the day of a show-down in the railway situation is only temporarily postponed.

The threatened strike—far-reaching though its effect might have been—is in reality only another incident in the undying warfare between the carriers and their employees. This warfare can only end in social control of the industry or chaos. Under private operation there is no use to hope for anything but a succession of strike threats, strikes, lock-outs, dislocations of service, charges, counter charges, jail sentences, riots and disturbances, and sometimes periods of acute suffering for the general population. It is a situation which cannot be settled by any known brand of “get-together” talk. It can be settled when those who run the industry, control it—not before.

The crisis just averted was the direct outcome of the determination of the carriers to break the agreements as to working conditions which the railway workers won under government control during the war. These agreements remedied many long standing abuses. Some of the rules were undoubtedly onerous for the carriers; a few undoubtedly made for downright operating inefficiency. On the whole, however, these rules constituted a genuine charter of industrial freedom, and the railway employees are prepared to fight for them; and will at no time take the threat of the carriers to abolish these rules without a desperate struggle.

Following the lead of many other industries, the carriers secured an order from the Railway Labor Board last July calling for a 12 per cent reduction in wages. To this quasi-public order,

the carriers have themselves demanded a further reduction of 10 per cent. It is rumored that the 10 per cent demand is only a bluff to make the workers accept the final 12 per cent cut without too much ill grace. All the evidence seems to point to the working rules rather than to wages as the crucial matter in dispute at the present time. Before the Railway Labor Board in Chicago the Railway Department of the A. F. of L. presented some very pertinent material in respect to decreased wages. Their engineers showed that the carriers were wasting over a billion dollars a year through operating inefficiency. The evidence was largely secured from previous statements and studies of railroad officials themselves. The carriers could, if they had a genuine conception of public service, cut their general operating expenses to a point where no wage reductions would be necessary. Men would undoubtedly have to be laid off, but wage scales could remain untouched.

The Board's decision on the rules has laid to rest present fears of a strike. The industry will limp along for awhile until the next explosion. If a strike had become necessary, the railway workers would have had a terrific battle on their hands. With winter coming on, a shortage in coal and food would tend to turn the “public” (i. e., everybody not involved in the struggle directly) against the workers; with five to six million unemployed, the carriers would have had an unusually good opportunity to recruit strike breakers. In the ranks of labor itself, with many jobless or partially employed, the spectacle of a more or less favored union fighting for a relatively high wage level and relatively good working rules, would scarcely have brought the sympathy or co-operation which might be normally expected.

But it is to be remembered, and this should be borne in mind in future crises, that if the carriers break the Brotherhoods, labor the country over will receive a setback which only years can overcome. And it is fantastic to conceive of anything but increased friction and trouble coming out of the temporary disruption of the great railway unions.



# The Month

## *Labor in America*

By HARRY W. LAIDLER

**S**TRIKES and threatened strikes, sweeping anti-labor injunctions, and widespread unemployment were marked features of the labor situation in America during the past few weeks.

The unemployed situation is not only bringing about much individual distress, but is seriously crippling union finances and is proving a menace to labor in every strike. Little of real importance in solving the problem was accomplished by President Harding's unemployment conference. One of the most spectacular efforts to call attention to the evil of unemployment was that of Urbain L. Ledoux, the conductor of the "slave market" on the Boston Common. These auctions, the clamor of organizations of ex-service men, and the sporadic efforts of city authorities—particularly those facing re-election—have resulted in spasmodic private and semi-public aid to the unemployed but in nothing fundamental.

### **Railroads**

Overshadowing every other question of labor and capital in the last few weeks of October was the threatened railroad strike referred to elsewhere in this issue. In mid-October, the "Big Five," which included the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Brotherhood of Trainmen, the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen, the Order of Railway Conductors, and the Switchmen's Union—ordered a nation-wide strike to begin October 30. It was at first expected that the railway shop crafts affiliated with the American Federation of Labor would join forces with the larger groups, but, on October 22, these refused to go on strike, as the "Big Five" had given to them no hope of support after the demands of the brotherhoods had been met.

On October 27 the strike was called off. The men had received assurances that carriers would make no changes in wages or working conditions except through the legal agency of the Railway Labor Board, and that this board would not consider wage reductions until the question of rules and working conditions had been settled. No sooner had the strike ended than the railway

executives started a move for a further wage decrease, and the Railway Labor Board made it plain that unions going on strike would forfeit all of their rights under the Transportation Act. The "Big Five" have kept their "war council" intact. The real struggle, many maintain, is yet to come.

### **Judge Anderson's Injunction**

No sooner was the railroad strike "settled," than rumors of war were heard in several other directions, notably in the coal and clothing industries. On October 31 Federal Judge A. B. Anderson of Indianapolis, who helped to break the miners' strike of two years ago, issued one of the most drastic injunctions in the history of American labor. The injunction prohibited the miners from using the funds of the United Mine Workers to organize in the Williamson coal fields of West Virginia. He also enjoined the continuance of the so-called "check off" system under which the employers deducted union dues from the pay of the miners, later handing the funds thus collected to the unions. Judge Anderson held that this injunction bound every coal operator in the United States to discontinue this practice. He maintained that the miners had entered into a conspiracy with the mine operators of the central coal fields to limit the production of coal shipped from the non-union mines of West Virginia! This the judge declared, constituted an interference with interstate commerce in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Law.

Immediately following the order, thousands of miners in Indiana, Pennsylvania and Illinois stopped work in protest. President Lewis of the United Mine Workers declared that the miners would regard the discontinuance of the "check off" system as a violation of the existing wage agreement entered into last year at the command of the Bituminous Wage Commission, an agreement which was to run until March 31, 1922.

The enjoining order has caused consternation in labor circles. Such injunctions, declares Samuel Gompers, will cause a revolution in the ranks of organized labor. It is folly, he asserts, to declare that the miners are organizing in West Vir-



Underwood and Underwood.

**LEDOUX AUCTION ON BOSTON COMMON.**

Made by I. P. E. U., 546

"Here is a man who has fought for his country—how much for him?"

ginia to destroy competition. They are organizing "to destroy persecution, to destroy mine-owner autocracy, to destroy rule by gunmen, to civilize the mines, . . . to destroy the abuses and oppressions of profit-making mine owners."

An appeal to a higher court has already been taken. War clouds in the industry are becoming ever thicker.

**The West Virginia Hearing**

Concurrent with this growing demand for a nation-wide strike in the coal industry were the hearings before the Senate Committee on the disorders in West Virginia. This testimony would furnish many a page for "Darkest America." On October 27, the counsel for the miners urged that the Senate Committee mediate the dispute, and that an arbitrator be appointed by Chief Justice Taft to carry out any agreement that such committee should reach. The operators turned down this proposal without consideration, refusing to have any dealings whatever with the United Mine Workers. Samuel Untermyer, during the hearings, testified that the United States Steel Cor-

poration controlled the largest company operating in the West Virginia field, and was in large part responsible for the conditions in that state.

**The Coming Struggle in the Clothing Industry**

Peace, not only in the coal industry, but in the clothing industry has been menaced by the events of the last few weeks, and the ladies' garment industry throughout the nation is now face to face with one of the bitterest struggles in its existence.

In 1919, after years of effort, the International Ladies' Garment Workers forced the manufacturers in the ladies' clothing trade to abolish the piece-work system, and to raise standards generally. Hope was bright that the old sweat-shop conditions in the industry would never return.

This spring the employers began their fight for the restoration of old conditions. The fight was first scheduled for last June, but was averted by an agreement between the union and the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Association to appoint a joint committee to study the question of production in the industry and submit a joint report on November 1. The manufactur-

## LABOR AGE

ers did not wait until November 1, however, before taking action. On August 22 they issued a call for a national conference of ladies' clothing manufacturers, to be held in Atlantic City in late October. The conference met. It formed a Federated Association of Garment Manufacturers. It decided on a national campaign for the re-establishment of piece work, for longer hours and smaller pay. Manufacturers in New York, Chicago and Philadelphia subsequently met and endorsed this program. They refused to meet the union in conference, and declared that the new standards would be effective November 14. A vote was immediately instituted among the members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers.

The program of the manufacturers, declared President Schlessinger of the union, would mean, if carried out, "a total destruction of all humane labor standards in the industry, a return to 'the sweat shop'." Wages are still woefully inadequate, particularly in view of the long period of unemployment, and hours should be decreased, rather than increased.

The strike, which now seems imminent, will involve from 100,000 to 150,000 workers. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers and other organizations have pledged their support to the International Ladies' Garment Workers in their struggle.

Two local strikes and injunctions which have recently attracted nation-wide interest are those of the milk drivers of New York and of the Fancy Leather Goods Workers' Union of that city. In late October, 12,000 milk drivers struck for a \$5 weekly increase and a two weeks' vacation, and during the next few days little or no milk was delivered to homes in New York City. The employers later blocked the men's efforts to settle the strike by refusing to arbitrate the question of the "open shop" or to deal with the union.

The Fancy Leather Goods Workers' strike led to the now infamous injunction of Justice Strong of the Supreme Court in Brooklyn against picketing of all kinds, peaceful or otherwise. "Picketing and the posting of sentinels," declared the learned justice, in an astounding rhetorical effort, "are done as war measures. Our laws and institutions will not permit the waging of private wars in such a manner." The injunction has aroused New York labor as has scarcely any recent judicial action. The decision is being appealed.

### "Open Shop" on the Canal Zone

Secretary of War Weeks has announced that he will enforce the open shop recommendations of the government commission appointed to investigate labor conditions in the Canal Zone. The recommendations to Secretary Weeks urge that the governor of the zone deal with labor, not through labor organizations, but through committees of employees; that the government adopt the "open shop" principle; that the authorities be given complete freedom to employ union, non-union or tropical labor, and that free housing, lighting and heat be abolished! Mr. Gompers pronounced this proposal to displace American citizens with aliens at a lower wage an affront to the country.

### Labor Education

The Rand School of Social Science began its 16th year of teaching, on September 26, without applying for the license required by New York State for educational institutions. The school issued a statement declaring that the Lusk law for licensing and supervision of schools and school courses is "unconstitutional and pernicious" and that the responsibility for testing its constitutionality rests upon the school, against which it was largely directed.

A new residence workers' school was opened this fall at Brookwood, Katonah, New York, with an enrollment of 25 students. The college is under the supervision of two committees, advisory in their nature, one, a committee of labor, and the other an advisory educational committee. Its faculty consists of A. J. Muste, Toscan Bennett, E. L. Oliver and Sarah Cleghorn. A new labor college in San Francisco has also been opened this fall.

### One Textile Union

The growing solidarity of the employing class, and the increasing arrogance of many employers are causing among various labor groups an ever greater demand for workers' solidarity. This demand was evidenced in the recent convention of the Amalgamated Textile Workers' Union, held in New York City, October 15 and 16. The delegates here laid plans for the federation of ten of the independent textile unions of the country into a Federated Textile Union of America. They also urged the formation of "one powerful union for all textile and needle trades workers in the country."



*Labor in Europe*

**U**NEMPLOYMENT, famine and reaction have placed the European labor movement this fall decidedly on the defensive. Its position has been made more difficult by internal dissensions over the Third International.

**England**

Radicals visiting the Cardiff Trade Union Convention (September 6 to 10) were disappointed at its lack of enthusiastic militancy. The Congress, however, was not entirely without results. A distinct forward step was taken in the creation of a General Council of 32 to succeed the outgrown Parliamentary Committee. The purposes of this committee are:

"to promote common trade union action on questions of general interest, to coordinate the workings of unions in allied industries, to settle inter-union disputes, to encourage joint action of an international nature and, in general, to bring about more united action in the trade union world."

The Council contains representatives from 18 industrial groups, divided for practical purposes into six sections.

The convention voted also to bring the economic and the political wings of the movement into closer relationships by establishing a joint research and publicity bureau for the trade unions and the Labor party. It demanded that Great Britain recognize Russia and that both labor and the government assist the starving workers in that country to the utmost. It approved the calling of the Washington Conference on disarmament, demanded that labor representatives be appointed thereto and urged that Great Britain cease all preparations for war until the disarmament conference had finished its work.

Finally, it urged the fullest democratic representation of all nations on the League of Nations and passed special resolutions favoring mothers' and old age pensions, the minimum wage and labor education.

More than 800 delegates attended the conference, representing 6,416,510 workers. E. L. Poulton, the chairman, in his opening address, set the general tone of the discussion. The goal of the labor movement was a socialistic system of industry, he declared; but, he insisted, a complete revolution could only be brought about through evolutionary means.

**Sweden**

Sweden is one country where the workers have made gains. In the general elections held there

in late September, 93 Socialists and 13 "Left" Socialists and Communists were elected to the Lower Chamber. The other parties elected altogether 124 representatives, comprised of 62 Conservatives, 41 Liberals and 21 Agrarians. The various Socialist groups thus hold 106 out of 230 seats, or 46 per cent of the membership of the House. The previous Chamber contained 76 Social Democrats, 7 "Left" Socialists, or 36 per cent of the total. Following the election, M. Branting, the leader of the Social Democratic party, was elected premier and asked to form a cabinet. This is particularly significant because of the close connection of the Socialist and labor movements in Europe.

**Russia**

Urged on by grim necessity, the Soviet government has of late decided to modify its program of immediate socialization and to extend the field of private enterprise. A special number of "Pravda" published an article of Lenin's in late August. It says in part:

"We will be modest and make great concessions, since these concessions constitute no danger for the proletariat, who are in a position of being the ruling class. We will collect the produce tax quickly and leave every factory which we can do without. We shall not be too sparing with concessions to foreign capitalists. It is necessary to create a block of the proletarian state and of state capitalism against the small bourgeoisie. We shall use great foresight in putting this alliance into practice. We must limit the field of our economic policy and concentrate all of our strength, examine the working out of all of our plans and go cautiously forward step by step."

The "United Press" dispatch from Moscow, September 23, carries the following statement of M. Kamenoff:

"The Soviet government has decided to return to private capital all industries throughout Russia save four—railways, metallurgical, textile and fuel resources. . . . Of the four basic industries which the government will continue to maintain, fuel and oil resources may also be turned over to private exploitation, the government retaining a measure of control. . . . All restrictions upon private, commercial and industrial activity will be removed forthwith. We realize now it has proved impossible to refashion society with one stroke. We never would have gone to that extreme if it had not been that war conditions, both civil and foreign, compelled iron measures to preserve the Soviet's existence. "As a result of this policy it was stated that 260 manufacturing plants had been leased to private concerns by September 26."

While this change of policy is taking place, Soviet Russia is passing through one of the worst scourges in its history. The Second, Third and Vienna and Amsterdam Internationals have sent strong appeals to the workers of the world "to save the Russian proletariat, now in danger of

death." Socialists, Communists, Friends, the Red Cross, and a number of governments are cooperating in relief measures.

#### Germany

By a four-fifths majority, the German Social Democrats voted at the Goerlitz convention in September to collaborate in the government with all parties adhering to the republic. This is imperative, they claimed, if the monarchist reaction is to be broken. This action is likely to delay indefinitely any merger with the Independents—a union which seemed so imminent this summer when the writer was in Berlin.

The Independents, when asked whether they would join the Wirth cabinet, declared that the Center and Democratic parties, from their recent utterances, evidently desired an extension of the cabinet to the right, instead of the left. This attitude would make cooperation impossible. At the same time they announced the following program:

1. The establishment of budget equilibrium by the taxation of property; 2. Effective measures for the defense

of the republic, suppression of monarchist reaction, especially by drastic reform of the judicial system and the removal of openly monarchist officials; 3. Continuance of the social policy; 4. Socialization of mines; 5. A foreign policy of conciliation, reconstruction and a sincere effort to fulfill the demands of the Allies.

The remarkable action of the Social Democrats in expressing their willingness to cooperate with all democratic forces—an action which the New York "World" characterizes as a repudiation of the doctrine of the class struggle—was partly a result of the monarchist demonstrations and the alarming number of assassinations of democratic leaders. The murder of Erzberger created widespread indignation and led to great anti-monarchical demonstrations all over the country—that at the Lustgarten of Berlin on August 31 being attended by no less than 400,000. Marchers surrounded the Lustgarten during the afternoon carrying the flag of the republic. Red Soviet banners and signs reading, "Down Reaction!" "Down Murder Agitators!" "Reform the Judgeships!" were everywhere in evidence. Many thousands were unable to enter the garden and had to content themselves with overflow meetings nearby.



—Times World-Wide Photos

#### BERLIN'S ANSWER TO THE MONARCHY

Made by I. P. E. U., 546

Mass Meeting of Socialists, Communists and Democrats in the Lustgarten.



# Labor Hits the High Cost of Living

## *An Account of European Cooperation at Work*

By J. P. WARBASSE

**I**N EUROPE are two ancient institutions which for a century have controlled the lives of the people. They have been more powerful than the people themselves. Yet today the foundations of these two mighty things are tottering; and no man can predict their fate.

One of these is the institution of government called the political state. There is not a government in Europe with any sense of security. Every one rests upon force; and without force, to suppress the majority of citizens in the interest of the minority, not one would long survive. They are things of armies, police and jails. The other tottering institution is profit-making business. Business is trembling and uncertain. Even the wealth of a Stinnes is an uncertain possession.

But there is a third institution which gives one the impression of solidity and permanence; it is the cooperative organization. The people through this movement are increasingly doing for themselves what the profit-making business had done and what the socialized political state aims to do.

During July, August and September, I studied the labor and cooperative movements in France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, England, Scotland and Wales. Unemployment is serious in every country except Germany. Here private industry, as well as cooperation, is more active than in the other countries.

The French government is meeting the situation by keeping the war going, but this policy is having a most disastrous effect upon the French morale. In no other country that I visited is there such a state of uncertainty. The labor movement is demoralized, chauvinism is rampant, and the people are waiting for somebody to do something for them. Having "won the war," the French are to receive from Germany vast sums of money—and they are waiting.

The cooperative movement is the most substantial and really sound constructive movement in France, although its members have not alto-

gether escaped the debasing influence of the French government. The United States government had a large military office headquarters building on the Boulevard Bourbon in Paris during the American occupation; the Cooperative Wholesale Society bought the building and established their central offices there. Thus is the new order succeeding the old. I went up through the devastated area, stopped at Amiens and Albert, and saw the cooperators doing more toward rehabilitation than the government was doing.

### **The Belgian Triple Alliance**

Belgium is better situated than is France. Here is found a strong combination of cooperation, trade-unionism and socialism. The three are bound together as one. The biggest red flag I ever saw flies all day from the front of the cooperative headquarters on the Place Eduard Anseele in Ghent. Anseele, the veteran co-operator, sat as Minister of Public Works in the House of Parliament. I talked with him there, and with Wauters, Minister of Labor; Vandervelde, Minister of Justice;\* Huysmans, and Henri DeMan. They all know that if the people should demand today the socialization of the industries that program could not now be carried through. They know that voting at the polls does not train the workers to administer industries; that socialism cannot be obtained by political action alone.

They have decided upon a better way. The political labor movement in Belgium is absolutely united in the cooperative movement. The workers are so busy in their cooperative movement actually doing things, organizing, administering, producing, distributing, educating and creating, that they have no time to bother their heads over the academic questions that disunite the socialist talkers in other lands.

The socialists, cooperators and trade unionists of Belgium are not separated into left and right wings and other subdivisions. Politics is largely words; cooperation is action; and they express themselves through action. They are solidly and harmoniously united. The workers of Bel-

\*These men have since resigned.

gium are too radical to be much interested in political theorizing. They are busy building a new social order from the bottom up, and they have the actual structure to show to anybody who wants to see it. It is the most substantial thing in Belgium—their cooperative movement.

The workers in Holland are split into wings. Political antagonisms hamper unity of action. In The Hague may be found the "Volharding," a cooperative society for medical service, which counts 90,000 families in its membership, with a fully equipped medical clinic. The society has many drug stores. Boxes like letter boxes are placed at the street corners for the doctors' prescriptions. Boys on bicycles collect prescriptions and deliver medicines. The society possesses a much more efficient medical service than that in England under the government. I have observed with much interest the working of these two plans of socialization of medicine. The cooperative, non-political method seems to me to be the better.

As one comes out of the railroad station at Copenhagen, Denmark, the largest and most imposing building that meets the eye is the Danish cooperative bank. This building occupies a block and is the finest business building in the city. Denmark may be designated as the most civilized country in the world. Cooperative housing is far advanced. The cooperatives supply their members with houses at 10 to 20 per cent less than the municipalities. The difference arises from simplicity, efficiency and freedom from bureaucracy.

### What the Germans are Doing

One of the most astonishing things in Europe is Germany. The cooperative movement there is progressing rapidly and upon a fundamental basis. Already the German societies have more members than the British. I have never been in a building which impressed me more than the office building of the Central Union of German Consumers Societies in Hamburg. Here is efficiency, beauty and magnitude. The meeting room where the board of directors sits is a richer and more beautiful room than that of the directors of the Bankers Trust Co. on Wall Street. I asked, "Do the working people approve of such elegance of equipment for their officials?" "Yes," was the reply, "the building of the Central Trades Union, just a few doors away, is still finer than this." I found it so. I wish that our labor temples in America,

if they cannot be as beautiful, might at least be as clean as the German workers' buildings.

"Produktion," the local cooperative society in Hamburg, has 120,000 members. It not only conducts stores but has a house-building department which has already erected several hundred dwellings. This one local society owns 35 automobiles, 60 horses, 50 boats and several productive plants. It has recently bought out a meat-packing business which had become too big for the capitalistic corporation that ran it during the war. The Berlin society is still bigger than that in Hamburg. Its bakery turns out 100,000 loaves of bread daily which are distributed to its 150 stores.

Germany is the one country that is actually meeting the housing shortage by building houses; and this building is being carried on most effectively by the cooperative societies. The cooperative movement has young men, executives of remarkable administrative genius and experts in every department. Many socialists who once were indifferent to cooperation are now in the movement heart and soul. I believe, as a result of better understanding, the German working people, while still retaining interest in political action, are giving serious attention to cooperation as offering the greatest hope. They have learned by bitter experience that political regimes come and go but cooperation is constant, and what they gain in that field they hold most securely. Germany is distressed, but the distress does not apply to the cooperative movement.

In Czecho-Slovakia, the movement is going forward with remarkable assurance. A young and enthusiastic member of the board of directors of the National Cooperative Wholesale at Prague said to me: "In five years, the world will be ours." This is pretty fast work; but who can tell?

### "Taking It Over"

Switzerland has the most beautiful cooperative movement. It is concentrated and effective. It embraces more than one-third of the population. When big business attempts a boycott or coercion, the Swiss Cooperative Union "takes it over." The process is simple. It did this with the flour trust. The Swiss Cooperative Union could not beat the Beef Trust until it got possession of 51 per cent of its stock; and now it runs the business and has the use of 49 per cent of capitalist capital. Our American radicals would

scorn putting money into the beef trust, but they are doing it every day with every bit of meat they eat; and they will keep on putting in millions of money and have no voice or control for their pains.

It was a striking thing to find the shoe factory of the Swiss Union running full capacity, and making more shoes than the members can buy and storing them in its warehouses, just for the sake of constant employment for its workers. "If there is any loss, the cost to the large number of consumer owners of the factory will be very small compared with the cost of unemployment to the workers." This at a time when there is not a capitalistic shoe factory in Switzerland running full time!

The cooperative movement in Great Britain is plodding along as it has for the past seventy-five years, making its steady gains, and training the workers to administer industries.

#### Making Use of the Expert

The noticeable thing about the cooperative movement in Europe is that everywhere one finds experts. The Germans are especially given to the employment of chemists. Laboratories are found in every big factory. Cooperation is a movement in which the democratically organized mass employs experts to perform for the people the special services which the democracy itself cannot perform. Engineers, electricians, accountants, scientists, architects, artists and every conceivable sort of experts are being "taken over" by the cooperative movement.

Another noteworthy fact is that the coopera-

tive movement is not easily "seen" by academic students. American investigators of labor conditions go to European countries where half of the people are embraced in this movement and utterly fail to find it. I know of only two Americans who have gotten to the heart of the European cooperative movement.

A visitor who sees it in action in country after country gets a sense of living in the future. This is a real and positive impression. It is the actual contact with a civilization in which things are produced and distributed for use and not for profit and in which the democratically organized working people are actually financing, controlling and administering every sort of useful industry. They are themselves controlling the capital which others pay out in profits to private interests. All of this is done quietly, efficiently, without demonstration or oratory.

It was a great privilege to sit as a delegate from the United States in the Tenth International Congress at Basle, Switzerland. The comparative extent of our American movement may be judged by the fact that the United States had 2 delegates, England 94, Germany 78 and France 48. This Congress set on foot an international cooperative wholesale society and an international bank. Its 1200 delegates, elected from 2 countries, represented cooperative societies having a membership of 30,000,000 heads of families. This body represented organizations which are actually solving in the economic field the great question which is disturbing the whole world and which diplomats and politicians cannot and will not solve.

ST. ANNAHOF



Home of the  
Great Zurich  
Cooperative

# Four Months After "Black Friday"

By PAUL BLANSHARD

**B**RITISH labor in retreat is no less fruitful in lessons for American labor than was British labor triumphant. There is something reassuring in the calmness with which the British workers are facing the present crisis. They are making blunders in their retreat on the industrial field, but there is no suggestion of a panic. Depressions may come and depressions may go but organized labor in Great Britain will stay.

I am writing this from the little beach resort of Llandudno, that nestles between the gray cliffs of North Wales. Here, in September, the Miners' Federation of Great Britain held its first conference since the coal strike.

Seated at long wooden tables in the assembly room of the Town Hall, one hundred and sixty miners' delegates faced the blackest prospect which has confronted them for a generation. Their spirit subdued, there was still not in the least wavering of courage. A rumored revolt from the organization failed to materialize. One leap, white-haired veteran of seventy, in making his retirement speech, echoed the spirit of the conference:

"It is a hard time to leave. It has been hard for me. . . . I have my wife left but all of our children are dead. . . . God bless the Miner's Federation of Great Britain. It has worked a revolution in the working life of the miners. It will work further blessings in the days to come."

The conference was an overwhelming victory for the conservatives. Not that there are any leaders of the Britishers who approximate the anti-Bolshevism complex which is known in America as "conservatism." But the split in the miner's executive committee which came on that historic "Black Friday," when the railroad and transport workers deserted their brothers in the Triple Alliance, revealed two schools of tactics. The Left, led by Noah Ablett of South Wales, declared, "We will fight this thing through at any cost because the principle of the national pool is right. We cannot discuss wages alone." The Right, which included Frank Hodges and the acting president of the Miner's Federation, Herbert Smith, answered, "The pool is right but this is not the best time to fight for it. . . . We can't win alone against the mine owners and the govern-

ment. We should settle the wage question separately to our own greatest advantage and fight for the pool later."

## The National Pool

The conference approved by unanimous vote the report of Herbert Smith, which in effect set forth the position of the Right. The government and the mine owners have taught the miners a dangerous lesson, that a clearly just and unselfish cause may be defeated by the brute forces of starvation and ownership. The ideal of the national wages board and the national pool was one of the noblest ideals that any labor organization ever fought for. Phrased in the language of Frank Hodges,

"The whole question amounts to this: That if the workmen desires and are willing to make sacrifices one for the other—because that is the fundamental point—it is not impossible to suggest that the owners should be prepared to make some sacrifice. If the workmen who have got the good luck to work in good seams and can earn good money—because the man who works in a good seam and earns good money sometimes works less hard than the man who works in a bad seam and earns poor money—are prepared, out of their good fortune, to make some sacrifice (and there are a million of these) surely it is not impossible to suggest that the owners, who are a considerable less proportion of the community, should be prepared to make some sacrifice for their less fortunate brethren. That is the moral assumption underlying it."

That moral assumption is a burning conviction in the minds of both Left and Right among the miners' leaders and so long as it endures the Left will fight jointly with the Right.

There was no disguising the fact at the conference that the coal strike was lost. The profit sharing scheme which ended the strike, although it was trumpeted in the press as a compromise, was essentially the same thing that had been offered by the mine owners long before. Frank Hodges is more optimistic about the settlement than the other leaders.

"The settlement was a complete defeat?" I asked him.

"The new plan of profit sharing and district management, according to the Mining Industries Act will be a wonderful training for the miners in developing responsibility," he said. "The success or failure of the settlement depends largely on the miners."

But can a man who works three thousand feet under the ground, as some of the South Wales miners do, accept responsibility grace-

fully and efficiently in the management of the industry on \$15 a week? The long, bitter struggle ending in defeat and starvation wages is the worst possible assurance of successful cooperation in the industry. The present peace is a truce to be broken by the miners at the first real opportunity.

#### What "Black Friday" Taught

The lesson of "Black Friday" has sunk deep into the miner's mind. It is not primarily a distrust of leadership, although there appeared to be incompetence and cowardice in the leadership of the railroad and transport workers. It is the commonplace lesson of preparedness.

The workers had not prepared their own defenses and they had not properly studied the defenses of the enemy. They were an army inspired by the highest purpose but with divisions in the ranks, no adequate supplies, deliberately assaulting the strongest position of the enemy in broad daylight after the enemy had learned all their plans. At the beginning of the strike, there was not enough money in the combined treasuries of the Miner's Federation to pay each striker a total of four dollars strike relief. The treasuries had been drained by the last strike and there was no attempt to levy an advance assessment for strike relief. One able propagandist who spoke to many miners' audiences during the fight told me that less than one-tenth of one per cent of the miners' executive could explain it properly.

The most bitter critics of J. H. Thomas admit that he was probably right in declaring that thousands of the railwaymen were opposed to a Triple Alliance strike on the issue of the mining pool.

#### The Triple Alliance a Myth

The Triple Alliance was either one union or it was nothing. It was nothing. The miners have learned the same lesson that the Amalgamated Clothing Workers learned in their great New York lockout. The clothing workers did not need to involve other unions in their fight; they won alone. But at the end of the fight they expressed their mature con-

viction in a message to the other unions in the Needle Trades Alliance: "There must be one union or no union in the Needle Trades Alliance. Paper alliances are no alliances at all."

In spite of their weakness, the miners would have won easily had it not been for the special economic forces at work against them. They were defeated by the United States coal owners and the Treaty of Versailles. One by one the markets for British coal have been stolen from the mine owners since the armistice. German reparation coal is supplying much to France. American coal before the strike was landed on the continent and sold for less than the same quality of coal could be produced and sold for at the pit heads of Wales. The export price of British coal fell in the first quarter of the year almost 50 per cent. When the strike came, many of the coal owners got their golf bags and trundled off to Scotland or the coast. What could they lose by a strike? Here was a chance to place the blame for the ruin of the industry upon the miners.

#### Appeal to America

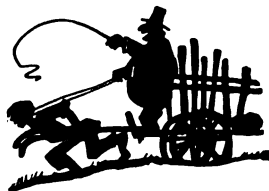
The British miners are now keenly aware that they were beaten by economic circumstances. The leaders believe that the United States holds their future in its power.

"What do you propose to do?" I asked Frank Hodges.

"That depends on you," he said. "There are only two things we can possibly do. One is to persuade your miners to compete with us on fair terms. We have the seven-hour day here and in America the miners work eight hours and often more. That difference is undermining our standard of living. The miners' international expects to send a commission to the United States this year to explain the situation to American miners. I expect to be a member of that commission.

"If we cannot get your cooperation then there is only one other alternative. The mine owners and miners of Europe must create an alliance against American coal."

The immediate future of the British mining industry seems well-nigh hopeless. Thousands of miners are out of work as a result of the shut-down in the steel industry, and the destruction of foreign markets for British coal. Some of the pits may never open again. It is only British grit and courage that can carry the miners' organizations through—and that grit and courage will not fail.



## BOOK NOTES

Edited by PRINCE HOPKINS and HARRY W. LAIDLER

OF INESTIMABLE value to students of the labor movement are the summaries and bibliographies of trade unionism, cooperation, single tax, socialism, guild socialism, syndicalism, bolshevism, anarchism, etc., supplied by Savel Zimand in his volume on "Modern Social Movements," prepared under the direction of the Bureau of Industrial Research (New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 260 pp., 1921). While here and there omissions of important references may be noted, the volume as a whole is the most thorough, discriminating and comprehensive bibliography on social problems which has thus far appeared.

A companion reference volume to that of Mr. Zimand's and equally valuable, is "The Labour International Handbook," 1921, edited by R. Palme Dutt, under the direction of the British Labour Research Department (London: The Labour Publishing Co., 6 Tavistock Sq., W. C., 320pp). The book gives a brief description of the history and present status of the socialist, trade union and cooperative movements in each important country, and devotes special chapters to vital questions of foreign policy.

\* \* \*

THREE volumes on the labor movement in America and Great Britain which must be noted are James Oneal's "The Workers in American History" (N.Y.: The Hanford Press, 7 East 15th Street, 1921, 208pp.), Frank Tannenbaum's "The Labor Movement" (N. Y.: Putnam's, 1921, 259pp.), and Lord Askwith's "Industrial Problems and Disputes" (N. Y.: Harcourt, 1921). The first of these, written by one of the most prominent writers and leaders of the American socialist movement, gives a clear and accurate sketch of the struggles of labor from the old colonial days to the beginning of the twentieth century. It contains a wealth of material of immediate and practical use to students and active workers in the labor movement.

Mr. Tannenbaum traces the intellectual and spiritual, as well as the material benefits conferred on the workers by the trade union. It is his belief that the conservative groups in the labor movement are directed toward the same goal as are the more radical forces, although in a less conscious manner. The goal is the organization of humanity on industrial lines.

From a more conservative angle comes the history of labor disputes, by Lord Askwith, chairman of the British Government's Arbitration Commission. Lord Askwith tells of trade union controversies with which he was closely connected, beginning with the dockers' strike of 1889, and concluding with the miners' dispute of a couple of years ago. He interjects chapters devoted to Marxian, guild socialist and syndicalist remedies, and urges the reformer's remedy of a cooperation between labor and capital, "that bitter disputes may be settled by understanding; that employers and employed may work together."

To any one who wishes authoritative information concerning what actually happened during the recent coal strike in Great Britain, the 50 page pamphlet on "The Coal War in Great Britain," by Herbert Tracey of the British Labor Party (N. Y.: Bureau of Industrial Research, 289 Fourth Ave.), will be doubly welcomed. The author throws much light in this pamphlet on the causes for the failure of the Triple Alliance. He believes that labor has suffered materially but gained morally from the suffering and sacrifice endured.

\* \* \*

THREE stimulating forecasts of a new social order have recently come to hand.

Of chief interest, written as it is by one of the most prominent industrial and political leaders of Germany, is "The New Soviet," by Walter Rathenau (N. Y.: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921, 147pp.)

The goal of socialism, according to the author, "is the abolition of the proletarian condition," a state of society where "no one can have an income without working for it." The ultimate goal "is the development of the human soul." The book is equally vigorous in its condemnation of the materialism of the German people, the stupidity of capitalism and the lack of creative thought among the Social Democracy.

The second forecast by Professor Thorstein Veblen, "The Engineers and the Price System," (N. Y.: B. W. Huebsch, 1921, 169 pp.) deals with the coming relation between labor and the technician. Professor Veblen unreservedly condemns the basis of our industrial order—that of "absentee ownership." In seeking the way out, he declares: "The whole-hearted cooperation of the technician would be indispensable to any effective movement of overturn," as their unwarranted servitude in the employ of the Vested Interests is indispensable to the maintenance of the established order."

A third prophecy from J. H. Thomas, of the National Union of Railwaymen, is found in "When Labor Rules" (N. Y.: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 197pp.) The book is a defense of the program of the British Labor party and a plea for national ownership of mineral resources, transportation, light, heat, and insurance and government regulation of non-governmental businesses.

Somewhat allied to the foregoing prophecies, but confining its attention to actual experiments in cooperative industry, is the suggestive volume on "Denmark, a Cooperative Commonwealth" (N. Y.: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1921, 199pp.) from the fertile pen of Frederic C. Howe. This volume describes the workings of the remarkably integrated Danish cooperative movement, and analyzes recent social legislation in Denmark. It maintains that these experiments constitute "the most valuable political exhibit of the modern world."



## A NEW LINK IN WORKERS' EDUCATION



This month one of the editors of the **Labor Age** will take charge of a small group of boys, nine to twelve years old, whom he will board and place at school near Greenwich, Conn. There is sufficient financial backing behind the enterprise so that the charges for each can be made very moderate, and therefore those boys will be preferred who appear to be personally the most promising and who come from families which are rendering service to the progressive labor movement.

The school will avoid the capitalistic bias, dogmatic teaching, encouragement

toward religion and autocratic harshness which characterize most existing schools. All the boys accepted will be of about the same school grade; this will render instruction easier and their association more congenial. A large tract of land has been bought near Stamford, to which excursions will be made from the school to practice woodcraft, build cabins, dam brooks, and enjoy all the other experiences which healthy boys ought to have.

This group may develop into a school filling the gap in local workers' education units between primary schools like that at Stelton, and Workers' Colleges like that at Katonah. Parents who apply to **Labor Age** for further information are asked to include their sons' photographs.

LABOR AGE has succeeded to the good will and mailing rights of the **Socialist Review**. In order to retain these rights, the following statement of last April is necessary:

**STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.**

Of The Socialist Review, published at New York, New York, for April 1, 1921.

State of New York, County of New York, ss.:

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared the editor of The Socialist Review, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, managing editor and business managers are: Publisher, Intercollegiate Socialist Society, 70 5th Ave., N. Y. C.; Editor, H. W. Laidler, 70 5th Ave., N. Y. City; Managing Editor, none; Business Managers, none.

2. That the owners are: (Give names and addresses of individual owners, or, if a corporation, give its name and the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of the total amount of stock.) Intercollegiate Socialist Society, 70 5th Ave., N. Y. C. Membership approximately 2,000. The principal officers are: President, Arthur Gleason, 156 E. 45th St., N. Y. C.; 1st Vice Pres., Evans Clark, 1 Union Sq., N. Y. C.; 2d Vice Pres., Jessie W. Hughan, 378 Grand Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.; Treas., James H. Alexander, 29 Cleveland Lane, Princeton, N. J.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) There are no known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any

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HARRY W. LAIDLER,  
Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 25th day of March, 1921.  
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Certificate filed in New York County. Register No. 2417. Commission expires Mar. 30, 1922.

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