

# LABOR MAGAZINE

THE VOICE OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR

## **Another Dred Scott Decision**

Louis F. Budenz

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## **1931 A. F. L. Convention**

A. J. Muste

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## **The Unemployed Citizens League of Seattle**

B. C.

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*Editorial*

**November, 1931**

**15 Cent**

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Vol. XX—No. 11

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**T**HE New York branch of the C.P.L.A. opened its new headquarters at 128 East 16th Street with a housewarming which packed the hall to overflowing. With A. J. Muste as toastmaster, tribute was paid to the progress of the C.P.L.A., especially in the field of industrial activity. It was pointed out by the speakers, who included Mark Starr, Tom Tippet, Carlo Tresca, Louis F. Budenz and others, that the opening of the headquarters marked a great forward step in what promises to be a period of even greater activity for the C.P.L.A. during the coming winter.

On October 17, the New York Labor Forum was opened with a talk by Comrade Muste on "The Outlook for American Labor in the Winter of 1931-32." This was followed, on October 25, by a talk on "The 1931 Convention of the American Federation of Labor." During the forthcoming weeks the following topics will be dealt with:

Nov. 1, "The Present Position and Future of the Socialist Party of the United States"; Nov. 8, "The Present Position and Future of the Communist Party of the United States"; Nov. 15, "Can a Realistic Left Wing Movement—Political and Industrial—Be Built in the United States?"

The forum is already attracting a wide circle of followers and bids fair to go a long way toward making the new headquarters an influential and recognized labor center for New York City.

## NOTICE

Labor Age Now \$1.50 Per Year

Due to the "beneficent" effects of "rugged individualism" on a large number of the readers of Labor Age (they are now able to belong to the involuntary leisure class), it has become necessary to reduce the yearly subscription price to \$1.50 and the single copy price to 15 cents.



## NOTICE

### Conference for Progressive Labor Action

New York Branch

Meets every Second and Fourth Friday of each Month.

# DANCE

*Dispel Those Hooverian Depression Blues*

at the

**FIRST SOCIAL AND DANCE**

of the

## Conference for Progressive Labor Action

**Saturday, November 21**

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*Music by the Blue Rhythm Band*

*Entertainment Refreshments Free*

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## IMPORTANT

*Labor Age and C. P. L. A. have moved from 104 Fifth Avenue to 128 East 16th Street.*

*We now have a large hall with offices to which members and friends are invited to come.*

# LABOR AGE

November, 1931

## EDITORIALS

**T**HE conservatives are swept into office and labor and the liberals snowed under in the British elections. We are told that the returns were received amid scenes of wild hilarity in the clubs and palaces of London's fashionable West End. That may serve as a symbol of what a calamity this election is for Labor in Great Britain and throughout the world.

### A Triumph for Fascism

Fundamentally, this election is a triumph for Fascism. There were those who argued that the liberal party would go down and that Britain would go back to the two party system. Actually the victory of the various nationalist groups and especially the Tories is so overwhelming that Britain is now on a one-party basis. That is the tendency everywhere today. It is especially significant that in the traditional home of political democracy it should develop thus swiftly. The evident shakiness of the capitalist economy in Great Britain gave the Fascists, with the help of would-be Socialists like MacDonald, a chance to frighten masses of people into putting them into the saddle.

British financiers are now free to enter upon a vicious wage-slashing campaign and an attack upon the social services built up to give security to the workers. This will be the signal for an international capitalist offensive against wages and labor standards, and against the labor movement itself. Capitalism will attempt to save itself by taking it out of the hides of the workers.

Britain will now put up tariff walls and contribute her share to the insanity of blocking the avenues of trade between peoples, which has so largely contributed to the misery in which the world finds itself.

The Round Table Conference on India will come to an end shortly without any substantial achievement. That means revival of the Civil disobedience campaign in that country, which will have repercussions all over the world.

In general, an ultra-imperialist foreign policy will be followed by the British government. The likelihood of war growing out of nationalist rivalries is vastly increased.

A Labor Party led by such men as MacDonald or even Henderson is not fit to cope with such a situation as Britain faces. The Labor Party while in office made no single bold attempt to move toward a Socialist economy. It attempted rather to bolster up capitalism, to put business on its feet, promising the workers that after that real efforts to bring in Socialism would be made.

If Britain is now to be saved from complete Fascist domination, British labor must adopt a clear-cut Socialist program and enter upon a militant struggle for power both on the economic and the political field in order that it may put that program into effect and establish a workers' republic. We hail the militant tendencies manifest in some sections of the Independent Labor Party and the trade unions, and hope for their speedy triumph.

**T**HE July and August issues of LABOR AGE devoted some space to a vigorous debate between Leonard Bright and James Oneal, on the question of whether the Socialist Party is a working-class or a middle-class party. Although we could not expect issues to be as prominently clarified in

### Not a Working Class Campaign

an off-year as during a presidential election year, yet the background and the general developments of the election campaign in New York City in 1931 shows the middle-class and non-working-class character of the Socialist Party most glaringly.

At the time when prospective candidates were throwing their hats into the ring, Morris Hillquit burst into the limelight with his famous suit against the Soviet Union in behalf of a number of oil companies. Although the Socialist Party managed to convince its favorite son of the error of his ways to the extent that Hillquit publicly withdrew from the case, yet it did not fail to show its unshakable confidence in its leader by giving him one of the outstanding places on its list of nominees—a nomination for Supreme Court Justice.

The campaign occurred in the midst of an intensive unemployment situation and at the time when the campaign of wage slashing was opened with furious vigor by the big corporations. But these issues played little part in the campaign. The campaign itself did not appreciably further the much needed movement for unemployment relief, nor did it fuse itself with any attempt to resist the wage cutting drive.

The high point in the campaign, apparently the great triumph of the entire campaign, was the endorsement by the Citizens Union of a large number of candidates including Norman Thomas. This is the outfit with which are associated the names of William M. Chadbourne, international spokesman for the Sugar Trust, Charles E. Hughes, Jr., son of the well-known Standard Oil defender, William Jay Schieffelin, millionaire drug magnate, Sam A. Lewisohn, millionaire banker of the firm of Lewisohn & Sons, Julius Henry Cohen, counsel for the manufacturers' association in the cloakmakers' strike of 1910, and others of equal prominence in the capitalist world. The Citizens Union is notoriously known as the semi-liberal face of the Republican Party, which is trying to get a foothold in New York City politics.

In the questionnaire sent to candidates there is not a mention of labor or the matters of closest concern to labor. The problems of unemployment, wage cuts, etc., simply do not exist for the Citizens Union. And yet Julius Gerber, executive secretary of the Socialist Party, in a letter of instruction to candidates, dated September 16, 1931, gives the following kindly advice:

"In order to assist our comrades in answering these questionnaires . . . I have asked Comrade Henry Rosner,



who is doing the research work for the Party, to prepare an answer to the Citizens Union questionnaire, which I am inclosing herewith. You can rewrite it in your own way and style, and send it to the Citizens Union. But we do want you to answer it, and as soon as possible."

Following this came the endorsement of the World-Telegram, the New York Times and even an endorsement by Hamilton Fish, Jr., who called Thomas, an "honest, upright, courageous, double-fisted" man, who ought to head a new reform party. The support of that staunch Republican, former Attorney-General George W. Wickersham, was hailed with glee by Thomas.

For labor to get the assistance of liberals and even capitalists in strike relief, defense, etc., is pardonable and absolutely legitimate, if no harmful compromises of labor principles are made. But for a working-class candidate, ostensibly running on the basis of the principles of the class struggle, to accept and even to solicit the endorsement of an avowedly pro-capitalist and anti-labor political organization like the Citizens Union, is to fly in the face of labor's aspirations for its own political party. The Socialist Party, and every candidate who has accepted the endorsement of the Citizens Union, stands convicted before the workers as having compromised—bartered the principles of Socialism for a mess of middle-class pottage.



**T**HE gods, if gods there be, must have set up a roar of laughter that echoed around all the hills of Heaven, when Matthew Woll delivered his speech against compulsory governmental unemployment insurance at the recent

### Matthew Woll on Unemployment Insurance

Matthew's substitute for unemployment insurance. He proposes "an aggressive preaching of trade unionism and the gospel of collective bargaining!"

This is cynicism indeed from the man who has never raised his finger in a genuine effort to organize workers, especially the masses of unskilled and semi-skilled in the basic industries; the man who, in fact, has often sabotaged such efforts.

Probably the fact that workers who were assured of some income when thrown out of a job (other than what some company welfare scheme might bring them) might have stronger feelings of independence and therefore be readier to join unions and less ready to accept jobs at non-union wages, is for Woll a good argument against unemployment compensation. He has never given any convincing indication that he wants unionism extended.

Nevertheless, the resolution for unemployment compensation got much more support in this year's convention than in the Boston convention a year ago. Some very powerful, and on most matters conservative, A. F. of L. leaders spoke for the measure. Reports indicate that the delegates might actually have been swept into voting for the measure, but for an impassioned plea from President Green to stand by the traditional A. F. of L. policy of "voluntarism". Even so, he conceded that "labor was moving fast" toward some form of permanent relief against unemployment.

Progressive and militant laborites should seriously consider whether a vigorous campaign for compulsory unemployment should now be waged in the A. F. of L. and among the workers generally. More especially, they should be on their guard that unemployment compensation, if it

comes, shall be the right kind and not like the wishy-washy thing that now passes for "old age pensions" in many instances. The C.P.L.A. will fight to the end, for example, against any scheme which requires the workers, out of their already too meager wages, to contribute anything to a fund from which they are to be paid when they are out of work.



**T**HE British Labor Party suffered a well-nigh crushing blow in the recent election. Ramsay MacDonald's treason accomplished more for the British Tories than he himself dreamed probable.

### Defeated and Disgraced

MacDonald is a living symbol of Social Democracy, of the Socialist parties of the world, and his treason to the British Labor Party is a symbol of the way in which that Party betrayed the workers, as all Socialist (as distinguished from revolutionary) parties eventually do.

Social Democrats everywhere end by attempting to bolster up capitalism, for when capitalism begins to go to pieces and a receiver is needed to take it over, they argue that "business" must first be put back on its feet, the "national credit" must be restored, and then you can establish Socialism. As if capitalists are likely to let you do that when they are sitting pretty again.

May the lesson of what has happened in Great Britain not be lost upon us. If we are to have a mass labor party in the United States it must be genuinely labor, and above all it must have within it a militant realistic revolutionary left wing such as C.P.L.A. is seeking to become and to create.

And, still more obviously, Socialists in the U. S. who are, or think they are, genuinely militant can now no longer evade the question whether they can remain a part of the Social Democratic movement of the world. They know, furthermore, that the American Socialist Party is honeycombed with the same elements as the center and right of the British Labor Party. To convert these elements to militancy is impossible. Militants who attempt it are in the sorry role of the maid who marries a drunkard to save him. Remaining in the same party with these elements hampers militants and in the end makes them partners in treason.

Where there is a mass labor party, it may often be wise for left-wingers to work within it while critical of it. Such a mass labor party does not make, or at least need not make, any pretense of being what it is not. A party which bears the Socialist name and is not composed solely of militant elements is deceptive. It raises hopes in the workers which it always disappoints. It is part of a world-movement which since the war, under the pretense of serving the workers, has been pumping oxygen into the weakened body of capitalism. To militant comrades we say, "Come out from among them and be ye separate."



**T**HE Communist Party and the National Textile Workers' Union have recently given in connection with the Paterson silk workers' strike, some choice instances of the policy of advancing the revolution by strike-breaking, to which they are becoming increasingly addicted.

Among the strikers in the big Doherty silk mill the tools of the boss proposed at one time that the workers should secede from the amalgamated A. F. of L. unions, which

they had joined at the beginning of the strike, and should form a shop organization. Of course the next step would have been for the shop organization to vote to give up the strike. Several N. T. W. organizers tried to get into the meeting, though this was certain to create confusion, and so play into the hands of the boss's friends. They were excluded, but the N. T. W. had a few members among the Doherty employes who were, of course, eligible to attend the meeting. The spokesman for these members of the N. T. W. attacked the A. F. of L. unions, among other things on the ground that they did not picket militantly, whereas the N. T. W. always did. One of the workers in the Doherty shop got up and asked this speaker why, if he was so strongly in favor of militant picketing, he had not joined in the mass demonstrations and the daily picketing which had been taking place in his own mill. He answered: "It was no use, because the strike was lost anyway." This was comparatively early in the strike, at a time when the Doherty situation was very strong. This was preaching defeatism in the most brazen fashion.

A couple of weeks later the twenty or so members of the N. T. W. in the Doherty shop went back to work in a body one morning when the strike was still on in force. The natural result was that many weak strikers followed the example of these "revolutionists" and also went in to scab.

In Bornstein & Sons, an important jacquard mill in Paterson, the weavers in the A. F. of L. amalgamated unions were offered a substantial increase in wages. This still left them, however, below the union scale, and the union denied their request that they be permitted to go back to work, and told them they must fight for a further increase. The workers in the mill accepted this decision of the union, and fought even harder than they had done before. A committee of the N. T. W., however, went to the employer and offered to fill up his shop with N. T. W. weavers at the price at which the A. F. of L. unions were refusing to settle. The employer told a union organizer that he would have accepted the N. T. W. scab proposition in a minute if he had been sure that his loom fixers and twisters would have been willing to work with these N. T. W. weavers.

At a time when the A. F. of L. unions were still fighting bitterly for the 6c rate in the plain goods mills, the N. T. W. permitted several dozen of its members to go to work in the mills for 5½c.

Brown Brothers Silk Company is an important plain goods shop. In this shop about two-thirds of the workers joined the N. T. W. and one-third the A. F. of L. unions.

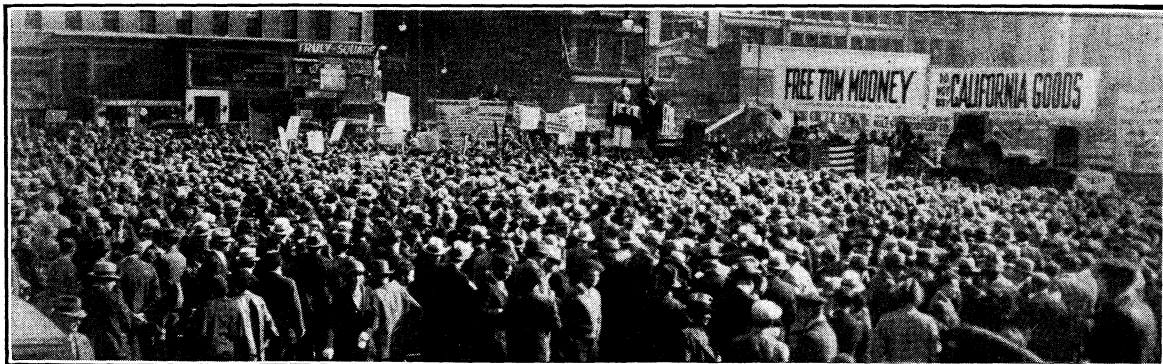
The shop settled against the orders of the A. F. of L. unions, but with the tacit permission of the N. T. W., for 5½c. Shortly thereafter, as the A. F. of L. unions had warned the workers, the boss told them that he would have to cut them to 4½c. The workers, after a conference with the boss, agreed to work for 5c, though many Paterson shops had settled at the union rate of 5½c, and several shops were at that very moment on strike against an attempt of the bosses to cut them below that rate. The A. F. of L. unions accordingly picketed the shop; thereupon the workers agreed to hold a shop meeting to discuss the whole matter.

The A. F. of L. organizers present at that meeting, Brothers Budenz and Muste, were asked by the workers in the shop what advice or instructions they had to give. They said: "The A. F. of L. amalgamated unions will not sanction your working at the 5c rate. If you try to settle on this basis, when the union standard is 5½c, and many of your fellow workers are even now fighting for that price, you will be scabbing, and the A. F. of L. unions will picket your shop."

The N. T. W. organizer was also asked for the advice and instruction of his union. After several attempts to evade a reply he made the following jesuitical pronouncement: "The N. T. W. will not sanction accepting a cut in wages either. The N. T. W. never sanctions a wage reduction. If, however, the whole shop votes to accept this 5c rate, we will not picket you. We do not picket against the wishes of the workers. (He was conveniently forgetting the several thousand union workers in Paterson whose standard of wages these workers in the Brown Brothers shop would be undermining.) Picketing under such circumstances would be a mechanical thing. This situation affects all the workers in Paterson, and three weeks from now we are going to hold a united front conference to see what is the best thing to do about it!"

Obviously this was an open invitation for the workers who had been out on strike a good while, and could think of nothing except their own immediate interests, to accept the cut, which they did.

With so many good, healthy reactionaries in the labor movement to be fought, it is a pity that radicals should have to fight each other. But strike-breaking is strike-breaking and is a crime against the labor movement, whether perpetrated by reactionaries or so-called revolutionists. The leadership of the radical movement in the United States must and will be wrested from the hands of such traitorous and fake revolutionists as the Communist Party and its affiliated unions are proving to be at the present time.



New York Labor unites in splendid demonstration on Union Square on Saturday, October 10 in behalf of Tom Mooney. Over 150 labor and fraternal organizations participated in this monster meeting.

# A Challenge To Militants

**T**HE present situation in the world, and particularly in the U. S., presents to American militants a mighty challenge. We must answer that challenge. Delay is dangerous and is treason to the working class.

The capitalist system is shaken to its foundations, even here in the richest nation on earth. As a result the workers face a concerted and bitter attack from the worried forces of reaction. Wages are being slashed right and left. Hard-won conditions are being taken away. Twelve million or more are unemployed. Instead of adequate relief being provided out of taxation, by governmental agencies, to the victims of capitalist stupidity, greed and brutality, the rich are permitted to escape taxation; the workers lucky enough to hold some kind of a job are being cajoled or clubbed into contributing out of their meager wages to relief funds, and are thus forced still further to lower their living standards, while the unemployed are herded into bread lines, soup kitchens and the corridors of charity societies that they may receive a dole.

When workers refuse to submit without a protest to these conditions, they are ruthlessly terrorized. Never before in any country has protest been silenced more swiftly and completely. Let a worker in any industry or locality utter so much as a word against some new form of wage-cutting, or be found attending a labor meeting, and immediately he loses his job. Special and damnable discrimination is practised against Negroes and other groups. "Radicalism" now includes anything not fully in accord with the dictates of the bankers and the corrupt politicians of the Republican and Democratic parties. Injunctions, yellow-dog contracts, thugs and the violence of so-called officers of the law, are used to break up every attempt of the workers to organize, every strike, every demonstration of the masses to voice their grievances and demand redress.

Thus the leaders of finance and industry are carrying through a concerted and vicious drive to drug the minds of the workers and farmers and to rob them of every ounce of independence and self-respect. The result will be, they hope, that when the

shaky structure of capitalist economy and political democracy falls to pieces, the masses will submit quietly to a Fascist dictatorship of big business and finance. The outcome of the recent British election furnishes a fresh and lurid illustration of how swiftly Fascism is sweeping forward everywhere in the world, except in Russia, where the workers have abolished capitalism and are building a workers' republic.

In the face of poverty, unemployment, the bosses' offensive against the living standards and self-respect of the workers, and the onrushing tide of Fascism, the American labor movement stands utterly bankrupt, confused and helpless. It contains no organized element which possesses the militancy, the revolutionary purpose, the realism and the strength, or promise of strength, sufficient for the stark crisis which confronts us.

The trade union movement includes only a tiny percentage of the workers, and its leadership works hand in glove with big business, the bankers, the corporations, the Republican administration in Washington, and the cheap, old-party politicians in the states and cities. Unless that leadership is soon smashed, the trade union movement will be extinguished, or degenerate finally and completely into a company union.

The Socialist party in the United States contains some vigorous and promising younger elements! As a party, however, it affords no hope. It is weighed down and confused by elements which are conservative, if not reactionary. These elements call themselves Marxian but give no leadership or effective help in the bitter industrial struggles of the workers. They give support to corrupt or conservative forces in the unions. They are indifferent or hostile toward Soviet Russia. They place far too much trust in the sham of political democracy. They have no clear revolutionary purpose.

The Party likewise contains, and indeed welcomes, other elements, more honest and idealistic in many cases, but essentially liberal and not working-class in character.

In recent municipal campaigns the party has often been far too much concerned about the issue of corrup-

tion in capitalist politics. Its appeals are too often addressed to the liberal vote. Thousands of voters, at any rate, do as a matter of fact, cast their ballots for party candidates because they believe these candidates would, if elected, provide "clean government" and feel entirely confident that they would not do anything seriously to undermine the present economic system. The temptation then becomes almost overwhelming to couch election appeals in such language and to direct party policies in such a way as not to make a poor showing in future elections by losing such voters.

So long as the party is composed in part of such elements as these, it may serve as an agency through which a larger or smaller number of people may promote certain progressive or partially radical measures, until they are absorbed in a mass labor party. Even in such a mass party some of the reactionaries would have no rightful place.

To think of a party containing such elements, however, as an effective left wing force within a mass labor party, as a fit instrument to inspire the masses to a realistic, revolutionary struggle for power, is to be either hopelessly blind or intellectually dishonest.

Recent events in Great Britain have furnished proof, if any more were needed, that in the final test such "Socialist" parties accept the ignoble part of trying to keep "business" on its feet and pumping oxygen into an exhausted capitalist system, instead of pressing forward to take power for the workers.

Real militants needlessly confuse the workers and squander their own energies, desperately needed in actual labor struggles, by trying to carry along in a supposedly left wing organization elements from which they differ fundamentally. They stand to gain vastly more than they can possibly lose by helping to build in America an organization of militants, by militants and for militants.

The Communist Party also contains some healthy rank and file elements. The party has not struck root, however, among American workers. Despite slogans about rank and file control, it does not have enough genuine



respect for the workers to attempt to do so. It has followed a divisive and secretarian policy in the unions and failed to show any practical leadership in the unions when it had a chance. It has carried on strike-breaking activities on a large scale. Its following among the masses, whether in the unions or outside, has fallen off tremendously, rather than increased, during the present crisis.

Other militant groups and individuals exist. Many are veterans of the class struggle in America, others are young and inexperienced but full of enthusiasm and promise. But they are weak and ineffective, largely because their resources in men, leadership, money and energy are divided and their activities scattered.

The situation is a crime, a disgrace—and a challenge! The Conference for Progressive Labor Action feels that under the circumstances it is necessary for the militant elements in the labor movement to band themselves firmly together in a disciplined organization—an organization rooted in American soil, facing the realities of American life, devoted to aiding the workers in the struggle to take control of industry and government, to

abolish the present capitalist system and build a workers' republic and an economic system operated for the benefit of the masses and not of the few.

The CPLA is trying to close ranks and transform itself into such an organization. Hence, the more precise definition of our aims and policies set forth in the revised statement of purpose printed in this issue of LABOR AGE. Hence our increasing interest in political action. Hence, also the conviction expressed in our statement of purpose that our membership should be a really active one, not tied to other political groups in such a way as to make it necessary for them to subordinate CPLA policies and activities to those of other groups.

We hope it is clear that this action is taken without ill will against any comrades who may not wish to go along with the more definitely "political activity." Furthermore, we depend as much as ever on their cooperation in industrial activities and struggles. In that field our policy remains as always that of a united front of all elements against the boss.

This does not mean that on the political field our policy is intended to be

a divisive or sectarian one, though in the nature of the case a political organization must be composed of persons who have a common point of view, whereas, equally in the nature of the case, a trade union consists of the persons working in a particular trade or industry regardless of race, age, sex, creed or economic or political affiliations.

At the same time that CLPA is transformng itself into a militant left-wing political organization, it is working toward a convention in which all militant, individuals and groups, having essentially the same realistic revolutionary point of view, but now often ineffective because working in a confused and scattered fashion, may meet to discuss the question of banding themselves firmly together in an organization of the militants, for militants, by militants, and to plan for future militant activities on the political, industrial and educational fields. This convention will be held at the end of December or at such other time as may prove most convenient for all the elements interested. We shall be glad to hear from fellow-workers who desire more information or who wish to cooperate.

## The Edison War Continues

WITH an army of spies and sluggers the Brooklyn Edison Company is attempting to stop its employes from organizing. Not being able or willing to answer the legitimate grievances of its workers in an open and decent manner, it is employing the tactics of the gangster racketeer. Posing as a Christian and as a patriotic citizen, Matthew S. Sloan, president of the company, permits or orders his subordinates to use the same methods to suppress criticism of the unsocial and autocratic policies of his company that Al Capone uses to suppress opposition to his gangster rule.

To prove that this denunciation of the Brooklyn Edison Company and its official head is not merely a result of unsubstantiated rumors and hot temper, we relate the following facts:

On Wednesday afternoon, September 23, four foremen of the Brooklyn Edison Company attacked and beat into unconsciousness S. William Levitch, secretatry to the Brotherhood of Brooklyn Edison Employes, while he

was distributing the "Live Wire," official organ of the Brotherhood, at Rockwell Place and Dekalb Avenue, Brooklyn. One week later another attempt was made to distribute the "Live Wire." This time six distributors, including Levitch, were met by between 40 and 50 gangsters who tore the paper from their hands, spat on the distributors, and hit one girl in the face.

Two weeks later another attempt was made to distribute the paper. This time there were 25 distributors, including a number of students from Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary. But the company had also increased its forces, having a small army of thugs waiting, who proceeded to beat up the distributors and to destroy the papers. One newspaper reporter had his camera smashed and was severely beaten. The police remained "neutral".

The latest attempt to distribute the "Live Wire" was made on Wednesday afternoon, October 7. Led by the Rev. Eliot White, representative

of the American Civil Liberties Union, more than 40 students of economics and Social Science from Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University, and New York University, together with Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. officials, appeared at the payline of the company with bundles of the "Live Wire."

But the irreproachable character and social standing of the distributors—certainly these people could not very well be called irresponsible "reds" or foreigners—made no difference to Mat Sloan and his thugs. They were treated with as much indignity and violence as if they had been *mere* workers. They showed sympathy with the cause of the workers, and this, in the eyes of the company and of the arch hypocrite who is its president, is sufficient condemnation.

In this battle, David M. Cory of the Cuyler Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn was beaten so badly that he had to be treated at the Brooklyn Hospital; Paul Porter, writer and

publicist, was beaten severely about the head and body; a student from Brookwood Labor College had to have four stitches taken over his eye; and Chester Williams, secretary of the National Student Federation, who was a bystander, is still in the hospital suffering from the beating given him by Sloan's thugs.

Now remember, all that these people were attempting to do was to distribute the *Live Wire*. This is not a scandal sheet; it is not a subversive publication; it was not being forced upon the workers against their will—in fact it is written by the men themselves. Neither is there anything illegal about distributing this paper, as Judge Folwell of the Adams Street Court, had ruled on two separate occasions that the distribution of the *Live Wire* is legal.

Despite these facts, however, the police did not make any serious attempt to protect the distributors from the violence of the company's thugs. Which suggests the question: "Whom are the police paid to protect?" This question will be dealt with in a future issue of *LABOR AGE*.

Perhaps there are some who are now asking: "Why does the Brooklyn Edison Company employ these tactics of violence? Why is this powerful company so determined to destroy the 'Live Wire'?" Here are the reasons:

Last spring, without any warning, nearly 2,000 workers were arbitrarily laid off by the company. Two thousand men with their families were thrown on the bread lines by a company which, according to its own admission, had made \$11,000,000 more profit in the year of depression, 1930, than in the year of prosperity, 1929. Thrown on the bread lines by a company whose president was a member of the Prosser Committee to relieve unemployment and who had solemnly promised the President of the United States that there would be no wage cutting in his company during the period of depression.

Not having entirely lost their self-respect—which is what Mat Sloan and his kind want the workers to do—the

employees of the Brooklyn Edison Company began to organize. In spite of the army of spies and spotters maintained by the company at the expense of the public, squads of workers came together secretly and formed the Brotherhood of Brooklyn Edison Employees. They started their own publication, the *Live Wire*, which kept the workers informed of the activities of the Brotherhood, and which exposed abuses within the company. The facts and charges published in the *Live Wire* have never been challenged by the company, although the

posed the tie-up of Eliot Roosevelt, son of Franklin D. Roosevelt, with the Edison Company through the advertising agency of Kelly, Nason and Roosevelt, which handles nearly a million dollars worth of Edison advertising yearly.

In addition, the *Live Wire* has warned the Edison workers that the company is preparing to start a wage-cutting campaign similar to those of other large corporations. The evidence for this being the brutal and desperate tactics employed by the company to stop distribution of the

Brotherhood's paper. It is now known that at a special meeting of officials and foremen, held on Tuesday, Oct. 27, instructions were given out that anyone seen with a *Live Wire* would be fired.

The newest expose by the *Live Wire* is the unemployment relief drive by the bosses' committee.

Matthew S. Sloan, although his name does not appear on the literature of the committee, was named by President Hoover to this committee. This is how, according to the current issue of the *Live Wire*, his company is collecting funds for the committee.

"A week ago we were confronted without the slightest warning with the demand

that we sign off two per cent of our miserably low pay for the Unemployment Relief Fund. We were compelled to sign on the dotted line, whether we could afford to pay or not, under threat of discharge. . . .

"Less than a half year ago 2,000 men were fired by the Brooklyn Edison Company and are now visiting the bread line. . . . Is it fair that we should be compelled to pay for this condition from our miserably low pay when it is due to no fault of our own? . . .

"The fact of the matter is that these relief drives are just a drop in the bucket when compared with the problem of feeding, clothing and sheltering over 7,000,000 unemployed. A few politicians make capital out of it. The company itself is insincere about the

(Continued on Page 28)



From the "Live Wire"

Brotherhood has time and again invited the company to public discussion.

Some of the things the Brotherhood, through the *Live Wire*, has accused the company of are:

Maintaining a vicious spy system, permeating every bureau and department; maintaining a system of inhuman speed-up; robbing the workers of their vacations and bonuses by the lay-off method; forcing the workers to buy company products such as Frigidaire, radios, clocks, etc.; withholding promised raises; unreasonable lay-off of workers for unavoidable lateness; abusive treatment and persecution of workers by their superiors; forced collections of funds for various reasons, and many others.

It has also publicly fought the new excessive rates; opposed the appointment of Sloan to the Gifford committee on unemployment relief; and ex-

# Yellow Dog and

By LOUIS  
FRANCIS  
BUDENZ

*Pennsylvania's Supreme Court  
Hands Down Another Dred  
Scott Decision*

# Golden Calf

IT is scarcely two years since we burned the "yellow dog" in effigy, on a high hill overlooking Nazareth.

The strikers danced around the big bon-fire, singing. Then I told them of how their Moravian ancestors had come upon the site of the "Holy City" from some such eminence, in their search for religious liberty. This battle against the "yellow dog" was a continuance of that struggle, on another class plane and in another set of circumstances, I emphasized.

During the past month, by decision of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania out of that Nazareth fight, the "yellow dog" becomes sacrosanct in that commonwealth. It is elevated into an idol, before which the workers are expected to bow down and worship.

No more putrid decision has been handed down in years in labor disputes than this majority opinion by Chief Justice Frazer in the appeal of Louis Francis Budenz "from decree of the Court of Common Pleas of Northampton County." The sole redeeming feature of the business was the brilliant dissenting opinion of Justice G. W. Maxey, which has already received deserved editorial notice in a number of publications.

Prior to this case, justification for the injunction in labor disputes had been pleaded on the ground that such a decree was for the purpose of preventing violence. Even in "yellow dog" injunctions, upheld by the courts, the element of alleged violence had been dwelt upon. All familiar with the labor struggle knew that this plea was but part of the hypocritical judicial jargon by which the courts in general have done the lickspittle work for the ruling class.

The injunction is for the sole purpose of crushing organization of the workers and for no other. It is a class instrument, in the interest of the dominant group, applied by the courts to stamp out any aspirations of the workers. If there were any doubt about

the matter, the Pennsylvania decision removes that for good.

The Nazareth campaign had been mapped out, with the Pharisical cant of the court in mind. The workers were not asked to join the union. As the court below found, "they were not counselled to strike." The entire campaign was for the purpose of "appealing to the conscience of the community, in order that pressure might be brought upon the company to have the contract abolished."

In other words, all the stupid arguments by the United States Supreme Court in various cases upholding the "yellow dog" contract were conformed to: *There was no record of any effort to break the contract in this case.*

The printed Record of the hearings in the Nazareth injunction case has been read by many students of labor problems with great interest. It is a fascinating account in miniature of the whole labor struggle. From cover to cover, the only issue that presents itself is that of the right to speak and to distribute literature showing the anti-social character of the "yellow dog" contract.

In that Record also appears the admission by Calvin Hartzell, general foreman of the company, that what he swore to in the original affidavit on which the injunction was based, was false. The other officers of the company, who had sworn to similar affidavits, dared not go on the witness stand, for fear of exposing themselves to like admissions of perjury. The Grand Jury of Northampton County, despite the financial power of the company officials, has indicted them for perjury because of these lying affidavits.

The Record disclosed these illuminating facts:

1. The workers had signed the "yellow dog" contract against their will, as one after another testified.

2. They had been locked in the mill at

night, in the attempt to force them to sign.

3. They had signed under protest, only after their jobs were threatened.

4. The union campaign had been conducted without threats or intimidation. Even strikebreakers, in the mill after the strike broke out, testified to that.

5. The men had struck only after seven of them had been fired for testifying against the company, after the company had compelled them by subpoenas to testify.

6. The injunction had been issued after one public meeting had been held on the outskirts of Nazareth. There we had gone with an amplifier after being denied entrance to the city by Chief Burgess Ziegler, who set up a censorship in Nazareth, announcing that fact in the *Easton Express*.

7. The State Federation of Labor, not enjoined, continued holding meetings after the injunction. The organ of the Federation also appeared in place of the *Nazareth Hosiery Worker*.

8. The injunction prohibited those enjoined from interfering with the "yellow dog" contract, "by any means whatsoever," and directly estopped the holding of meetings or the distribution of literature.

Despite this set of facts, the court below made the injunction permanent and then perpetual, and it was the appeal in that form that came before the Supreme Court.

In passing upon the appeal, the majority of the Supreme Court use the cheapest casuistry that has been called upon to support a bad cause.

While attempting to pay lip service to the right of any one to "the free communication of thoughts," they ordain that this was done "wrongfully" in Nazareth. If peaceful persuasion had been used "at a proper time and in a proper way" there would be no cause for injunction, say these judicial oracles. But it happens that under their interpretation there is no right way, and they give none.

To sum up: The Supreme Court



of Pennsylvania has now declared that the "yellow dog" contract cannot even be discussed in public, either by word of mouth or by literature.

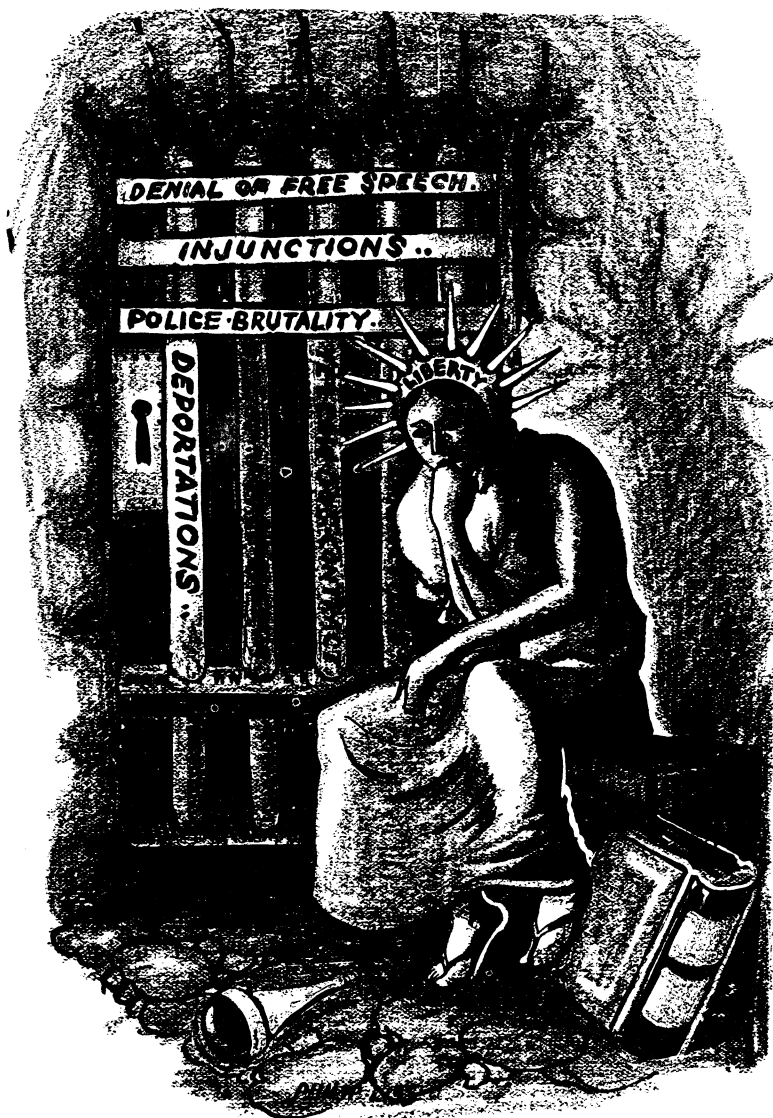
Justice Maxey's dissenting opinion is so full of masterly statements that I regret our inability to publish it in full in these pages. For instance, he says:

"What plaintiff sought to restrain by injunction was nothing more or less than Budenz's public advocacy of trade-unionism, because eventually this advocacy might result in the growth of trade-union sentiment in and around plaintiff's plant, and this might eventually lead to the unionization of the plant, with higher wages and shorter hours for the employes and some possible diminution of the employer's profits. An injunction against this public advocacy is to my mind insupportable. I think Budenz's right to say and publish what he did and to do what he did is embedded in the fundamental law of both the state and the nation.

"The decree appealed from is in effect an injunction against Budenz's ideas, not against his acts, for not a single unlawful act did or could the court below find against him. That decree should therefore be entirely reversed and set aside, for ideas are not subject to injunction. Ideas have far reaching effects. Some of these effects may be good and some may be ill, but it is opposed to progress and contrary to the spirit of our institutions to entrust any official with the arbitrary power to say what ideas shall be liberated and what ideas shall be suppressed."

Again he forcibly states:

"There is but one issue in this case, and that is the issue of Budenz's right of free speech—his right to advocate by both written and spoken word the principles of labor unionism and to attack anti-union individual contracts. Not a single act of violence or deceit or intimidation is charged against Budenz. 'The head and fount of his offending' seems to be that he published and circulated the pamphlets referred to above. . . . I find in them no phrases as offensive as those commonly used in political contests by zealous partisans against candidates for the highest offices in state and nation. Equity is entering a forbidding and hitherto untrodden field if it is to be used to enjoy the making of speeches and the publication of articles that offend the feelings of persons who are in the front line of the



In the Land of the Free.

age-long and never-ending battle of ideas."

In discussing the "yellow dog" contract per se, Justice Maxey prophetically says: "The social philosophy of industrial absolutism is, I believe, headed for as complete rejection in this country as was the social philosophy of the Dred Scott decision in 1856."

The parallel is an apt one, for his colleagues, in shutting off all discussion of the sacred "yellow dog," have presented the workers with another Dred Scott case in its crushing effects. This majority decision fastens shackles upon the workers as unjust as those of chattel slavery itself.

Justice Maxey hammers home the logical outcome of the sanctioning of this alleged "contract." "These anti-union contracts," he writes, "contravene sound public policy for the further reason that they are provocative

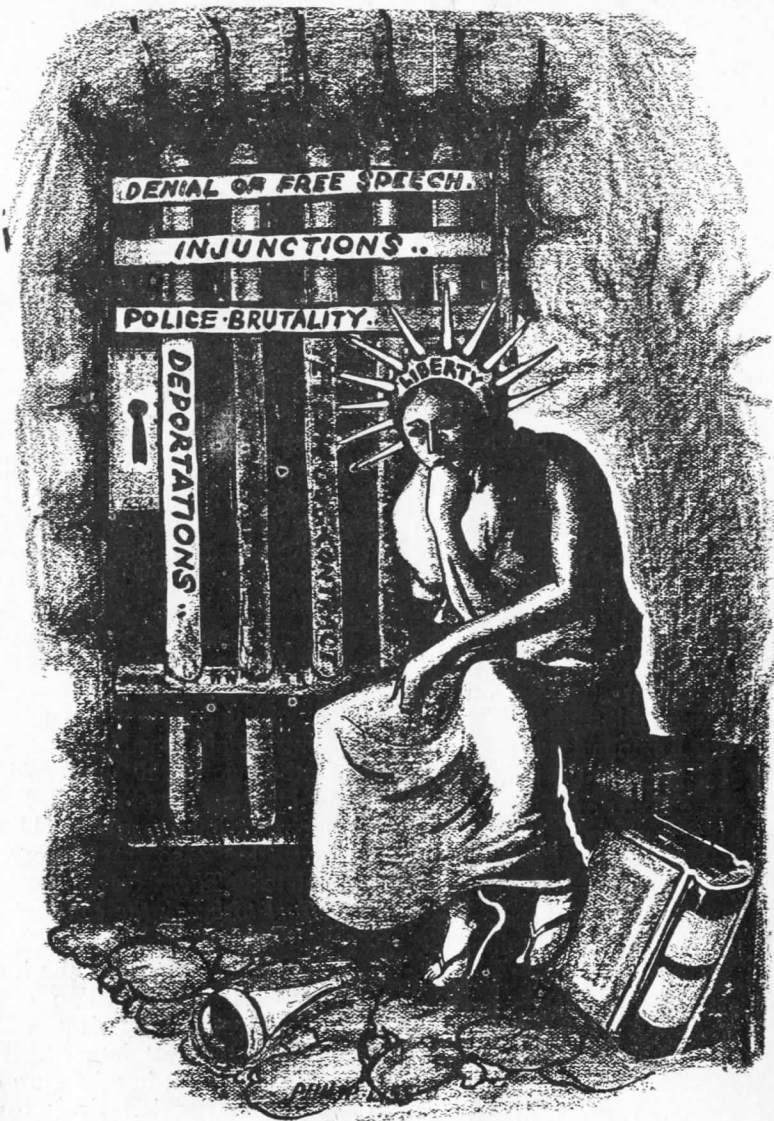
of violence. Millions of people in the United States, both within and without labor unions, detest these contracts as illegitimate weapons in contests between capital and labor. The very name by which these contracts are commonly known, to wit, 'yellow dog contracts,' indicates the public appraisal of them. Yet, according to the decree before us, these contracts are so sacrosanct that equity should shield them from public discussion."

And he adds significantly a page or two further on:

"History proves that the existing order is never in so much danger of losing support as when large masses of men deeply feel that its legal agencies are the instruments of oppression."

It is precisely that which large masses of men will not only deeply feel but clearly see when they learn fully of the Nazareth decision.

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In the Land of the Free.

# W.Va. Mine Workers Carry On

By TOM TIPPETT

**T**HE strike of the West Virginia Mine Workers is over in all the camps in the Kanawha Valley. It was officially ended in the middle of August. In the end none of the operators met any of the union's terms. The struggle, as a strike, was lost in all the struck camps, but that is not the end of the story.

The union office is still open, meetings are being held during the week at night, and every Sunday sees a union mass meeting in the field. The union officials are still traveling up and down the creeks that wind their separate ways through the numerous mountain passes and empty into the Kanawha River which flows past the capitol building of Charleston. The workers are still singing "Solidarity Forever," and many of the old religious hymns and mountain ballads have a new lease on life, with new verses telling the story of the strike. The coal operators are still spending good money to maintain an enlarged private army of gunmen, and the state police do not spend all of their time playing cards now. The nerves of the valley are still jumpy. The union ideal still lives.

In the union office visiting press correspondents are told of the latest wage cuts; they are shown pay envelopes indicating how much the miner is indebted to his boss at the end of his pay; company store prices are compared with those in the free market, and the general system by which miners are underpaid at the mine, underweighed on the tippie, and overcharged at the store is exposed. Much of this finds its way into the national press. Because the union office is still open, that black curtain of silence which is usually rung down, once a strike is ended and behind which coal operators get away with murder (literal and otherwise), is pushed aside. The incredible conditions of coal miners are still in the news. The coal operator may have beaten the miners in the fields; he hasn't silenced their protest—coal diggers are still howling loudly in the Kanawha Valley.

Moreover, the union is conducting meetings of public protest in the city of Charleston itself. Since the strike Norman Thomas has journeyed there and had his say on the coal industry.

Benjamin Marsh of the People's Lobby has likewise spoken for a special session of Congress in behalf of unemployment relief. Now the union is organizing a convention in order that the miners may discuss independent political action for Labor. And with all the lessons learned in the strike, the discussion of that subject may not be untimely. Thus, out of the ashes of their strike, the miners are poking up the embers. One day that fire will flame again and again and again until the coal diggers win.

The strike was lost because there

ly true of the situation in the Kanawha Valley before the strike.

For seven long weary years after the old United Mine Workers of America was destroyed, the miners there had suffered incredible hardship under non-union conditions. One standard after another, built up by many years of union effort, was broken down. Coal diggers were degraded to a point where they lived at standards much lower than the mules with whom they labored in the mines. All of them lived in dreary company camps, tucked away from the larger world in isolated mountain regions. No matter what new atrocity might be imposed upon them by their boss, there

"Pioneer Youth"  
Kids at the  
Hunger  
Demonstration



was no other way for it honorably to end. The open struggle was forced on the union after it was plain that the operators intended to bleed the organization to death by wholesale discharge of union men. By the application of logic, conditions in the industry being what they were, the strike was doomed to failure before it commenced. But it is impossible to apply logic to all strikes, and in every struggle there are unpredictable elements that may develop and cause a seemingly futile strike to be manoeuvred into a success. Then, too, most strikes are justifiable because of the educational features that accrue to a union's membership and to the public at large. The condition of workers in America is generally unknown until after the workers themselves make a dramatic struggle for relief, and even then the conflict must take on extremely sensational aspects before it makes headline space in the news. This was especial-

ly nothing they could do about it. They had no way of action among themselves; neither could they inform the public. The coal operators did whatever they pleased, and the outside world was none the wiser.

In the pre-strike campaign the miners caused a great deal of their horrible conditions to become known, but it was only after the strike got under way that special correspondents journeyed to the valley and found out for themselves. What they saw there was so ghastly that almost all of them wrote stories that considerably embarrassed the more hypocritical operators, and at least irritated the hard-boiled coal barons who pretend not to give a damn for public opinion. When the day comes that sees the coal industry taken away from its present owners, strikes such as the one under discussion will reap an overdue reward.

The strike lasted six weeks. Frank Keeney, the president of the union,



backed up solidly by the other officials, kept his men on the picket line until an avalanche of evictions and stark starvation overtook them. Then, and only then, did he admit defeat and order a retreat. There was a new tactic employed in this retreat which has proved so correct by this time that it becomes significant.

Defeat of any sort is bitter at best, and to the West Virginia Mine Workers it was more than that. Keeney, although he had led the miners for seventeen years, had never before lost a strike. Although all the risks involved were constantly pointed out to them, the psychology of the miners was that Keeney would pull the strike through to victory, as he had always done before. And Keeney himself, consciously in doubt, unconsciously felt that he would win and therefore held on. Before the retreat finally came, the valley was dotted with evicted families, and the union unable to purchase a rag or board to shelter many of them. All the strikers were hungry for days before the end. Strikers waiting on some creek or other for food for days, saw the relief truck appear—empty. Instead of food they got a speech, and in every single case went home empty-handed without complaint. But that could not go on forever. Human beings cannot live by words alone, so the strike was called off.

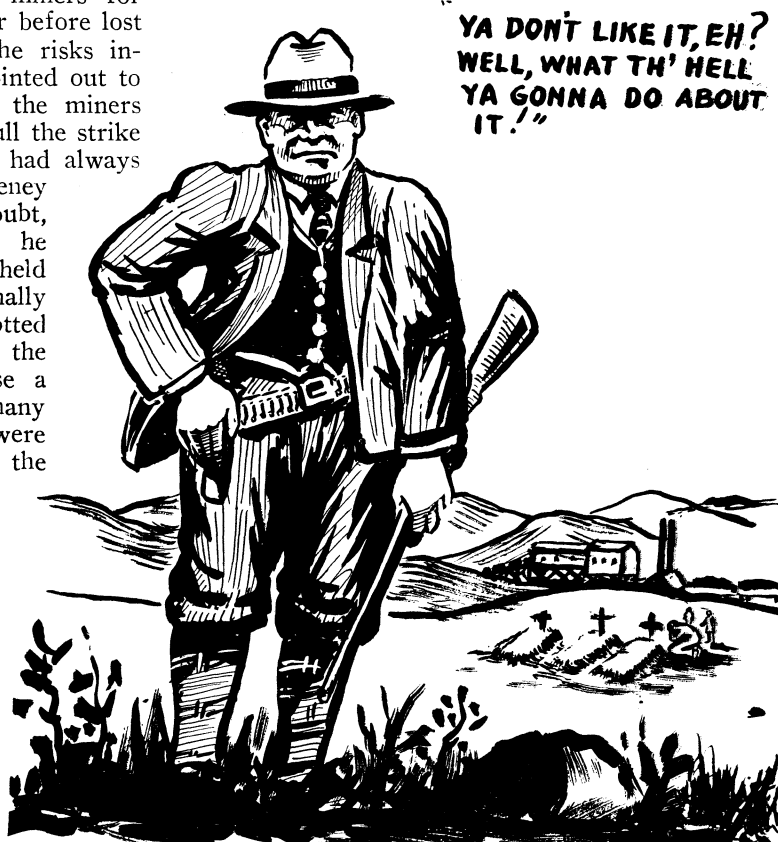
Once the decision was made—and this is the significant part of the end of the strike—Keeney admitted defeat calmly and consistently. He, and all of his officers, went unhesitatingly into the field and stood unflinchingly up to defeat. He told the miners the whole truth and for that they cheered him.

There was another avenue open to the union officials, and one that far too many union men take to save their faces in a similar situation. The story of the end of the strike was published in the local press. In its statement the union had cited the brutality of the coal operators, admitted its inability longer to feed the strikers, and notified the authorities that victimized miners must now be fed by the state.

Naturally the operators replied, and they made the usual magnanimous gesture for public sympathy. Among

other things they said they would re-employ the strikers "even beyond our present needs so as not to aggravate the unemployment situation." The tenor of their statement was that there would be no victimization, no discrimination for union affiliations, and that general good feeling all around would prevail.

Had the West Virginia Mine Workers' Union been like some unions I know, it would have interpreted the



Drawn by a native of the coal fields

operators' statement to mean a partial victory for the strike. Keeney's group, knowing coal operators well, decided otherwise. At the mass meetings, on the day the statement appeared, the union officials read it to the crowds and then they said:

"The operators will not keep this pledge. They will victimize and crucify all our key men. This statement is made to confuse the issue and fool the public. When our union is strong enough to compel them to treat us kindly, they will—but not before."

The prediction of the union was verified the next day when the strikers returned individually and asked for their jobs. Thousands were turned away. With but few exceptions the operators continued their persecution of union miners. They put into circulation an effective blacklist; they re-

fused credit at the company stores; they continued to serve eviction notices, and they also continued the hideous business of actual eviction. As I write, miners' families are still being thrown out of their houses. There have been more evictions since the strike was terminated than in the whole campaign and strike period.

Because of this post-strike brutality on the part of the operators and the union leaders' attitude at the end of the strike, the union has retained the miners' loyalty. The union told them the truth. Keeney did not fool his followers in order to save his own pride. As a result, the solidarity of the membership is still intact, and although that solidarity is unable now to wring concessions from the operators in coal mines, there are other functions requiring collective action that can be fulfilled in spite of the boss.

Then, too, a union, if it remains a united group after a defeat, can move into battle again much more quickly and much more efficiently if its ranks have not broken to pieces when the first battle was lost.

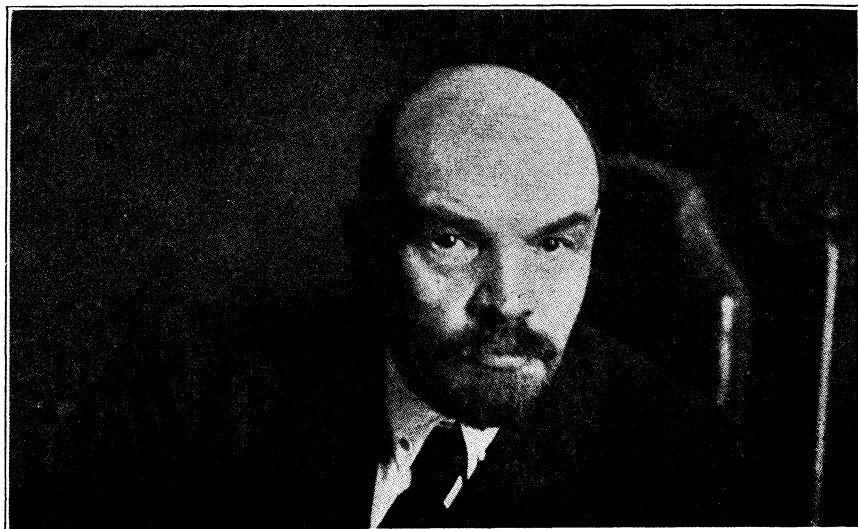
The West Virginia Mine Workers will continue. Its friends have raised a fund sufficient to underwrite the office for a year. In some camps local unions continue to function openly; others have been forced underground. Group meetings and workers' educational classes are being held at the edge of company towns. Literature and books are put into miners' hands. The miners are now a part of that current of working-class thinking so beneficial to themselves, and so dangerous to their common enemies. Charleston has become a station of the "underground railroad" in a new struggle for freedom.

It is because of these factors that the West Virginia Mine Workers did not actually lose all in their defeat. It is true that they are now suffering—and "suffering" is putting it mildly—but it is also true that they were suffering before. They are very used to hard times down there.

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# Soviet Russia's 14<sup>th</sup> Year

By J. C. KENNEDY



Lenin

**N**OVEMBER 7 marks the fourteenth milestone of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution. How do matters stand compared with a year ago?

First of all, giant strides have been made in the development of heavy industry. Over \$500,000,000 have been invested this year in new steel plants, coal and iron mines, electric power stations, railways, chemical plants, etc., in the Ural-Kuznatz districts alone. The necessary foundations of a self-sufficing and adequate industrial system for the Soviet Union are being laid with amazing rapidity.

Secondly, collectivization and industrialization of agriculture have been carried forward to a point that leaves the issue no longer in doubt. Only three years ago the makers of the Five-Year Plan thought it would be an extraordinary achievement if 25 per cent of the farms were collectivized by the end of 1932. Sixty per cent of all peasant households in the entire Soviet Union are already in collective farms. This is an agricultural revolution without parallel in human history—and without doubt the most decisive victory yet won by the Bolsheviks in the building of Socialism.

Thirdly, this year has demonstrated more convincingly than ever before that the Soviets can not only build giant factories, but that they can operate them successfully. The outstanding test case, of course, was the Stalingrad tractor factory. This huge plant was completed ahead of time—but when it came to turning out tractors that was another matter. The number produced each day was disappointingly small. The tractors were poor in quality. It didn't take long for the foreign critics to scent a new source

of danger for the Soviet government. The Five-Year Plan would prove to be the most colossal failure in history, said they. For after the Russians, with the aid of foreign engineers, got their much advertised giant plants completed they wouldn't be able to operate them. Just a year ago the editor of the New York Times was pointing scornfully to Stalingrad, "only ten tractors a day, and half of them won't run."

No editorials have appeared on that subject recently. It happens that the Stalingrad factory is now turning out 100 tractors daily, and they compare favorably with tractors built in America. And Stalingrad is not the only factory in Russia building tractors. Another question is settled. The collective farms will have all the tractors they need in a few years—and they will be built in Russia. This goes, of course, for all kinds of machinery.

In a year when unemployment grows by millions in capitalist countries, Soviet Russia provides work for all at constantly rising wages.

The major achievement mentioned above would alone justify the Soviets in looking upon their fourteenth year as one of brilliant success—but scarcely less important advances have been made in many other directions. For example, this year the number of children in primary and intermediate schools increased from 13,500,000 to 20,000,000. In addition 1,400,000 others are receiving special technical training in factory schools and technical colleges.

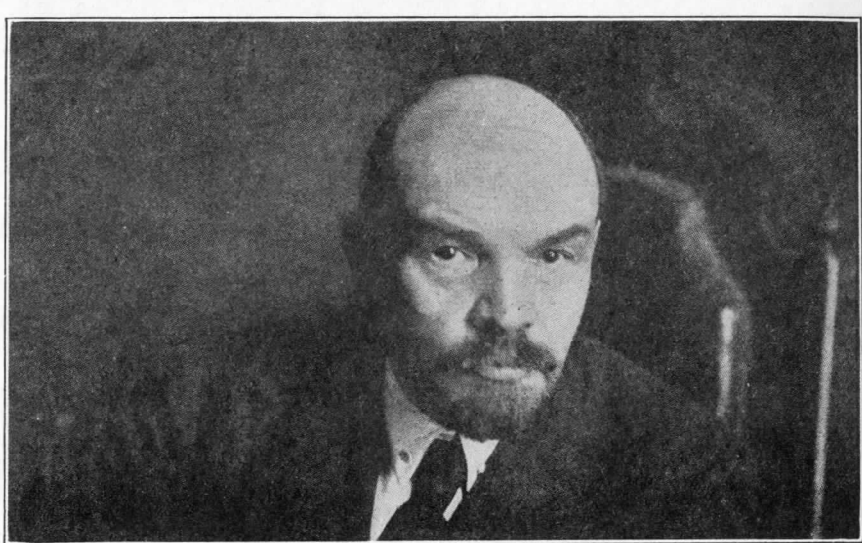
A success of an entirely different order, but not less essential to the progress of the Soviet Union, has been the maintenance of peaceful re-

lations with other countries. Each year the deeds of the Soviet Union add weight to the words spoken by Litvinoff at Geneva—"The U.S.S.R. stands for world peace and international disarmament." It may be safely predicted that while the Soviet Union is well prepared to defend its interests it will not be drawn into any militaristic adventures.

However, regardless of its peaceful intentions, the U.S.S.R. cannot avoid war if it is attacked by imperialistic powers. The Japanese adventures in Manchuria are a real menace to Soviet Russia. Herbert Bayard Swope in a letter published in the New York *Times* recently calls for full support of Japanese imperialistic designs for expansion, in order that a *cordon sanitaire* may be created against Russian Bolshevism. Representative Sirovich, in a statement published in the New York *World Telegram*, points to the danger of an encirclement campaign against the Soviet Union on the part of Japan from the East and Roumania from the West. The cordial relations recently established between facist Poland and Roumania add another piece to this black picture in which the hand of France can be traced behind the scenes.

For this reason the recent visit of Premier Laval to this country, in spite of the profuse expressions of "frankness" (which actually covered up the secret purposes of the visit), can only be explained as part of the capitalistic realignment now taking place against the Soviet Union, with the United States and France playing the leading roles. Into this realignment Germany has apparently been

(Continued on Page 29)



Lenin



# The Unemployed Citizens League of Seattle

By B. C.

**D**URING the latter part of July a small group of Seattle workers met in a community club house in the suburbs of that city one evening to discuss what might be done in an immediate, practical way about unemployment.

One of the number, a socialist in philosophy, had prepared a resolution calling upon the city administration to establish a million dollar wage fund to be expended on a highway project which was already partially under way. This suggestion was adopted.

Another proposed that a canvassing committee be organized to take a census of the neighborhood to determine the degree of unemployment. This was agreed to.

A third proposed that a relief committee be chosen to give whatever assistance was possible to those who might be found in destitute circumstances. This was accepted.

All agreed that the idea of organizing the unemployed was a good one and should be spread to other parts of the city. A committee was elected for this purpose.

Thus the Unemployed Citizens League was born. Today it has 20 branches in different parts of the city, meeting weekly in churches, community halls and other places which have been loaned rent free. A central federation with delegates from each branch meets once a week. The original demand for a public works program has grown to include the following planks:

A special session of Congress to appropriate five billion dollars for public works and relief; same to be repaid out of higher income of inheritance taxes.

A special session of the Legislature for unemployment relief along the same lines.

Establishment of a million dollar wage fund in the city budget to be expended without delay on public improvements.

Establishment of a \$500,000 wage fund by the county for the same purpose and an additional \$500,000 for direct relief to needy residents.

All work shall be done directly by the city and county without the intervention of contractors and the work to be rotated fairly among all the resident unemployed who register for that purpose.

The city scale of not less than \$4.50 per day to be paid for all common labor.

No eviction of unemployed for failure to pay taxes, assessment and back rent.

School children to be provided where needed with adequate food by school board.

Abolition of dual employment.

In the beginning this program served as a rallying point to build and unify the organization. Delegations appeared before the municipal and county bodies to press these demands. A mass meeting, the largest yet held around the issue of unemployment, helped to build morale. The movement received fair news space in the daily papers and people generally began to remark at the unusual sight of more or less conservative homeowners and tax-payers organizing in their status as jobless citizens.

But the demands of the workless were not given very serious consideration by the City Council and the County Commissioners. The appropriations made were not up to the minimum requirements and the wage scale for unemployed was set on a sliding scale ranging from \$1.50 per day for single men to \$3.00 per day for those with large families. This in spite of the fact that organized labor and the veterans' organizations also fought for the \$4.50 scale with a graduated period of work according to the size of the family.

While this set-back dampened the spirit of the meetings, certain relief and co-operative self-help measures had been started which proved to be of real strength. In two districts the branches combined in a number of wood-cutting crews to supply themselves with their winter's fuel. Land owners permitted the trees to be cut without charge; city departments loaned equipment; gasoline companies donated gas for cars, and power saws and trucks were secured from friendly transfer firms. Each wood-cutter is allotted so much for his labor and a supply is accumulated for widows and

those incapacitated. This is going forward now in other districts. The number applying to go out on this work is larger than can be taken care of.

Expeditions have been organized to canvass the surrounding market garden and farm territory for donations of potatoes, apples, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, etc. Patches of potatoes have been found and dug on the shares. In three districts, local commissaries have been established for the systematic distribution of such food. Canning groups have been organized among the women members.

One of the most important food items is surplus fish from the boats of the members of the Fishermen's Union. One committeeman meets all boats with a truck and takes what is unsold to the cold storage plant of the municipal port where it is frozen for future use. At each branch league meeting, members state their needs and fish is distributed to them at a central point in the district on the following Thursday. Arrangements have been made to secure large quantities of staple farm products from the rich farming lands east of the Cascade Mountains. All the work of the organization has been done by volunteers and no rent has been paid.

In the meantime the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment (chiefly business men) is getting the machinery in shape to establish food depots in different parts of the city. It plans to feed not only the transient unemployed, but residents also. It has the support of the merchants and business men and will raise money to pay for the stuff. When this gets under way, very likely the food relief work of the Unemployed Citizens League may have to be dropped. The local merchants in many cases have refused to give of their surplus pending the organization of the Mayor's food distribution.

This will be a test for the League. Will its members fall away when the loaves and fishes are gone? To meet this problem, the agitational and protective features will have to be intensified. Free legal service is now being given in foreclosure and eviction cases. Committees in each branch call upon hard-boiled landlords who are pressing penniless tenants for pay-

(Continued on page 28)

# SLAVERY *in the* COTTON FIELDS

By CLAY FULKS

SOME weeks ago the local papers published reports from widely scattered points in the Cotton Belt to the effect that policemen, and presumably other "peace" officers were collaborating right nobly with the planters in the art of inducting some of the lowlier members of the community, opprobriously designated as "loafers" and "vagrants," into the service of King Cotton, the sick and senile monarch of the South. These papers contained not a hint of condemnation, nor even disapproval, of this legal kidnaping of humble and practically defenseless workers and forcing them to labor in the cotton fields. On the contrary, it is not at all improbable that such news was published largely for the purpose of stimulating and promoting the practice to the point of making it general throughout this section. But, of course, this attitude and policy of southern newspapers, especially the smaller and most numerous ones, is not surprising.

In spotting, apprehending, and arresting these lowly folk, the "law" must take extreme care against making mistakes. He must see to it, at his peril, that "loafer," "vagrant," or some such annihilating label can be securely fastened on the person under surveillance. Even to accost the son of a banker or other business or professional man, with a matter of this sort in mind, would mean the swift undoing of any officer guilty of such gross malfeasance. Such mistakes can easily be avoided, however, by noting whether the contemplated victim—if he is not personally known to the "law"—is well groomed and dressed like a gentleman. This discretion goes almost exclusively for whites; the Negro's right to dress up in the manner of one claiming exemption from servile toil gets only the most grudging and doubtful respect.

At least two reports of this semi-barbarous practice came from points in Arkansas—one from Helena, on the Mississippi, near a social swamp made infamous a few years ago by the "Elaine Race War"; and the other from Texarkana.

Now Governor Parnell of Arkansas, puts his official approval on the prac-

tice in a proclamation in which he strafes "loiterers" and "idlers." I quote from the text of the proclamation:

"At this time there are many unemployed in our cities. Doubtless many of these do not realize the seriousness of the need for laborers in the fields to pick cotton and the opportunity they have of not only securing work, but of rendering a service to their state. Again, there are those who do not care and are loitering, idle, hoping that they will be supported.

"More than a living can be made by gathering this splendid crop and employment offered for many weeks, and I am appealing to the officials of the various communities to make a complete survey, ascertaining the names of those who are able and should be in the fields, and to organize and make it possible for the unemployed at this time to be busily engaged.

"This crop must be gathered before storms appear. There is danger in delay.

"There should be no idlers, no loiterers in the towns. The cotton must be picked while it is white. The quality must be maintained."

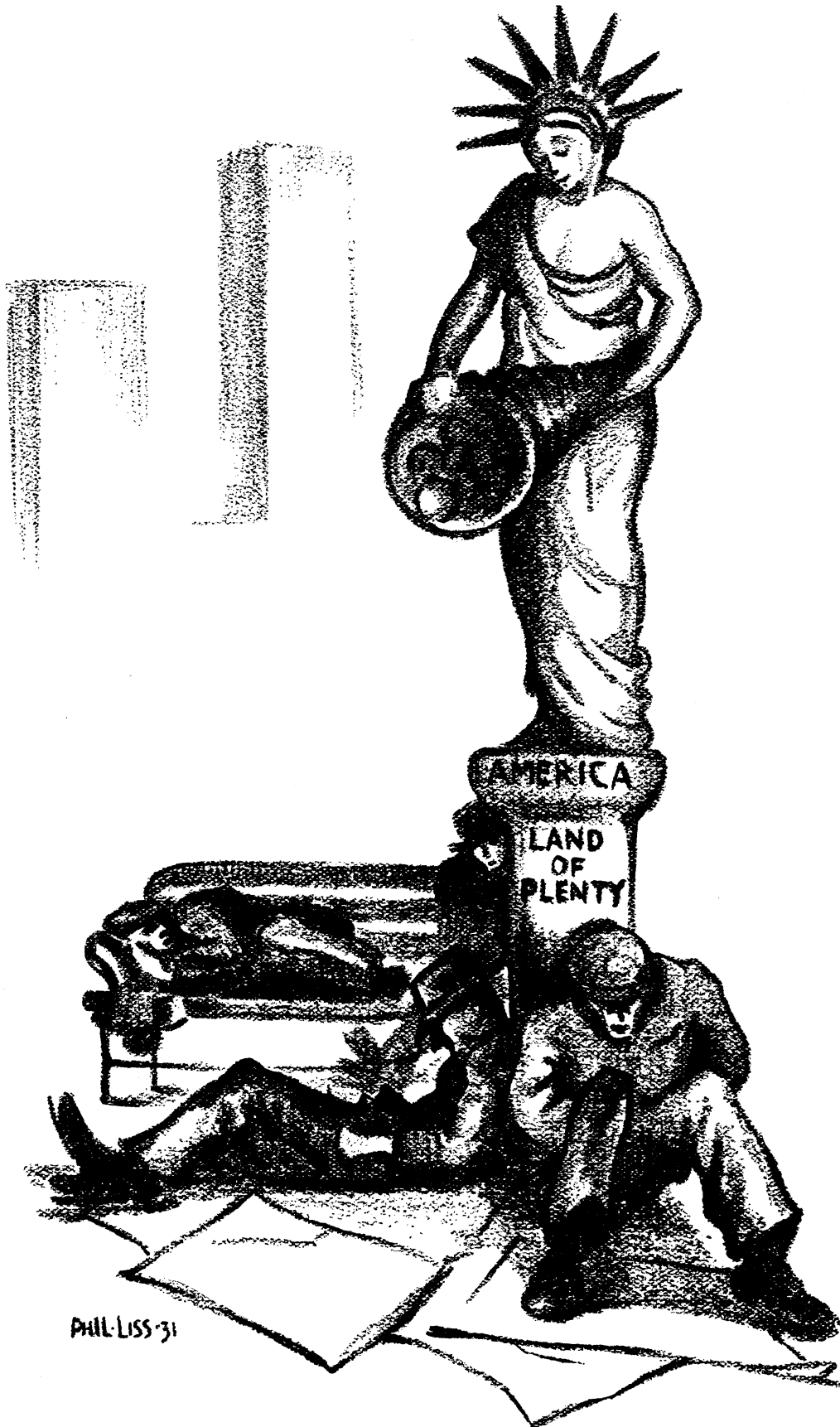
It will be noted that the Governor, with traditional Southern politeness, makes no mention of the rate of pay; there is only the general assurance that "more than a living can be made by gathering this splendid crop." Yet herein lies the secret of the refusal of workers to rush pell-mell to the whitening cotton fields. The prevailing wage seems to be 35 cents a hundred. Two hundred pounds is a good average day's picking. At this rate, a man can earn 70 cents a day, or \$4.20 a week. Just how much "more than a living" this is—well, maybe the Governor knows. Still, in justice to His Excellency, it may be admitted that there is more to this apparently slender wage than appears at the first calculating glance. If the job lasted the year 'round, why, the cotton picker could make \$21,840—in a hundred years. Twenty-one thousand eight

hundred forty dollars is no trifling sum.

It is strange that the Governor doesn't suggest that one-half or one-third of the cotton be left in the fields unpicked. Wouldn't this loss, according to the cotton economists of the South, be compensated for, or more than balanced, by the resulting increase in price? And isn't this good capitalist economics?

Unfortunately, this phenomena of southern industrialism — this hang-over from the days of chattel slavery — is all too indicative of the predominating attitude toward the rights and dignity of labor. This general attitude, particularly as regards Negro workers, has been disclosed in thousands of cases of peonage and near-peonage throughout the Cotton Belt. And "po white trash" fares little better. It is notorious how easily young white men traveling in the South—especially if they can be said to be hobnobbing—can be picked up on a charge of vagrancy—or without any charge at all—and put on the chain-gang, or "impressed" into the service of corporations needing cheap labor. Southern lumber mills, especially, have been beneficiaries of such atrocities. Neither national nor state bills of rights, neither common considerations of humanity or decency has been able to prevent a long series of such outrages against personal liberty, personal security, and human dignity in the "Black Belt" of the South. There is not a just man in the world who would undertake publicly to defend these "legal" atrocities, and yet they go on and on with a vast volume of Southern sentiment behind them. Denounce them openly and you must take chances on being arrested and beaten up as a Communist caught inciting Negroes to insurrection.

But as long as the National Red Cross will feed these victims of exploitation—these cotton-pickers who can make "more than a living by gathering this splendid crop"—during the Winter period of unemployment, why, isn't the snail still on the thorn?



PHIL LISS '31

*Prosperity!*

# The 1931 Convention

## of the A. F. L.

By  
A. J. Muste

THE recent convention of the A. F. of L. was its fifty-first. It was therefore the opening convention of the second half century of the Federation's existence. It was held in the midst of a severe economic depression, and amid changes referred to as "revolutionary," even by conservative spokesmen at the convention. This convention met, however, about as far as possible away from the center of American working-class life, namely, in Vancouver, British Columbia. Pleas to change the meeting place in face of the critical situation had proved unavailing. Were the leaders of the A. F. of L. afraid that the delegates would have been thrown into too radical a mood if they had met in the midst of the unemployment and poverty of some great Eastern or Mid-Western industrial center? Is this choice of meeting place symbolic of the way in which the A. F. of L. is playing around on the outer edges of its task instead of boldly meeting it this winter?

The present brief summary and interpretation of the proceedings of the Vancouver convention will confine itself to what appear to be the most significant activities and trends, namely membership figures; the unemployment program of the A. F. of L.; organization work, including the tendency to seek advancement by legislation rather than by economic action; the collapse of the Workers Education Bureau; and finally, the present philosophy of the A. F. of L.

### A. F. of L. Membership

A. F. of L. membership for 1931, according to the Executive Council's report, stands at 2,889,550, which is a loss of 72,546 from the previous year. The loss is not in itself a large figure, in view of economic conditions such as usually make for a drop in trade union membership. It must be remembered, however, that the membership figures are padded. The United Mine Workers, for example, are still credited with 400,000 members, although they do not have more than 150,000 dues-paying members at

the present time. It is significant also that there was virtually no increase in A. F. of L. membership during the great boom of 1924-29.

Large losses in membership are reported by some of the larger unions which have been the conservative backbone of the A. F. of L. Thus, the barbers' union reports a 10 per cent loss; the longshoremen 14 per cent; street railway employes a loss of approximately 6,000 members, and the teamsters a loss of nearly 7,000 members. There may be some connection between the membership loss in these last two organizations and the fact that W. D. Mahon and Daniel Tobin, the respective heads of these unions, surprised everybody by advocating compulsory unemployment insurance on the floor of the recent convention.

On the face of this year's returns the building trades' unions do not seem as yet to have been affected seriously, only the painters reporting a loss of 10,000 members or about 9 per cent. It is likely, however, that in the case of at least some of the building trades' unions the figures are not accurate.

The greatest drop in membership is reported by the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, who have lost 21,700 members, or nearly 20 per cent. This is significant from various angles. The loss is suffered by a union which has had a comparatively vigorous and progressive organizing policy in recent years. It reflects the extent to which mergers and labor-saving devices are cutting into the jobs of white-collar workers. It reflects also the tendency of such forces to cut down employment on the railroads. In 1929 there were 360,000 fewer workers on class A railroads in this country than in 1920, and in 1931 there was a drop of over 700,000 from 1920. It is easy to see why the movement for the five-day week is gaining momentum among the railroad workers.

The only important gains in membership for this year, except for the hod carriers and building laborers, were registered by organizations of workers employed in federal service,

the federal employes' union reporting a 13 per cent increase, the letter carriers 15 per cent and the postoffice clerks a similar increase. This growth in membership among workers for the government, while union membership in private employment is decreasing, is a matter of considerable significance. We must remember that among the shop craft unions in the metal trades there is a tendency to concentrate on the unionization of workers in the government service, and that the railroad workers constitute another group working under special government regulation, although not directly in the employ of the government. The growth of importance in the Federation of these elements will doubtless mean an increasing tendency to seek gains by legislation (which in the A. F. of L. means lobbying, seeking favors from the old parties) rather than by direct action. These elements will reinforce the cautious and "responsible" trends in the Federation, rather than the militant.

### Labor's Unemployment Program

With at least 6,000,000 workers in the United States unemployed and many more on such short time that their wages are insufficient to support them and their families, thousands of workers losing their homes, hundreds of thousands dependent on charity for a living—what is the program of "the Parliament of Labor" for meeting the emergency.

The emergency program for immediate action submitted to and adopted by the convention includes nine points:

1. Maintenance of the wage level. The Executive Council presented some very interesting figures, pointing out the failure of increases in real wages to keep pace with increases in productivity in recent years. Thus "real wage rates advanced 4.2 per cent from 1899 to 1919, compared to the 26 per cent advance in productivity, and 36 per cent from 1919 to 1929 compared to the 54 per cent advance in productivity." Another section of the report points out "that while wages were in-



creasing from 1923 to 1929 only from \$11,000,000,000 to \$11,421,000,000, corporation dividends were increasing during the same period from \$930,648,000 to \$3,478,000,000—and interest paid to bondholders was increasing from \$2,469,000,000 to \$7,588,000,000.”

2. Shorter Hours. On this point also the Council submitted some interesting figures. For example, “because of the increase in productivity in manufacturing industry, work which took the average man a 59 hour week in 1899 could be done in 47 hours in 1919, but the work week in manufacturing was actually shortened only from 59 to 52 hours. In 1929 work which took the average man a 52 hour week in 1919 could be done in 34 hours, but the work week in manufacturing was actually shortened only to 50 hours. That is, an 18 hours decrease in necessary work time was compensated by only a two hour decrease in actual work hours.”

3. Employers should determine the minimum number of workers they can keep on the payroll in the next few months and then immediately inform these workers that their jobs are secure. It is expected that these workers will then feel free to spend money, which will create demand for the products of other workers and thus reduce the number of unemployed.

4. It is suggested that each employer might take on additional workers. If each of the 3 million employers, outside of the farmers, were to take on two additional workers each, the unemployment problem would be solved. The Executive Council recognizes that some small employers could not take on a couple of additional people, but suggests that larger employers could take on a considerable number.

5. Public works should be extended. It is estimated that an additional 100,000 men might be put to work in this way.

6. Employment exchanges should be improved.

7. Arrangements should be made to refuse working cards to young people, keeping them in school, while giving their jobs to adults.

8. Preference is to be given to workers with dependents.

9. Adequate relief must be provided from private or public funds for workers for whom jobs cannot be found.

With many items in this emergency program there will not be much quarrel. Some of them are perhaps a bit naive as, for example, the suggestion that if each of the 3 million employers

in the country would take on one or two additional workers, the employment problem would be solved! The real criticism, however, is that the suggestions are not concrete; they do not face real issues; and no adequate machinery and forces are suggested for putting these general proposals into effect.

For example, wage rates are to be maintained. As President Green put it in one of his addresses at the convention: “The A. F. of L. will stand as a Rock of Gibraltar against any effort to reduce wages!” This statement comes, however, from leaders who in 1929 trusted the “honor” of President Hoover, the bankers and the industrialists not to cut wages, who for a year and a half after the depression still contended that this “promise” not to cut wages was being kept, and who have not initiated or led a single important battle of the workers against wage reductions. Their pronouncements against wage reductions mean just exactly nothing for the great mass of workers. It is possible that the A. F. of L.’s stand has been of some value to the exceedingly small percentage of workers in such trades as building and printing.

Again, more work is to be provided through public undertakings, but there is no suggestion as to where the money is to come from, and proposals for a special session of Congress to vote a “prosperity loan,” for example, were voted down by the convention.

Employment agencies are to be strengthened and improved—an excellent suggestion. The A. F. of L., however, only very mildly rebukes President Hoover for vetoing the Wagner Bill which aimed to set up an adequate system of employment exchanges. It thanks the President for having placed in charge of his own utterly inadequate substitute, Brother John R. Alpine, former head of the Plumbers’ Union, and ex-member of the A. F. of L. Executive Council. In other words, criticism on the main issue is silenced in exchange for jobs for a few “labor skates.”

Adequate relief must be provided, but the A. F. of L. is backing up Hoover’s policy of contending that such relief can come largely from private agencies, and of bleeding the workers who still have jobs, in order to create funds out of which to furnish a “dole” to workers who are unemployed. There is not a single suggestion about using relief work in such a way as to educate the people in a labor point of view, or to advance a labor program.

## “We Look to the Bankers”

If this be official labor’s emergency program, what is proposed in regard to the prevention of unemployment in the future and the reform of an economic system which has brought the workers in the richest nation on earth to the sorry pass in which they find themselves today? At this point the A. F. of L. Executive Council is in the fashion, for it talks about planned production. It asks Hoover again to call a national economic conference, at which various groups may discuss the coordination of economic development. It proposes “public accounting on the facts of business, which should be filed with the federal government and compiled there,” the reports to be open to responsible organizations. It suggests a Federal Labor Board to gather and disseminate information of interest to workers, as the Department of Agriculture does for the farmers and the Department of Commerce for business men.

While some of this talk seems imposing, it is not much more than talk, and that of a most tentative and timid kind. The Federation is not so bold as to suggest that actual economic planning on a national or international scale should begin immediately. “We do not yet know enough to plan the agencies or chart functions of economic control. We do, however, know that national economic conferences will disclose the way. We have therefore repeatedly urged upon the President of the United States that he call a national economic conference to find a way forward.” It is not the intention apparently that the proposed Federal Labor Board should have any power to compel business to be guided by the information the Board might discover about economic conditions. “It need have only the authority to make facts public in order to render service and have effective influence.”

Above all, there is no suggestion that labor should rule the world, should take in hand the economic system which the bankers and the industrialists have so nearly brought to disaster. The various factors in production—the group which supplies capital, the group which supplies credit, that which does the buying, that which plans production, that which sells the product and that which does the work—all are to get together and to plan jointly for a balanced economy. Even among these groups the Federation does not really look to labor to take the lead. It appeals still to the common sense and the good will of capitalists

to keep up wages. In a whining tone it says that to cut the already inadequate wages of the worker "would be a most sorry expression of appreciation" from financiers and bosses.

The whole key to the A. F. of L.'s approach to the situation is given, though the Executive Council may not have realized it when that sentence was penned, in these words: "We look to the bankers to be concerned to increase the amount of money put to buying uses, and no group spends its income more freely than wage earners." Ours is a labor movement which "looks to the bankers."

### Down with the Dole

In spite of all this, economic conditions and the suffering they are bringing upon the workers, forced more progressive attitudes at some points. Nowhere was this more dramatically illustrated than in the debate and in the vote on unemployment insurance. Matthew Woll's Resolutions Committee brought in a report against the measure which contained a vicious attack upon "the dole," as he prefers to call it, following the fashion of his pals, the bankers and the insurance magnates. Said the Resolutions Committee's report (unquestionably written or dictated by Woll): "In return for a slice of bread—a mess of pottage as it were—the workers are being asked by the promoters of compulsory unemployment insurance in the United States to yield up their birthright, to practically surrender in their struggle for liberty, by enactment of legislation deliberately calculated to give the employers increased power of control over the workers."

Nevertheless, a large number of voices were raised on the floor of the convention in favor of unemployment insurance, including, as we have already mentioned, those of prominent and usually conservative trade union leaders such as W. D. Mahon, the head of the Street Railwaymen's Union, and Daniel Tobin, head of the Teamsters Union, and former treasurer of the A. F. of L. Reports indicate that there was a moment when the majority of the delegates might actually have been swung in favor of unemployment insurance, but for the impassioned plea of President Green to abide by the traditional A. F. of L. policy of "voluntarism." Green promised, if the A. F. of L. did not reverse its stand in the matter, to go to Congress and demand "millions, yes billions, for relief." He ventured also to assert that unless conditions radically changed, some form of perma-

nent relief against unemployment must be devised. We are "traveling fast toward it but the time has not yet arrived." This is in startling contrast to the situation one year ago at the Boston convention, when few voices, and no important ones, were raised for the measure, and when there was only a scattering vote against the Resolutions Committee's report.

### Organizing the Unorganized

For fifty years the A. F. of L. has had as its fundamental policy, emphasis on "pure and simple trade unionism." "Organize the workers into unions of their crafts and trades": that has been its slogan. Everything else it has regarded as a side-line. It is by its success in organizing workers into unions, therefore, that the A. F. of L. may most fairly be judged. One might expect a great deal of attention to the subject in the report of the Executive Council and in the proceedings of the convention. If there is still anyone who does expect this, he is in for a sad disappointment. None but the most perfunctory resolutions on organizing work were introduced; the Committee on Organization had no important concrete plans to propose; and there was no discussion whatever from the floor on the Committee's report.

As for the Southern organizing campaign, begun with a great fanfare of trumpets in 1929, one must now ask "Where, oh where, has my little dog gone?" The Conference for Progressive Labor Action pointed out, when this campaign began, that it could succeed only on certain conditions. The campaign, namely, must be a militant one, appealing to the courage of the workers rather than to the favors of the boss. It must be widespread, carefully planned, providing adequate relief and legal aid machinery, and drawing in the help of the progressives and the militants in the movement. When practically everyone of these considerations was ignored in the conduct of the campaign, the C.P.L.A. for a time refrained from direct attack, in order that the A. F. of L. might have no excuse for saying that it would have succeeded if only the "reds" had not interfered. We spoke out at last after the disgraceful ending of the Danville strike. The present Executive Council's report contains only a couple of sentences referring to the Southern campaign in the most perfunctory fashion. It states that this campaign "has been continued." That is a sorry bluff. The fact is that the A. F. of L. has forgotten all about its one great organizing effort of the last decade.

It seems clear that whatever aggressive official moves the A. F. of L. may make in the immediate future will be in the field of legislation, rather than in the field of direct trade union organization. The railroad organizations are going to Congress for legislation for a shorter work week. The United Mine Workers of America, an organization which has traditionally distrusted resort to legislative action, is to seek legislation for the establishment of a coal commission to regulate the coal industry, as the Interstate Commerce Commission does the railroads, as a first step in an attempt at rehabilitation of the miners' union. The Federation as a whole will put much effort behind the bill to regulate injunctions in labor disputes.

It is doubtless inevitable that there should be a certain tendency to resort to political action in a time of economic depression, when it is hard to make gains as to wages or hours by direct action in the shop. The tendency is, however, indicative of a development away from militancy, which has been going on in the A. F. of L. for a long time. In the present convention, talk about defying injunctions, in which even Matthew Woll has sometimes engaged in the past, was definitely soft-pedaled. Legislative action on the part of the A. F. of L. means in practice lobbying, seeking favors from the dominant political parties.

It seems that if members of A. F. of L. unions are going to be forced to seek redress through legislation, that is political action, for some of the greater ills from which they suffer, if thus they begin to think more in political and less in pure and simple trade union terms, the result must eventually be to stimulate the movement for the building of a labor party. It is significant, however, that in an A. F. of L. convention, held in a time of most severe economic depression, not a single word in favor of independent political action was spoken, and that the A. F. of L.'s non-partisan political program was adopted without dissent. There is no indication here of any mass movement among organized workers toward a labor party.

### Good-bye Workers' Education

Of minor importance, perhaps, but nevertheless of special interest to many progressive laborites, is the action of the Vancouver convention in regard to workers' education. When in the Spring of 1929 the Workers Education Bureau of America was made a mere mouthpiece of the Executive Council and of international unions

with no real interest in education, instead of a voluntary cooperative association of labor colleges and classes, educators, and unions interested in workers' education, which it had originally been, we prophesied that there would never be another convention of the Workers Education Bureau, that genuine workers' education under official trade union auspices was on the way to the graveyard, and that that was the precise purpose of Matthew Woll and his colleagues in fundamentally changing the constitution of the Bureau. They took the corpse to Vancouver for burial!

It is true that Spencer Miller, Jr., secretary of the W. E. B., estimated in his eloquent address to the convention, that thousands of workers throughout the country have been brought in touch with workers' education through classes, institutes, chautauquas, etc. He implies that all this was done through the activities of the Bureau, though it is well known to all who are working in the field that these activities are rapidly approaching the zero point. The Executive Council's report on the matter is much more modest. It occupies barely a page; it points to the conference of a handful of trade union officials and of professors of economics held at the State University of New Jersey last June as the outstanding achievement of the year in the workers' education field.

The convention's Committee on Education recommended, for one thing, that state federations of labor get in touch with state universities for the working out of adult education programs. Thus whatever adult educational work goes on, in connection with these federations, will be university extension work rather than labor education, in the proper sense of the term.

However, the most important recommendation of the Committee on Education was that "the most effective manner of giving education its proper place among the working policies of the Federation would be to coordinate these various educational activities now carried on by the Federation through the Permanent Committee on Education and the Workers Education Bureau, into a unified whole." It, therefore, authorizes the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. "to coordinate and consolidate all such activities." In other words, all pretense is now abandoned; the Workers Education Bureau as a separate organization is to go out of existence. This Bureau, of whose executive committee Mat-

thew Woll was the chairman, is to be "coordinated" with the Permanent Committee on Education of the A. F. of L., of which the good Matthew is also chairman, and all those familiar with the situation know what that means. "The young lady from Niger" disappears, and the "smile is on the face of the tiger."

Workers' education which aims to give workers the facts about our present political and economic system, which leaves them free to discuss any subjects of concern to them and to the movement, which trains them for effective service in all branches of the labor movement, and inspires them with a passion for building a new and just economic order, will have to be done in the future, as it is now being done, by agencies which are independent or semi-independent of the official trade union movement, such as the various summer schools for women workers, Commonwealth, Brookwood and the schools conducted by labor political or other groups.

### Labor's Confession of Faith

Approximately, at the beginning of the second half century of its activity, the Executive Council devotes considerable space in its report to setting forth the fundamental philosophy of the A. F. of L., the faith which guides and inspires it in these troubled and momentous days. What is that philosophy?

Before we answer that question, it may be well to recall that the preamble of the A. F. of L. constitution, which sets forth the philosophy which in general guided the Federation in its earlier days, begins as follows: "Whereas a struggle is going on in all the nations of the civilized world between the oppressors and the oppressed of all countries, a struggle between the capitalist and the laborer, which grows in intensity from year to year, and will work disastrous results to the toiling masses if they are not combined for mutual protection and benefit."

We must not conclude that the A. F. of L. was once a revolutionary organization. Yet in pre-war days it had, on the whole, a distinctive labor point of view, regarded itself as in opposition to the dominant political and business forces, and tried to organize the workers primarily by appealing to them rather than to the good will of the boss.

Since the war, a radically new point of view has established itself, though it can legitimately be argued that this

point of view is a logical development from tendencies previously operative in the labor movement. There is no mention in the present Executive Council's report of any opposition of interest between employers and workers. On the contrary, "mutuality of interest" among all groups in the community—capitalists, bankers, bosses, workers, salesmen, consumers—is emphasized. The conclusion of the A. F. of L. Executive Council's report, as it faces this winter of suffering, of world-wide political and economic upheaval, is not a call to battle, but a vague and pious suggestion that "the problems that lie ahead require coordination of effort, and the application of the principles of balanced progress toward prosperity, national and international. Upon each group constituting the whole of any joint enterprise or problem rests responsibility for organizing to take part in meeting the situation upon a basis of mutual interests. Every group must organize not for exploitation or selfish interest, but for advancement as a part of the whole undertaking."

The union, according to this new philosophy, is not primarily a fighting force to defend the workers and advance their interests. On the contrary, "the basic contribution of the union is to supply industry with an agency that will direct labor thinking and policies in accord with constructive principles.—It is an agency through which an important element in production can make intelligent and ordered progress and make its relationships with management constructive, adjusting as industry develops."

The report repeatedly advances the argument that labor ought to be given recognition and its interests safeguarded on the ground that the worker also is "a business man." Thus, it is pointed out that in early days "workers had two economic weapons—the strike and the boycott. Our early labor conflicts were contested fiercely. We found warfare not only wasteful, settling nothing, only postponing necessary concessions and agreements. We began to develop a constructive program for the under-privileged. . . . We believe that all human beings should order their lives so as to make the greatest possible progress. In a very definite sense this is the business of the wage earner. He should conduct this business in the most efficient way, and his success should have public approval just as do the achievements of the successful business man."

Surely there is an element of com-

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# The White Man's Burden

By WARREN C. MONTROSS

ON September 21, a magistrate in Alipur, Bengal, passed sentence of death on an alleged leader of the forces opposed to British rule. Immediately after passing sentence, the magistrate was shot to death while on the bench. It is obvious that the prisoners in Hijli could not have planned, certainly could not have executed, the shooting of the magistrate. But, on September 22, the Government had apparently decided to retaliate on the prisoners.

Hijli is a detention camp for political prisoners situated some 72 miles outside Calcutta. As is usual with political prisoners of the British Government, the men were condemned to prison without trial and without hearing. Their imprisonment was brought about by spies and professional sadists. As political prisoners they were supposed to have freedom of movement within the prison enclosure, the theory being that they were simply being isolated from the rest of the population to prevent the spread of revolutionary ideas. The prisoners are for the most part better educated than the average of the population—the guards, as usual with guards, are below the average.

On the evening of September 17, at 9:20 o'clock, a guard ordered a group of about 20 prisoners from the prison yard. The prisoners stopped to remonstrate with the guard and the guard fired into the air and blew his whistle. A corporal's guard immediately appeared on the scene and, according to the Government communique, each member of the guard fired one round. The prisoners, unarmed, ran for cover and the guards pursued them into the building. S. J. Tarakeswar Sen, who came out on a balcony of a second story window, was shot through the head and was instantly killed. S. J. Sachindra Ghose, brother of Saliendra Nath Ghose, president of the India National Congress of America, was shot in the back, the bullet severing his spine. S. J. Santrosh Mitra, who was in the

*(India's cry for justice has been stifled in the past through the British Government's control of the cables, but no more striking example of that suppression has been given than the massacre at Hijli, Bengal. The details of that massacre are just now reaching the United States and the capitalist press here, ever sympathetic with their class comrades in Britain, has refused to print the news. Pieced together from the Indian press and from confidential sources the story is being given here in full for the first time outside of India.—EDITOR.)*

dining hall, was shot three times in the abdomen and died immediately.

The guards, not satisfied with dispersing the prisoners in the yard, ran into various buildings and shot prisoners who were in no way connected with the original group in the yard. Inmates of the prison hospital were shot by guards who fired upon them in bed. The scene is described by such prisoners as were able to communicate with the outside world. Hospital inmates, roused from sleep by the commotion, were shot before they could raise themselves in bed. Others, trying to

escape from guards, were cornered and shot. The Government "investigation," published a few days after the massacre, acts as a whitewash for the guards. It does not, however, explain several important details.

The report states that the prisoners had "armed themselves with clubs and threatened the guards." The report does not explain why—granting that the prison guards are so stupid as to allow prisoners to make a collection of clubs—the inmates of the hospital, who were certainly not armed with clubs, were shot. The Government must pretend that the prisoners provoked the attack, but it does nothing to explain away the number shot in the back. Nor does the report explain why unarmed men should attack an armed guard and then allow him to sound an alarm. Nor does it explain the remarkable efficiency of the reinforcements that appeared on the scene immediately after the signal was given.

The prisoners in Hijli are now on a hunger strike to demand a truly impartial investigation by representative

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Police and Excise officers battling with Indian nationalists in the canal of this village (Kalikapur). The men had been manufacturing salt illegally and threw themselves into the canal to avoid arrest.



# Left Trends in the International Labor Movement

## A SYMPOSIUM

by

A. Cupelli, Ludwig Lore, David J. Saposs and Mark Starr

With the growing interdependence of the economic life of all countries of the world, the revolutionary labor movement cannot be truly effective in a revolutionary sense unless it is international in its scope. Now, as never before, the interests of labor throughout the world demand putting into effect the advice of Karl Marx — "Workers of the world, unite!"

Lenin realized very early in the days of the Russian Revolution that the safety and the future of Soviet Russia depended to a large degree upon the strength and support of the international proletariat, and upon the extent to which that proletariat by its revolutionary activity prevented their own imperialists from embarking upon enterprises of intervention against the First Workers' Republic. With this strategy in mind, the Communist International was founded, largely under the initiative and leadership of the Russian Communist Party.

Not only did Lenin succeed in erecting a powerful bulwark against imperialist interventionists, but due to the example and stimulus of the Russian Communist Party, the Communist movement took firm root throughout the world. Mass Communist parties were established in Germany, France, Czechoslovakia, Sweden and other countries. The Communist movement became the pole around which the militant, revolutionary forces of the labor movement crystallized and consolidated. Even in the United States, the golden throne of world imperialism, the Communist Party, though not large in membership, was beginning to attain considerable mass-influence.

With prophetic foresight, however, Lenin warned against the danger of "the gap", namely the gap which would arise between the problems of building up Socialism in a workers' republic and the problems of the world proletarian revolution. Today "the gap" has grown in proportion, and has become one of the most vital problems of the international revolutionary movement.

The Stalin leadership, acting under the exigencies of the gigantic difficulties of constructing a Socialist society, has tended more and more in its emphasis upon the purely Russian problem—as if one could speak correctly of a purely Russian problem. Within the Communist International, under the leadership of Stalin, a policy of ultra-left sectarianism, an un-Leninist policy, an unrealistic and divisive policy of self-sufficiency, was adopted. The result has

been the almost complete collapse of the prestige and mass influence of the Communist parties throughout the world.

But the objective situation, the problems arising out of the world economic crisis, create the necessity of an active, militant, revolutionary movement, rooted in the conditions and struggles in each particular country, a movement which shall take up the baton of leadership from the hands of the Communists, who have let it fall. The question therefore arises whether or not new world forces are arising competent and willing to undertake in a realistic manner the tremendous tasks and responsibilities confronting the revolutionary movement. It is the purpose of this symposium to pose this question with a brief survey of the developments taking place in a number of important European countries.

—EDITORS.

### THE LEFT OPPOSITION IN THE L. S. I.

For the first time since the Labor and Socialist International was formed the left opposition elements asserted themselves at its last convention held in Vienna during August. At the convention the division centered around the vital questions confronting the working class in the immediate present. The left opposition demanded uncompromising and energetic action in coping with the present world ailments. It took the position that economic conditions are ripe for the immediate overthrow of capitalism. It, therefore, attacked the position of the majority in bending all its efforts to patching up the present system. The left opposition asserted that entering coalition governments and otherwise cooperating with bourgeois parties inevitably resulted in maintaining the principles of the capitalist system.

The left opposition also attacked the attitude of the majority on war and disarmament. It demanded that the International appeal to the workers direct on

this issue instead of wasting time and energy in appealing to the governments. The left opposition announced that there must be no compromise with war any more than there must be compromise with capitalist parties in parliament. Socialists must always vote against military credits and when they come into power they must set the example by disarming.

Likewise the left opposition disagreed with the majority over the League of Nations. It asserted that the League of Nations is merely a device for defending capitalism and staving off the revolution. The left opposition declared that the workers will only accomplish their revolutionary objective through their own organizations and their own movement.

This new opposition was not well organized but will undoubtedly crystallize its ideas and bring the left elements in the Socialist movements together for more effective action.

D. J. S.

### GERMANY

The socialist elements which withdrew from the Social Democratic Party of Germany about a month ago to form the new Socialist Labor Party of Germany have not acted prematurely—indeed, the contrary could probably be said with much greater justification. Though until recently members of the Social-Democratic Party, these men and women had but little in common with their mother organization, nor were the differences between them and the party majority mere questions of tactics and the methods to be used in the daily struggle for political power. They involved a fundamental divergence in the application of socialist thought and socialist ideas.

It is not accidental that the leaders of this 1931 secession movement—with the exception of the younger elements recruited in the post-war period—were among those who led the Independent Social Democratic movement in 1916 against the S. D. P. bureaucracy. If men like Heinrich Stroebel and Kurt Rosenfeld, who were the standard bearers of international socialism in that period, hesitated to take another decisive step, notwithstanding their utter disagreement with their party, it was the fear that no middle ground existed in a labor movement dominated by its social democratic and communist wings that held them there. In the last analysis, every discussion in international party circles concerning this new constellation in the political zenith of the international labor

movement will of necessity emphasize this phase of the problem. It will be generally recognized that a third grouping of indefinite proportions exists, in every country, inside and outside the official parties, that is waiting for some such move. Is this element sufficiently articulate to justify the upheavals that the organization of a new party must bring? The answer to this question will decide victory or defeat for the new Secession. There can be no doubt, even at this early stage of the game, however, that hundreds of thousands of S.P.D. and K.P.D. voters, and many thousands of those who are members of one or the other of these two parties, will join this new venture as soon as its political success seems a possibility.

The rupture that brought the new party into being was precipitated by the continued opposition of its leaders to the toleration of the official Social Democratic Party of the reactionary Bruening government. While it is not represented in the Bruening Cabinet, the party had again and again assumed full responsibility for governmental anti-labor policies, and has continued to give the Bruening regime its unwavering support. Against the demand of the opposition that the S. P. D. take an open stand against the present regime, though this would bring about its inevitable overthrow, the majority, backed up by the last party convention at Leipzig, persisted on the downward road, making possible the reduction of social insurance and wages by its parliamentary activity and condoning a system of government by decrees (Notverordnung) and the emasculation of the Reichstag.

The new Socialist Labor Party (Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei), if it wishes to satisfy the still more or less unformed desires of the uncounted thousands who are dissatisfied with the leadership and policies of the existing class parties in Germany, will have to proceed along new lines. Its application of socialist principles to the day by day exigencies of political life, its strictly international treatment of the German question in opposition to the more or less national outlook of the S. P. D. majority, should have a wide appeal. It has already indicated an aggressive program of popular resistance against Fascist ideology with its concomitants of nationalism, militarism, anti-socialism, that should act as a wholesome antidote against the suppression of Fascist institutions and followers by governmental and police persecution under a system of government by decrees that has made Germany, with the consent of the official Socialist movement, the most autocratically ruled country of Europe. Under the present so-called anti-Fascist government, Commun-

ist and Fascist newspapers are arbitrarily suppressed, meetings are forbidden or dissolved, and Constitutional liberties are trodden under foot with indiscriminate ruthlessness, while the Socialist movement calmly consents to the suspension of every constitutional guarantee of its so hotly defended democracy because it views with like alarm the coming of a Fascist "putsch" or a Communist revolution, and persists in this suicidal policy although every recent election has shown the futility of police brutalities and political suppression. In Hamburg, in an election for the Buergerchaft (City Council) the Fascist vote increased from 14,760 in 1928, to 202,465 in September, 1931. In Anhalt, a little German free state, during an election held on October 24, the National Socialists (Fascist, who had held two seats since 1927, came out of the election with 79 deputies. Every other recent election shows practically the same results.

The new party will take an energetic stand for the socialization of the important industries of Germany, and will pursue a Socialist policy, the immediate and ultimate aim of which will be the destruction of the capitalist state. It will take and maintain an attitude of constructive friendliness toward Soviet Russia, with all that this implies, and will oppose every attempt on the part of the ruling classes of Germany to side with the avowed enemies of Soviet Russia, bringing its influence to bear in favor of a German-Russian rapprochement in all questions of foreign and internal policy. Withal it will be sane enough and strong enough to resist the temptation of adopting a program of glittering revolutionary generalities. If it adheres to its announced policy of defending the class interests of the German proletariat with all means and weapons at its disposal, it should gain the confidence of the masses, not only in Germany, but in other countries as well, and should go far to re-establish the good name and well-earned reputation the German Socialist movement enjoyed up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

L. L.

#### ITALY

It is exceedingly difficult to secure full and accurate information regarding the present situation in the Italian Socialist movement, because of the black reaction prevailing under the Mussolini regime. However some information is available.

The Second International of war patriots has tried unsuccessfully to unite the social patriots and the left wing Italian Socialists. The Partito Socialista Italiano, which is outside the Second International and opposed to it, is today the most powerful revolutionary group in

Italy. Ideologically it is close to the Third International. But the sectarian tactics and policies of the present Communist leadership, has made impossible any cooperation with them.

Suppressed by the tyrant Mussolini by violent means, and compelled to flee to foreign countries, the organization has now its headquarters in Paris. Its newspaper "Avanti," has the largest circulation of all workingclass or radical publications in Italy, in spite of the terrific reaction prevailing. Its membership is equal to all other exiled parties, Social-Democrat, Communist and Republican put together. It has a considerable number of militant, and active branches scattered throughout the world.

In comparison with this group, the Social-Democrats, expelled from the Party at the Rome Congress in 1922, count 60 generals, a few sergeants-at-arms, as well as the money and the corrupt machinery of the war patriots.

Among the Italian workers the opposition to this appendix of capitalism is as gigantic as the Alps Mountains. The great majority of Socialists do not want to share in its unparalleled moral and political downfall. In a desperate attempt to win the support of the Partito Socialista Italiano, the Second International has held out all sorts of promises to its exiled leaders, including money and positions. Because of these maneuvers, the Partito Socialista Italiano was compelled to expell a dozen intellectuals for carrying on parliamentary intrigues with the Social-Democrats. This was accomplished after a sharp battle at the Grenoble conference of last year. Thus the tricks of the Second International were frustrated with the help of the Socialist working masses, who have no illusions concerning its policies of compromise and its effort to keep alive the dying capitalist system instead of trying to achieve Socialism.

In a recent issue of the "Avanti," the Partito Socialista Italiano declares that it "is a Socialist party. Socialism is a great revolutionary movement to bring a deep change in public and private as well as in political and economic life. Our principles, the incentive and stimulating forces to action, call for the abolition of all capitalist privilege and for the socialization of the means of production and trade and for the attainment of economic justice without which we cannot attain any other form of justice."

The Partito Socialista Italiano believes that there is no fundamental difference in the aims of Socialism and Communism. What keeps it out of the Third International is the scandalous subordination of the interests of the international proletariat to a short-sighted policy of what it conceives as the immediate in-

terests of the Russian state. This policy has dealt a tremendous blow to the revolutionary movement of Italy. The support given by the leaders of the Third International to the fascist regime for small, insignificant diplomatic concessions, while Mussolini murders all those suspected of Communist ideas, cannot be justified before the Italian working-class. Against the ultra-lefts, sectarians, the Communists and against the right, Social-Democrats war patriots and upholders of capitalism, the Partito Socialista Italiano is standing firmly and bravely for the final triumph of Socialism.

A. C.

GREAT BRITAIN

The cynic might well say at the present moment that all sections of British labor are now left—left behind. Many politicians have kicked away the ladder by which they climbed to prominence, but MacDonald has actually broken his in pieces. Blind panic and fear have created a situation parallel to the post-war election of 1918 when Mr. Lloyd George headed a coalition composed of almost as strangely assorted elements as the ones now in the National government. The only cheering thing in the situation is that the popular vote of the labor movement, despite the frenzied attacks of Winston Churchill and the Bishop of London, still stands as high as 6½ millions.

Before the crisis came, relations between the Independent Labor Party and the official Labor Party had reached what looked like the breaking point. The constitution of the Labor Party was amended at its recent conference so that I. L. P. members of Parliament would not receive official endorsement unless they promised never to vote contrary to the decisions of the parliamentary Labor Party. All they could do in case of a difference of opinion was to abstain. This obviously involved setting up of the I. L. P. in the House of Commons as a separate left-wing labor party. This possibility, however, was complicated by the fact that the I. L. P. members of Parliament were not united in their refusal to comply with the Labor Party decision. In the election, four of the I. L. P. candidates declared their willingness to submit to the new ruling and were endorsed; but 19 (including Brockway, Maxton, Jowett, Wallhead) refused to do so and ran as unendorsed Labor candidates. There were a few cases in which an official Labor candidate ran in opposition. It still remains to be seen whether the defeat inflicted on the Labor Party by reaction will alter the situation.

The I. L. P. during the last 10 years has suffered a decline in membership from about 35,000 to 20,000. This has been largely due to the fact that it lost MacDonald, Snowden, and their sympathizers. The I. L. P. was also unfortunate in the personal nature of the criticisms made by some of its representatives. In one case charges of personal corruption were made against members of the Labor Party which could not be substantiated; and some of the members of the I. L. P. were accused of seeking cheap notoriety at the expense of the party.

strikes and unemployment demonstrations on a wide scale now that Labor is impotent on the political field, and the Communists head those movements, additional sympathy may be evoked.

So far, the new Socialist Society for Inquiry and Propaganda (S.S.I.P.) has done no more than issue a very good pamphlet dealing with the facts and fictions of trade with Soviet Russia. Its leader, Ernest Bevin, the head of the Transport Workers, was among the defeated at the recent election.

It is to be hoped that the Labor Party will interpret rightly the lessons of the present set-back. A working class organization which endeavors to clear up the mess of capitalism is bound to be discredited. A labor movement which puts the community before class is bound to be out-manouvered. The international bankers can create a crisis and then put the blame upon the Labor government. The next few years are likely to be full of bitterness and suffering for the organized workers. These years, however, will not be in vain if the workers' educational movement, chiefly the National Council of Labor Colleges, helps to point the lesson and if the official labor movement, instead of excluding the left-wing advocates of "socialism in our time," makes their program its own.

M. S.

FRANCE

Perhaps no socialist movement is as united at present as that of France. This situation is in part

McShane

THE MAN AT THE TOP:-  
"Equality of Sacrifice—that's the big idea, friends! Let's all step down one rung!"



From "Plebs"

In the greatly reduced numbers of the Labor M. P.'s, Maxton and his group will play an important part. The Labor Party may realize the necessity of coming out boldly for Socialism. Its election manifesto, although a sort of death-bed repentance, contained radical proposals for socializing industry, for taking over the banks, and other features which have been championed by the I. L. P. Thus there may be no second labor party in the Commons. Before the election some of the I. L. P. representatives entered into conversations informally with some of the Communists to discuss the possibility of organizing the unemployed. The Communists demanded acknowledgment of error and recantation; and the meetings ended with no result.

Despite the wage cutting and general misery of the unemployed masses, there is still no sign of a swing to the left, as far as a great increase in support for the Communists is concerned. With 26 candidates in the field, only about 75,000 votes were secured. Should there be

traceable to the fact that France has not been, so far, vitally affected by the economic crisis. It is just now beginning to feel it. The apparent unity is also attributable to the fact that the French Socialist Party has not become involved since the war in coalition governments with bourgeois parties. Also, since the reactionary bourgeois elements have been in power the Socialist Party has had no choice but to act as an opposition.

Because of this situation the Socialist Party of France has been able to maintain a sort of revolutionary attitude. Within it there are, however, three distinct factions. There is the extreme right group that favors a coalition with the bourgeois radicals, even though the Socialists were in the minority. There is the middle group which advocates that the Socialists should only participate in government if they were given control. In other words, the Socialists would take office if the bourgeois left parties promised to maintain benevolent neutrality.

(Continued on Page 28)

# LETTERS FROM WORKERS

## CONCERNING THE AMALGAMATED

Dear Editor:

I wish to give you an idea from actual experience of the present conditions in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, which is being widely advertised as a "progressive" union. As a matter of fact, it is in some respects more backward than some of the most reactionary unions of the A. F. of L.

The Amalgamated in New York, for instance, is composed mainly of Jewish and Italian workers. Among these workers there has been established a regime of open fascism and gangsterism, which is used by the Hillman, Bellanca machine to stifle the demands of the workers.

The capitalist class of America threatens the militant workers with imprisonment, but this inhuman and corrupt bureaucracy uses the more effective weapon of starvation against any one who dares to raise his voice in protest. This charge can be proven by many facts. In the early days of the Amalgamated, when freedom of opinion was tolerated, there existed large opposition groups to the administration, and this opposition was a powerful force in keeping the Amalgamated a progressive organization. Now in the days when the union is engaged in high finance with the manufacturer, through the Amalgamated Bank, an openly reactionary policy has been adopted and all opposition groups have been ruthlessly destroyed.

Workers who dare to criticize the administration of the union are forced out of the shops and are compelled either to starve or change their trade.

What are the conditions which make the situation in the Amalgamated so intolerable—conditions which are transforming the Amalgamated, once a fighting organization of the workers, more and more into a bosses' agency! In fact in many cases, the bosses are more eager to have their workers belong to the Amalgamated, than are the workers themselves.

Until a couple of years ago, the Amalgamated workers were paid chiefly on a week basis. In the last few years the Amalgamated officialdom has imposed the piece work system against the will of the membership. That means the abolition of the 44-hour week and the actual introduction of the 50 and 60-hour week. Conditions in this respect are now worse than in 1910 before the union was organized. The piece work system has been made continually worse by the introduction of lower scales every

season, these scales being introduced with the collaboration and approval of the officials.

The slogan of the Hillman machine from top to bottom is that if the workers do not accept conditions put down by the bosses, the bosses will either go out of business or leave town. Under this threat the workers are being compelled to work under conditions no better than slavery.

The only thing the administration of the Amalgamated does efficiently is to collect dues and assessments with the aid of the vicious check-off system and the co-operation of the bosses.

In a period of severe unemployment, jobs are distributed to a favored clique supporting the administration, and the rank and file are left to starve.

Unemployed workers receive no benefits from the highly advertised unemployment fund. Workers who have been out of work for a long period are compelled to pay up their dues before they can secure unemployment benefits, which is practically impossible for them to do. Meanwhile the employed workers are taxed while the unemployed receive nothing.

In spite of the serious unemployment situation many shops are working overtime nearly every night and even Sunday, thus keeping more workers out of a job.

The bosses are exercising the right to freely hire and fire with little or no interference from the union, except where administration favorites are involved. For instance, in the William P. Goldman shop, one of the largest in New York City, the union officials were given charge of the reorganization of the shop, which meant the firing of a considerable number of workers, and a 25 to 30 per cent reduction in scale. In this particular shop, I was forced out by the union officials and the boss because of my protests against the continued attacks upon the workers' conditions, even though the shop has been working overtime and new pressers have been employed in my place.

When Bellanca was asked for an explanation he declared frankly: "Of course you were fired because you criticized the union office."

The fight between the Hillman and Orlofsky groups is simply a fight as to the division of the spoils squeezed from the workers. This fight will soon be patched up.

The task still remains to build up a genuine opposition in the Amalgamated

to save the union from destruction at the hands of the clique now in charge. I will write more on this question in future issues of the Labor Age.

DONATO CARRILLO.

## THE LAWRENCE STRIKE

Dear Editor:

On October 4 the mills in Lawrence announced a general 10 per cent wage cut. They included the American Woolen Co. and the large independent mills such as the Arlington, Pacific and Kunhardt.

The American Textile Workers Union, an independent organization with a membership of 1,200, sent a committee to see the management of the Pacific Mills, the mill from which the largest part of its membership comes. It refused to accept the reduction and announced its determination to strike before the wage cut went into effect on October 12. Meanwhile Robert J. Watt, legislative agent of the Massachusetts Federation of Labor, stepped into the picture along with Horace Riviere of the United Textile Workers and had meetings on the Lawrence Common calling the people on strike. One by one the mills came out.

The United Textile Workers has now a membership of about 9,000 and the American Textile has 3,000. The National Textile Workers has the sympathy of the Italian strikers but has a very small membership, not exceeding 300. The American and the U. T. W. are cooperating with each other as far as picketing is concerned but in nothing else. The U. T. W. is collecting money for relief through the Lawrence Central Labor Union, and the American Textile Workers is cooperating with the Workers Cooperative Union, which has tried to get a United Action Relief Committee started and has offered the services of its buildings, bakery shop, and creamery and is also willing to make its headquarters a relief station. It wants to serve all the strikers regardless of affiliations. So far the U. T. W. has not come in, but there is a possibility of it joining, since the National Textile Workers Union sent delegates to one committee meeting and then stated that it had a United Front Committee and if anyone wanted to start a united relief committee it was up to them to join its United Front, and then withdrew.

Once again the Communists are following out their strike breaking tactics. They are importing their shock troops and are sending their people to break up the picket lines. However, the rank and



file strikers are going to resist their attempts to break the picket lines and will use the same methods with them as have been used on the scabs.

Lester (Red Mike) Shulman, L. F. Green and myself have been working through the U. T. W., but we have co-operated and are still co-operating with the American Textile Workers and the Workers Co-operative Union which is headed by Joe Salerno, one of the active leaders of the 1919 Lawrence strike. We have the respect of the rank and file, and have been the only ones who have led large mass picket lines.

Red Mike is respected and revered by most of the strikers and has the largest following. I led a picket line of 3,000 on Monday, October 19, from the Lawrence Common down to the Prospect mill which had 200 people still working. Two days later the mill closed.

On Tuesday, October 20, I was assigned to the Arlington Mill. On that night 5,000 people massed around the gates. When the scabs started to come out the crowd started to slug them and the cops had to call out the riot squad. While the crowd was rioting in the streets I managed to keep a picket line of 700 going without one break from the lines. Twenty scabs were beaten up and one mill boss was nearly thrown over a bridge. Only two of our boys were arrested. I, however, was warned by the Commissioner of Police that I would be held personally responsible for all damage and also for an attempt at murder. My answer was that if I was wanted I could be found on the picket line the following morning.

The next night I had a line of 5,000 pickets and 15,000 spectators. We had heard that the scabs were still working and we determined to close the mill. After this demonstration of 20,000 workers the mill announced that it had closed.

That night the National Textile Workers' Union started its strike breaking tactics. About 75 of them came into the picket line and every time I started to lead the line to another gate they planted people in the line to send it another way.

Three mills have announced their closing. The Monomac, the Pacific and the Arlington. However, the Prospect and Stevens mills have also closed their doors, since they were unable to get scabs due to our educational committees' work. We are planning to concentrate on one mill at a time until we close all the mills.

SAM BAKELY.

#### COMBATING COMMUNISM

The following letter, recently brought to our attention, is a fair sample of how the "leading intellectuals" of American cap-

italism are attempting to meet the problems growing out of the breakdown of their system. The writer of the letter, Morgan J. O'Brien, is the senior partner of the law firm of O'Brien, Boardman, Conboy, Memhard and Early, was at one time a trustee of the public schools of New York City and is a former Justice of the Supreme Court of New York. Mr. O'Brien is also a trustee of the New York Public Library and of the Equitable Life Assurance Company; he is a director of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and of the New York Title and Mortgage Company; and he is on the educational board of advisers of the National Broadcasting System.

This letter was written to a member of Mr. O'Brien's social class. For obvious reasons we withhold the name of the recipient.—Editor.

\* \* \*

Dear —

May I add my personal endorsement to the letter you have received from Victor F. Ridder regarding Jochi University.

I am convinced that Communism is the one great peril to-day. If we do not immediately take steps to curb it, we shall find ourselves at the mercy of those forces in a comparatively short time. We should not withhold our support now because of unfavorable economic conditions. The danger is too imminent.

So deeply convinced am I of these facts that, departing from a principle, I am appealing to you personally to come at once to the support of Jochi University in combating Communism.

If you have not already sent in your subscription, will you do so as soon as possible.

MORGAN J. O'BRIEN.

#### CAPITALIST "DECENCY"

Dear Comrades:

I live near the southern railway. Friday morning an unemployed worker attempted to swing off a freight train near my home, and was seriously injured. The county officials refused to give him treatment or a cot to rest on. I waited on him and gave him all the attention I could until he died seven hours later. We found out later that he was a good worker and had a job until the last week when he was cut off. He was trying to make his way back to the hills to his people.

LARRY HOGAN.

#### FOR A FARMER-LABOR PARTY

Dear Editor:

There is no doubt but that we must build a real producers party on a farmer-labor basis if we are to make as much progress on the economic field as we should—economics and government are inseparably bound together. I am very

much interested in the development of a real farmer-labor party, bringing both elements into the harness to work together because neither will get as far working separately as they can working together. I have been a member of the League for Independent Political Action from the beginning, but have felt it is mainly a middle-class intellectual organization without much drive in the membership. I feel that the spirit of the C. P. L. A. is what is needed to push the movement for a new party, with the L. I. P. A. acting as a sort of Fabian Society, in conjunction with the C. P. L. A. as a sort of Independent Labor Party, both supplying brains and leadership for the actual party.

GORDON WARD.

#### THE LEAGUE FOR MUTUAL AID

Dear Editor:

Some day we may have universal unemployment insurance; some day we may have national employment exchanges; now we have chaos. But even today much can be done by the co-operative effort of those most struck by the terrors of the present depression.

We think your readers will be interested to learn of a venture based on the principles of mutual aid that is known as the League for Mutual Aid. This little-known organization is made up of members joined together to aid each other in getting jobs and to lend money without interest. Founded in 1920 as a stay and support for the conscientious objectors of those days, it has continued as the place to which radical and liberal workers can turn when they are broke or out of a job. An office with a competent secretary is maintained as a clearing house for jobs. A revolving loan fund has been built up from returnable deposits and contributions of the members. Unemployed members list themselves for vacancies as they occur. Loans are made without interest upon the endorsements of members and friends. During the past year over 300 jobs were filled and \$13,500 loaned. All this was done by a small organization of 600 members, operating on dues of \$5.00 a year.

The emergency now upon us calls for extension of our work and vastly greater activity. Increase of membership in the League is essential to our program of usefulness. We invite any of your readers who are interested to join with us, to report jobs they hear of, to avail themselves of our services, and to co-operate in all possible ways. The League for Mutual Aid office is at Room 2008, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Members will be welcomed from all over the country.

ELLEN A. KENNAN,

# LABOR AGE FORUM

## REVOLUTION—FAR OR NEAR?

"Short Cuts to the Revolution," by Commentator, in the October number of Labor Age calls for further consideration. All thinking students of social movements will doubtless agree with its author that there is no short cut to revolution, but some of them will try to place that generalization in its proper perspective by adding: Given the necessary social crisis, there is no holding back in order first to supply the revolution with "blue print" specifications of its detailed course.

Granting that the American masses may be insufficiently tutored in revolutionary theory and tactics, it does not follow that a revolution cannot possibly break out in America in the near future. It may break out, and it may not. Suppose it does? Isn't that question worthy of serious consideration in view of the existing economic and social crisis in America? Shouldn't that possibility—of near at hand revolution—greatly concern all those who may accept "Commentator" as their spokesman at this moment?

Let me try to present a snap-shot of the American situation which, in all essential features, is paralleled in every other capitalist nation: Two years of the most devastating industrial breakdown the country has ever experienced with no hint of immediate improvement and no basis for ultimate recovery; unemployment variously estimated to affect from seven to ten million wage and salary workers who, adding dependents, constitute at least one-third of our country's population; wholesale bankruptcy of the middle class of small manufacturers, store-keepers, farmers, and the "new middle class" of salaried attaches of capitalist concerns; a recession of the income from taxes which threatens to undermine the functions of the political state; banks and the entire credit system paralyzed by "frozen assets," domestic and foreign; wage cuts made imperative by the panic's inroads into profits and dividends; desperation strikes of workers making a last stand for very existence; charity officials, preachers, politicians, business men and other spokesmen of capitalist society freely predicting imminent disaster to their system "unless something drastic is done at once," while hopelessly unable to specify what that something might be; and, last but not least, a multiplicity

of radical and liberal groups, each calling the others hard names and, for the most part, insisting that the revolution must be deferred until the great mass of starving and harassed workers has made its choice and has been thoroughly drilled in the "manual of arms" of some particular group.

Obviously, such a situation has potentialities of a critical character, apart from any question of the experience and discipline of the American masses in the "finer technique" of the class struggle.

But for all that, isn't "Commentator's" assumption regarding "the theoretical backwardness of our country, where Marxism is still considered a foreign importation, and where a sound understanding of revolutionary theory is so sadly lacking"—isn't that assumption a bit shy of the facts? Lenin is quoted as saying that "Russia has attained Marxism, the only revolutionary theory, by dint of fifty years travail and sacrifice, thru the greatest revolutionary-heroism, the most incredible energy and devotion in seeking, educating, practical experience, disappointment, checking and comparison with European experience." Obviously, Lenin did not mean that all proletarian Russia had attained "the only revolutionary theory" in this manner, or in any other manner, prior to the revolution; but that a minority of the Russian proletariat—taking advantage of a crisis in the life conditions of the masses—experimented with that theory and made good.

Now, what about American working-class experience in "travail and sacrifice, energy and devotion, education, disappointment," etc., during the past half century or more? Let me mention a few facts.

Marxism was introduced to the United States by Marx himself, in the Civil War period. With the aid of representatives of the First International, the revolutionary theory influenced the meteoric National Labor Union. It rooted itself still deeper in the more slowly-developing Knights of Labor, which for two decades staged some of the most gigantic struggles recorded in American labor history. That theory was partly obscured by the cry of "anarchist terrorism" in the Haymarket trials. It burst forth again in the American Railway Union with its great demonstration in '94. It was present in the struggles of the Western Federation of Miners. Its

distinctive American objective on the industrial field: One Big Union—rejected by the American Federation of Labor as a "foreign importation," acquired clearer theoretical formulation and further practical demonstration through the Industrial Workers of the World. On its propaganda side—by word of mouth, by newspaper, leaflet, pamphlet, public speech—Marxism, in a fairly clear theoretical form, has been brought to the attention of the American working class through such agencies as the Socialist Labor Party, the Socialist Party, and other propaganda groups.

All through this history runs the red thread of "travail and sacrifice," of "incredible energy in seeking, education, practical experience, disappointment, and critical comparison," which Lenin pointed to as the training school of the successful Russian revolutionists.

In view of these facts, we need not share the vagaries of certain avowed "Communists" who appear to regard America as a blank sheet upon which to scribble Russian hieroglyphics only. On the contrary, America is a closely-written page of working-class experiences constituting a strong background to possible revolutionary change in the near future.

In spite of the decade of post-war "jazz," which terminated two years ago—rather, I should say, because of it—disillusionment, "an alteration in the views of the masses," is widespread in America today. It is reflected in the attitude of those whom we have been pleased to term spokesmen of the capitalist masters. With few exceptions, they are facing realities as never before. Unlike many radicals, these capitalist spokesmen show respect for the intelligence, and fear of the possible wrath of the American masses. They know it is useless to forever deceive the American people about economic and social conditions. While hoping and praying that it may not occur, they sense the possible nearness of a revolutionary upheaval.

Should their fears prove to be well-grounded, I venture the prediction that Marxism—which "Commentator" thinks is non-existent, and which some other radicals think is confined to Russia—will, like the proverbial chickens, "come flocking home to roost," in America.

B. H. WILLIAMS.

# Statement of Purpose

## CONFERENCE FOR PROGRESSIVE LABOR ACTION

The Conference for Progressive Labor Action  
Stands For:

**Militant Unionism**, finding its strength in the solidarity and courage of the workers, not in favors from the bosses;

**Industrial Unionism**, bringing the workers of all crafts in a shop or industry into one powerful union;

**Inclusive Unionism**, taking in all the workers regardless of race, color, nationality, creed, age or sex, the unskilled and the semi-skilled as well as the skilled;

**Active Opposition** to all elements in the trade unions, whether in the ranks or among the leadership, which are corrupt, inefficient or bureaucratic and a definite hindrance to the progress of the labor movement.

**Vigorous Efforts to Organize the Unorganized in the Basic Industries;**

**A United Front** of all workers against the boss in all industrial struggles;

**A Nation-Wide System of Social Insurance** against the risks of accident, sickness, death and unemployment, no contributions to be required from the workers;

**Encouragement of Genuine Cooperative Enterprises;**

**Opposition to All Forms of Capitalist Repression and Defense of All Class War and Labor Prisoners;**

**Opposition to All Forms of Discrimination Against the Negroes or Other Races;**

**Opposition to Militarism and Imperialism;**

**Recognition of Soviet Russia**, and vigorous opposition to all capitalist and imperialist efforts to weaken or destroy the Soviet regime;

**A Mass Labor Party** based primarily on the industrial workers, and including also agricultural, clerical, technical and professional workers;

**Genuine Workers Education**, which does not aim to educate workers out of their class but to teach them the facts about the present control of finance, industry and government in the interest of a few, and to train them for more effective service in all branches of the labor movement;

**Active Efforts to Develop a Militant Left Wing Political Organization** to carry on the work of education and agitation which is necessary for the building of a mass labor party, and working with such a mass labor party once it is formed, in order that it may not fall into opportunism, but may

advance as swiftly and steadily as possible to its true goal, the complete abolition of planless, profiteering capitalism, and the building of a workers republic. The C.P.L.A. aims to function as such a militant left wing political organization. It is prepared, also, to join with other forces in building such an organization on the broadest possible base. Since the C.P.L.A. believes that genuinely revolutionary political activities grow directly out of industrial struggles and cannot be separated from them, our interest in political activities means more and not less activity on the industrial field.

Workers, whether industrial, agricultural, clerical, technical or professional, are eligible for membership in the C.P.L.A. Exploiters of labor are barred from membership. We aim to build an active, disciplined membership, devoted to a militant struggle against capitalism on every front, political, industrial, cooperative and cultural, and free from ties which might compel them to subordinate C.P.L.A. activities or principles to those of other political groups.

### Members Are Required:

1. To accept the fundamental aims of the organization and to carry out such policies as may be adopted by the organization.
2. To exert their influence by all legitimate means for the adoption of C.P.L.A. ideas and policies in the unions and other organizations to which they belong.
3. To make it a major aim to build the C.P.L.A. organization; wherever possible to join or to form C.P.L.A. groups in the industries or localities to which they belong; to assist in the sale and distribution of C.P.L.A. literature; to attend meetings regularly.

Membership fee in the national organization is \$3 per year, payable in lump sum or in installments.

The fee may be reduced for very low-paid workers or omitted for the unemployed at the discretion of the National Executive Committee. A member who is in arrears in dues for three months loses his voting rights in his group and in the national organization; members in arrears six months are suspended, and those in arrears for one year are dropped from membership.

Those who are in active sympathy with the aims of the organization and who cannot undertake full membership may be enrolled as C.P.L.A. co-operators at a minimum fee of \$5 per year.



# "Say It With Books"



## American Capitalism Analyzed

**Concentration in American Industry.** By Harry W. Laidler. Published by Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 518 pp. 8vo. Price \$3.75.

HARRY W. LAIDLER, Executive Director of the League for Industrial Democracy and a prominent Socialist, has written what he designates as "primarily a book of facts, of trends in economic controls," which its respectable publishers claim "should prove of exceptional interest and value to the business man and the general student of social development."

It is not a book primarily intended for the revolutionary, class-conscious worker. Only in an apologetic side remark in the closing chapter does the author mention the fact that "the movement toward concentration has followed in general the predictions of *their* (meaning the socialist) leaders—Marx and others. One gains the impression from this approach that the rapid concentration of industry in fewer and fewer hands is a crime rather than the scientific law of capitalist development. This is the attitude of the petty-bourgeois trust-buster rather than the attitude of the scientific Socialist. The movement toward increased concentration of control is interpreted as an unfortunate post-war development. Nowhere in the book does one find the clear-cut class approach which characterizes Lenin's "Imperialism", which declares that "the birth of monopolies, as the result of the concentration of production, is a general and a fundamental law of contemporary capitalist development."

Laidler has made a most careful study of this phenomenon of modern capitalism, but his study displays the detachment and aloofness of the secluded physician tracing with microscopic care the causes of a certain disease without regard to social conditions which give rise to it, and of which it is a necessary part. While one can admire the thoroughness of such research, one is forced to recognize its fundamental limitations.

"Concentration in American Industry" was written by a Socialist in 1931 in the

midst of the gravest depression in the history of the United States, with from seven to nine million unemployed and a far more gloomy prospect ahead. A worker is surely entitled to ask what effect this concentration has upon the unemployment situation and the economic crisis generally. In his academic detachment from the problems of the class struggle, the author does not give the answer to these questions. For the answer, we must turn again to Lenin's "Imperialism". "When monopoly," says Lenin, "appears in certain branches of industry, it increases and intensifies the chaos proper to capitalist production as a whole. . . . At the same time the extremely rapid rate of technical progress (which accompanies concentration—BM) gives rise more and more to disturbances of equilibrium, to disproportion, crisis and chaos in the various spheres of economic life."

In drawing his conclusion, Laidler displays the same timorousness, the same solicitude for the feelings of "the business man". Not daring to venture an opinion of his own as to the outcome, he declares, "To which school will go the final verdict time alone will tell. This is not a book of prophecy." In the meantime he puts forward without claiming direct responsibility for it, the socialist proposal of "public ownership" cautioning, however, against "the immediate outlay of too great a sum of money" for this purpose. In the quiet of his study, the author visualizes a calm and peaceful buying up of the naughty monopolists, who will thereupon obliterate themselves and pass into oblivion.

It is quite conceivable that it might shock and even incense the bourgeois reader and the bourgeois publisher for whom the book is written if the author drew the correct picture of sharpening class conflict, the growing danger of imperialist war, the intensification of capitalist chaos and misery, when the workers will rise in their revolutionary might and finally put an end to the capitalist system by expropriating the expropriators.

Given a proper background and interpretation, the book furnishes considerable valuable information as to the present development of American industry. One might very well paraphrase Governor Pinchot's remarks regarding the power monopoly and say, "The time is fully in sight...when, from morning to night, from the cradle to the grave, the monopoly will enter at every moment and from every direction into the daily life of every man, woman and child in America."

"It is indeed difficult," says Laidler, "for the independent American citizen in these days of 'rugged individualism' to make any move at the breakfast table without paying tribute to concentrated capital. If he takes his toast, one chance out of five he is helping to fill the coffers of the General, the Continental, the Ward or the Purity Baking Co. If he has a bit of meat, he is probably doing a good turn for the 'Big Four' packers. If his taste in cereals favors Shredded Wheat, a coin clicks in the strong box of the National Biscuit Co. If he is partial to Force, Presto, HO Oatmeal, Farina, the Standard Milling Co. and indirectly the Gold Dust Corp. get the benefit..."

In this vein, the book considers each division of industry. One can follow the threads as they lead to the lair of the big moguls with all the fascination found in tracing a criminal in a Philo Vance detective story. "In anthracite coal, we have found that nearly four-fifths of the recoverable tonnage is controlled by 8 companies closely affiliated with railroads....In the case of iron ore, one corporation, the United States Steel, controls from one-half to three-fourths of the iron ore reserves and two-fifths of the industry's steel-making capacity....In the copper industry, 4 companies control nearly one-half of the copper reserves....One company—the International Nickel—owns more than 90 per cent of the known nickel resources of the world. One company—the Aluminum Company of America—holds a position of practical monopoly as far as the domestic

market is concerned in the ownership of bauxite deposits, used in the manufacture of aluminum.... In the oil industry, the Standard Oil group is still powerful. ... We found in the gigantic business of communication that one system—the Bell Telephone—controlled about four-fifths of the telephone service of the country; that another company—the Western Union—had jurisdiction over three-fourths of the telegraph service; that another company controlled the major part of radio communications.... In power utility, four electrical groups control a majority of electricity produced in the country.... In the automobile industry General Motors and Ford sell nearly three-fourths of motor cars.... Three corporations control over 70 per cent of the cigarette trade of the country...." And so it runs through the entire gamut of American industry, with concentration apparently more intensified in the so-called newer industries.

Inevitably the finger points toward the control by the big banking interests. Morgan for instance has recently added other crowns to his vast number, becoming the "king of yeast" and the "king of baking powder." "We find," says Laidler, "Albert H. Wiggin, chairman of the board of the Chase National, the largest bank in the world, a member of the boards of nearly half a hundred public utility, manufacturing and financial concerns. Samuel Insull in 1930 was serving on over 80 boards. Richard B. Mellon on nearly 50, William L. Mellon on 38, P. A. Rockefeller on 68, Oris P. Van Sweringen on 32, Patrick E. Crowley, president of the New York Central, on over 70, Sidney Z. Mitchell on 35, Charles E. Mitchell, president of the National City Bank, on 32.... Thus we find J. P. Morgan as chairman of the United States Steel and on the boards of the Pullman Co., of the International Mercantile Marine, of Drexel & Co. of Philadelphia, of the First Security Co. of New York, and of the Etna Insurance Co.... Lawyers representing numerous interests serve their clients indirectly." The entire structure, according to Professor Myron W. Watkins, "enables a few financiers to exercise a practically irresponsible management of whole fields of industry."

It is this ramified edifice concentrated in the hands of 60 odd bankers and millionaires, which it is the task of the American working class to take over and control in the interests of the many who toil and suffer in the mines, mills and factories of the United States.

BENJAMIN MANDEL.

## The White Man's Burden

(Continued from page 19)

Indians. Mass meetings held all over India have included previously irreconcilable factions in the revolutionary movement. All have joined in a denunciation of the government of Bengal, and the demand for an impartial investigation.

The black history of capitalist imperialism is being written in India today. The blood of prisoners is nothing to textile merchants on the "tight little, right little isle." No one expects that these manufacturers who have killed and starved their millions at home can be touched by the murder of a few political prisoners thousands of miles from home. The white man's burden includes the shooting of those who would dare to take seriously his protestations of his love of liberty.

The fact that the workers of India have not yet arisen and smashed the British by force, is no proof that they may not. Gandhi, met in London by the peddlers of bankers' lies known as diplomats, has confessed that little has been accomplished by the series of discussions in London.

## W. Va. Mine Workers Carry On

(Continued from Page 10)

They were starving before the campaign began, they starved during the strike, and they are still starving. But they put up a fight, and that's important for their self-respect. Not only they, but many millions of American workers are now starving. There is plenty of food in the country. If the hungry ones are to get it, apparently they will have to fight. These are the times which try rich men's souls. The workers have nothing to lose.

## LEFT TRENDS IN THE I. L. MOVEMENT

(Continued from Page 22)

Then there is the element that is unalterably opposed to the Socialist Party participating in government unless they have an absolute majority and can carry out an out and out Socialist program. In view of the outcome of the British elections and general developments in other countries this third faction should be strengthened in its position.

D. J. S.

## The Unemployed Citizens League

(Continued from page 12)

ment. Dramatic mass action must be staged to drag larger appropriations from municipal authorities, for the two weeks' work given at the "coolie wage" is the most disgraceful sort of a make-shift. The money is virtually gone before it is received by the worker.

While thus far the League has successfully countered the charge that it was purely a propoganda or political organization, the time is coming when it will have to sponsor constructive measures of permanent character for the benefit of the unemployed. Talks along economic lines are a feature at all meetings and the way is being paved for a more far-reaching program.

Seattle's experience would indicate that the unemployed can be organized if they are approached in a natural way with a reasonable, practical program free from propaganda taint. Give them a chance to build their own organization without outside dictation. They are not scared of progressive or even radical leadership, so long as tangible things are given proper position. Find cooperative jobs which they can do for mutual aid and which stimulate independence and working class reliance. They will not become social revolutionists over night but they will learn lessons of organized effectiveness in contrast to individual impotency.

## THE EDISON WAR CONTINUES

(Continued from Page 6)

whole business and is using the relief drive for which *we have to pay* to cover up its brutal lay-off policy before the public. . . ."

Yet it is such fellows as Matthew S. Sloan who fulminate about the violence of workers and of the threat of the "red menace." We should like to know who is responsible for the violence being employed by the Brooklyn Edison Company to stop its employes from demanding no more than decent and fair treatment. Who are desirable citizens. Mat Sloan and his thugs, or the workers?



## The 1931 Convention of the A. F. L.

(Continued from Page 18)

edy as well as tragedy in this attempt to dignify the laborer by making him out to be a business man, at the very time when the majority of our critics, even conservative ones, are fed up on the business psychology, and when business men have plunged mankind into unexampled chaos and distress.

We protest against this theory of "mutuality of interest" and this mouthy twaddle about "balanced progress." There is no mutual interest between the bankers, the corporation executives, the politicians, and the worker on whose back they ride, from whom they take the fruit of his toil, whom they use as machine fodder in times of peace and cannon fodder in times of war. It would be just as reasonable to talk about mutuality of interest between the slave-owner and the slave, between the feudal baron and the wretched serf who dug in his fields and was tied like an ox to his estate.

It is the business of the labor movement to see clearly the fundamental

cleavage between the exploiter and the exploited, to organize the workers for protection against the evil results of an exploitive economic system and for eventual liberation from it. That business the official leaders of the A. F. of L. have almost completely abandoned, though there are unions which still, in some measure, carry it on. The A. F. of L. will have to come back to the business of fighting for the workers rather than serving as personnel agencies for the boss, or it will not get very far past its fifty-first milestone.

## Soviet Russia

(Continued from Page 11)

drawn, receiving in payment the moratorium on war debts.

The threatened attack upon our Workers' Fatherland can only be considered as part and parcel of the international capitalistic drive on wages and living conditions of the workers in the United States and throughout the world, and the entire working class should be aroused against it.

The fourteenth year has demonstrated anew the capacity of the Russian Revolution to overcome all obstacles on the road to socialism. Dif-

ficult tasks lie ahead, but the triumph of the workers and peasants becomes more certain and more secure each year. The Russians are doing their part well. Let the workers of the entire world give them united support against all imperialistic attacks.

## Yellow Dog and Golden Calf

(Continued from Page 8)

The "yellow dog" and the Golden Calf are now one. Those who adhere unto Mammon ask us to prostrate ourselves before this vicious and crude form of slavery. Like the Israelites who reared up the Golden Calf, thousands of those who venerate this new idol will be crushed and slain before the "yellow dog" is cast down.

There is only one answer for the workers. That is, with all the cunning that is in them to defy and make ridiculous this decree of those judicial puppets, mumbling the words dictated by their masters.

The injunction has at last been led to its final conclusion. We see it now, stark naked—a thing to be spat upon and mocked and violated.

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