

The Campaign Against the Foreign Born

"Keep Your Mouth Shut or Get Out of the Country"

By I. AMTER.

IF you don't like this country, go back to the country you came from." This is what every foreign-born worker has to face whenever he complains about conditions in this country.

How much hypocrisy there is in this statement! It emanates too often from the mouths of capitalists, who themselves depend to a large extent upon the foreign-born workers for cheap, unskilled labor.

These are the same capitalists who are not in favor of restricted immigration, but prefer that the silent man of the White House (who is doing a lot of empty talking these days) should have the power to admit foreign-born workers above the quota, "provided industry needs them." Industry in the United States does not **NEED** them, but the capitalist does. He wants cheap labor that he can treat as he pleases—at wages and under conditions that are below the so-called American minimum of existence.

Need Class Consciousness.

THESE same capitalists bring in hundreds of thousands of Mexicans, who are accustomed to a meager living and will not rebel so readily.

But one also hears these words from the mouths of lackeys of the capitalist class. Native-born American workers who regard everything foreign as below the American standard, assail the foreign-born workers as if they were parasites on the life of the native workers.

The American-born worker has not learned class-consciousness as yet. Just as he despises the Negro worker and keeps him out of the trade unions, thereby incurring the hatred of the Negro worker, so too he despises the foreign-born worker and considers him a class apart.

The capitalists and the capitalist government know not only how to exploit this lack of class-consciousness, but at the same time they employ means of intensifying it. They pit one nationality against the other—not merely the American against the foreign-born, but the foreign-born workers of different nationalities against one another. By dividing the workers, the capitalists manage to keep control.

The capitalists furthermore, are as well aware of the national and international situation as the Communists and advanced workers of this country are. They know that the situation of several countries in Europe is precarious. They know that the national movement in Asia and Africa is growing. The danger of revolution in Eu-

rope—in a few states—and altogether the unstable state of things will reflect on America. Economic conditions in the United States may not be serious at the present time, but the decline of European industry will immediately have a reaction on the United States. The apex of prosperity is probably past; the building industry will not have another boom; the steel industry is not looking for a prosperous year. The decline of industry will mean struggles for the workers.

The workers in the basic industries are foreign-born workers. The steel industry employs 17% Negro workers, because it requires just 17% of the working force to keep the plants going. Hence the capitalists have launched a campaign against the foreign-born and Negro workers, hoping to intimidate them.

Bills Against Foreign-Born.

THIS campaign is bound to become more intense, as conditions get worse. The capitalists therefore have introduced thru their representatives in the government bills to coerce the foreign-born workers. "Keep your mouth shut or get out of the country," is their slogan. In order to be able to track down the offender—one who fights for the interests of his class—the capitalist government of this country intends to register the foreign-born workers. According to another bill, the foreign-born workers will be registered, photographed and fingerprinted. The foreign-born workers will not be able to move from one part of the country without the

knowledge of the authorities. At any time, at any place, an officer of the law will be allowed to stop a man and ask for his registration card. This is terrorization of the brazenest kind.

Why do the capitalists introduce such legislation at this time? Because of the approaching economic and political conditions in Europe, Asia and this country—and because the labor movement is weak and demoralized. To attack the weakest section of the working class—the foreign-born workers—means an attack on the working class as a whole. If the foreign-born workers—and the Negro workers—are intimidated, they may be used to force down the general condition of the working class. The lowered economic status of the foreign-born will be a threat to the native workers—and the whole level will sink.

The foreign-born therefore, must organize to protect themselves. Organization is the only weapon of the working class. Mass strength is the hope of the workers. Once the foreign-born are organized—which means that they themselves have realized the danger that confronts them—the native workers will begin to understand the menace of the legislation against the foreign-born worker. They will and must unite with the foreign-born workers in protection first of the interests of the foreign-born workers and of their own interests.

Organize to Protect Selves.

COUNCILS for the Protection of the Foreign-Born Workers must be the answer of the working class to

the challenge of Coolidge and the capitalist attempts to terrorize the foreign-born. The Negroes must be brought into these councils, for they suffer from the same malicious, dangerous forces that the foreign-born do. Even tho they may not be deported, the attacks, discrimination and general levelling of the Negro to a status below that of the foreign-born, make it imperative that the Negro workers become a powerful factor in these councils.

Support Councils!

The Communists must support these councils in every way. The members of the party must recognize that the impending mass menace are the bills that will be introduced in congress during the present term. But whether these bills pass or not, the foreign-born must remain organized in order to protect their interests. The capitalists do not depend upon law. They have sufficient extra-legal organizations, fascist organizations, such as the ku klux klan, American legion, American Defense Society, National Security League, Minute Men of the Constitution, etc., which demonstrate that they will spit upon their own laws, when their interests are endangered.

Local and national councils for the Protection of the Foreign-Born Workers are the demand of the hour. Every foreign-born worker, all trade unions, and especially those containing a percentage of foreign-born workers—but in reality all organized labor must recognize the danger of the present situation.