

Menace of Vicious Immigration Laws

By Ben Gitlow

THE United States Government is now laying plans for a campaign of discrimination and persecution against the foreign born workers. The hundred per cent Americans, who want to keep the American stock clean, desire to create the impression that the foreign born workers are a menace to the stability of America and its free institutions. It is needless to say that American Capitalism with its billions owes practically everything in the station among capitalist powers that it now enjoys to the millions of foreign born workers. The foreign born workers have for generations been exploited in the mines, fields and factories, for the express purpose of building

up the economic life of the country and fattening with billions of dollars the coffers of the capitalists in America. If the United States had to depend upon the native Indians, the only real one hundred per cent Americans, it would not now be the leading capitalist power in the world. American prestige, power and wealth has been built up on the toil, sweat and blood of millions of foreign-born wage slaves. Even today the foreign-born form the overwhelming majority of the workers in the basic industries where the conditions of work are dangerous and exceedingly hard. Besides, in the basic industries the foreign born workers are most unmercifully exploited.

And one must not forget that the basic industries are the foundation of American capitalism, and continually boast of the billions they are making.

In spite of the important role that the foreign workers play in the economic structure of the United States, the government is determined to put the foreign workers in the same category with criminals and deny them the elemental rights that human beings should enjoy in a country. In addition to this the government proposes also to make use of the foreign born workers in the campaign of the capitalists to crush and smash Labor's organizations in this country.

What does the government now propose? The government proposes, according to President Coolidge's message, that foreign-born workers coming to this country shall be registered. President Coolidge in his message supported the advocates of registration who propose to keep a record of incoming immigrants in the same manner that records are kept of criminals. These registration advocates in the interests of American liberty and freedom even go to the extent of advocating the finger printing of aliens. Under the proposed system of registration foreign-born workers will have to give their whole history. The result will be that no worker will be admitted into the country who will have in his records the slightest tinge of radicalism or trade union activity. Under this plan the wage-slaves who come to America will be selected from the standpoint of their obedience to the capitalist masters of the country. The capitalists will then have the government assurance that the foreign-born workers who will be permitted to enter the country will not rebel against the intolerable conditions of capitalist exploitation.

Secretary of Labor Davis, who is directly in charge of the carrying out of the Immigration policies of the government, besides being in favor of the registration of foreign-born workers coming to this country, is also in favor of Selective Immigration. Selective Immigration is the pet hobby of the Manufacturers' Association of which Mr. Emery, the well-known Labor Union Hater is the leading spirit. The Manufacturers' Association is the champion of the "open shop" in the United States. Its platform is one of uncompromising opposition to trade unionism. It is determined to crush every labor union in the country. The Manufacturers' Association never stops in its efforts and never spares its funds in conducting its nefarious "open shop" war. Every Labor Union of any consequence in the United States has at one time or another met the savage attacks of this anti-labor capitalist organization. Secretary of Labor Davis and the Manufacturers' Association are, nevertheless, agreed that the pol-

icy of Selective Immigration is the best policy for the country.

Under this policy of Selective Immigration it is proposed that the needs of the industries in the United States shall be taken care of. For example, in the words of Secretary Davis, if the steel industry were in need of ten thousand men the immigration laws would make it possible to allow workers suitable for this industry in the numbers required to enter the country. It is also understood that when such workers come to the United States, they should immediately be shipped to the particular industries where they are needed. This policy of Selective Immigration would turn the United States into an agent that would import contract labor for the capitalists of this country. The Labor Unions have for years waged a bitter fight against contract labor. The government of the United States was forced by organized labor to take the stand that the bringing in of contract labor is a criminal offense. However, the government now proposes itself to become the contract labor supplier for the capitalists. This will make contract labor immigration on a big scale in the United States a government institution, therefore, legal. Of course, the advocates of Selective Immigration are quick to inform the public that such Selective Immigration should not be brought into the country for the purpose of breaking strikes. However, one who knows the technicalities surrounding all laws and their enforcements knows that it will not be difficult for the capitalists, together with the government immigration agents, to find ways and means to bring foreign-born workers into the country for the purpose of breaking strikes. What then, is to prevent the mine owners, in anticipation of a strike, to declare that they have a shortage of miners in the country and to direct the government immigration authorities to proceed forthwith to supply them with foreign-born workers, who will come just in time to smash a strike. Every trade unionist who knows anything of the history of the trade union movement knows what a menace contract labor importation is to the unions of the country. If such labor importation in the past has been effectively used by the capitalist interests, to crush labor organizations and to prevent the successful organization of unorganized workers in a particular industry, at a time when contract labor importation was conducted by individuals on a small scale, then how big of a menace will it be to the American Labor movement when the government itself will import contract labor.

The immigration policy of the government at the present time is a very vicious one. On the one hand exclusion, restriction and discrimina-

tion and on the other hand free immigration to supply American industry with willing slaves who will work for small wages and with scabs to destroy the trade unions of the country.

In the New York Times Analyst of January 7th, Secretary of Labor Davis laid down his immigration policy as follows: "The exclusion as permanent residents or immigrants of all non-naturalizable aliens of all races." This will establish in the United States an agency which will continually supervise and keep a record of the activities of the foreign-born workers in the United States. When ever this agency will declare a foreign-born worker non-naturalizable he will be seized and deported. This will mean that all foreign-born workers holding radical views will be hounded by the government.

"Selection of Immigrants of the admissible races and qualified classes on the basis of our needs as a nation and economically." This clause means that the United States shall adopt the policy of Selective Immigration and shall import contract labor for the benefit of the capitalist industries of the country.

"Selection and Inspection Abroad sufficient to avoid the return to the land whence they come of large numbers of prospective immigrants after they arrive in our ports." Here, Secretary Davis proposes to establish an espionage system abroad against foreign-born workers, desirous of coming to this country. And the United States would be in a position to render very valuable service to the White Guard governments of Europe who are anxious to lay their hands on workers fleeing

International Organization Problems

By A. Losovsky

IN the international trade union movement we are witnessing a continuous, if also only gradual, alteration of the old forms of organization. The old craft unions are dying out and their place is being filled by new forms of associated action, which include all the workers of allied trades. The systematic failure of the old craft unions and their weakness in face of the aggression of strongly organized and concentrated capital has brought this about. But the old forms of organization will not vanish of their own accord. The entire old bureaucratic apparatus has become an end in itself for its beneficiaries. Often the need of a few dozen trade union bureaucrats to make a career for themselves exercises a mighty influence on the form of organization.

One of the first consequences of a consolidation of the trade union movement is the lessening of its bureaucratic apparatus. A whole crowd of presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, and functionaries become simply unnecessary ballast, and the opposition of these superfluous officials to any changes that would deprive them of their secure jobs plays a large part in holding the unions to outworn forms. It is sufficient to take a look at the notorious Gompers machine in America, the complicated machinery of the English trade unions, or the bureaucratic armament of the German movement,

to see what kind of barnacle the trade union apparatus is upon the industrial action of the workers.

Just in this regard does the whole reactionary spirit, the conservativeness and the narrow-mindedness, of the trade union officialdom put itself coarsely in evidence. But notwithstanding the fact that the trade union machinery forms such a hindrance to the development of new forms of organization, this development is taking place. Very worthy of observation in this connection is the industrial union movement in the United States and in England. Thousands of trade union councils and local branches have declared themselves in favor of industrial unionism.

In this connection the sections of the R. I. L. U. have by no means displayed sufficient initiative. The field of the remodeling of the trade union organization is for the masses the most accessible and the easiest to understand. But only the Trade Union Educational League of America has known how to approach this matter in the proper way. They have found it possible to win the approval of the broad working masses for their proposals. Our sections in other countries have almost entirely passed over this problem. Neither in England nor in Germany was a great campaign for the reorganization of the trade unions undertaken.

the White Terror of their government by attempting to escape to America.

"The annual enrollment of all aliens as long as they remain aliens." The enrollment annually here referred to is plainly the registration carried on annually, under the provision here proposed by Secretary Davis, and whenever the authorities come to the conclusion that the activities of a foreign-born worker are detrimental to the capitalist interest of the country they can refuse to register him as a desirable alien and deport him from the country. This enrollment or registration can become a powerful weapon in labor dis-

putes, against the workers. Through the issuing of an injunction, for example, a strike may be declared illegal and foreign-born workers who must register in order to prove their loyalty and good behavior, can under the threat of deportation be forced back to work.

This campaign against the foreign-born workers and against the immigrants coming to this country is full of dangers to the American Labor movement. It is absolutely necessary that all labor unions and all foreign-born workers' organizations join hands in a fight against this proposed abominable campaign.