

STRIKES TO BE CRUSHED BY PERMANENT MARTIAL LAW, IS MEANING OF STATE POLICE

(Article III)

By MANUEL GOMEZ

State police means perpetual martial law. It means what amounts to military intervention in every strike. It means government by irresponsible and heavily-armed troopers, free to invade any community in the state with or without the permission of local authorities, and to interrupt meetings, make arbitrary arrests and tyrannize over the workers and poor farmers.

As I pointed out in former articles, the wealthy backers of the Dunlap police bill in Illinois and similar bills in other states are far more interested in the workers than in the farmers—at any rate when it comes to this

BRITISH LABOR CLOSING RANKS FOR BIG FIGHT

Miners' Chieftain Is Taking the Lead

That British labor is girding itself for a titanic struggle with the employers is becoming more evident every day. A. J. Cook, chief of the miners' union appears to be taking the lead in organizing the forces of labor nationally to meet the united front of the master class thru their Federation of British Industries.

The British Minority Movement of which Cook is a prominent member, is a counterpart to the American Trade Union-Educational League and is the brains and driving force of the united front campaign.

As the DAILY WORKER previously pointed out there is a big division in the ranks of British trade unionists and the battle is raging fiercely in the columns of the London Daily

(Continued on page 4)

matter of "police protection." The state constabulary would be a mobile police force which they could throw into industrial communities in addition to the police already there and which "would not have the disadvantage of being held in check by local organs of government."

Permanent Martial Law

That this is equivalent to permanent martial law must be obvious to anyone who stops to think about it for five minutes. Military and police rule—the rule of clubs and bayonets—is the latest product of capitalist "democracy" which the bankers and businessmen of Illinois are trying to force upon the workers.

How do the workers of Pennsylvania look upon the state constabulary the original and model force? Are they overjoyed at the thought of a visit from the "cossacks"? Do they feel that this half-disguised system of permanent martial law is for their protection?

Condemned by Pennsylvania Labor Unions

Well if they do, they have a queer way of expressing it. There is not a bona fide labor organization in Pennsylvania which does not denounce the state police as an agency for oppressing the working class in the interests of organized plutocracy.

Up to a few weeks ago Pennsylvania newspapers were full of news of the new barracks which were to be established for the state police in

(Continued on page 5.)

ER, LOYAL TO
MOCRACY' VOTES

MARTIAL LAW TO CRUSH STRIKES, IS POLICE PLAN

Meaning Behind Fight for State Cossacks

(Continued from page 1.)

Berks county. But the workers of Reading and other Berks county communities raised such a storm of protest that Governor Pinchot was forced to countermand the order. The workers of Berks county do not want any of the cossacks quartered upon them.

The brutalities and assaults against workers committed by the Pennsylvania state police have already become household stories in every industrial town in the state.

Foster Cites Brutality of Cossacks

During the great steel strike of 1919 the anti-labor reign of the Pennsylvania constabulary was particularly bloody. William Z. Foster, leader of the steel workers in that titanic struggle, cites example after example to show that the state troopers acted virtually as hired gunmen of the steel trust, stopping at nothing to interfere with the successful course of the strike.

Foster's testimony is confirmed and supplemented by the report of the commission of inquiry of the Interchurch World Movement, headed by Bishop F. J. McConnell.

State Police Condemned Even by Church

The interchurch report which contains hundreds of affidavits showing constabulary violence states on page 178:

"In Monessen, where the strikers held out solidly for a long time, with the exception of the arrest of many Russians on vague charges of 'radicalism' the policy of the state police was simply to club men off the streets and drive them into their homes... In Braddock, however, where some of the mills were partly operating, the state police did not stop at mere beating."

An interchurch commissioner spent half an hour talking with strikers in a little room in Braddock used as union headquarters. A moment after his departure, state troopers rushed into the place demanding "that speaker" and threatened to close the headquarters because "a meeting" had been held.

Charges of assault brought against the state police in Butler, declares the report, come not only from strikers, but from non-strikers and businessmen as well. And in Clairton, on the Sunday before the strike, numerous men and women were attacked by the state constabulary and arrested while they were attending a mass meeting for which permission had been given by the local authorities; workers in the uniform of discharged soldiers were among those at the meeting ridden down by the state troopers.

State Police Assault War Veterans

Capitalism respects no uniforms which are not directly in its service! Discharged soldiers no longer form part of the capitalist state machinery. And when they attend strikers' meetings they even become "un-American."

Affidavits charge that men were thrown into cells and kept there several days before they were given a hearing. This occurred in practically every strike center. In Donora the constabulary rode into the headquarters of the strikers, drove the men out and placed the 98 men present, including the local organizer, under arrest, refusing to release them on less than \$500 bail each.

Still later vengeance comes from the coal strike of 1922, during which the reckless anti-labor exploits of the Pennsylvania troopers attained such notoriety that Governor Pinchot was obliged to appoint an investigating commission.

Union Organizer Against State Police

William Broad, a union organizer of Indiana, Pa., swore to the following story before the commission:

"On April 16, 1922, at Marion Center, Pa., while engaged on my work as organizer for District No. 2 U. M. W. of A., I was halted by three state policemen as I was about to call a mass meeting on an isolated piece of ground away from the mines. These troopers went from house to house and prevented men from attending the meeting. The troopers refused to arrest the drunken men who were interfering with the citizens on the street, after I had requested them."

This testimony could be swelled by a multiplicity of affidavits covering all sections of the state affected by the strike. Every scrap of evidence goes to show the troopers usurping all authority and acting as Judge Gary's private army. There are no instances of the constabulary favoring the workers.

Martial Law Disguised

That is the way the undeclared martial law of the cossacks expresses itself in the concrete issues of the class struggle. All government under capitalism is anti-labor government, but the worst excesses of all take place when a system of martial law is established. Pennsylvania presents an example of permanent martial law. Constabulary rule in Illinois would produce the same effects.

* * *

NOTE:—The next article will take up the activities of the employers' cossacks in other states.