

Texas Oil Workers Gird For Struggle Against Companies

By GEORGE PAPCUN

HOUSTON, Tex.—The drive of the CIO in the oil fields is gaining momentum, especially in the Houston area which is the center of the huge refining, shipping and producing in the United States.

In order to combat the tremendous propaganda and the vicious attacks of the oil companies against the oil workers union the oil workers issued their own militant paper "The Gulf Coast Oil Worker."

The task of the oil workers is made more difficult by the fact that the oil production, refining and distribution is scattered throughout the 48 states of the Union. In this section, according to available figures, 690,000 barrels are handled daily by refinery workers; crude oil shipments from the Gulf average daily 463,000 barrels to domestic points and 47,000 barrels for export trade.

All of the largest companies are stationed here. Among these are: Humble Oil and Refining Co., subsidiary of Standard Oil of New Jersey; Stanolind Co., Pan-American Co., subsidiaries of Standard of Indiana; Magnolia, Vacuum and Atlantic units of the Standard Oil of New York; the Texas Company; Gulf Co.; Sinclair and Sinclair-Prairie; Shell Corp.; Sun Oil Co.; Pure Oil Co.; Standard of Kansas, Crown Oil Co. and in Louisiana the Standard of Louisiana.

World Oil Center

The Houston-Beaumont-Port Arthur sector is the center of the world's largest oil refining and shipping area. There are at this time nine local unions with thousands of members functioning in this region, which includes the south of the line from Del Rio, on the Rio Grande to Shreveport, La., including the large East Texas field.

The South Texas oil companies on March 17 announced with a big blare of publicity a ten million dollar a year increase in pay to workers in the oil fields earning less than \$5,000 per year. (Not many of them earn \$5,000 a year, or anything near that). This is plainly a counter-move against the oil workers union and the CIO which the workers are enthusiastically supporting. An effort is also being made by these oil companies to give a greater increase in one refinery or field of the same company than in another in order to divide the workers.

One can hardly express in writing the tremendous enthusiasm for unionization shown by oil workers at their meetings, at their job and on the streets. This enthusiasm has become contagious to all other workers in this area.

The latest result of labor activity in the Houston area has been the organization of 700 taxi drivers into Local 349. Drivers receiving from eight to thirteen dollars a week with terrible working conditions, unsafe cabs and long hours delivered an ultimatum which included that the rates be increased 30 to 45 per cent, that two days holiday with pay be given each month and that the union be recognized. Seventeen companies in answer to this ultimatum locked out the drivers on March 19. Eight minor companies signed the agreement. The lock-out has thrown 450 taxi drivers out of work.

The Socialist Party in Houston is extending its activities rapidly. Roy Burt, national executive secretary of the party, will inaugurate the drive of the party officially at a meeting April 12, at 8 p. m. at the Houston YWCA auditorium corner of Rusk and Austin. Comrade Burt will speak on "The Trends in the Labor Movement and the Sit-Down Strikes."

An effort is being made to get

Gov. Murphy Hit By Labor As Pro-Boss

By FRANK MARQUART

Thundering a unanimous "Aye," 2,000 sit-down strikers at a mass meeting inside the Dodge main Plant supported a resolution censuring Governor Murphy's anti-labor attitude.

Warning the strikers in Detroit that he will not hesitate to use force if need be, this "friend of labor" is at last showing on which side he stands.

Emphasizing the need to enforce respect for public authority, the Governor said not a word about the Chrysler Corporation's flagrant violation of the National Labor Relations Act.

Worse than this warning to the workers, however, is the Governor's move toward anti-strike legislation. Two bills were introduced into the Michigan Legislature on March 18. One bill makes it a felony to participate in a sit-down strike. The other would make it a felony to engage in a sit-down during negotiations.

Dangerous Bill

The danger of these bills becomes apparent when it is pointed out how the companies use negotiations for the purpose of stalling off the workers until the favorable time for pulling a strike is past. Because Palmer, the introducer, is the Democratic floor leader in the Senate, it is believed the bills were sponsored by Murphy.

Committee Anti-Labor

The "Strike Committee" which the Governor selected to handle the strike situation in Detroit is one well calculated to please the bosses.

Burt to speak in Galveston, Texas. These meetings will be held in connection with a tour of Burt through the Southwest and through the oil fields. Other meetings will take place in other parts of Texas.

Workers in the Houston area can communicate with the Socialist Party by writing to Box 2321, Houston.

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AND THE CO

Saturday, April 12

Over the Columbia Broad

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6:45 to 7 P.

New York State