

World Socialism

UNIONISM IN AUSTRIA

By HERBERT ZAM

THE recent mass trial of Socialists, trade unionists and Communists in Austria has once more emphasized the oft forgotten fact that the labor movement in Austria is still alive and active, in spite of two years of continual persecution by the Heimwehr fascist regime. It is this, more than anything else, which accounts for the relatively mild sentences imposed upon the workers on trial. The stubborn resistance the workers put up against the fascist coup has made possible the maintenance, not only of the morale of the workers, but of their organizations as well.

Recent reports from Austria show that the trade union movement, in spite of the difficulties in its way, is still a power. There are two trade union movements—one serving the workers and one serving the government.

After the February, 1934, events, the fascist government

dissolved the free trade unions, which had over 600,000 members, the highest proportion of trade union members in comparison to population in any country. The government proceeded to set up its own trade union movement, under the name of "Unified Trade Unions" (UU).

These were not only given a legal monopoly in the trade union sphere, but also received all the funds, buildings, institutions and records of the free trade unions which were confiscated by the government. The officials of these unions were chosen by the government and every support was rendered them.

The Austrian workers, however, refused to support these government unions. By secret leaflet and meeting, and from mouth to mouth, the word went out to boycott them. Up to date, no more than one-third of the former trade unionists have been induced into the UU. This is true in spite of a vigorous campaign against workers who refuse to join. Individual workers are dismissed from their jobs, while employers whose workers fail to join the UU very frequently have their contracts cancelled.

The UU has another weapon to use against stubborn workers—the pension funds. These were seized from the old unions, whose members had been paying into them for many years, for unemployment, sickness and old age. In order to be able to draw from these funds, a worker must now be a member of the UU, and many workers, with no other possible income, are compelled by starvation to join the UU. Thus, one-quarter of the total membership of the UU draws pensions of one kind or another. Many of the workers inside the UU are not passive, but carry on active oppositional work and maintain contact with the free trade unions.

Illegal Unions Function Actively

The free trade unions, dissolved by the fascist government, did not go out of existence, but instead became an illegal organization. All efforts of the government have failed to liquidate them. In 1935 a secret circular by the Department of Public Safety estimated the membership in these unions at 300,000.

Anti-government leaflets are circulated secretly, bringing to light the intolerable conditions under which the workers toil. One of the main objectives of the unions is to expose the UU as an agency of the fascist regime, used only to prevent the workers from improving their conditions. The trade unions realize that conditions cannot be beltered so long as the present regime is in power, and they are constantly struggling for the overthrow of the present fascist regime and the restoration of democratic rights for the workers.

The illegal unions are, of course, subject to continual persecution, and any one even suspected of being a member is subject to a long prison term or confinement in a concentration camp. Recently the leader of the lumber workers, Holovaty, was sentenced to ten years penal servitude for "conspiring" to organize the lumber workers into a genuine trade union. In spite of these persecutions, the struggle of the Austrian workers is being kept alive, new forces are coming into the movement, and success will eventually result from these efforts.

Walter Dearing	13
Adolphina Murahainen	8
TOTAL	21

NEW YORK CITY	
Old Guard	2727
Old Guard	13

NEW YORK CITY County and Assembly Districts

Vote	Old Guard	Vote
2	Philip Kottler	1
1	Eliz. Jacobsen	7
7	Charles Wilbur	(?)
(?)		
11		
14		
3	Grace Croyle	85
28	Conrad Axelson	34
36	Iva Taylor	10
18		
12	Angelo Canope	3
	John Grant	6
	Pierre de Nio	1
5		
10	Angelo Cordaro	30
34	Mae Anderson	33
55	Isidor Beckman	25
11	Charles H. Roth	43
39	Norman Heppel	43
19	Matthew S. Rosen	43
21	James Battistoni	38
15	John M. Secord	5
1	Norman S. Porter	1
0	Morris Steinberg	5
0		
0	Earl Bloomingdale	2
	Walter Countryman	1
0	Ray Stanton	2
8	John J. Nickel	8
	Robert Walde	3
2	Charles Rich	3
13	William Hilsdorf	18
6	Jack B. Gaerity	22
12	James Sullivan	9
37	Gurney Peck	21
9	Martin T. Cook	12
	(No Candidate)	
8		
6	Clifford Wagoner	9
	Alfred Hyde	14
20	Newton R. Jones	13
10	Butler	5
6		
22	Frank Schauble	3
6	Clinton Parsons	13
4	Fred Sander	9
17		
7		
(?)		
0	*William Daragh	(?)
1	Carmen Romano	1
	Ross Brown	4
0	Floyd H. Young	5
14	Herman Kobbe	4
26	George H. Brassard	5
19		
21	Charles Noonan	20
7	Herbert Merrill	33
	Leonard Miller	11
4	O. E. Wedgewood	3
	Otto F. Valgraf	6
(?)	L. A. Jackson	12
(?)	Daniel Hinkleley	(?)
	Wm. Dreuslike	(?)
	Boris Fogelson	14
2	Robert L. Compton	3
1		
3	Harvey D. Sammons	22
12	John F. Sullivan	4
1	Bessie L. Burke	4
	William Wolfe	2
53	Harry Padis	28
35	Sellay	3
3	Silverberg	3
21		
16	Bessy	1
	Harry Marshall	1
	Harry Moses	1
775	Old Guard	779
4213	Old Guard	3503
SOCIALIST PARTY	77	
OLD GUARD	54	
*Ties	5	
No Report	3	
In Dispute	1	
No Candidate Elected	1	
Total	142	
No Primary	8	
Total	150	

Shame

age cuts: Charlie Schwab, Berlin
in 1935. His salary was
\$20,000 to a bribe of \$20,000.