

# Labor Age

*H.V.K.*



## THE CHALLENGE TO PROGRESSIVES

AN EDITORIAL STATEMENT

## UNION LABEL WINGS

BY HARVEY O'CONNOR

FEBRUARY, 1929

25 CENTS

# **Labor Age**

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**AN EDITORIAL STATEMENT**

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Presenting all the facts about American labor—Believing that the goal of the American labor movement lies in industry for service, with workers' control.



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## The Major Job

Organizing the unorganized is the important problem facing the labor movement. It is the major plank of all progressives.

The slogan "Double the membership" should not be merely a wish. Let us convert it into an accomplished fact. It can be done.

In this issue are two articles on this question, outlining the problem and offering suggestions. "Labor Age" will gladly consider contributions from active labor men and women covering one or another phase of the subject.

# Following the Fight

## With Comment Thereon

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

### OUR AIM:

To Educate the Unorganized—To Stimulate the Organized—  
To Unity, Militancy and Intelligent Action.

## Act—Or Perish!

### *Movement's Rejuvenation An Imperative Necessity*

**M**ID-WINTER headlines are enthralling. They carry the message of a self-satisfied Open Shopper, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Mr. George Eastman presents his Kodak makers with a brand new insurance scheme, amid loud Hosannas. (We all promptly forget that the workers pay a large part of the premiums, and that this is but a bit more of the flub-dubbery substituted at Rochester for wages and freedom.) The New BRUNSWICK TIMES plays up the \$1,100,000 bonus distributed by Michelin Tires, and from Kenosha comes word of a Nash bonus. (At the same time an unadvertised event takes place, in the cut of piece rates to the Nash workers.)

Of course, the endless flow of consolidation and merger continues. It is head-splitting to follow the magician-like manoeuvrings of Morgan and Mellon and Rockefeller. Front pages blare forth fusions in power and fusions in oil and fusions in radio and newspapers—creators of public opinion. We are becoming rapidly divided into the Merged and the Submerged.

If there ever was a time for action on the part of the American Labor Movement, that time is now. As things stand, the Submerged have at hand, but a feeble vehicle of opposition to Open Shopper and Big Industry. The National Civic Federation influence in the Movement does not equip it any too well to battle the anti-union forces so dominant in that Federation itself. How can it effectively battle for old age pensions, to offset the industrial pensions offered unorganized workers as substitutes for unionism, when the Civic Federation is on the firing line with the Big Employers, fighting tooth and nail against State pensions for the aged? And so on, with other things.

It is clearly evident that Progressives—imbued with the spirit of unity and militancy—must do their part in rejuvenating the present Labor Movement. They must help it overcome its apparent helplessness. It cannot be allowed to become an organization largely intent upon seek-

ing out heretics and crushing unorthodox opinion. There is something sad as well as unhealthy in the condemnation of Brookwood—when Brookwood has furnished the two men most capable in local workers' education, Israel Mufson and Charles Reed, and the one man whose new organization plan was endorsed at New Orleans, Alfred Hoffman. Those who have contributed so much to re-build the Movement deserve more encouragement than that.

In a desire to stimulate renewed activity, to hasten the organization of the unorganized, to meet the problems raised by Open Shopper and Company Unionism, our editorial board has issued a statement in this issue—"The Challenge to Progressives". It is put forward for study and discussion. We hope that it will meet with a large response. Those who put it forward understand the difficulties raised by the Machine Age. They know that the advance of Labor is not a matter to be thought of lightly, when the forces in opposition are considered. But they believe that a real move should be made to cope with the present business of Mass Manufacture and the steady march of Open Shopper, with the machine in its hands. They warn the Labor Movement and the unorganized wage earners that the alternative is: "Act—or Perish!"

Act we must—and the real contribution to the future advance of the American worker lies in a progressive program, which can meet the Open Shop interests and defeat them. Through renewed fire and intelligence, expressing itself in that form of organization and those tactics that will arouse the unorganized and place the foot of Organized Labor within the door of the basic industries, can we expect to meet the challenge which now looks us squarely in the face.

### OUR SERVICE BUREAU

**C**RITICISM, we must admit, is pretty cheap. Any incompetent can hurl bricks at his neighbor's glass house.

Unless we are prepared to go out and do things ourselves, it is wiser to keep our mouths shut.

That is why we of LABOR AGE had the temerity to establish the Labor Age Service Bureau. Our pleas for the wider use of publicity in labor difficulties were valueless if we could not apply them ourselves. Our claims that resourcefulness would go a long way toward making the labor battle a victorious one could only be shown to be well-founded by *doing* as well as *talking*.

The experience of the Bureau has been a happily successful one. Of three unions that immediately offered to avail themselves of our services, we took up with one—the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers. This was a particularly fine choice, as the organization is one ready to listen to new ideas, and at the same time largely engaged in organizing the so-called “unorganizable” young native American worker.

The speed with which the Real Silk workers were brought into the union fold—the continuance of the campaign for freedom among them despite the subsequent “yellow dog” contract—the Church Commission report on union-management relations in Philadelphia, praising those relationships and condemning the Real Silk Company—the Buffalo report in favor of the union—the spectacularly successful fight at Kenosha: these testify to the accomplishments of the Service Bureau in its two years’ work.

The value of publicity to the union cause has been proved beyond denial. The importance of resourcefulness in union campaigns has been emphasized, not by words but by deeds. With all due modesty, we feel that all must agree that in these deeds—soon to be recorded in detail in a Bureau report—we have just cause for congratulation.

### BEFORE AND AFTER—STRIKES

**E**NDORSEMENT of the Piedmont Organization Council idea, by the way, was one good piece of work at New Orleans. It now remains to put that idea into effect, in other localities.

A permanent organizing group, composed of union representatives of all trades and industries, can become a powerful influence in getting things accomplished. The meetings of the groups are occasions for publicity which can inform the community of the value and virtues of unionism long before there is an industrial show-down in any mill, mine or factory. Should a strike or lock-out be only indifferently successful on a particular occasion, the council can be the means to do the necessary follow-up work, so often lacking.

Bringing the workers into a union is only the first and perhaps simplest feature of organizing work, it is true. The big thing is to fire them with fervor, so that they will remain loyal in strike-time, should the employers force such a move. The chief problem is resourcefulness in

that period of real crisis. Nevertheless, even here the organizing council can be of help. It can aid in informing public opinion, so that it will rally to the cause of the strikers and thus give them in turn more assurance of the justice and power of their cause.

It is to be hoped that the recommendation of the A. F. of L. convention will be made a living thing throughout the country, in order that real organization progress may be made.

### HOW THEY GET THAT WAY

**S**HOULD any simple soul have any doubts about the need for organization work, let us quote a few random facts to him.

Christmas saw the Standard Oil give itself \$54,877,432 in dividends for the last quarterly distribution. Total dividends for 1928—according Pforzheimer and Co., specialists in Standard Oil securities—amount to \$221,567,410. This is higher even than in 1927. As Leland Olds of the Federated Press says: “The owners are now receiving annually in cash more than twice the entire par value of the capitalization of the parent company before dissolution.”

These little tid-bits for Big Finance come out of the Standard Oil workers, company-unionized and brow-beaten as they are. With the cash thus secured, the dividend-takers go over into tobacco, superpower, automobiles, and the like and gain wealth-producing power there. The workers, by the great surplus they pile up over their wages, go on in this ad infinitum manner building up millionaires.

(While this is in the making, the New York newspapers conduct their Christmas drives for the aged poor—many of whom have toiled in oil, tobacco, superpower and the like. Not even the thoughtful condescension is made them of a meagre old age pension!)

That \$10,000,000 increase in railroad profits for the first 9 months of 1928—of which we have heard so much—has its interesting human angle, also. It was achieved at the expense of the railroad workers, who find that they are as a group receiving less of the share in railroad income than in previous years. The September report of the Interstate Commerce Commission tells us why. The class I railroads, during that period, employed 91,153 less workers than in the same period in 1927. Wages, too, were \$85,154,425 less. Speed-up and the resulting cuts in working forces are accountable.

A wage increase of 7.7 per cent over what they are now getting, would just restore to all train and engine service men on freight work the share in the revenue they enjoyed in 1924.

Unless strong and militant organization is in evidence in all branches of labor, the financial procession will be so far ahead of the workers that it will take an economic earthquake to restore any sort of reasonable balance.

# The Challenge To Progressives

## An Editorial Statement

*In putting forth this statement we believe that we are giving expression to what is in the minds of many men and women in our labor movement today. We issue the statement primarily to arouse discussion among the workers in union meetings, cooperative societies, workers' benefit organizations, labor political organizations, shops, social clubs, and the homes of the workers.*

*We invite correspondence from any one interested with regard to the ideas we have set forth and the ways in which they might be realized. Give us your criticism, favorable or unfavorable. Send us any information from your locality that might shed light on these problems. Send us the names of other persons who might like to have a copy of this statement. If you have discussed these problems in some group or class let us have a report on your discussion. If there is no group or class in which you can take up these matters, possibly you can gather one around you.*

*Information obtained in this way should be of value to all concerned and can be passed along through correspondence or through the labor papers.*

*Send all communications to Labor Age, Room 2005, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York.*

**W**E believe that the situation which exists in the American Labor movement today is a challenge to all honest, militant, progressive elements—to all those who are in accord neither with Communist tactics nor with reactionary elements and policies which so largely control the labor movement—a challenge to clarify their thinking, define their purposes, and organize their efforts.

Seven or eight years ago there were militant, progressive elements in the American Labor movement that had to be reckoned with. They dominated, or at least exercised important power in many city central bodies and state federations, and international unions such as those of the needle trades, the miners, machinists and others. They engaged in aggressive efforts to organize the workers in the basic industries, as witness the historic packing house and steel campaigns. They explored the possibilities of independent political action for labor. They even carried resolutions for the nationalization of railroads, for example, in A. F. of L. conventions, despite determined official opposition. They founded the workers' education movement. They thought of the labor movement not only as an instrument to get immediate gains such as higher wages, shorter hours and better conditions of work for the toilers, but as a great social force having for its ultimate goal the achievement of the good life for all, in a world controlled by the workers.

Today this militant labor progressivism has ceased to exist as a movement, as an effective influence in the American scene. We do not enter here on the reasons for this change or an analysis of the extent to which lefts or rights or progressives themselves may

be responsible for the present situation. Suffice it to repeat that that situation is a challenge to honest, militant elements which cannot and must not be evaded.

When we contemplate the American scene today, what is it that we find?

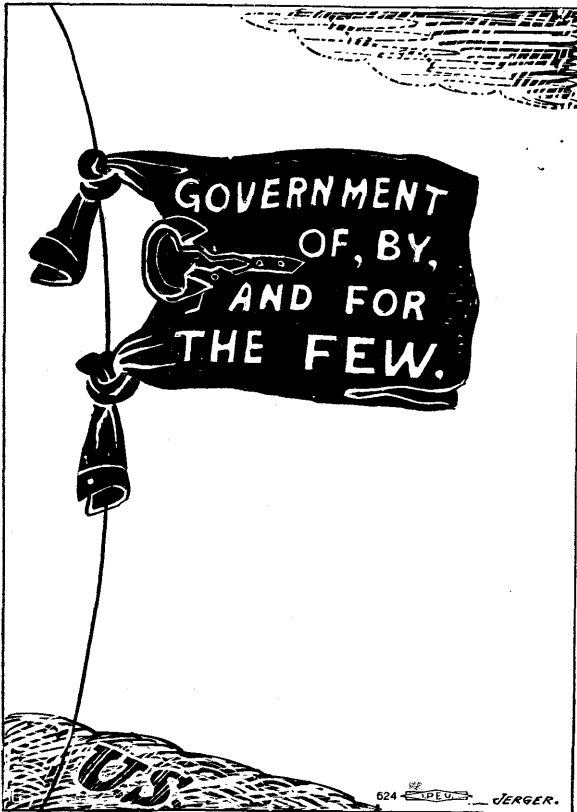
Even the most liberal estimates do not account for more than perhaps four million organized workers in the United States today. Something under three million are in the A. F. of L., the remainder in independent unions, chiefly the transportation brotherhoods on the railroads and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

In Australia over 50 per cent of all the employed population is in unions. In Austria it is over 40 per cent; in countries like Sweden, Great Britain and Germany, it is about 35 per cent; in the United States, barely 12 per cent. If one takes only workers employed in occupations usually considered as organized into consideration, the percentage in unions in the United States is still but one in five.

The trade unions in the United States have been barely holding their own in membership during the past few years, though it has been a period of relative prosperity, when ordinarily trade union figures are expected to mount.

The American labor movement has suffered serious losses at certain strategic points. One thinks of the steel strike of 1919, and the breakdown of the effort to organize the steel industry; the routing of the textile workers from the southern field in the 1920-22 period; the breaking up of the railroad shopmen's organizations on many important roads following the 1922 strike; the practical breakup of some of the im-

## WILL IT COME TO THIS?



Continued reaction, unchallenged effectively by a progressive labor policy, will lead us inevitably to industrial fascism.

portant needle trades' unions; and most recently the losses endured by the United Mine Workers of America which only a few years ago seemed the very backbone of the American Labor movement.

### Basic Industries Unorganized

While trade unionism is relatively strong in the building trades and printing trades, the transportation services on the railroads, and some miscellaneous, chiefly skilled, trades, it is weak or well-nigh non-existent in textiles, steel, automobiles, oil, rubber, public utilities, manufacturing of electrical supplies, the metal trades generally, mining—in other words, in our great basic industries, among the masses of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

We are the only important industrial country where labor has not developed to considerable strength its own political party.

The consumers' cooperative movement is relatively undeveloped.

The same is true of workers' education.

Social insurance against sickness, old age, unemployment, etc., is also in a most backward state, and in the United States is for the most part in the hands of employers instead of in the hands of unions or the state or both, as in other industrial countries.

The labor movement suffers morally and spiritually, and not only in loss of membership here and there. The complaint that members do not attend meetings,

that the old fire and enthusiasm are gone is common, and by no means only in radical circles. Daniel Tobin, President of the Teamsters' Union, a conservative trade unionist and until recently the treasurer of the A. F. of L. recently indicated in a public address that the labor movement was at a lower ebb today than when he first joined it twenty or more years ago.

Bitter factional strife has been raging in some unions. In the conflict anything seems "to go," there are no longer any "rules of the game," which anyone feels bound to observe. All energy must be concentrated in destroying the other faction root and branch, regardless of whether union itself survives or perishes in the process.

Furthermore, whether consciously and deliberately or not, the trade unions seem to rest satisfied to an increasing extent with organizing small sections of the skilled workers, a sort of "aristocracy of labor," and leaving the great masses in basic industries to the company unions and open shoppers.

### Defeatism and Complacency

A student of the labor movement, in a recent work which is in the main an apology for pure and simple trade unionism, and a criticism of the activities of radicals and intellectuals in the American labor movement nevertheless concludes his appraisal of the situation in the movement today by calling attention to the "psychology of a big majority of its leaders today—a curious blending of 'defeatism' with complacency. Every union leader admits that the organization of labor must be expanded into the basic industries—steel, machinery, automobiles, electrical supplies, etc. But at the first encounter with the difficulties of the task—difficulties which are admittedly enormous, made up as they are of the employers' active opposition and of the inertia on the workers' part begotten by the Coolidge prosperity and by 'welfare capitalism'—or in many cases even before such an actual encounter, union officers and organizers lose their heart for the task, and rarely proceed beyond expressions of good intentions. Thereupon,—having gone through the motions of organizing in new fields, and thus eased their organizer's conscience—the same leaders settle down to a smug survey of the well oiled machinery of their little organizations, which suggests at least a suspicion that these leaders might not entirely welcome too many new members, whose alignment in the politics of the union would at best be uncertain."

Along with this goes a growing tendency to try to build unions by appeal first to the employer, "selling" trade unionism to him, persuading him perhaps that trade unions can be more useful to him in "securing production" than company unions, instead of appealing in the first instance to the workers, persuading them to "recognize the union" as the instrument by which they may protect their rights and secure material and spiritual gains. The union is now commended to the employer as a personnel agency rather than to the workers as a fighting organization, in contrast with the pre-war militant policy of Samuel Gompers himself.

These facts we have set down here as we see them, not

in order to suggest an easy, off-hand, indiscriminate condemnation of trade union leadership, not to hint indirectly at praise or blame for what has happened, not in order to cry down the American labor movement in comparison with the movement in other countries. We realize that the American movement is in a measure the product of the conditions under which it has developed and had to operate, the same as the movement of any other country. We are not blind to the achievements and the glories of its past. We simply believe that loyalty to the movement and its fundamental aims requires that we see the facts of the situation today as straight as we can.

Over against a labor movement in the condition which we have tried to picture stands American capitalism, the wealthiest and most powerful in the world, American "big business" powerfully entrenched, feeling secure and insolent as it goes forth to conquer economic power throughout the entire world. No labor movement has a more formidable foe to grapple with.

Save in small areas of our industrial life, the elementary right of workers to organize in bona fide trade unions is not in practice recognized by American "big business." There is opposition, sometimes subtle and indirect, sometimes brutal and direct, but always determined, to every effort at organization in strategic industries. In the struggle, employers and their supporters make use of welfare work, company unions, injunctions, labor spies, hired thugs, yellow dog contracts, many of these devices practically unknown elsewhere in the world. They do not hesitate to throw entire states or sections of states into a con-

dition of civil war in order to prevent organization, yet on their part they have the support of the courts and all the machinery of government in their anti-labor activities.

### **Organize, Organize, Organize!**

Faced with such a situation, what will the honest, militant, progressive laborite do? We believe that progressive will

## **OUR PROGRAM SUMMARIZED**

**Here is a summary of the sixteen points of the progressive trade union program outlined in this editorial statement:**

- 1. Organize the masses of unskilled and semi-skilled.**
- 2. Appeal primarily to workers instead of to employers in organizing efforts.**
- 3. Expose and fight National Civic Federation influence in the labor movement.**
- 4. Insist that union membership shall not be denied because of race, or political, social, economic or religious views or affiliations.**
- 5. Fight for the right of a minority or opposition to exist in the movement.**
- 6. Fight injunctions and yellow dog contracts.**
- 7. Campaign for social insurance.**
- 8. Encourage cooperative enterprises.**
- 9. Emphasize labor's goal as a social order controlled by workers.**
- 10. Work out effective methods of collective bargaining and of union control, without sacrificing the union's independence.**
- 11. Struggle for the five-day week, higher wages and better conditions.**
- 12. Advocate recognition of Soviet Russia by the United States.**
- 13. Work to make the American Labor movement anti-imperialistic and anti-militaristic.**
- 14. Assert the principle that labor must be international in its spirit and activities.**
- 15. Develop a labor party based on mass organization of industrial workers.**
- 16. Support a broad workers' education movement based on progressive concepts.**

I. Work untiringly to organize the masses of unskilled and semi-skilled in the basic industries into industrial unions. They will welcome the help of all those who want to build industrial unions. They will insist that unions be made effective agencies on behalf of the workers primarily on the economic field and that propaganda for the special social, economic or political views of members be subordinated to that end. The attitude of indifference must go. The sentiment must be laughed out of court that "it can't be done." Paper resolutions to organize must be thrown in the waste basket where they belong. An organization that proves unable or unwilling to organize workers over whom it claims a paper jurisdiction cannot forever prevent these workers from organizing and others from helping them. Young men and women in industry must be set to work organizing on the inside, as used to be done in the days when our present unions were built. There must be careful

study of effective organizing methods. It is not only lack of will to organize that holds back the movement, but lack of knowledge as to how to cope with the new developments in industry. Special attention must be given to groups such as young workers, women workers, Negroes and immigrants. The first slogan must



## LABOR AGE

be: "Organize, Organize, Organize!" Progressives will

2. Appeal to workers to join the union as the agency that will fight for them and help them to improve their conditions, instead of appealing primarily, as is done in many instances today, to employers to recognize the union and induce their workers to join on the spurious ground that unions can do as much for the boss as the company union can. The tendency represented in the so-called Mitten-Mahon agreement must be vigorously fought. Progressives will

3. Expose and fight the National Civic Federation influence over the labor movement and its policies. Insist upon the fact of the struggle between the employer and the employee under the present system, and the function of the union in that struggle as so clearly set forth in the preamble to the constitution of the A. F. of L., which states that "a struggle is going on in all the nations of the civilized world between the oppressors and the oppressed of all countries, a struggle between the capitalist and the laborer which grows in intensity from year to year and will work disastrous results to the toiling millions if they are not combined for mutual protection and benefit." Banish from the labor movement the all too common conception that it is perfectly all right for labor people to hobnob with bankers, open shoppers, company unionists, strike-breaking politicians like Calvin Coolidge and similar types, but that a unionist who in any circumstances has anything to do with a radical loses his standing in the movement. Progressives will

4. Insist that trade union membership shall not be denied on the ground of race, or of the political, social, economic or religious views or affiliations of workers. A union like any other organization will take disciplinary measures against a member who is convicted of committing overt acts against the union, but whatever measures of this kind may be taken, the principle must be laid down that "a worker is a worker for a' that and a that," that no people can be expelled from unions on the ground of their political, social, economic or religious views or affiliations. It is impossible that there should be absolute uniformity of opinion among workers, and the very basis of trade unionism is violated when it is sought to impose such uniformity. Furthermore, discipline must be administered impartially to all who truly injure the union, not excluding crooks, grafters, gangsters and politicians. Progressives will

5. Fight for the recognition of the principle that a minority or opposition in disagreement with what happens to be the official position of the moment, has a right to exist in the movement. The labor movement is necessarily a changing movement in the midst of ever changing conditions; it can live only as it adapts itself to those changing conditions; the policies that have been accepted today may be outlived tomorrow. Unless, therefore, new ideas have a chance to be heard, unless there is discussion, and the clash of opinion, unless "rules of the game" are observed and those who are temporarily in the minority have a chance to func-

tion, the unions must inevitably stagnate and die. Progressives will

6. Fight injunctions and yellow dog contracts. Fight judge-made law by mass resistance of the workers on the picket-line and not only through lawyers and legislatures. Progressives will

7. Campaign for social insurance against sickness, including maternity, unemployment, death, and for old age pensions. The right of the worker and his family to a dependable year-round income, including special provision for emergencies over which he has no control must be recognized. Progressives will

8. Encourage the development of genuine cooperative enterprises among the workers. Progressives will

### Labor's Idealism

9. Keep alive the soul of the labor movement, set forth the movement as a great idealistic force having for its goal a social order controlled by the workers. Man lives by bread, and therefore the union must struggle to get immediate results in higher wages and other conditions for its members. Workers will follow leaders who get such results and not be too squeamish about their methods, and they will laugh at intellectuals who are mere theorists or cranks. Nevertheless, it is also true that "man shall not live by bread alone," that the union which has lost its soul will perish as surely as the union that has lost its practical efficiency. Only a movement marked by idealism, leading American workers on to freedom and independence, can stir and hold them, can win them away from company unionism in a period when it may be difficult, if not impossible, to go to the great masses of workers and promise them any immediate improvement of conditions over what the boss is giving them if they join the union. Progressives will

10. Support and help to work out effective methods of collective bargaining and of union control in the shop under the conditions existing in modern industry. A trade union is not a revolutionary political party. It must deal with the situation as it finds it and must make compromises from time to time. It cannot take a merely negative attitude, assume a crude opposition to the introduction of new machinery and methods in industry; such a policy has proved suicidal in the past. On the other hand, the union must regard itself as primarily an instrument by which the workers may defend their rights, improve their conditions and raise their status. A union that exists mainly in order to enable the boss to attain certain ends is a company union even though it be masked as a bona fide union, and the workers will not be long deceived, nor give it devotion and enthusiastic service. Progressives will

11. Struggle for the five-day week for all workers, for cutting down night shifts and overtime work to the barest minimum, for drastic and continuous reduction of hours and increase in wages as the productivity of industry increases, and determined resistance

OPEN SHOPPERY'S GANG

to all speeding up of workers which is unnecessary or subjects them to excessive physical and mental strain. Progressives will

12. Stand for recognition of Soviet Russia by the United States and opposition to all efforts on the part of reactionaries and imperialists to prevent the Russian people from carrying through their revolution against czarism and working out their experiment in workers' control. Resist efforts of reactionaries and imperialists to throw a smoke screen around their own designs and activities by the effort to "pin communism" on anybody who refuses to take an attitude of blind hostility to the Russian workers and their government. Progressives will

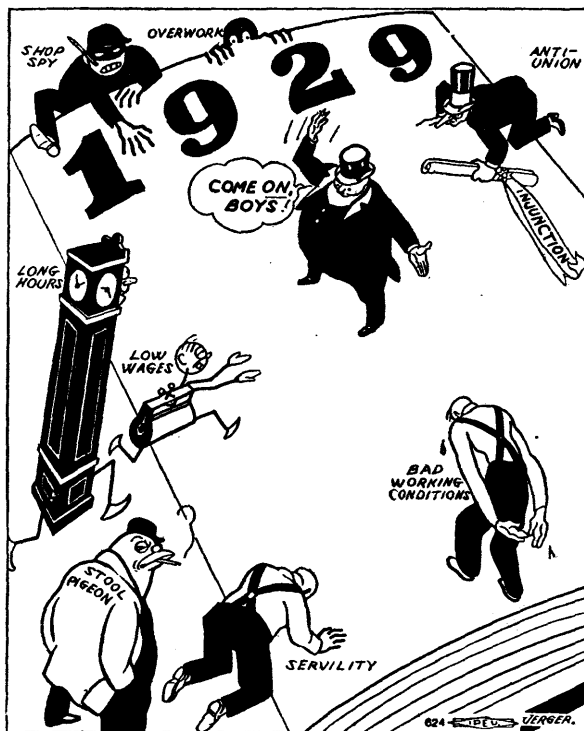
13. Work to make the American labor movement definitely anti-imperialistic and anti-militaristic. Imperialistic adventures of the United States must be rigidly opposed. American workers must recognize before it is too late the danger for other peoples and for themselves which lies in our immense resources, our huge industrial machines, our actual and potential military power, all in the hands of financial overlords whose policies are bound to drag us into indescribably costly and bloody wars. Progressives will

14. Assert the principle that labor must be international in its spirit and activities since capital is internationally organized and conditions of work in one country directly affect workers in other lands. Work for an international labor movement, a closer and closer union of all the workers of the world, regardless of race, nationality, creed and color, against the forces that are exploiting and oppressing them, and using them as machine fodder and cannon fodder. Progressives will

15. Develop a labor party based on the mass organization of industrial workers, including farmers and agricultural laborers whose social and economic status is that of workers, rallying all individuals who can no longer stomach the regime of Coolidge-Hoover Republicanism, big business, and militarism, and excluding all exploiting groups and interests. While a sound political movement must be based on industrial organization, an effective political arm will in its turn greatly help the formation of unions.

Education With Union Label

16. Support a workers' education movement that has for its primary aim equipping the workers for the struggle to improve their conditions and to gain control of industry. In order to be worthwhile and not positively misleading and harmful, workers' education must address itself to the actual needs and problems of the workers. It must study the very issues which we have been setting forth in this statement. It must inform the workers about them and lead them to consider and discuss these issues in union meetings, shop meetings, classes, forums, wherever workers gather or can be brought together. Workers' education must develop its own institutions and agencies



Locomotive Engineers' Journal

Will Labor continue to put up with this vicious crew? They can be routed by united and courageous action along the lines suggested in the accompanying editorial statement.

to meet the varied conditions and problems of the workers. It must go out to the masses of unorganized workers in the basic industries, not wait for them to come to it. Progressives will not, however, want dogmas or cut and dried theories foisted on workers. They will want high educational standards maintained. They will try to develop workers who think for themselves and who approach their problems with respect for facts, willingness to face facts, and to base conclusions and actions on facts rather than theories, speculations, or prejudices. Progressives will want the labor movement to seek to meet all the varied recreational, cultural and educational needs of the workers and their families. They will deem it quite as important to have education, recreation and culture with a union label on it as socks and shirts with the union label on them. They will vigorously support such agencies as the Federated Press, Labor Age, Brookwood, various labor classes and colleges, the various progressive labor papers and journals,—all agencies dedicated to education of the workers, for the workers, by the workers, agencies through which American workers are trying to make their contribution toward a finer, richer, more intelligent life for themselves and families.

With such a program and in this spirit, we believe the American labor movement can move on to power and victory. Let honest and courageous discussion lead to intelligent and effective action.

# Progressives Can Win

## Hopeful Aspects of the Situation

By A. J. MUSTE

**T**HERE seem to be a good many people who think that we ought to have a progressive labor movement. But can we have such a progressive movement as is described elsewhere in this issue of LABOR AGE? That is the big question. Perhaps we are like children, crying for the moon?



A. J. MUSTE

It is certainly true that there are tremendous difficulties in the way of developing a more progressive labor movement in the United States and anyone who thinks the job is an easy one had better not tackle it at all. Here, however, I want to point out one encouraging aspect of the matter.

The fact is, as indicated elsewhere in this issue, that it is only a few years ago (four to seven years to be exact) that we had such a progressive labor movement in the United States. What we had five years ago we may perhaps have again. The labor movement knows many ups and downs, and certainly the fact that progressivism has had a hard time of it for a short while does not warrant the conclusion that it is dead forever. If that were the case, the whole American labor movement would have been dead long ago.

Furthermore, the progressivism that constituted such an important element in the American labor world a few years ago was not a freak appearance that had come suddenly from nowhere and might be expected to disappear as suddenly and completely. On the contrary, progressivism had a long, normal and natural growth in our movement.

I can best make my point clear perhaps by an illustration from the development of the British labor movement. About 1850 there appeared in Great Britain what we should call "pure and simple trade unionism." The prevailing structure of the unions of the period was craft or trade rather than industrial. The dominant unions were those of the building, printing and certain other skilled trades. The movement did not believe in independent political action. It accepted the prevailing system of industry and simply sought for immediate gains in the way of wages, hours and conditions under that system. It was a trade union movement suited to the period when British capitalism was young and growing, when the wage level was rising, and industry was still on a comparatively small scale

so that the skilled workers held the key to the situation.

Now about 1870, this type of unionism was well established, and it must be set down to its everlasting credit that it laid the permanent foundation of the British labor movement so that that movement was never again virtually wiped out in a crisis as had happened before. Having become firmly established, this unionism gradually became conservative and stale, as so often happens to institutions and movements of all kinds, and the utterances of some of the leaders of the British Trade Union Congress at that time are such as to make those of the present Executive Council of the A. F. of L. sound revolutionary by comparison!

During the 1870s there also came a change in the British economic and industrial position, however. Germany and the United States developed their industries and Britain no longer reigned alone as "the workshop of the world." The standard of wages was no longer rising steadily. "Big industry" was coming in and with it masses of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The skilled workers accordingly no longer held the key to the situation. They found it more and more difficult to protect their own position, but even if they succeeded in doing this, they failed to organize the masses. The movement became less and less a movement, more and more a business proposition for a small percentage of the workers.

### The Tide Turns

In 1889 comes a turning of the tide. Great strikes of unorganized workers in the basic industries began to occur. Unions were formed in these industries and it is the unions of those industries, railroad workers, miners, dock workers, steel workers, that became the backbone of the British Trade Union Congress. Independent political action is again tried and the British Labor Party developed. The movement no longer accepts the present capitalist system as final, but begins to think of itself as a great social force destined to bring in the good life for all men.

Now if we turn to the United States, we find that the labor movement in this country has on the whole followed the same line. From about 1880 to 1900 what we call "pure and simple trade unionism" developed under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor, and it must be set down to its credit that it laid what appears to be a permanent foundation for the American labor movement. In this movement of the 80s and 90s the craft and trade union rather than the industrial union predominated. The building, printing and a few other skilled trades were the most prominent in the movement. Independent political action was eschewed. The movement occupied itself almost altogether with the achievement of immediate gains.

It was a movement suited to a time when American capitalism was comparatively young.

By 1900 "big industry" was developing in the United States, and a change comes over the labor movement also. Big strikes of unskilled and semi-skilled workers occur. Industrial unions are built not only outside the A. F. of L. by the I. W. W., but inside the A. F. of L. in such unions as the United Mine Workers and the United Textile Workers. Unions of railroad workers, miners, machinists, become more prominent in the general labor movement. The workers become increasingly interested in independent political action. In 1912 Debs polled nearly 1,000,000 votes at a time when women did not yet have suffrage and a million votes meant a great deal more than they do today.

### Industrial Unionism Grows

The great war comes along and for a moment interrupts this development, but it is noteworthy that immediately after the signing of the Armistice the thread is taken up again. In 1919 and the years immediately following, railroad workers, miners, machinists, etc., are to the front in the movement. There is a fresh tendency toward industrial unionism in one form or another, as, for example, in the building up of the System Federation scheme among the shop crafts on the railroads. All kinds of experiments to develop labor political action are tried. These culminate in the well-known LaFollette campaign of 1924.

Before that date the labor movement had already suffered serious set-backs in some great strikes, and immediately after the LaFollette campaign the labor progressive movement seemed to collapse entirely, although LaFollette had polled about 5,000,000 votes. The reasons for this collapse we cannot go into at length here. Suffice it to say that when American capitalism had caught its breath after the close of the war,

it found itself in possession of a vast industrial machine which had been built for war purposes but was turned effectively to peace purposes. It found its rivals weakened by the war and largely at its mercy. American big business was thus in the saddle. It learned a few new tricks. It was able to give the workers what seemed a high standard of living and to render them, superficially at least, contented. At the same time changes occurred in the labor movement. Some moved to the right, some to the left, some took an uncomfortable seat in the middle of the fence, spending most of their time perhaps in protesting to the Communists that they were not A. F. of L.ers and to the A. F. of L. that they were not Communists!

But surely no one who has the slightest knowledge of labor history expects that these conditions will last forever. Big business in America is powerful indeed but it has not been proven that labor is altogether powerless to stay its headlong course. Nobody who knows his America will expect the farmers and workers to be as meek and quiet forever as they have been in the past few years. Only a few short years ago we had a vigorous labor progressivism. We can have it again, if we will and if we make skillful use of the conditions with which we are confronted. Assuming that we have the conditions out of which progressivism may possibly grow, two things need to be done immediately. First, such progressive elements as exist must be brought together. They must talk through their problems together. They must come to understand each other and must organize their forces. Secondly, we must launch a campaign of education among the workers wherever they can be reached, teaching them what the present regime of Coolidge-Hoover-Mellon republicanism, big business and imperialism is actually doing to them. Let's get busy at these jobs, and we shall soon lose that it-can't-be-done feeling.

# The Crisis in Labor Education

## *Complacency vs. Militancy*

By ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ

THE history of the organized labor movement is one of striking militancy, signal economic achievement inspired by a vision of a better society for those who do useful work. When we compare the status and the opportunities enjoyed by the workers of today with those enjoyed by the workers a century ago, we cannot but pay a tribute to those heroic men and women who forged the weapons for economic emancipation, who legalized them and who made possible labor's intellectual emancipation through the establishment of free tax-supported public schools, compulsory education laws, free texts, academic freedom and teacher tenure.

All great movements in history, have their birth, their growth, their ascendancy, their decline and their

death. Education and labor are now facing the problem of decline. The public schools—through which labor hoped to achieve intellectual emancipation—have largely failed in their mission. They are being attacked as mechanical, formal institutions in which students sit like automatons absorbing what is called "knowledge" by listening to teacher or pupil monologues. The public schools have failed to prepare for life through living. Phonographic education has failed because it has not come to grips with reality except in its worst aspect—political control. Hence the movement for creative education, which will replace the public schools education unless the schools themselves become creative—as some slowly are.

Not only have the public schools been attacked by

### CONFERENCE ON NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Philadelphia Labor College, whose discussions always attract wide attention, has arranged another thought stimulating conference. "New Relationships between Labor and Capital" will be considered at this conference which takes place at the Labor Institute, 810 Locust Street, Philadelphia on February 2 and 3.

Gustave Geiges, President American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers will discuss, "Universal Organization Essential to Newer Relations." Mark Starr, of the London Labor College, will follow with an analysis of "The Mond Plan and British Labor." Percy Tetlow, United Mine Workers of America, will advance "A Constructive Program for the Coal Industry while Miss Josephine Roche, Vice president of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company will talk on "Opportunities for Harmony in the Coal Industry."

Morris L. Cooke will discuss "Engineering Approach to Labor Minds," Otto S. Beyer will present "The Results of Five Years of Cooperation," and the Mitten-Mahon Agreement will be analyzed by W. Jett Lauck and J. M. Budish from different angles.

the progressive educators, but also by the workers. First, because they are poisoning the minds of the school children; second, because they are slurring over—if not misrepresenting or ignoring—labor's part in historic struggles; third, because they are being used or controlled for propaganda purposes by dominant economic groups. As an illustration of the attempt to poison the minds of youth—an attempt frustrated in large part by a member of the Teachers' Union—let me cite from the Regent's examination in Economics given in 1922, which asked the public school children to define a "walking delegate." The model answer proposed by the leaders of economic teaching was the following: "Walking delegate is the term applied to a person who goes from one locality to another, organizing unions and stirring up labor disputes. His main stock in trade is a good voice and a 'book knowledge' of the wrongs of labor. He must be distinguished from the honest leader who tries to better his union's condition by peaceful methods and does not believe in overthrowing the government."

### Power Trust Propaganda

The use of the schools for propaganda purposes is illustrated by the efforts of the Better America Federation in California—efforts frustrated by the organized labor movement. A better illustration is the more recent attempt of the Power Trust's pernicious efforts to control the thinking of our future citizens on the subject of public control of public utilities by subsidizing newspapers, teachers, professors, superintendents, conventions, etc. The Federal Trade Commission is to be praised for exposing the most brazen

effort ever made to poison the minds of young America.

### Why Workers' Education?

Because of the conviction that our schools were not functioning as educational institutions should, organized labor reached the conclusion that it must have not merely adult education under the control of existing educational agencies, but labor education—that is education controlled and financed by labor. The purposes of labor education were two:

1. Administrative or business—to prepare men and women to run their unions efficiently and to enable them to place their problems and grievances before the employers and the general public in an able, scientific and convincing manner:

2. Intellectual—to prepare the workers for intelligent citizenship; that is, to lay the basis for a saner social order founded on co-operation, justice and peace in place of the present social order built on competitive greed—individual and national—injustice and war.

In 1921 when labor was at the height of its economic and political power, when the ideals of industrial democracy were being everywhere discussed and proposed, the labor education movement and the Workers Education Bureau were founded. Its sponsors were essentially intellectuals and labor progressives who believed that the primary function of labor education was the preparation for a new social order through an analysis of real life and not by propaganda. The bread and butter basis was to be but the starting point for this ultimate goal.

Today, both labor and labor education are declining. Unless they are re-energized they will eventually be eclipsed. If this were to happen, it would be a catastrophe because America would be faced with a mass of disorganized and disgruntled workers who might seek salvation through violent revolution and all the horrors such a revolution must bring with it in our highly complex industrial society. This struggle has not reached its peak in the economic field partly because of skilled labor's gains due to the technological improvements and partly because the Communist menace has temporarily disorganized all progressive activity within the union movement. The result is the unquestioned domination of an intolerant and complacent leadership strongly under the National Civic Federation ideals as typified by Matthew Woll, its acting president. The worst aspect of this complacency is a seemingly characteristic subserviency to capital; i. e., an effort to make labor appear as a "good boy." The result of this policy has been a loss in labor militancy as evidenced by a decline in numbers in action and power—a decline so deplored by Daniel F. Tobin, International President of the Teamsters and former vice-president and treasurer of the A. F. of L.

In the field of labor education the struggle is at its height. It was precipitated by the un-American and unjustifiable attack of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor upon the foremost successful example of labor education in America—Brookwood Labor College. This educational "heresy hunting," was launched and consummated by the A. F.

of L. without giving Brookwood a copy of the charges, without giving it an inkling of the evidence or without giving it an opportunity to be heard in its own defence. Can it be that the leaders of the A. F. of L. are attempting to cover their lack of militancy and success on the economic field, by seeking to make their "bread and butter" concept of labor education dominant to the exclusion of the more significant aspect of labor education? Are they seeking to establish the divine right of labor leaders by crushing all opposition or criticism of officialdom from within? If they are then one can understand the reason for the attack upon Brookwood—a college which stands for militancy and a saner social order—a college loyal to the finest traditions of the A. F. of L.

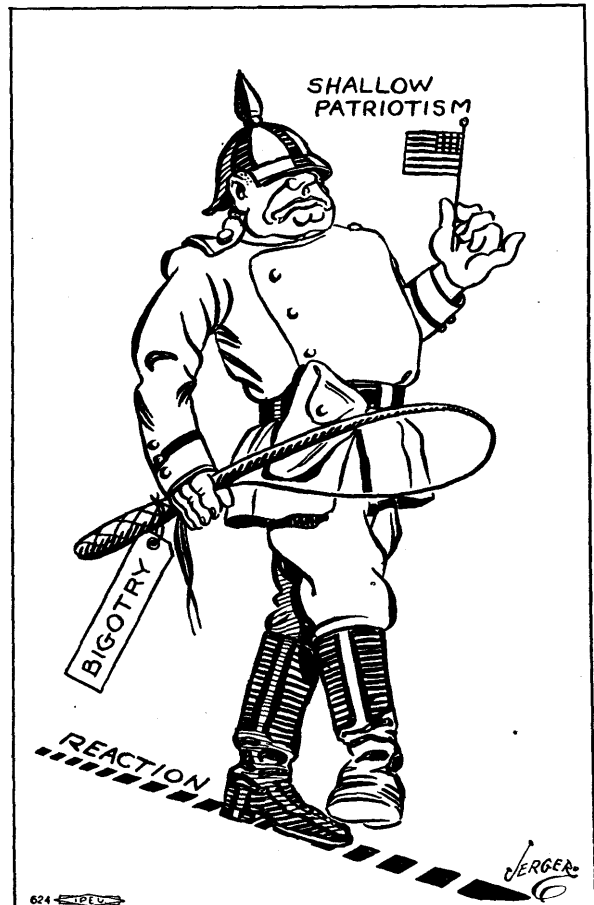
### Something to Strive For

Brookwood Labor College believes with the leaders of the A. F. of L., that no labor college can ignore the "bread-and-butter" aspect of labor education. But it differs with the present leadership of the A. F. of L. in believing that labor education must be true to its two-fold function. Hence it insists that labor education must constantly hold before the student the changes that would make a better order possible. Hence, it seeks to give the toiler a goal, something to work for, something to die for. If you like, it seeks to give labor a religion so as to fire it anew and restore its former militancy. It does not seek to do this by indoctrinating students with any particular "ism" or by giving them a blueprint of a new society. It does not propagandize, it does not tell the student what to think but it tries to teach him *how to think* and how to serve society by serving labor. Like all true institutions of learning, it believes no education possible without "academic" freedom. Hence, the faculty members and students, all members of the A. F. of L., feel free to criticize and to weigh labor policies or the policies advocated by any other group or institution or person.

Brookwood and progressive labor thinkers generally recognize that labor is no longer the dominant economic and political force it was. They recognize not only labor's great possibilities, but also the real achievements of the founders of the movement. Brookwood seeks to give its students not only an understanding of labor, its achievements and its ideals but also to reawaken in them that energizing spark, that crusading spirit, that religious zeal which alone can revive labor's fighting spirit and devotion and make it ready to clash successfully with the forces of reaction on both the economic and political fields. The teachers of Brookwood want labor to develop into the most potent single force for social progress. Hence, the effort to crush Brookwood—an attempt which must fail—can only be interpreted as an attempt to destroy not only the energizing aspect of labor education, but also all criticism from within and thereby develop a false sense of solidarity and power. "After us the deluge" seems to be the road that many leaders of labor are taking. That road leads to stagnation and death.

Which shall it be, fellow workers? Shall labor be as idealistic and as militant as of yore, seeking to make

### MILITARISM'S MODEL TEACHER



An attempt is being made to introduce military training in New York High Schools. The Teachers' Union is fighting this effort to Prussianize the American school system.

a happier and better world, a place where the only war embarked upon will be a war against injustice—individual or national—against disease, against crime and against poverty? Or, shall labor be content to be the servile play-boy of our economic overlords for the few crumbs of cake thrown to them, leaving the vast mass of their unorganized fellow workers to suffer from ignorance and poverty?

Whatever the official labor movement may do, because of its past, because of its possibilities for future good, because it is the only force through which society can peacefully work out its economic and political salvation, we should remain within its fold. "Labor, right or wrong," but if wrong we must fight within the fold, as some of us have fought, to make it right, to make it the most potent force for economic and political justice. This is the task and which labor education must seek to realize if it is to justify itself and grow. This is the task to which Brookwood had been dedicated. May the forces of economic righteousness grow in numbers and help labor peacefully to embark upon a sounder policy so as to help usher in a social order built upon the basic principle of true religion—brotherhood, service for all.

# PROBLEMS FACING THE ORGANIZER

## Planning the Campaign

By J. M. BUDISH

**T**HE need of organizing the millions of unorganized workers is keenly felt. The labor movement has reached a point where further progress is practically impossible without a substantial increase in membership. It is getting ever harder to maintain even the present positions unless considerably larger numbers are embraced by the Unions. So there is the slogan—Double the membership! It is a good slogan, but it will not in itself accomplish the task.

To make the slogan count for more than a mere pious wish it is necessary to perfect definite plans to arouse the unorganized masses and bring them within the folds of the labor movement. It is further necessary to supply the methods and means to carry these plans into execution. The task is enormous. The difficulties are excessive. But they are not insuperable. They can be overcome only by a gigantic effort made in accordance with well conceived and vigorously carried out plans. Individual unions have a great deal of experience in their own fields. While in most cases slow advance has been made, while in many cases the Unions were merely marking time, there are also cases of notable achievement. This experience supplies a basis for a thorough analysis of the problem. The last convention of the American Federation of Labor was expected to devote a great deal of attention to this question. Unfortunately there was no discussion at the Convention of any plans or methods to be employed in the organization of the unorganized.

It is the purpose of this article to introduce the discussion of methods and plans for the organizing of the unorganized. The first step is to subdivide the question into its major parts. It is a very complicated question, and there is little chance to approach its solution unless we are ready to consider carefully all the elements involved. This article aims to suggest a basis for discussion. There are apparently several steps which must be made in order to bring the non-union worker within the unions. It would seem that the indispensable first step is to arouse within the masses of the unorganized a desire to organize. Unless we can make them aspire to organization there is clearly no chance to accomplish our task. For no one can conceive seriously that the workers can be organized through the good offices and cooperation of the employers! Only after the unorganized masses have been made anxious to organize can we tackle the next task of actually bringing them into the existing labor organizations or forming them into new unions.

In the working out of a practical solution of both phases of this problem numerous questions arise. Let us take the first step. How should the unorganized masses be approached? What message shall we carry to them? In what way can we arouse their enthusiasm and make them really want to be organized? "Organization work is essentially educational," says the A. F. of L. editorially. But on the other hand "false educa-

tion deadens the worker's will." It is admitted that the power of will, imagination and enthusiasm have been often overlooked by the trade union movement. But how can that imagination, that enthusiasm be aroused within the millions of the unorganized?

### The Appeal to the Unorganized

Shall our appeal to the unorganized workers be based primarily on consideration of selfish interest, higher wages, shorter hours, etc.? Or shall it be based mainly on a selfless devotion to a greater freedom and idealistic solidarity? Is the full dinner pail or full garage to be the central point of the message of labor to the unorganized, or is it to be a vision of economic freedom, of workers' control of their own destiny, of a greater human dignity and of an exalted spirit of self-sacrifice for great ideals and aspirations? The question is not of eliminating one appeal or the other. The question is of emphasis; the question is what shall be the heart of the appeal. It is a question of mass psychology, even if we shall overlook the wider question of the inherent aspirations and ideals of the labor movement.

After the nature of the appeal to the unorganized worker has been agreed upon, the question still remains, how is it to be brought to them? Who is to carry the message to the unorganized workers? Shall it be done by every individual union in its own field? Shall it be done by organized labor as a whole? Shall it be considered the monopolistic task and privilege of any given Union or Unions, or shall the efforts of every group of workers in that direction be welcomed? What machinery is to be created for that purpose? Are the officers of the union to be charged with the task? Is the number perhaps to be increased for that particular purpose by a staff of special organizers? Would it be possible to have the rank and file of the present trade union membership take an active part in this organization work? And if they are to take part, what machinery is to be created for that purpose? How can the organizing work of the trade union membership be made effective?

After having determined the nature of the appeal and the machinery by which it is to be carried to the unorganized workers, there still remain many questions as to methods. Is the appeal to be carried by word of mouth? Is literature to be used, and if so, of what nature? To what degree can the press be used for that purpose, the labor press and the general press. Is there any way by which the modern method of publicity, including the theatre and the radio, can be harnessed for that task?

So much for the first question, how to arouse the desires of the millions of the unorganized workers to become organized. The second question, how to actually organize them is no less involved. As already said, this article merely aims to suggest the questions, to introduce the discussion. The writer will in the succeeding issues make his contribution to the discussion.

# Meet Ed Crouch

## Inventor and Organizer

By ART SHIELDS

**A** CIGARET is a very little thing. A few puffs and it is gone. Just one little fag among 100 billion made in America.

But a cigaret town with 12,000 men and women producing as many as 135,000,000 little smokes a day is the biggest city in the rising state of North Carolina. A city that organized labor is beginning to put on the union map.

Edward L. Crouch, the man behind the "Camel City" campaign, is one of the most interesting people I have met in the South. It isn't often that a talented inventor and a skilled union organizer are found under the same skin. Here is a workingman who would be highly honored in a more progressive society. He designs the machinery that creates wealth and organizes the workers to see that this wealth is distributed.

Some of Ed Crouch's ancestors go back to early Moravian settlement days when religious German immigrants took up land and founded a communal colony in central North Carolina in the seventeen fifties. Those old Germans believed in primitive Christianity. They took the talks of Jesus seriously and held their prosperity more or less in common as did their fellow Moravians in Bethlehem, Pa. Ironically, both Bethlehem and Winston Salem evolved into highly capitalistic cities, where Jesus was crucified on a cross of gold and the few ruled and owned while the many worked under the open shop plan.

Young Crouch was of those who worked. His grandfather had been a missionary to the Indians in Indian Territory, but his father was a working man. At an early age Ed got a job in the huge R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company plants that had come to dominate the town. Old "Dick" Reynolds had become a multi-millionaire in one short generation. Arriving in Winston, later Winston Salem, with little capital and almost illiterate he wedded his stenographer and learned to write business letters. A rising tobacco market, new machines and low wages did the rest.

"I couldn't afford to buy the cigarets I made when I first went to work at Reynolds," says Crouch. He stayed there 13 years. They shifted him from department to department till his keen mechanic's brain had a broad knowledge of all tobacco manufacturing processes. And his sympathetic workingman's eye was

all the while noting the grievances of the white men and girls and the colored folks whom he was later to organize.

In the Prince Albert tin department girls and boys bottomed the cans by hand. Often their fingers were gashed badly by the sharp tin. They were speeded too much to be careful.

### Designs "Fool Proof" Machine

So Crouch designed an automatic bottoming machine that eliminated all risk. It was fool proof, highly efficient and conserved the operator's strength. Not even a foot pedal was required. Twenty-four machines were built and installed. They are still operated. The company unexpectedly gave the inventor a \$600 bonus, \$25 for each machine, a rare event in Reynolds where inventors usually get precisely nothing more than thanks. They could afford the bonus. One million P. A. cans are made daily, and every few days the new machines save the firm \$600 in labor and metal scrap that had been wasted by the old process.

About that time the inventor became secretary of the new tobacco workers' union which he had helped to organize after the war. "Ed, you don't get much money from the union," pleaded one of the bosses. "Stay with us and we'll treat you right."

But Crouch was thinking of the girl packers getting a few dollars a week, and colored strippers getting less. He stayed with the union. And that is why Ed is barred from the P. A. room during working hours and can't show his friends his brain child at its job, though because of some lingering sentiment for old times or because he still owns the patent he is allowed to do so after the shift is over.

Crouch stayed with the union during its years of success from 1919 to 1921 when the organization was riding high with a big wage increase to its credit. And he stuck after the Reynolds refused to renew the contract. The inventor became a full time organizer, working under his friend Intl. Pres. E. Lewis Evans, and was elected a national vice president. The union had hard years and there have been hard times for his family of 7, but the wife and the kids were stickers, too. And Ed hustled about town in his little Model T, keeping a nucleus of a union together and

### A CRUSADER



ED CROUCH



## DIXIE WOMEN ORGANIZERS



*Photo by Esther Lowell*

Mrs. Josephine Joyner (left), is President of Winston-Salem local, Intl. Tobacco Workers' Union, carrying on the campaign against R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. One of "Josie's" faithful aides in organization work is with her.

carrying on publicity till the opportunity came to start a new drive last year.

### The Union Drive

The story of that tobacco workers' drive is a labor drama, bits of which have been told in Federated Press stories and Pres. Evans' newspaper articles. But it is worth a book—the splendid response of white and colored workers, the comic opera sleuthing of company foremen disguised with Charlie Chaplin mustaches and old duds, the wholesale discharge of union members, the rallying of North Carolina labor against the scab cigaret, the firing of employes who smoked Chesterfields or other rival brands, and the "home products" campaign in Camel City to force every smoker to use Camels whether he liked it or not.

This "home products" campaign is a sign that the Reynolds are worried. Here is a new anecdote from the Camel City front of a big boss fretting:

Sitting in a barber shop one day Pres. Bowman Gray of Reynolds saw a well-dressed stranger enter. The man lit a cigaret—and it was not a Camel. Gray determined to investigate. A few days later he met a youngster of his acquaintance who had been with the stranger.

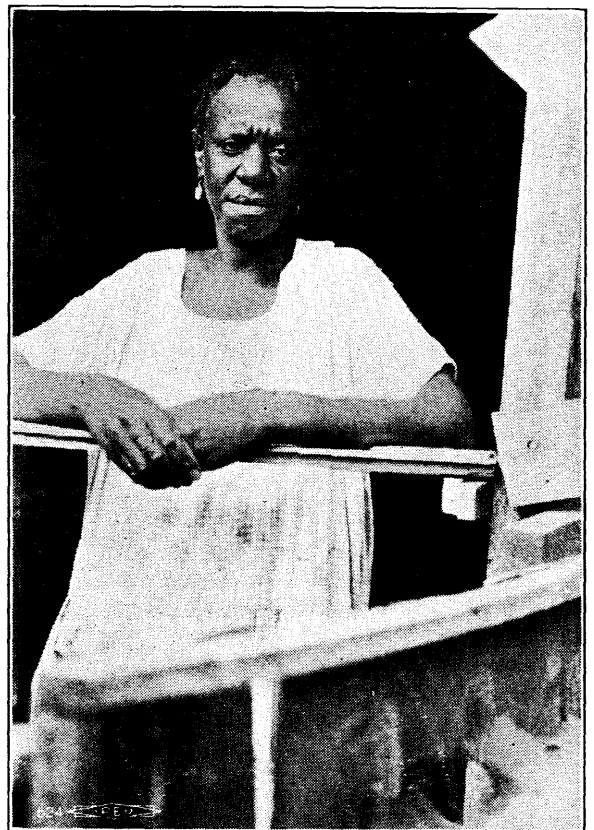
"Who was that man with you?" he queried.

The youth explained that the stranger was an out-of-town promotion expert who was putting on a drive for the same business house with which he was connected.

"Well," said Gray solemnly, "he was *not* smoking a Camel. I hear that some other folks in your office are smoking other cigarets. You want to watch out for those little things."

The tobacco workers' union likewise appeals to all brother unionists to watch out for those little things—and pass up Camels.

## AN ACTIVE AGITATOR



*Photo by Esther Lowell*

The anti-union "Camels" firm used to pay this colored woman \$9.90 a week for stripping tobacco. But when the company discovered that the worker and her mother were busily bringing others into the unions, they fired both

# Union Label Wings

## Machinists in Key Position

By HARVEY O'CONNOR

**T**WENTY-FIVE years ago two brothers made a contraption that hopped painfully 100 yards in the first man-carrying airplane flight in history. Today 10,000 planes are in the air. Is it fanciful to foresee 25 years hence—millions of workers building and servicing wings for America?

In the first quarter century, the plane has developed from a clumsy, dangerous collection of lumber, cloth and piano wire into a trim, dependable, safe transport device. In 1903 a simple wood shed was hangar, workshop and office for two men who constituted the aviation industry of their day. Now 25,000 men are employed directly in the building and servicing of planes and another 50,000 in fashioning the raw materials, financing, selling and exploiting the product. Each year sees aviation thrusting forward, doubling previous records. Five thousand planes were made last year, 2,000 the year before, probably 10,000 will be turned out this year.

To the unionist, this astonishing growth of motored birds into a major service, vying with speeding train and perfected automobile for mastery of transport raises a fundamental problem. Are the men and women who weld duralumin into wings to be members of a powerful aviation workers union or aircrafts federation, as in the railroad industry? Or will company unionism and industrial feudalism, as in non-union industries, dominate the field, binding workers hand and foot to their bosses? That question must be faced now, when the industry is coming out of its infancy into maturity.

The perfection of the helicopter or some similar device enabling planes to rise and descend within the space of a few yards, is the only obstacle now to mass production of a transport medium whose speed and flexibility will relegate the train to heavy freight service and the auto to trucking and taxi transport. Even now a plane can be bought on time payments, \$500 down and so much a month, for as low as \$1,800. The principles of air navigation and plane construction are so well applied that a plane flying 150 miles an hour is in many ways safer than an auto making 20 miles. A pilot can step from his cockpit, while flying, releasing all controls, without danger. Would an autoist care to drive from the back seat?

### 85 Cents An Hour

Although this newest of the industries is raining profits from the air on its manufacturers and financiers, its workers fare little better than those in other transport lines. A skilled tool and die maker, bringing into the airplane shop 10 to 30 years of all around machine shop practice, works for 85 cents an hour. Semi-skilled mechanics make 50 to 85 cents. Women

working on the fabric coverings of wings get as little as 35 cents.

Unionism among them is non-existent. Unionism among the manufacturers, selling agencies, air transport companies is well nigh 100%. The industry's owners and profit-takers boast of their Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce, embracing 95% of manufacturers. Other organizations cater to specialized needs for cooperation.

For the workers, the Pratt & Whitney, Wright and Curtiss company unions are good enough. Don't they throw a picnic once a year, and don't they publish employe papers, picturing John Henry's baby and Jennie Little in a bathing suit? Group insurance trying the engine builders to their bosses, is a strong feature of these company unions, but how they shy off from the mention of wages or collective bargaining!

### Time to Act

If labor is on its toes, the airplane industry can be organized now, before it trustifies and builds up Chinese walls against unionism. Indeed, labor could hardly select a more vulnerable point of attack on super-profits. Strikes in the three big engine plants could tie up the entire industry; organization of one essential craft could force employers to permit unionization of every worker; thousands of men who have been members of trade unions are employed in engine and plane shops; unemployment is not so intense as in other industries.

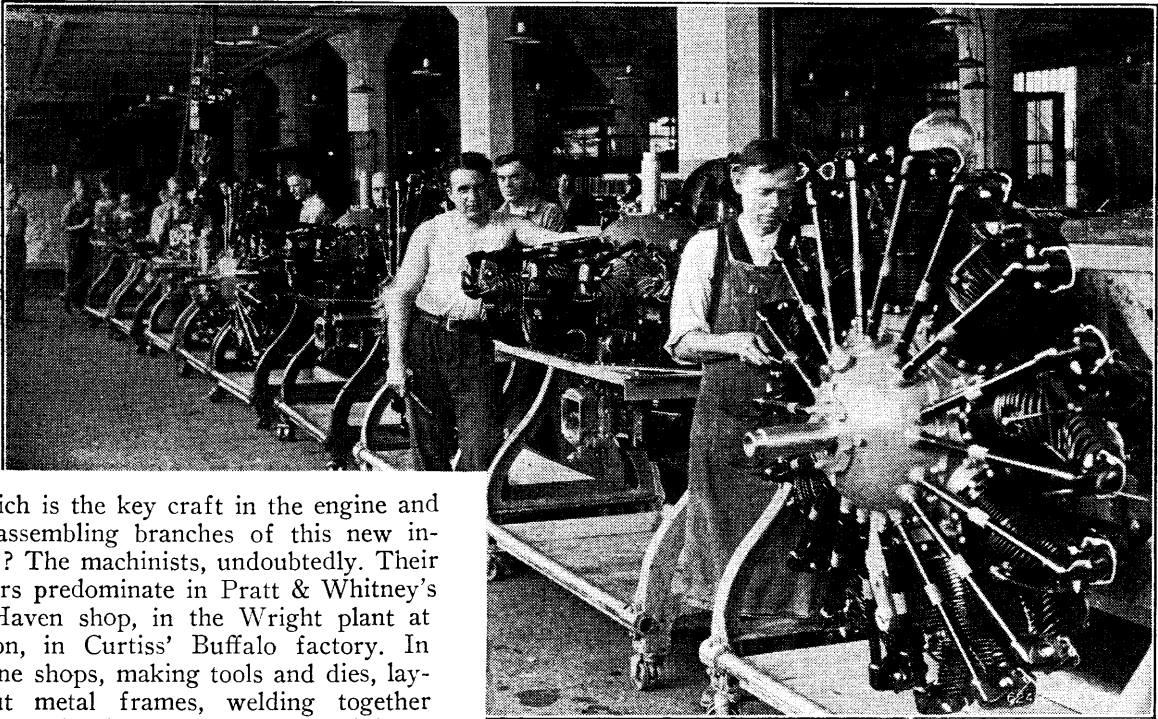
Johann Dietrich, over from Germany but two years, works at his lathe in the plane shop, wondering why there's no union in America for him. In the old country the Metallarbeiter Verband, embracing all workers in metals, was his union, defending him against wage cuts, stabilizing employment, backing his demands for better conditions. Here in America no union asks him to join.

John Smith, expert machinist, who carried a Machinist's card for years before and during the war, is now an "ex." "Sure, a union would be a great thing here. We could line the boys up. But where's the union?" he asks.

Others, still card carriers, wonder how a group of unions can make an effective appeal in plane shops. Should machinists, pattern makers, molders, electricians and a dozen other unions make individual appeals? Or can they all get together, as they did on the railroads, into a federated shop crafts? Better yet, can the Metal Trades either yield all jurisdiction to one union or throw their forces together for one united metal workers or airplane workers union?

Such is the picture of confused thinking and paralyzed action in a typical factory on Long Island which turns out hundreds of planes each year for the navy.

## ASSEMBLING THE ENGINE



*Courtesy Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Co.*

Which is the key craft in the engine and plane-assembling branches of this new industry? The machinists, undoubtedly. Their numbers predominate in Pratt & Whitney's New Haven shop, in the Wright plant at Paterson, in Curtiss' Buffalo factory. In the plane shops, making tools and dies, laying out metal frames, welding together wings and fuselage, it is the machinist—especially in his role of welder—who is the key man. The Machinists' Union, with its recently proclaimed jurisdiction over all welding, is at the crossroads of approaches to labor organization. Important also are sheet metal workers, electrical workers, carpenters.

What have the unions done? Very little, it must be admitted. The metal trades unions, still shell-shocked from the terrific open shop offensive of 1921-22, find their own immediate problems too great to warrant exploration or invasion of this fertile unorganized field. The A. F. of L. executive council at an Atlantic City session last summer, issued an apocryphal statement that it was studying the industry. However, no report was submitted to the New Orleans convention to indicate that any conclusion had been reached from the study—if any. The Machinists' Union would like to take the initiative, but it finds railroad problems all-absorbing for the present. This organization has made inquiries into the industry and exhibited a desire to take further interest.

The Independent Auto and Aircraft Workers' Union seems to have been guided by good intentions in including "aircraft" in its title, but the Detroit Employers' Association has been too aggressive to permit it to go afield.

A union survey of aviation will show significant facts to guide an organization campaign:

The industry is decentralized geographically and will remain so for a number of years, if not permanently. The product is so costly and the raw material so light that transportation charges are not exorbitant. On the other hand, the finished product, boxed in huge crates, presents a high shipment expense. Thus we see

Wichita, Kansas, as the "aviation capital of America." Distant Seattle has the Boeing works—one of the bigger units of the industry. A hundred firms are active in the Los Angeles, Detroit, Buffalo, and New York industrial regions.

#### **Aircraft Mergers**

Aviation, however, is concentrating under the control of a few major financial interests. United Aircraft and Transport, just merged, is the biggest unit in the industry. Controlled by National City Bank interests, it comprises Pratt & Whitney, makers of the Wasp and Hornet motors; Chance Vought Co., Long Island City, makers of the Corsair and Amphibian military planes; Boeing's of Seattle, makers of transport and mail carriers; and both the Boeing and Pacific Air Transport, in control of western mail, express and passenger transportation. Thus the merger is represented in the three major lines of aviation—engine building, plane construction and transportation itself.

Capitalized at \$150,000,000, the actual assets of all companies concerned cannot exceed \$5,000,000. Thus the water in the stock is at least 3,000% of actual value—a liberal gift of the financiers to themselves. Thirty blades of profit-producing grass are to grow, where but one grew before! The extra \$145,000,000 to be realized from the sale of the stock to the gullible and hopeful investing public will be pocketed by the promoters.

Other mergers follow these general lines, only the names and amounts are different. On United Aircraft's board are representatives of General Motors, Ford, Standard Oil and National City Bank, a perfect set-up of the powerful forces which govern America financially, industrially and politically.

## IN AN AIRPLANE SHOP

There is little need of underestimating the foes unionism must match if it tackles unionization of the air. United Aircraft and Transport will not be an easy nut to crack. Already the industry is interweaving its interests with those of the industrial corporations which have fought unionism to a standstill in other fields. This is a list of some of the powerful corporations directly interested in aviation, through supplying parts, fuel or service:

A. C. Spark Plug, Aluminum (and Andy Mellon), American Telephone & Telegraph, DuPont, Eastman Kodak, Elgin Watch, General Electric, Radio Corporation, Roebing's Sons, Travelers Insurance, U. S. Steel, Westinghouse, Winchester and all the big oil companies, including particularly Gulf, Standard and Sinclair.

If trade unionism were powerful generally, it might be remarked, an important branch of the air industry could be organized immediately through political pressure on Congress. Appropriations for army and navy planes—still the biggest part of American production—could carry a stipulation that the planes be made under certain minimum wage and working conditions.

### Nothing Too Good

That union conditions could easily be granted is not open to dispute. When United Aircraft promoters proceeded to pocket a cool \$145,000,000 on a \$150,000,000 deal, certainly there is room for decent wages, hours and conditions. Indeed an Aircraft Workers' Union could in all fairness to prevailing capitalistic standards demand a 30-hour week, a minimum \$2 an hour scale for skilled mechanics and \$1 for the least skilled, and the most liberal health, sickness, accident, old age and unemployment insurance, to be paid for by the employers. The well organized building trades have shown the way. Nothing should be too good for the men and women who turn out a product which must be 100% perfect, if it is not to go to pieces in the sky, hurtling occupants to certain death.

Practically, unions could insist on the 40-hour week, a wage scale in advance of the railroad industry and conditions comparable to those in government service and still be considered modest in their demands.

A practical airplane builder, with nearly 20 years experience in the machine shop and the union, sketches aviation organization in these terms:

1. The Machinists' Union, as the one primarily concerned with engine and plane construction, to study the industry, plan strategy and assign a corps of organizers concentrating on the industry. The appeal to be made to the workers primarily—and only secondarily to the employers.

2. A national airplane workers paper, discussing trends in the industry, outlining organization methods, enheartening rank and file organizers, printing shop news from every factory. "The paper must be an organizer itself," says this experienced worker-organizer.

3. An intensive campaign of workers' education—progressive, militant and intelligent—among new members, training them in unionism's practice and ideals so that when strikes come, they can fight courageously



*Courtesy Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Co.*

with an invincible morale. If the union is merely a business concern, job consciousness will divide the workers, men in one plant will ignore the struggles in other plants, the union will not be the welded unit that the airplane is.

Others may prefer an independent, industrial union, as new as the industry itself and constructed especially to meet the needs of its workers. Whether it were better for an existing craft union whose jurisdiction, however, includes the key workers and perhaps the majority of all workers in aviation or such a new union to undertake the job is of course a debatable question which will be answered by the superior aggressiveness of one or the other on the job. An important factor in favor of the Machinists' Union, it may be mentioned, is its unquestioned position in the repair field. A local machinists' lodge has already been organized in Florida for the repair and upkeep of planes, paralleling the scores of auto mechanics lodges which represent the older unionism's only success in organizing in the auto field.

\* \* \*

It requires no flight of the imagination to see even the better paid workers possessing air flivvers 25 years from now. Plane production then will be measured in the hundreds of thousands annually, instead of in thousands. An army of 5,000,000 to 10,000,000 workers, clerks, speculators, aviators, financiers, technicians, employers will make their living out of the air. America, now air-conscious will in reality sprout wings and soar aloft in business, pleasure, ocean travel.

Will the America that takes to wings, use union-made wings, union-serviced wings? Organized labor must answer "Yes, they will be union, 100%."

# Doubling the Membership

## Business Unionism Forbids

By ISRAEL MUFSON

**N**OW that 1929 has been ushered in with all the fervor, enthusiasm, and bootleg liquor appropriate for such an occasion, definite commitments, which must be faced seriously and soberly, arise for consideration. One of these, having its origin at New Orleans where organized labor just concluded its annual planning, calls for the doubling of the A. F. of L. membership during the present new year. Actually to double membership, however, requires work, understanding and a proper attitude. Are these ingredients handy within the organized labor movement today to make that slogan a reality?



ISRAEL MUFSON

Not long after the New Orleans convention concluded its sessions, and almost immediately after this

“Double the Membership” slogan reached out to the boys back home, a complaint was registered against the lack of practical sense displayed by the American Federation of Labor for adopting such a slogan. This complaint came not from a person of theory whose head might have been filled with all sorts of radical notions. It emanated from a labor leader with many years experience in the movement; one who makes no turn that cannot be translated into immediate benefits for his organization and his membership. He accepts most mandates loyally and without question, and sincerely looks upon his efforts as those of a business man attempting to win better profits for his associates.

### A Leader's Complaint

“It is too bad,” were his thoughts in essence, “that the A. F. of L. had to adopt this double the membership slogan at this time. With so many of our own members out of work, I have my hands full taking care of those already in. There is no sense in making my position more hazardous by taking in new members. I would like to help the American Federation of Labor attain its purpose but they certainly chose the wrong time for such an effort.”

This labor leader does not realize, of course, that there can never be a right time for increasing membership with the attitude towards organization that is his. Under present arrangements, there is almost always bound to be some unemployment or some other ele-

ment of dissatisfaction among the existing membership. There will always be an excuse for not desiring to augment the ranks already difficult to handle. And that, therefore, slogan or no slogan, an increasing membership is more to be feared than to be desired. Unfortunately for the slogan, and for the labor movement in general, the views expressed by this labor leader are the views prevailing throughout the movement. The attitude towards organization is manifestly one not conducive towards doubling membership.

### Blaming the Union

Wherefore this crop of dragons' teeth? A little analysis is evidently now in order. It is apparent among all who wish to see that satisfaction with life as now constituted is more a myth than a thing of reality. In spite of the self back-slapping indulged in by Coolidge and by President-elect Hoover about what a wonderful folk we must be to enjoy such glorious good fortune, there are people here and there, scattered rather thickly throughout this vast land, who cannot voluntarily appreciate a joke of such nature. Some of these sober-minded folk are members of organized labor. Their wages are unsatisfactory; they work too hard; or cannot find work at all. They have a grievance; nay, they have grievances. Whereupon they go with their troubles to their union, their business agent—and demand relief. They pay dues, don't they? And they have been told that trade unionism was a business proposition where the worker pays a premium to insure himself good times immediately and always. If good times are not forthcoming the membership cannot place their blame anywhere else than on the union. For they have been taught that to blame the “system” or the “government” for any shortcomings in their search for happiness was to show oneself up to be a crackbrained “radical.” Therefore the union must be cautious and lean heavily towards a policy of exclusion. The fewer members the easier they can be handled. No matter what the slogan of the American Federation of Labor may be, the practical union leader who must satisfy a membership that demands bacon all the time will pursue a policy of exclusion. He cannot do otherwise and maintain himself in power.

Pussyfooting on essential differences of purpose may be the nicest and most gentlemanly thing to do. It is a method never conducive to a long and vigorous life. Friends soon fail to understand and foes quickly learn to treat with disdain. The labor movement becomes a frail sister unless it stands as a challenge to the profit system and to every agency, economic or political, that upholds it. The labor movement fights for health, opportunity and happiness of the masses of the people.

In doing so it violates every rule of self-preservation if it is afraid to assert boldly that all these things are menaced and denied the workers by industry as now constituted and by the political parties giving sanction to present practices. If it is not vigorous in its criticism and radical in its remedies then the trade union movement becomes responsible for the shortcomings of present day society. It assumes a burden that is not its own, and which eventually must crush it with its weight. The result is already evident on every hand. Not understanding that "systems" and "governments" have any responsibility for their ills the membership blames their unions for their dissatisfactions. Not being able to analyze the dissatisfaction of the membership and explain their predicaments in the broader principles of economics and politics, the officers of these unions seek as a remedy the limitation of organization. Between the two what faces labor? "Double the Membership in 1929?"

It has become a curious ideological attitude within the labor movement to look upon criticism of government as unpatriotic. How it originated should be a most interesting study. Some day this bit of research will be done and its results should prove fruitful. But whatever its origin the present tendency is unique in the annals of all group existence. For no group, no matter what its reason for being, abstains from taking a crack at the party in power, which, of course, is the government, except the labor movement. Even the D. A. R. will occasionally issue a lady-like broad side against those controlling the Nation's political destiny if not enough battleships are voted for. Government, after all, is at any given time the expression of the dominant group in society. If the dominant group at this particular moment is large scale capital, with its open shop philosophy, government is just that and nothing more. Labor, by failing to maintain an independent and sincerely critical attitude towards government, again falls heir to all the ills that trouble man, and the common worker again will place the blame on the labor movement for all his dissatisfactions.

### White House Cooperation?

Curiously, this danger signal that waves so plainly right before our very noses, is entirely unseen by those who hold the destiny of the labor movement in their hands. The lament seems to be that labor showed too much courage in the past—stood up too vigorously for its rights. Therefore, it suffers. But all this is changed now. The January, 1929, issue of the *Railway Carmen's Journal* bemoans the fact that labor monkeyed around with independent political action in 1924, because of which "the White House has had no specially friendly feeling for labor in the intervening years."

"This will not happen this time. Granted for argument's sake that everything his opponents said about President-elect Hoover is true, it remains a fact that labor officially took no part in the fight on him, and he will have absolutely no reason to refuse to co-oper-

ate with the American Federation of Labor and the railway brotherhoods. We believe he knows enough about practical politics to realize that despite the action of a few state federations, he cannot consider he was officially opposed. He had, in fact, a great many supporters in the organized labor movement. Besides, labor succeeded in putting most of the representatives and senators in Congress which it endorsed.

"Labor will, therefore, be welcome at the White House and in official Washington the next four years. . . ."

No one is in any mood for bedtime stories. The above quotation may mean that labor can now go to Mr. Raskob and General Motors and organize the works. Mr. Raskob, having opposed Hoover, will now probably have to face a regiment or two and a battleship in his efforts to continue open shop. Or it may mean that one or two labor officials will get some swell government berths and thus labor will get recognition. But what it actually will mean is that it will strengthen the muddle-mindedness of the organized workers. Since Hoover and the Republican Party are all right; since Big Business and capitalism are all right; since labor cannot offer anything different than the program proposed by industry and its industrial welfare, the worker with an ache and a pain; the worker without a job and a hungry family; the worker with a grievance because of a system organized against him, will go to the union with a howl and demand substantial returns on his investment. Failing that he will either wreck his business agent or his union.

### More Muddle-mindedness

Therefore this crop of dragons' teeth. No movement of a subject and dominated group dare identify itself so completely with the dominant as to lose its identity. Otherwise the movement of the dominated assumes responsibility for the existing evils. It becomes the business of such a movement to point out clearly how far it can help the workers under conditions as they exist and where it must fail until the evils engendered by the present system are eradicated with the system. If such a movement, for reasons of its own, fails to be vigorously critical; fails to adopt a program different from and at variance with the program of those in power, the very results now presented are inevitable. It has failed as a movement of the masses and any slogan will barely leave the hall of its origin.

There is no reason but one why the membership of the American Federation of Labor could not be doubled during 1929. There are plenty of workers within the unorganized field to choose from. Conditions certainly are satisfactory for organization purposes. But the proper attitude is lacking. Both members of organized labor and their officers have fallen victims to the "business" philosophy of trade unionism. They have learned to bargain for a mess of pottage and to lose a world thereby.

# Flashes from the Labor World

## Workers Storm Ford Fortress

As dawn wan and icy fingered, pulled back the curtain of night, thousands of men were to be seen stamping on the frozen ground, flinging their arms, rubbing chilled ears with numbed hands. By 8 a.m. 30,000 plumes of white vapor issued from as many mouths. "What's the matter up there? Won't they ever open?" These questions from 30,000 men, many of them breakfastless and without overcoats.

Then a door opened. The great crowd swayed and plunged. Fences became kindling wood. A squad of police hastily summoned, pushed, swore, threatened, beat back the mob. Within a half hour came the word, "No more." Three hundred had gone within the portals, 29,700 turned toward the city, many of them tramping the cold, weary miles.

Such is the picture of that Monday morning at Ford's River Rouge plant. A few days before daily papers from coast to coast had published unpaid for want ads, telling the world of workers that Ford intended to hire 30,000 men within the next few months. The 30,000 sprang up overnight, from Detroit itself, hungry men, jobless men, men with families wondering where their next loaf of bread, the next scuttle of coal were coming from. Within a week another 30,000 had come from other states, from the west, the south, the east. Such is prosperity in this best of all possible countries!

Have we a free press? Listen to EDITOR AND PUBLISHER, trade paper of

the newspaper craft: "Every reader of EDITOR AND PUBLISHER knows that the economic, social and legal restrictions on the press of this day have reached a point where they intimidate newspapermen. Our vaunted freedom has very narrow limits for most of us as it stands. If you think to the contrary, we ask

game by making each town raise half the capital for its mill, bringing hundreds of citizens into alliance with its business. Towns were selected where there was no other industry to compete for female labor. Some of the towns are near coal digging areas; others are close to tenant farm regions. The promoters de-

manded tax exemptions and other special privileges from each community. The workers will get the usual \$2 a day, when and if they work. The other side of this picture can be seen in Lowell, Lawrence, Fall River, Mass., where scores of mills are idle or have shut down, where tens of thousands are jobless, where wages are being beaten down to Alabama's \$2 level.

\* \* \*

Metal trades unions get a powerful impetus in their organizing work through the 5 cent an hour increase won by New York Central's 16,500 unionized shop workers. The award, by a federal board, means \$700,000 a

year more to them. It means that 100,000 other shop workers in the east will demand similar increases, that company unionized roads like the Pennsylvania will have to kick through with "voluntary" increases, that metal trades workers in outside shops will want corresponding raises. Non-union men will see that unionism, solidarity, militancy pay and union men will gain added courage in their fight for better conditions.

\* \* \*

Men and women in Chicago's stockyards pay a heavy price for

### IDLE MILLS



As the New York World sees New England's textile mills.

you to start telling all available truth that is valuable to society, let the chips fall where they will, and see what happens to you in a day or a week."

\* \* \*

Alabama Mills Co. is just another name for Alabama Power Co., which is just one of the many guises of Electric Bond & Share, the power trust. Alabama Mills is opening six mills in as many small towns, writes Esther Lowell, FEDERATED PRESS correspondent. The big Alabama power fire played a shrewd

their failure to unionize. A casual glance at the profits of Swift, Armour, Cudahy for 1928 reveals the amount they lost because they have built no organization. The Big Three made \$55,000,000 profits. Swift's alone made 17 percent on its actual cash investment. Dividends to the Polish workers included injuries, occupational diseases, layoffs, unemployment and death.

\* \* \*

Hearst and Gannett are big men. They are the first and third largest chain newspaper proprietors in the country. Their own resources run into the hundreds of millions. One owns an international news service, the other is perfecting a teletypesetter that threatens to throw thousands of printers out of work. But between them they are not big enough to beat Albany Typographical Local 4, whose 250 members were thrown into the street when all Albany's newspapers locked them out. Instead the union has counterattacked so effectively that the publishers themselves are now on the defensive. It was simple enough: the printers, who know almost everything about newspapers anyway, set up their own paper, the CITIZEN whose 16 to 24 pages daily and 20,000 circulation are driving Hearst and Gannett circulation and advertising executives to distraction. The select crew of rats getting out the non-union papers are drawing double the wages of union printers. The publishers spend thousands defending them in court against charges of drunkenness, larceny, assault. More serious, advertisers don't think much of papers whose circulation has dropped to the lowest point in 10 years. The non-union publishers are decidedly unhappy; but the members of Typographical Local 4 are all busy, all earning good wages running Albany's only union paper which also happens to be Albany's favorite newspaper.

\* \* \*

WCFL, radio voice of the Chicago Federation of Labor, has gone over the heads of the radio commission to senate and house with an appeal for fair play for labor. The only organized labor radio station in the country has been denied an exclusive radio channel and has been confined to daytime broadcasting, exactly the time when most workers have no

time to listen in. But 25 newspapers, 350 business concerns, 40 churches, 70 schools, 30 chambers of commerce have been given choice air assignments, which include evening hours. "Never in our history has there been such a bold and brazen attempt to seize control of the means of communication and to dominate public opinion as is now going on in the field of radio broadcasting," asserts the Chicago Federation of Labor. "And never in our history has the federal government shown such a crass disregard and contempt for the rights of those who toil."

\* \* \*

For the first time the American Indian is becoming a serious competitor with the white worker in the scramble for jobs. The roving, hunting Indian of the North Atlantic seaboard, of the plains, prairies and mountains, fought his way doggedly against white advance, was pushed back year by year and finally cooped up on reservations, there to be robbed and starved by government officials. But the Mexican Indian, who absorbed the Spanish conquistador, is forcing northward over the Rio Grande and conquering the white worker in job bidding. More than 500,000 are in the United States and 1928 saw at least 100,000 of that number cross the border. In Los Angeles more than 100,000 live in the Mexican colony. They are road laborers, railway track workers, mill hands. In the Los Angeles Goodyear cotton mill, the percentage of 90 whites to 10 Mexicans three years ago is now exactly reversed. Prosperous, pious, Rotarian Los Angeles consigns these newcomers to the city's vilest slums, where they live, a family to a room, eating beans and corn meal, sleeping on straw, uncomplainingly they work, and good workers they are. Most peasants or peons, they are not organized. But the Mexican labor movement has done a good job of organizing. Perhaps these latest of the sweatiest immigrants can be organized, but the United States labor movement has done nothing so far to help them do so.

\* \* \*

In the sunny, open spaces south of Van Cortlandt Park in New York stand the cooperative apartments of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Ground has just been broken for another unit of the buildings which will accommodate in all 500 families. Already more than 300 families enjoy the present apartments and the privileges of cooperative service. A year of success proves what organized workers can provide for themselves when they act together. Children who were born in dark little tenements of the lower east side now play in sunshine around the buildings or pile into the co-op's bus to drive over to grammar school. Cooperative stores provide all necessaries in the way of groceries, meat, fruit and vegetables. An educational committee gets up plays and the auditorium has a stage large enough to make it a little theatre. All these advantages are secured for a monthly charge averaging only \$11 a room.

\* \* \*

Union miners in the anthracite are fighting hard to save their state hospitals. The fee-charging medicos are sore about the hospitals, where the miners get treatment free of charge when they are maimed in their gamble against high explosives and falling rock in hard coal mines. The coal operators, too, want to shift the burden to the miners so as to ease taxes.

\* \* \*

A giant merger of 70 leading fine goods cotton mills to wipe out unionism in New Bedford is the scheme of the American Wool and Cotton Reporter, leading textile weekly. New Bedford, seat of the heroic half-year battle of weavers and spinners against wage cuts, controls half the fine goods production of the country, argues the sheet. Very well, merge all the big mills, shut down the New Bedford units, starve out the organized workers, then reopen them when the workers consent to abandon their unions and to accept whatever speed-up and wages the bosses dictate. The editor of the American Cotton and Wool Reporter is, we surmise, a pillar of the church and a highly respected member of his community. Why, we don't know.

*This department prepared from Federated Press news reports by Harvey O'Connor, Federated Press eastern bureau manager.*



# Machinery and Labor Turnover

## *Efficiency and Stability of Employment*

By HERMAN FRANK, Ph. D.

**T**HE wage-earners occupancy of his particular position is temporary and transitory. Workmen frequently leave one plant to enter either another plant in the same industry or one in an entirely different industry. To this rapid change from position to position has been given the name "labor turnover."

Of recent years inquiries have been made into the causes and cost of the moving about of large armies of workers from one factory to another. It has been shown in terms of dollars and cents how the actual cost of hiring and firing a man may run from twenty to two thousand dollars, depending on the kind of a man and the importance of the job. Accordingly, therefore, reducing labor turnover has been found an indispensable condition for getting the greatest output from the plant. Many a novel departure in the tactics of the American capitalist class, such as welfare schemes, personnel administration, and employe stock ownership, at bottom is but a camouflaged restraint on excessive labor turnover.

From the workers' point of view the problem appears in a quite different light. Labor turnover has been called the unorganized man's strike. This is not entirely accurate, however, for "turnover" includes more than the workers' voluntary resignations. The workers having difficulty in discriminating between employers before they accept jobs, the method that they frequently use is to resign when they find the treatment or working conditions are not to their liking. Not all workmen, of course, are in a position to quit when dissatisfied, but enough of them are to create a social force of considerable power.

Still another social aspect of labor turnover is its relationship to the growing mechanization of industry. It is the purpose of this article to analyze mainly this side of the constant flux from position to position, which distinguishes the labor-status in a capitalistic regime.

### **Human Labor and the Machine**

Industrial evolution, starting with the use of steam-driven machinery and up to standardized mass production and scientific management of today, was fated to produce a deep change in the human factors of industry. The all important necessity of exact standardization in the production of duplicate parts meant that the one irresponsible, variable influence—human labor—must be minimized, if not eliminated. As a result, during the first quarter of the current century, a vast equipment of nineteenth-century skill and trade knowledge gradually lost its value. Unskilled labor, capable of sustained attention, became the typical labor of American industry.

Not only did the huge industrial cities of the East

and Middle West furnish a ready labor supply to the capitalist, but the human elements in these labor markets found that they could easily sell their unskilled labor in any market which had a labor demand. Thus a stimulus to a restless migratory spirit was given. The number of hirings in the year necessary to keep the factory force up to the normal steadily increased.

As the simplification of production, brought about by the increasing use of machinery, developed, one type of unskilled or semi-skilled worker was rapidly displaced by another of lower industrial knowledge and willing to work for lower wages. More than this, as the intensity and monotony of the work increased, a worker more pliable and subservient, less liable to organize, was eagerly sought by the employer. Thus, our modern industrial technique, coupled with the spirit of profit-chasing, produced in the end a constant cause of enormous labor turnover on the one hand and on the other a lack in the workers' capacity to be organized into trade unions of the traditional Anglo-American kind—craft unionism.

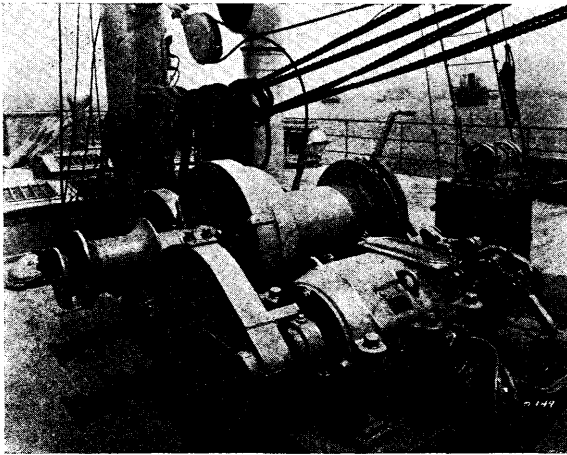
### **The Cost of Hiring and Firing**

Eventually the employers realized that the policy of hiring and firing was a stick with two ends, and that they had not got hold of the right end. Efficiency experts found out that the continual replacement of workers was most wasteful. Tremendous inefficiency is caused through the time spent by uninitiated workers in getting used to the habits of the new plants they join. New workers, who are more or less unfamiliar with the processes and operations peculiar to a given plant, contribute greatly to the increased outlay because of damaged materials, spoiled work, breakage of materials, tools, and equipment, and a rise in the overhead expenses in general. Moreover, statistics of the frequency and causes of industrial accidents have proved conclusively that the accident frequency rate tends to be excessively high among new employes.

The costs of labor turnover to the workman and society as a whole are very real, though hardly calculable in terms of cold cash. Unskilled workers, upon whom the main burden of unemployment due to labor turnover weighs, are just for this very reason the least able to bear the cost of this wastage. So much the more, by virtue of the fact that their share in the product of industry is smallest, they must fall, as a result of frequent replacements in shops, upon public or private charity for emergency relief.

Now the unemployed worker, who suffers through loss of income during the interval between jobs, frequently must in addition incur the expense of traveling to another locality in search of work. He has to pay a fee to some exploitive private employment agency

## MECHANIZING THE WORKER



Without union control the machine causes endless hardships to the worker, depriving him of employment and imposing upon him greater monotony and speed-up.

and to endure the humiliation of involuntary idleness. Almost invariably idleness results in loss of skill or its rudiments, efficiency, and ambition, which further complicates the difficulty by making it almost impossible for the workers to find suitable employment.

### Security on the Job and Efficiency

It can be seen that in the advanced stages of mechanized production excessive labor turnover, so far away from being of advantage to industry, is a source of loss and misery. By way of summary, the reasons are as follows:

In the first place, with a great expansion of the use of automatic machinery, some of which are complicated and delicate, it becomes increasingly difficult to replace highly skilled mechanics who have spent years in attaining their present proficiency. With the progress of scientific management it has been discovered that a "science for each operation" (the gist of Taylorism, or scientific management) does not always destroy craft skill. It modifies its content a good deal, but it as frequently gives it wider scope. For the sake of ideal efficiency, in addition to old skills, a skill in co-operation through understanding of purpose and methods is required. A scientific management plant is more dependent on uniformly high intelligence and skill within a craft or department than any other kind of plant. Naturally, then, hiring and firing at a high rate does not harmonize with scientific management.

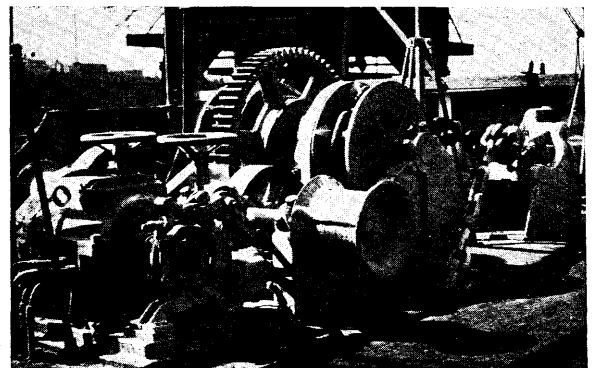
Secondly, mechanization of work does not always produce monotonous jobs from which the worker seeks an escape and looks for a chance to find a less dull job. True enough, specialization and routine render work so dull that the worker frequently does throw up his job. But that lot in life is not peculiar to the unskilled only, for even certain kinds of craft work become

mechanical and monotonous. On the other hand, the mechanization of manual tasks makes a job in the long run less tedious and hard. The task of the seamstress, for example, was more trying and tiring than that of the woman who works at a power machine in a clothing factory. Less impulses to labor turnover on this account (job monotony) may arise in an age of giant power and super-mechanization.

Yet the timely and acute problem of technological unemployment, that is to say, of displacement of men by machinery, remains in all its burning urgency. Here, in a manner of speaking, lies the core of the contradiction inherent in an industrial civilization based as it is on a social principle—division and subdivision of labor—and yet animated by the motive of private gain. On the one hand, stability of the labor force is essential for efficiency and larger output, while on the other competition and unregulated production devoted to profit-making result in driving hosts of workers into the human scrap-heap.

Fortunately, public opinion is ready to admit that continual replacements of workers are unwarranted and wasteful. Again, some employment managers have discovered that the opportunities offered for a change of work in the same plant (reassignments) are an effective means against many causes of labor turnover. This essentially means that the position of workers in a genuine and humane industrial civilization is to be changed from a transitory wage relation into a new status, one that somehow approaches and resembles that of the salaried officials entitled to security of tenure. This development is in line with the tendency, observable in all highly industrialized countries, of constant growth on the part of supervising and controlling staffs. In the German dye-stuff and explosive industry, for instance, one out of every six employes has the status of an official.

### CONTROLLING THE MACHINE



With thorough organization and increased control the machine becomes a blessing to the worker, enabling him to obtain shorter hours of labor, increased wages, giving him an opportunity for more leisure and a greater share of the wealth he creates.

# Research For Workers

By LOUIS STANLEY

## X.—WATCHING WASHINGTON

IT goes without saying that, if the research worker is going to keep an eye on the numerous and far-scattered activities of the United States Government, he must make use of the appropriate instruments of research that have already been described in this series of articles. In the order of their importance for the subject under consideration, these are the following:

1. The daily press, to which a key is supplied by the quarterly "Index" of the New York "Times".

2. The periodicals, to which the best indices are the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature" and the "Public Affairs Information Service" (P. A. I. S.).

3. Books and pamphlets, which can be discovered through book reviews and P. A. I. S.

Now we should like to indicate some of the special aids to research on the complicated affairs of the United States Government. The most important single guide is the "United States Daily," published at Washington, D. C. This is a newspaper which began publication on March 4, 1926, the month and day being selected apparently in order to have each bound volume cover a presidential year. The paper claims and is "the only record of the official acts of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the government." Its motto is "all the facts—no opinion." The "United States Daily" is the one place where you can find each day a comprehensive account of all the doings of the Federal Government for the previous twenty-four hours. Speeches are quoted copiously or in full. Committee hearings are recorded with generous extracts from the testimony. The communications, reports, plans, announcements or other statements of governmental officials, bureaus, boards and departments are carried with fullness. The text of bills and laws are given entirely or partially, depending on their importance. The decisions of the United States Supreme Court, the other Federal courts, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Board of Tax Appeals are recorded. Lists of new books received by the Library of Congress and of new publication issued by the the Government Printing Office appear regularly. In short, the "United States Daily" is a day by day compilation of material relating to the United States Government, which to a large extent escapes the daily press and the periodicals, and which, in any case is frequently not available to the general public for weeks and months. In fact, some of the things published and thus made easily accessible would otherwise be obtained by the research worker only with great difficulty.

The "Daily" has mechanical features which facilitate its use. There is a splendid summary-index appearing each day which practically occupies the entire back page. The pages are numbered from 1 to 12 daily but in addition each page receives a "Yearly

Index" number, which runs consecutively throughout the year. For example, March 4, 1926 begins with "Yearly Index 1" and March 3, 1927 ends with "Yearly Index 4448." This makes it easier to use the "Weekly Index", which appears in eight pages every Monday, and the "Annual Cumulative Index".

Subscriptions to the "United States Daily" cost ten dollars a year or fifteen dollars for two years. Eleven service bureaus are at the disposal of subscribers. Single numbers of the "Daily" are sold for five cents. In the larger cities some newsstands sell the paper. The larger libraries, of course, keep it on file.

The "United States Daily" cannot, of course, publish in full the many extended reports of different governmental officials and agencies. These have to be consulted in the original. In general, they can be obtained free of charge from the person or body issuing the report. They can also be purchased at cost price from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Among such important documents are the annual reports of the secretaries of the various departments, who constitute the President's cabinet, as well as the annual reports of such important bodies as the Federal Trade Commission and the United States Shipping Board. Then, too, there are the thousands of publications which are sponsored by various governmental bodies not to speak of Congress, which we discussed in the last article.

Those who want to keep track of the vast amount of printed material put out by the numerous governmental enterprises centering at Washington, D. C., may do three things. First, they may ask the Superintendent of Documents to place them on the mailing list for the free receipt of the "Weekly List of Selected United States Government Publications." Secondly, they may subscribe at the rate of fifty cents per year to the "Monthly Catalog of United States Public Documents", which includes an annual index. Lastly, they may consult the free price lists on special subjects issued by the Superintendent of Documents which were mentioned in a previous article.

Two unofficial sources of information may be mentioned here: the "Congressional Digest" and the "Editorial Research Reports," both published at Washington, D. C., where they can be reached for subscription terms. The first is a magazine published monthly, except during July and August; the second is a service appearing about weekly. Both aim to summarize in each issue the available information on one current public question, the latter more comprehensively. Most libraries contain copies of the first, some of the second.

### For Your Own Research

Select some topic of current interest and consult the various publications mentioned in this article to see what information is available in addition to that in the ordinary newspaper.

# In Other Lands

## THE MINER'S PLIGHT



Bread and boots for the miners—Relief for the unemployed are appeals heard hourly from Buckingham Palace to Birmingham slum, from Dundee digges to Dowlais dumps, tips and warrens. The air rings with Charity—the Charity that creates a multitude of sins, that metamorphoses a nation of rebels into an aggregations of beggars, Charity that is blest by Premier, Prince and Plutocrat. Even the newly rich of that paradise of plutocracy—the U. S. A.—are sending over donations. It is fashionable. The sums will not hurt since they will be deducted from the income tax next year.

What to do with the by-product of British capitalism—the miners of Wales and England is the greatest problem that ever confronted the British, or indeed any other government, in peace time. It is also the greatest indictment that could be drawn up against the present social order in which labor is exploited for private gain and greed. Premier Baldwin and other official and unofficial rulers of Merrie England are full of sympathy for the miners. However, despite their copious tears and high sounding sniffing, they vigorously oppose every proposal for a fundamental analysis of the situation as made by spokesmen of the miners. The rulers have no remedy for the disease of unemployment but to whine and beg. It is the 1947 famine tactics repeated.

The miners say they will not be drugged by the opium of the ruling class. According to their spokesmen, and

the official and semi-official organs of Labor, they resent charity as a method of meeting the situation. In the London "New Leader" whose cartoon is here reprinted, a miner writes "We demand honorable treatment from the nation as a right after having spent our lives in the service of the community. We do not want charity though forced to take it."

Scotchmen are organizing monster processions and are marching on the capital. Lancashire is demanding more grants from the treasury. Labor as a whole seems determined that it is not going to be converted into a sort of social-economic Salvation Army. The Government in despair shouts—Emigrate!—Where to? it does not say. And how? The Dominions have the last word and the veto. The tactics of 1847—slow starvation, coffin ships and emigration wholesale will not work. Anticipating the mind of the governing class Hugh Dalton, Labor M. P. said, relief instalments would not do and that so far what was done "was only a drop in the bucket." Unemployment will be the chief question at the forthcoming general elections. Should the Labor party be victors as the straws indicate, British businessmen will repeat the famous French saying of '48, "Legalism is killing us", when they will be forced to pay for genuine remedies by the Labor government. Or will there be a reactionary revolt like Carson's in Ulster?

## HOME-MADE JINGOISM



Satirizing the peaceful pose of Uncle Sam who got his Kellogg Treaty and his Cruiser Bill from the Senate, the "New York World" in this cartoon, translates the Yankee business man into a blustering jingo of the Caribbean. While the Kellogg Treaty tells Europe "All is well; I'm sending over J. P. Morgan for your banks and loose change," the Cruiser Bill tells the world, "I am all set; who's first to tread on my coat?"

AMANULLAH DEPOSED



After making peace with China Britain turned to Afghanistan and according to the radical press of London is promoting a counter-revolution in a friendly sovereign state. It sent cash to the rebel chiefs and airplanes to shower leaflets on Kabul and adjoining territory as a prelude to bombs. The planes were later used to "rescue" women and children who it has since been admitted, both by themselves and by the British Minister, were never in danger. Both Delhi and London admit they "backed the wrong horse" in the puppet they placed on the Afghan throne. An obscure soldier took the place of the British nominee after three days. He is suspected of being supported by Amanullah and the Soviet. The former by the way is conveniently quartered at Kandahar. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the butcher of 4000 Hindoos at Armitzar, told the London papers that Amanullah should be punished because he "insulted India and Britain when he forced them to recognize the independence of his country during the World War." The above cartoon from the Moscow "Isvestia" illustrates a viewpoint not exclusively Russian nor German since it is not the first time a progressive ruler was knifed.

From Iraq comes news that the King and his ministers are not pleased with the tutelage of the British. They want complete control of their country and the armed forces in it. They are clashing with the British in Trans-

Jordania where the tool is Emir Abdullah who has a small force but is supported by British airplanes and armored cars. In another border the Irak King is confronted by the Wahabis tribesmen who have massacred the natives and are trying to get full control of all the good grass lands of the section. The economic basis of the row with the British is the chemical supplies that the London capitalists are after. There are over ten million tons of raw materials for fertilizing and explosives in the country. Irak and Palestine, where the Zionists are battling for their rights are, taken together, the jugular vein of the British Empire. London's aims are therefore obvious.

MUSSOLINI BACKS DOWN

Jugo-Slavia has a dictator who is playing true to form. King Alexander after his coup-de-etat arrested Socialists, radicals and even conservative union workers. Paris is supporting the Dictator as an offset to the growing power of Mussolini in the Balkans. The Duce got his first bad set back from the President of Argentine. The latter closed the ports of the La Plata to Italian ships when Mussolini said children of Italian parents born in Argentina must be his subjects. Two days of economic pressure by Iroygien and Mussolini backed down. Spain is nationalizing its oil wells and forcing the foreign capitalists to withdraw. The United States, Britain and France are not declaring war on Spain or treating it as Mexico and Nicaragua were by Washington. The principle is the same in both Mexico and Spain but the nations are different.

REWARDING THE ROGUE



Australia which pays London bankers \$300,000,000 a year on its domestic governmental and commercial indebtedness, is now confronted by the additional task of paying \$100,000,000 war interest to its own bond-holders while it only pays \$35,000,000 out in pensions to the crippled veterans who helped to win the war and save the Empire. The cartoon here taken from the Brisbane Worker reveals the Plutocrat and the Graftocrat with the spoils while the cripple gets the crumbs, to the disgust of the common people.



“Say It With Books”



## UMPIRING INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

Wage Arbitration, Selected Cases, 1920-1924, by George Soule, The Macmillan Co. \$2.00.

WHEN unions and employers agree to submit wage issues to arbitration, what happens then? Do union officials simply sit at the table and shout “We want more.” Or do they engage advisors and collect data to support their claims.

Some may believe that all negotiations with employers, even at the arbitration stage, consist of much shaking of fists and many vigorous assertions. This book, written by one who has taken part in many arbitration proceedings, gives a somewhat different picture of what goes on, at least when arbitration is agreed to. It shows the union using technical men to prove its case with facts and figures.

By the use of a sort of case method, George Soule describes how the two sides are presented in wage arbitrations and gives the arguments advanced in certain typical hearings. Examples are taken from the years 1920 to 1924 and for the following industries: book job printing, railroads, meat-packing and women’s garments. Worker readers in those industries hence will be specially interested in owning this book.

The study covers a period when the use of arbitration was more common than it is now in American industries, for the unions were then stronger and more widely recognized. Since then, the packing house worker’s organizations have been swept away by the power of the millionaire exploiters of Chicago, leaving a sickly set of company unions in their places; garment workers unions are demoralized; railroad workers have been greatly weakened.

Before the next stage of arbitration is reached new unions will have to be built in many industries, militant campaigns will have to be waged, vigorous agitation will have to be carried on. For arbitration does not come through conciliatory, “strikes are obsolete” statements from labor leaders who have no will to fight and no effective unions behind them. Such machinery is developed out of the struggles of unions powerful enough to force recognition from corporations.

Without attempting to summarize the valuable material contained in these case records of 1922-’24 we may set down certain general conclusions concerning arbitration suggested by a reading of this book.

1. Arbitration is not a substitute for the strike, except under circumstances defined and decided by the

union itself. It goes without saying that no effective union will ever agree to do away with the right to strike in favor of any kind of arbitration. Over certain questions, for a certain limited period, the union may agree not to strike. But it should never agree to arbitrate at all times and all questions.

2. It follows that there are certain issues, “recognition” for example, or fundamental questions of hours or other important working conditions, which can never be left to arbitration. Certainly arbitration should never be permitted before a union is recognized by the corporation. Secretary of Labor Davis, for example, proposing arbitration to Passaic strikers, acts as a virtual strike-breaker.

3. No arbitration imposed by law should be accepted by a union. Nor any quasi-legal arrangements such as those proposed by Bar Associations or similar essentially anti-union bodies. No public boards or “industrial courts” should ever be tolerated under a capitalist government. Compulsory arbitration is, of course, a form of tyranny to be classed with injunctions and similar methods used by an owning class government to defeat the workers.

It is clear from every line of this book, as well as from the experience of workers in this and other countries, that there can be no such thing as a wage arbitration unless the workers are organized voluntarily and independently. Company unions sometimes make use of the term “arbitration” to designate the sort of cat and mouse play that goes on between a corporation and its dependent “association of employees.” Such phantom and fictitious “collective bargaining” should never be confused with negotiations and arbitrations where the workers are represented by a bona fide union. There can be no such thing as arbitration as the word is understood in this book, under the slavery of company unionism.

Another point that becomes plain from a reading of this volume is that the relative strength of the parties in any dispute brought to arbitration has a strong psychological effect on the most impartial arbitrator and is usually taken into consideration in making a decision. No matter how disinterested the arbitrator may seem to be, the fact that a union is powerful enough to make real “trouble” should the decision give inadequate consideration to its grievances, is bound to have much weight in the outcome irrespective of the relative merits of the arguments presented. The moral of this for workers is clear: don’t depend on arbitrators. Build strong unions.

ROBERT DUNN.

## OLD AGE PENSIONS

### Pressing Need for Machine's Victims

The Challenge of the Aged, by Abraham Epstein; Macy-Massius, price \$3.00.

THE virile Theodore Roosevelt feared to Chinify the United States and yet, according to "The Challenge of the Aged" in so far as its treatment of the aged is concerned, the United States is in the same class with China and India, both at the lowest rung of the industrial ladder.

Prior to the advent of the Industrial Revolution and after its appearance, the old workers were not only highly paid because of their skill but were also in great demand. The tremendous improvement in machinery according to Mr. Epstein has not only increased production and the wealth of the owners and speculative classes but also simplified the industrial process to such an extent that the skill of the worker is no longer needed. To add to the worry of the former skilled worker, modern machinery has speeded production to such a degree that the older men can no longer maintain the machine's pace. Hence men of 40 or over, heretofore in great demand because of their skill, now find themselves either in the economic scrap heap or forced to accept a menial's wage. If these calamities were not enough, medical science is increasing the span of life and with it, the increasing dependency of the workers. What does America intend to do in the face of this challenge?

The average American, dominated by his strong individualistic philosophy, is opposed to socialism or to the theory that society owes every willing and able worker a job that will keep him and his family in reasonable comfort. With the inauguration by large firms of a definite policy to hire no worker over 35 or 40 unless they can pass a most rigid physical examination, Mr. Epstein believes that the former independent and proud workers are now finding themselves without opportunities for employment. Too proud to accept odd jobs or those paying less than their accustomed scale, they are slowly distintegrating while subsisting upon the charity of their children, who are enduring hardships rather than suffer the disgrace of having the father become an object of "charity."

The American Federation of Labor, still under the influence of the ideals of the National Civic Federation and its acting president, Mr. Matthew Woll, has given lip service to the plight of the aged but has taken no aggres-

sive step to force Congress to enact an Old Age Pension Act. Contrast this drifting policy with the vigorous conduct of the Federation of Labor under the fearless Socialist leader, James H. Maurer, who, early in 1917, introduced an Old Age Pension Act into the Pennsylvania legislature! Contrast further America's neglect with the prevalence of comprehensive plans of social insurance to be found everywhere on the continent of Europe.

Why then this striking difference between the continent and the United States? Because the workers of Europe cannot be frightened by the "socialist bogey" or any other bogey. Moreover, the workers of Europe believe that it is the function of government and industry to take care of the sick, the injured, the old and the unemployed.



From a Woodcut by Douglas Percy Bliss  
Old Age Pensions Counteract the Spectre of the Poorhouse.

Social legislation is regarded by the workers of Europe as an indispensable part of the industrial overhead while the enlightened employers regard such legislation as necessary to industrial stability.

The writer earnestly hopes that Brother Epstein's "Challenge of the Aged" will not only galvanize organized labor into effective action on behalf of the aged but, what is of far greater importance, will help to develop a new spirit among the workers of America so that they will look upon social legislation as an economic necessity. Never in our history has organized labor so urgently needed such a challenge. We hope labor will read Brother Epstein's book and meet its challenge with its old militant spirit and usher in a new industrial day for the discouraged workers of America.

ABRAHAM LEFKOWITZ.

### TACTFUL MANAGEMENT

Personnel by Geo. R. Hulverson. Business Administration Series, edited by J. O. McKinsey, Ronald Press Co., New York. Pp. 385 and Index. \$4.50.

"PERSONNEL" is the title of a book by Geo. R. Hulverson, who was long closely associated with me at a school in California, where I learnt to know him as a man of broad outlook, sympathetic to the laboring man in his struggle.

Hulverson spent a number of years as personnel manager of Burrough's Adding Machine Company and in other big concerns, in which capacity he found great

opportunity to put to practical use this sympathy with labor's problems and to increase his knowledge of the situation.

That usefulness is likely to be extended through the present book, in which, with the tact which was always one of his characteristics, he presents to a public that would be largely made up of employers and others likely to have an anti-labor slant somewhat of the viewpoint of the man whose only capital is the muscle and skill which he brings to the job.

In his introductory chapter, Hulverson stresses a note which is heard repeatedly throughout the book, namely, "that it is obviously reasonable to provide working conditions which will increase the comfort and convenience of the employees." He brings this home to the employer, never as a question of charity, but more as a matter of good business principle. But over and above that he shows that the working man in any big concern will generally, by the fact of his affiliation with it, be led to "welcome an opportunity of doing something out of the ordinary" for the concern, and that consequently through such means as decent wages, proper conditions of work, a human type of relationship, and even "through the establishment of personal service, the employer has an opportunity of expressing a corresponding attitude of helpfulness and interest."

But the book would be of less than its actual value if it stopped at pointing out even these desirable facts. Its greater service is that of pointing out the actual technique for carrying them into practice, with, of course, emphasis on that phase of the work in which Hulverson has himself specialized, namely, the procedure of the employing of the man and training them for better positions, etc.

PRYNCE HOPKINS.

## CLASS FREEDOM IN RUSSIA

Liberty Under the Soviets by Roger N. Baldwin. Vanguard Press: (272 pp. 50 cents).

ROGER BALDWIN, who has concerned himself with human liberty as much perhaps as any man of his generation, maintains in his book on Russia just published, that there is not only more liberty under the Soviets than under the Czars, but also than in the bourgeois democracies of Western Europe and of America.

When the last barriers of class are destroyed, when all men and women become workers, then the State now so drastic in its control, will cease to function and will become vestigial and eventually "wither away." Baldwin quotes Lenin: "While the State exists there can be no freedom. When there is freedom there can be no State." This is the distant and difficult end towards which Communists are working and which to their minds justifies the means they employ in bringing it to pass.

Not individual liberty, but class liberty—not personal rights, the cry of the democrat or liberal, but class rights—to emerge from the abyss of oppression and attain freedom one must do so not alone and apart from others and at the expense of others, but as one of a class whose fortunes rise or fall with the triumph or defeat of the class to which he belongs.

Freedom has always been the possession of those who hold the economic power. In capitalistic countries the exploiting classes are the free and the privileged, and control the governments and all the ways of life. In Russia, according to Roger Baldwin, the government is designed for the safeguarding of the interests of the working masses in factory and field. There all power is to the Soviets, all power lies in the hands of the workers and the poorer peasantry.

The old is dead. The new is not yet born. Much of the brutality, barbarism and stupidity of the government's treatment of counter-revolutionists is a direct heritage of the past with its dark and terrible history of persecution and death. There are inherent forces in the country which persist from era to era even through revolutionary change. Paine knew this when he recognized the features of the regime of Louis XIV in the French Revolution.

If he were living in Russia the author does not hesitate to say, he would, no doubt, find himself either in prison or in exile. Though in sympathy with the basic, economic ideas of communism, its aims and tendencies, Baldwin has always protested against the treatment of Russian political prisoners at the hands of the Bolshevik State, and was one of those who helped publish "Letters from Russian Prisons." He states and explains but he never minimizes nor condones his findings of excessive and unnecessary cruelty on the part of the government in its treatment of political prisoners, and often of gross stupidity. For the writer of this book is the same Roger Baldwin of unimpeachable moral and intellectual integrity, who, during the agony of the war, joined the thin ranks of those who fought for fraternity as opposed to those of fratricide, and who, since then, has devoted his life to the cause of civil liberty.

Crimes committed in the name of liberty, war waged in the cause of peace—it is life's tragic paradox! Surely new forms must be found, new ways of carrying on revolutions! No one wishes to stand towards the Russian revolution in the relation of Burke towards the French Revolution, but if the heart of so true and so passionate a lover of freedom as that of Roger Baldwin did not quail at what he found in Russia, if his spirit emerged stronger and more full of faith than ever is it not in itself a guarantee that out of the new status for man won by Russia on the economic and social plane will rise that new world in which man will never again be called upon to do violence to the spirit of man?

ANNA STRUNSKY WALLING.

DEMAND BREAD WITH THIS INTERNATIONAL UNION LABEL:



This Will Help the Bakers



# Time for Action

The time has come for the thoughts and aspirations of progressives to be translated into action. In this issue we publish an editorial statement presenting the program of the progressive elements in the labor movement, as we understand it. LABOR AGE feels that this program fairly represents their views, but no program is worth anything unless it is converted into action.

Carrying out this program may involve serious efforts. It may demand a great deal of sacrifice, but no trade unionist worth his mettle will hesitate to back up his convictions to the limit of his moral and material resources.

Accordingly, we call upon you, labor progressives, to tell us what you think about our program and what you are ready to do to realize it.

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LABOR AGE is now definitely becoming the mouthpiece of the militant and progressive trade unionists. Our next issue will be our seventh anniversary celebration number. In it we expect to outline our program in greater detail—not merely to publish a series of articles on various points of our program but we also expect to give expression to the views of progressives all over the country. We shall in that issue summarize the messages we receive from militant trade unionists everywhere concerning our program and our plans for the future.

The anniversary issue starts a great movement. It is therefore essential that it shall be put into the hands of the greatest possible number of active workers. Will you not help us by sending in bundle orders immediately.

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