

# THE LABOR HERALD

Official Organ of The Trade Union Educational League



Another Year of the League — The Coming Struggle

FEBRUARY 1924

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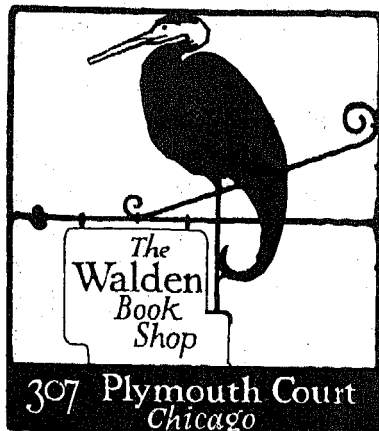
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# THE LABOR HERALD

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## The Coming Struggle

By Wm. Z. Foster

**M**ANY indications are at hand to show that the position of influence and leadership won during the past couple of years by the left-wing elements in many sections of the trade union movement is about to be sorely tried and tested. We may look, during the oncoming months, for a great sharpening of the struggle between the reactionary and revolutionary forces, and forever greater demands being made upon the left-wing's claim to leadership.

### The Economic Crisis

The basic cause of these developments will be the business depression now looming on the industrial horizon. Signs of this multiply on all sides. Industry is gradually slowing down. Already several large lines of work have been heavily hit. Unemployment is steadily on the increase. It may be several months before the full force of the crisis hits us, but that it is developing only the most optimistic will deny. Events in Europe are hastening the American industrial breakdown. Germany, ever a great customer of the United States, is now in a state of collapse and totally incapable of absorbing any considerable show of products from this country. England and France are also gradually drifting towards similar economic chaos. This is eloquently demonstrated by the recent spectacular decline in the value of the pound sterling and the franc. Stripped of such great customers as Germany, England and France, the United States cannot hope to go along for any considerable length of time. Inevitably the breakdown must come.

The impending crisis will without fail engender a bitter attack by the capitalists against the organizations and standards of living of the workers. This great "open shop" drive will be fought out under conditions particularly favorable to the capitalists and disadvantageous to the workers. On the one hand, the capitalists have gained tremendously in organized strength and self-confidence in the past few years. Having beaten the trade unions time and again, they have lost all respect for the latter's fighting ability and they will start the offensive with the

avowed intention of crushing them altogether. On the other hand, the workers, dispirited from their many defeats and with little confidence in their leaders and organizations, will go into the fight half whipped. Faced by the aggressive employers, who are driven on by their own militant spirit and the force of economic necessity to cut wages, lengthen hours, and worsen working conditions, the workers, harassed on all sides by the army of unemployed, will be confronted by a desperate situation. When it develops, the coming "open shop" drive will create a life and death struggle for the entire labor movement.

### Betrayal by Yellow Leaders

In this critical situation absolutely no reliance may be placed in the yellow bureaucracy now so generally controlling the labor movement. Although their policy of class collaboration has proved such a failure in the past, they will cling to it more desperately than ever in the industrial crisis. Just when the workers most need to make a determined stand, is exactly when the yellow leaders will be most bitterly opposed to a fight and most decided in favor of compromise and yielding. When the pressure is put upon them they will accept drastic wage cuts, give up the eight hour day, allow the reintroduction of piece work, and generally abandon the hard-won conquests of the trade unions. In short, they will still further intensify the cowardice, timidity, stupidity and shortsightedness, which have brought the labor movement to its present sorry pass. If they have their way in carrying out such a policy of surrender, the workers will become still further demoralized and disheartened and will quit the labor organizations in great flocks. One of the worst factors the workers will have to contend with in the coming struggle is their own weak-kneed leaders. In times of industrial prosperity, when the battle of the workers is easier, the policy of conciliation is bad enough; but in times of industrial depression it is a disaster.

Such leadership as will be displayed in the advancing crisis must come from the left-wing. It is up to the militant revolutionaries to promulgate

the necessary policies of resistance and to see to it that they are adopted. We must hearten the workers, unorganized as well as organized, to make a stand for their rights and to desperately resist all attempts to further enslave them. If we fail to go at this task clear-headedly and determinedly then we fail in our mission as the advance guard of the proletariat. Such a militant policy upon our part will bring us into most drastic conflict with the bureaucrats now heading the unions. Eager to put across their policy of class collaboration and thus to curry favor with the employers, they will ruthlessly try to crush all opposition among the rank and file.

This is the real explanation of the great struggle now going on between the "rights" and "lefts" in the needle trades. In that industry the industrial crisis is much further advanced than in other industries. Work is scarce and unemployment bears down upon the workers like a plague. The employers are militant and on the offensive. Already the yellow leaders are prepared to surrender to them many of the most precious conquests of the workers. To this the left-wing is unshakably opposed. Hence, the growth of the struggle. Similar situations may be looked for in other industries where the left-wing is strong enough to raise its voice against the fatal policy of class collaboration. But these, with all their attendant hardships and persecutions against the militants, must be accepted as a matter of course in our general effort to rejuvenate the labor movement. Those who, through ignorance or design, consider the struggle between the "rights" and "lefts" merely a quarrel over personalities and abstract ideas utterly falsify the situation. The great question is, shall the struggle of the workers be carried upon the basis of class collaboration, as the reactionaries want it, or upon the basis of the class struggle, as the revolutionaries advocate. This difference in viewpoint brings the two groups into conflict all along the line, and no amount of sooth-saying can prevent the struggle.

#### Reviewing the League's Policies

In view of the threatening situation it will be well for us to re-value the policies of the Trade Union Educational League, especially with regard to their availability in the event of an industrial depression and a strong offensive by the employers. There are some militants who say that in such a crisis the slogan of amalgamation will be useless. Indeed, they even declare that this slogan has already lost most of its value. But such militants are entirely wrong. Industrial unionism is a basic need of the working class in good times and bad. The campaign for amalga-

mation is not a thing that may be advocated or dropped at will. It must go ahead increasingly until either industrial unionism is achieved, or there is some method devised to bring it about other than by consolidating the existing unions. It is exactly in periods of industrial depression, when the unions are on the retreat, that the workers can see most clearly the necessity for solidifying their ranks. In the oncoming crisis, therefore, we must not give up our amalgamation campaign, but intensify it.

The same is true of the labor party campaign. That, too, must be gone ahead with more vigorously than ever. American history (not to speak of that of other countries) shows that the working class is most active politically during industrial crises. At such times the workers, losing faith in the weakened unions, tend to turn their attention towards winning their demands on the political field. In "good" times the unions attract the workers' support; in "bad" times it goes to the political parties of Labor. This cycle has regularly occurred for more than half a century with the rising and falling of industrial activity. Hence, during the approaching depression the workers will be particularly susceptible to political movements. We must take advantage of this favorable situation by redoubling our efforts to launch the great Labor Party of workers and exploited farmers. But, in so doing, we must not fall into the common error of the masses and neglect the unions. These must be preserved and stimulated at all costs. To allow them to weaken would be merely to play the game of the employers.

#### Organization Campaigns Essential

Some militants declare, with the utmost feeling of conviction, that our slogan of "Organize the Unorganized" will be useless during the industrial crisis and should be discarded. But this is a dangerous illusion. Such a move on our part would be a great mistake. The need to organize the workers, like the need to amalgamate the unions, is a constant need in good times and bad. It must be emphasized always. It is true that during periods of depression the unions cannot ordinarily be made to grow. But we should not give up our organization campaign on that account. Quite the contrary. During industrial depressions it serves the purpose, not so much of bringing new workers into the unions, as of holding in them those workers who are already organized. Every practical trade unionist knows the tremendous value of a vigorous insistence upon the necessity for organization just at the time when the morale of the workers, under the constant pounding of the employers, is lowest

and when the unions tend to disintegrate. In "good" times the "Organize the Unorganized" campaign extends the unions; in "bad" times it preserves them. At no time may we give it up.

Other leading policies of the League, such as the propagation of the ideal of a Workers' and Farmers' Government, affiliation to the Red International of Labor Unions, recognition of Soviet Russia, protection of the foreign-born workers, defense of political prisoners, etc., must, of course, be carried on in industrial depressions as well as at other times. No argument is necessary to demonstrate this.

### Some New Policies

Although none of the central policies now being advocated by the League may be dropped during the threatened industrial crisis, certain new ones must be adopted. One of these is a militant campaign against wage cuts, lengthening of the workday, re-establishment of piece work, etc. The left-wing movement must put itself at the very head of the workers, unorganized and organized, in their battles to preserve their standards of living against the assaults of the employers. To the full extent of our resources we must sound the slogans of resistance throughout the industries and labor movement of the United States and Canada. As the crisis intensifies our slogans must be, "No Reductions in Wages," "No Lengthening of the Workday," "No Reintroduction of Piece Work," "No Slackening of Union Standards." Wherever workers congregate in shops, local unions, city central bodies, state federations, international conventions, etc., we must raise our voices and rouse the workers to repel the enemy. We must show them that the left-wing alone has a real program, one capable of defending their interests. The development of a great "open shop" drive will throw a big burden of leadership on the left-wing; it will also give it a splendid opportunity to increase its hold upon the masses of workers.

In the struggles that will come between the workers and the employers, another policy that the League must put into effect, already outlined at the Second General Conference, is militant resistance to the injunction. For many years this judicial usurpation has been a menace to Organized Labor, and it may be depended upon that the employers will use it to the limit in the coming "open shop" drive. If so, it will be a supreme duty of the League militants to counter it by stirring the workers to mass disobedience of all injunctions restrictive of the workers' rights. In 1921 when the railroad shopmen struck, the injunction was used against them

with tremendous effect. Unfortunately at that time the League was too young and weak to organize a real fight against it. But in the coming crisis the League will be ready. We must break the next great injunction, which will probably come during the approaching crisis. In organizing the workers against the injunction lies one of the best ways for the left-wing to gain leadership over the masses. "Mass Disobedience of Injunctions" must be one of our most important slogans in the intense labor struggles ahead.

Finally, when the crisis develops, we must meet squarely the problem of unemployment. We must point out to the workers how this curse is the inevitable offspring of the capitalist system and how it can never be done away with until that system is abolished and succeeded by a new workers' society. We must also fight resolutely for the adoption of meliorative measures, industrial and political, such as the shortening of the workday, division of work amongst all the workers in each industry, insistence that the employers be compelled to furnish out-of-work pay to the unemployed workers, federal relief and maintenance for the unemployed, etc. Finally, we must organize the unemployed into demonstrations, councils, and in such other ways as practical experience may prove expedient. In carrying out this program, however, premature action will injure our cause. We must be sure that the evils are malignant before we treat them as such.

### The Everyday Struggle

In the coming crisis, even as in its ordinary work, the aim of the League must be to plunge directly into the actual struggles of the workers and to, so far as possible, take the practical leadership of them. To stand aloof from the battling workers and to bombard them with theories and slogans is vain and futile, no matter how beautiful such theories and slogans may be. The very breath of life of the left-wing movement is to take the most active part possible in all the efforts of the workers against their masters. We must not rest in the field of abstraction, but go into that of reality. Trade questions, the immediate issues which the workers are interested in, are meat and drink for us. We must take advantage of the movements naturally developing around them and, by winning the confidence of the workers through our practical leadership, get them to accept our whole revolutionary program. Not fine spun theorizing, but actual leadership in the struggle, must be the goal of all militants in the stormy days ahead for the labor movement.



# Another Year of the League

By Earl R. Browder

**W**HILE the first year's intensive activity of the Trade Union Educational League was dominantly propagandist, the second year was marked by great organizational achievements, and the coming twelve-months will present the decisive struggle to establish program and organization in the life of the American labor movement. This, in brief, summarizes the rich experiences of our work, indicates the stages through which our movement has grown, and points out the tasks of the year before us.

Propagandist efforts, the dissemination of the program of the T. U. E. L., is fundamental to our work. To say that the first year of our work was propagandist and the second year organizational, does not mean that propaganda stopped during the second year. On the contrary, at least ten times more was achieved in the year just ending than in the first year. But the second year's educational work is marked by a new factor—it is accompanied by the establishment of definite organization forms, crystallizing throughout the labor movement all the forces of progress and revolution into a machinery for carrying over the program of the League from theory to action. Organizational achievements are the outstanding contributions of the last year.

## Development of Industrial Committees

Before the close of the first year we had a demonstration of the development that the left-wing forces must undergo, when the Railroad Amalgamation Conference met in Chicago in December, 1922. More than 500 delegates from all over the country met, and established the Railroad Committee which has since published the *Railroad Amalgamation Advocate* and organized 3,377 local unions into the movement for industrial unionism. The Needle Trades Section of the T. U. E. L. followed suit with a national conference, May 5-6, New York City, in a great gathering that unified, for the first time, a national left-wing movement within the entire industry. Early in May, a national conference was held of militants in the Textile industry, and a committee established there also, which has been a militant factor in later developments. On May 13th, a national conference of militants in the Shoe and Leather industry was held in Boston, which instituted the Amalgamation Committee for that industry. The Metal Trades Committee, first organized at the time of the Railroad Conference, held its second conference in Chicago in September, 1923. The Building Trades Committee was organized provisionally in May,

and held its first conference in September in Chicago. The culmination of the campaign of organization was the great conference of the Progressive Miners, held in Pittsburgh, Pa., June 2-3, in which participated more than 200 delegates from all the coal mining states of the country.

The year shows active International Committees at work, uniting the activities of all left-wingers upon uniform programs, in the Railroad Industry, the Metal Industry, the Needle Trades, the Building Trades, the Printing Trades, the Food Industry, the Shoe and Leather Industry, the Textile Industry, the Marine Transport Industry, the Tobacco Industry, and the Coal Mining Industry. All of these Committees have printed and circulated complete plans of industrial unionism through amalgamation, and various other planks of the left wing program, in quantities ranging from 10,000 to 100,000 copies each. Six industrial publications have been launched; they are, *Railroad Amalgamation Advocate*, the *Metal Trades Amalgamation Bulletin*, the *Needle Worker*, the *Progressive Building Trades Worker*, the *Progressive Miner*, and the *Industrialist*, organ of the Printing Trades Committee. The railroad and mining papers are bi-monthly while the others are monthly. Their circulation ranges from 5,000 to 20,000 copies each.

## Completing the Organizational Machinery

In addition to the industrial conferences mentioned, there were several district conferences which went far to build up the power of the T. U. E. L. The Eastern District conference, held in New York on May 6th, consisted of 160 delegates from 17 cities. It definitely established the League organizationally in New England and the industrial States of the East. The Canadian District held two conferences, the Eastern section conference at Toronto, in August, and the Western conference in Edmonton, in September. Both were very successful and registered deep impressions upon the Canadian labor movement. In July, a conference of the Western railroaders was held in Tacoma, under the auspices of the Railroad Committee, which further consolidated the organization of the railroad militants. The Central District held a conference in Chicago in September, in conjunction with the Second General Conference of the T. U. E. L.

When the Second General Conference gathered on September 1-2, in Chicago, another measure was had of the organizational advance made by

the League during the year. Not only was the conference more than twice as large as the first one a year before, but it covered more than 90 industrial centers and included Canada and Mexico. A large part of the proceedings were taken up in organizational matters; plans were executed for hooking up all loose ends; and international connections established between the industrial committees and the various international propaganda committees of the R. I. L. U.

Another organizational achievement was that made by the establishment of the Red International Committee, which co-ordinates the activities of the League and the various unions affiliated or sympathetic to the R. I. L. U. This committee completes the organizational structure of the entire left wing of the American labor movement, and leaves the organizational problem as one of simply filling in and building up the established machinery.

### **Educational Work More Successful**

In the meantime propaganda has been wider and more effective than ever. The well-known fact that 16 State Federations of Labor and 14 International Unions have been put on record for industrial unionism through amalgamation is not so important as the less-known fact that literally thousands of local unions and central bodies have been permeated with the idea. In the railroad industry alone considerably more than 3,000 locals formally endorsed the Minnesota Plan. The scope of amalgamation propaganda has everywhere taken on this profound rank and file character. Such conservative unions as the Iron Molders and the Lithographers, known for years as anything but radical, have joined the movement, demonstrating again how deeply the left-wing forces have penetrated the working masses with the revolutionary ferment.

The campaign for establishment of a labor party has been most effectively participated in by the T. U. E. L. It was the League that made the first national move toward crystallizing the nation-wide sentiment that existed into definite organization, by sending out its famous referendum in March, 1923, to 35,000 local unions throughout the country. The overwhelmingly favorable response to this move had a great deal to do with the successful gathering of more than 500 delegates a few months later in the July 3-5 Convention in Chicago. Local and state labor parties have sprung into being in dozens of places, under the stimulus of the propaganda carried on by the militants in the T. U. E. L. and the Workers Party. The Federated Farmer-Labor Party has become a power through the support thus organized.

In all the other issues close to the left-wing elements the T. U. E. L. has played a leading part in stirring up the labor movement to their consideration. For example, the case of Jacob Dolla, steel strike militant railroaded to the penitentiary in Pennsylvania, was brought before the labor movement by THE LABOR HERALD. That there is hope for Dolla's release today is due to the agitation of the League militants. The League participated in one of the greatest educational campaigns ever conducted, in the trial of Wm. Z. Foster in Michigan. THE LABOR HERALD has laid the basis for sound movements of organization in various industries, by the publication of articles analyzing the problems of the Ford industries, the electrical industry, the rubber industry, and the automobile industry generally. In the question of immigration and the migration of negro labor, the League published, in the articles of the late Clarissa S. Ware, a program that received the most wide-spread attention in Europe as well as America. Through the publication of its pamphlets, the T. U. E. L. has stimulated thought and study throughout the labor movement, on the questions of the Red International, Fascism, the Russian Trade Unions, as well as the more intimate questions of the trade unions.

### **Reactionaries War Against the League**

Deep and profound has been the effect of the T. U. E. L. activity among the rank and file. Among the official bureaucrats the effect has been equally strong, but in an opposite direction. The reactionaries have taken up the alarm sounded a year earlier by Samuel Gompers, and joined in a holy war against the League. In this campaign they have openly called upon the employers for assistance, a typical example of which is seen in the Searles articles sponsored by the United Mine Workers. Fear of the League and its activity has worked miracles in wiping out feuds of long standing between reactionary labor leaders; an example was shown when John Lewis and Frank Farrington, at each others throats for years in the Miners Union, suddenly made peace and formed an alliance, within a week after the Progressive Miners Conference.

It is probable that 1924 will be characterized by a more systematic war against the left wing by the reactionary officialdom. This is to be expected. Now that the League has definitely established its program among the revolutionary and progressive elements, and the whole left wing is beginning to crystallize its forces into the organization network established under the leadership of the League, the bureaucrats will frantically endeavor to beat back its rising in-

fluence. But the beginnings of their efforts, experienced during the past year, give confidence to the militants rather than otherwise. For while the reactionary officials have been able to do great harm to the unions themselves, which is a very bad thing and to be overcome in every way possible, yet they have not diminished the power of the left wing. Quite the contrary. The left wing has become more powerful since it has been forced to fight for its life.

There have been four main efforts to break the progressive forces, in the leather, mining, and needle trades, and by the Gompers machine in the A. F. of L. Convention at Portland. In the leather industry, an effort was made by Bryan, president of the Leatherworkers Union, to expel the members of the Amalgamation Committee. It failed dismally. The rank and file came to the support of the attacked men and forced the bureaucrats to drop the cases. In the mining industry the struggle has been more bitter; it has involved the betrayal of the Nova Scotia miners to the British Empire Steel Corporation by Lewis, and the break-up of the District administration by Lewis "organizers." It has been carried to the extent of the expulsion of Tom Myerscough, secretary of the Progressive Committee. But generally the local unions have refused to carry out the expulsion program of Lewis and Co., and the rank and file militants are stronger than ever before in the history of the union.

The fight in the International Ladies Garment Workers and Furriers Union has been the most intense. It has cost the Unions much in strength and membership, and threatens to do more harm if the bureaucrats are not brought to a halt. To the militant and revolutionary workers it has meant much hardship and suffering. But from the standpoint of the growth in power and influence of the left-wing program and leadership, even this struggle has forwarded our movement greatly. Never before have so many thousands of needle workers been convinced of the neces-

sity of amalgamation of all needle trades unions, of a labor party, of revolutionary leadership, as they have been convinced by the war fought by the present officialdom against the Trade Union Educational League. The officialdom has shot its heaviest artillery already, and the membership of the needle unions are more than ever overwhelmingly with the left wing. Ways and means to register the rank and file revolt effectively and overwhelmingly is the problem for 1924 in the needle trades.

It is the systematic campaign for class collaboration, organized and executed especially within the last year by the reactionary officials, that gives the guarantee of more rapid and solid development of the left wing in the future. Whether it desires or not, the membership of the labor unions will more and more be forced to fight against their official leaders, because these leaders are flagrantly and openly selling them out to the employers. The institutions of class collaboration set up, the revival of insurance as the basis of unionism, the "labor bank" craze, the Johnston "co-operation" scheme of efficiency engineering, and the Gompers-Lewis-Berry program laid down in Portland, all combine to force the masses of workers to the left because the official union machinery is being tied up to capitalism so closely that it cannot even partially function to protect wages and hours.

Carefully surveying the second year of the Trade Union Educational League we can say: our program has been proved sound and it has been established with the progressive and revolutionary labor unionists; our organizational methods and forms have been established and, when sufficiently backed by the enrollment of every militant who believes in the program, meet the needs of the movement; and our militants have shown themselves to be first-class fighters, when necessity arises. The coming year may confidently be expected to see the Trade Union Educational League move forward to new achievements.

## ***Idaho 17th State Federation for Amalgamation***

**M**EEETING at Pocatello, January 14th, the Idaho State Federation of Labor adopted a resolution for industrial unionism through amalgamation of existing unions, thus becoming the seventeenth such body to join the amalgamation movement. It also approved the project of independent working-class political action through the

formation of a Labor Party, endorsed the recognition of Soviet Russia, and denounced the State criminal syndicalist law. Full reports are not available as THE LABOR HERALD goes to press, but from the action on these four vital measures Idaho can be fully classified as a member of the progressive wing of the American labor movement.

# Minnesota Invites You

By C. A. Hathaway

**I**N extending an invitation to visit Minnesota on May 30th, we should explain the scenic beauties of this great "North Star State." We should tell of its rich farm lands, its wonderful iron mines, its forests, and its thousands of lakes with the resulting boating, fishing and bathing. But what's the use! We know with economic conditions as they are in America today, the workers and farmers are not the ones who inhabit our summer resorts and travel throughout our state in high powered automobiles. Under capitalism nature's beauty is not for the workers—and for this very reason we invite the workers and farmers to Minnesota.

In Minnesota, as in all other states, our natural resources have been taken over by financial interests, our iron mines are in the hands of the U. S. Steel Corporation, our forests are controlled by the Weyerhaeuser Lumber Trust, and our "rich" farm lands are rapidly passing into the hands of the banking interests through mortgage foreclosures.

After years of this exploitation, the producing masses of the state finally woke up to a realization of the fact that they must forge a political weapon with which to wrest control of government from their exploiters. Out of this desire was born the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota. Two U. S. Senators have been elected, not men who will wage a militant fight for the class interests of the workers and farmers, but nevertheless men who subconsciously realize that something is wrong in society and that certain sound reforms are necessary. This movement also came very close to electing its entire state ticket at the last election and we all confidently expect to put it over next November.

But out of our experiences within our own state, we came to realize that this struggle for freedom from capitalist domination could not be won without developing our party into a national movement. We looked around us for the first time (Minnesota has always been hopelessly isolated from all national movements) and we found that while we had been conscientiously sawing wood at home, that the workers in many of our sister states had also awakened to the need of entering into a struggle for political power,—why, to our great surprise, we even found that a few groups had been farsighted enough to try to form national parties.

After looking the situation over, we, in Minnesota, felt that this was the logical time for us to step in and try our hand at forming a national

united front of all workers' and farmers' economic and political groups for the presidential campaign of 1924. With that end in view William Mahoney, representing the organized workers, and Henry Tiegen, representing the farmers, issued a call for a conference to be held in St. Paul to talk over the matter of a national unity movement. This conference was attended by representatives of the Farmer-Labor Parties of Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Montana, and Washington, the Progressive Party of Idaho, The Federated Farmer-Labor Party, formed at Chicago on July 3rd, the Farmer-Labor Party of the U. S., the Western Progressive Farmers, and the Committee of 48.

The representatives of these organizations reported in detail on the sentiment of the workers and farmers in their territories. These reports showed an overwhelming desire to break away from the two old parties and form an independent national movement based on the economic needs of the workers and exploited farmers. After these discussions it was unanimously decided to appoint a committee of five to issue a call for a national convention to be held in St. Paul, Minnesota, on May 30th, 1924. Under the terms of the call agreed upon, all local unions, farmers' organizations, state and national workers' political parties, and international unions will be given representation. This call is being prepared now and will be mailed within the next few weeks.

It was further agreed that the convention would draft a platform on which the workers and exploited farmers could unite and nominate candidates for President and Vice President. The representation at this convention has been allotted in such a manner that the rank and file from the mills, the mines, the factories, and the farms, may send their representatives up into this state of the steel trust, the lumber barons, and near bankrupt farmers for the purpose of launching a movement that will bring hope and courage to the working class in their struggles against capitalist exploitation.

The Minnesota Farmer-Labor forces, in conjunction with the organizations attending the St. Paul conference, invites you to prepare now to send delegates to St. Paul on May 30th. Let the workers on this Memorial Day gather from all sections of these United States and lay plans to place a floral wreath on the grave of American capitalism in the form of a militant workers' and farmers' government.

# Coming Fights in Britain

By Harry Pollitt

IT would be a big mistake to assume that because of the Labor Party success at the recent general election in Britain, that all trade union activity was likely to express itself more through the medium of Parliament now that there is a strong possibility of the formation of a Labor Government. As a matter of fact, it can now be placed on record that the British trade union movement is at last refusing to acquiesce any longer in the continual wage-slashing tactics that have been common for the last two and a half years, and all the signs now point to the unions commencing definite campaigns to get increased wages.

It has been estimated that during the last two years, the British workers have had their wages reduced over £600,000,000. This has brought about a condition of affairs unparalleled in the history of the Union movement. It was thought at the close of the war, that with over 6¼ million organized workers, a higher standard of living for all workers would not only be demanded but maintained. At the present time, the British workers are working harder and producing more for less real wages than ever before. Skilled engineers all over the country working a 47-hour week for a wage of £2/16/6; general laborers an average of 35 shillings per week; miners working 6 shifts a week, earning about £2/8/0; surface workers about mines considerably less than this figure; carpenters in shipyards, and shipwrights, also down to about £2/16/6 per week; while the official cost-of-living figures still show prices to be about 80% above the 1914 level.

## The Railwaymen and Miners

The railwaymen are the only section who have been able to keep their wages anything like a decent figure, and they are at present facing a National Wages Board, where the railway companies are demanding further reductions of wages, which if agreed to would result in the railwaymen losing about another £4,000,000 per year. The three unions catering for railwaymen have decided to resist this demand, and if the companies insist on a reduction, then there is every possibility of a railroad strike, as all the three unions are agreed that no further reductions shall be accepted. In fact, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engine Drivers and Firemen have put in a counter-claim for an advance in wages, and at the Wages Board great argument was made on the huge profits that the railway companies have made during the past year.

At a special conference held in London on December 14th, the miners decided to take a ballot of all their members on the question of terminating the present wages agreement. This agreement forced on the miners at the close of the lock-out in 1921, has been described as the most pernicious wages agreement ever imposed on a section of workers. It has been championed by Frank Hodges, the secretary of the Miners' Federation, but opposed by practically every other responsible leader. It stands for the principle of relating wages to profits, with a guarantee that no miner shall work and receive less than 20% upon the 1914 rates of pay. When all costs of production are met the owners are guaranteed 17% standard profits. If these cannot be paid, the deficit goes against the various districts, and owing to the state of the market there are standing against the miners account accumulated arrears of profits amounting to millions of pounds Sterling, all of which must be paid off before the majority of miners can have any chance of an advance of wages. This means in practice that however much trade revived, it would be impossible for advances to be paid until arrears of profits were wiped off, and by that time trade would likely be bad again and the miners plunged into a state of perpetual debt to the coal bosses.

It has been common knowledge that 10 out of the 13 mining districts that make up the Miners' Federation of Great Britain have been on the minimum basis since 1921, and now they have had enough of this, and will terminate the agreement in three months' time. They will then demand an increase of wages, and no doubt the return of a Labor Government will see the introduction of a Minimum Wage Bill, but this will mean the complete opposition of the Liberal and Tory parties and the Miners will be forced to strike in the early Spring of 1924, in order to force the coal owners to pay a living wage. The continued lament of the bosses is that they cannot afford to pay higher wages. Yet for the year ending June, 1923, they made a clear profit after paying every conceivable cost such as wages, maintenance of plants, timber, compensation claims, directors' fees, etc., a sum of £24,500,000.

## The Builders and Dockers

The members of the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives, have decided to put in a demand for an increase of 2 d. per hour, and this claim will be heard early in 1924.

The great unofficial dock strike of 1923, has had a sequel that demonstrates the far-reaching effect of strike action. This strike which was vehemently opposed by the Union officials, was caused through a reduction of wages which operated under a sliding scale agreement. At a special conference in November, the Dockers section of the Transport and General Workers' Union decided to make a demand in January, that an advance of 2 shillings per day should be conceded. A national agreement known as the Shaw Award expires at the end of 1923. A month's notice on either side is necessary either to end the agreement or to get some of the conditions revised. The dockers are going to get the agree-

ment revised, and this claim for an increase of 2 shillings per day is the first step in that direction.

Enough has been written to show that throughout the unions a new awakening is taking place, and that from the increasing pressure of the rank and file, the officials are compelled to go ahead. The great thing to be noted in our movement here, is the growing desire for common action, and the idea of a national minimum wage, now being popularized by the left wing elements inside the unions, is receiving wide-spread and general support. We face 1924 conscious of the coming struggles and confident that we have at last stemmed the tide of the capitalist offensive.

## Organization of the Metal Mining Industry

By W. F. Dunne

**T**HE metal mining industry is the infant giant of the industrial monopolies that exploit the American wage-earner.

The trustification of iron and steel, lumber, shipping and rail transportation had made great strides in the early nineties but it was not until 1906-07 that zinc, lead and copper—the unholy trinity of the metal mining industry—began to come under the control of highly centralized and well-financed groups of employers.

It was the echoes of the stern struggle for centralized control of the metal mining industry that was heard in the nation's capital with the election of Senator Clark of Montana, and it was the later fight of the Anaconda Mining Company (then the Amalgamated) to secure the holdings of Augustus Heinze that again divided the working miners and the citizenry of Montana into two warring factions in a struggle in which no weapon, from dynamite with a short fuse in the underground workings of Butte, to the open purchase of district and supreme court judges in the state at large was barred.

Today the metal mining industry presents, from the standpoint of the employers, an almost ideal spectacle. In the whole industry—we speak now only of the copper, zinc and lead mines of which gold and silver are lucrative by-products—there are only four great groups; the Anaconda Mining Company, the Phelps-Dodge interests, the Guggenheims and the Lewisohns. Competition between these four groups has been eliminated by an arrangement, conducted under the beneficent auspices of the United States government, which allows them to combine "for the purpose of fixing the price of export copper."

Just as in the wheat market, the exports determine largely the price of the product sold at

home, so that for all practical and important purposes the four great metal mining groups mentioned are able to fix the price of their commodity.

In an article of this kind, intended only to deal with the necessity for and the obstacles to organization of the workers in the industry, it is necessary to do no more than point out that in accord with the contradictions of capitalism, monopoly control of the industry has resulted in a curtailment of demand for the metals—particularly copper—and that this failure to develop the possibilities of the industry actually puts money in the pockets of the monopolists.

It is not hard to see how this works out. It is cheaper to produce a million pounds of copper to sell at 15 cents per pound than it is to produce two million pounds to sell at 7½ cents per pound. Any child in the grammar grades can understand this so there is no cause to wonder when we find the astute heads of the metal mining industry making this a national policy for the industry. They enjoy a monopoly of a necessity and they see to it that their mines produce just enough to keep the price at a juicy figure. There can be no question that a lower price for copper and other metals would result in a greatly increased demand in the electrical industry alone. That the metals can be produced much below the present selling price is also a matter of public knowledge: the Anaconda Mining Company's Butte mines, known as "high cost coppers" in the stock market, can, according to the company's own figures, produce at 11 cents per pound.

The importance of this from the organization standpoint is in the fact that the metal mining monopoly rarely sells a pound of its product until a huge surplus has been stored, a surplus that,

with the normal return in the shape of scrap, can probably take care of the domestic and foreign market for a year barring the abnormal demands of a world war.

The tactics that win for the miners in the coal industry cannot, therefore, win for the miners in the metal mining industry. There is little possibility of a strike in this industry seriously interfering with capitalist production in the country as a whole unless it is of long duration and general in its nature because of the fact that the metals can be stored for an indefinite period; even a shortage quite often, as has already been explained, makes added profit for the owners of the industry without the expense of operation.

### No Effective Organizations

The strong position of the lords of metal can be appreciated better when it is discovered that in the whole industry there is, so far as effectiveness is concerned, no organization of the workers. This statement will bring vehement protests from the Industrial Workers of the World who have, from time to time, conducted an aggressive organizing campaign among the metal miners. In this article, however, I am dealing with actual conditions in the industry and not with what anyone would like them to be. The industrial branch of the Industrial Workers of the World having jurisdiction over the metal mining industry has approximately 4,000 members, according to statements made to me by an official of the organization\* in connection with a referendum for the election of officers.

A similar protest will doubtless come from the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smeltermen—the new name of the remnant of the Western Federation of Miners—when I credit them with not more than 8,000 members in the entire industry. This estimate is likewise based on the statement made to me by one of their prominent officials and I think it is a very liberal figure; 6,000 would probably be more nearly correct. Outside of the Hoisting Engineers local in Butte, the smeltermen in Anaconda and Great Falls, a total membership of approximately 3,000 at best, the organization of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smeltermen consists of scattered locals many of which exist only on paper.

Disorganization of the Western Federation of Miners coincident with the increasing centralization of metal mining industry culminated in Butte, in 1914, with the destruction of Butte Miners' Local Number One of the Western Federation, the last stronghold of that once militant

union. Stripped of the lies, charges and counter-charges and mutual recriminations which resulted from this tragedy one fact stands out clearly. It is that in the destruction of the union three groups were involved—the Anaconda Mining Company and its agents, a crooked and ignorant union officialdom and the so-called radical element.

### The Struggle in Butte

Long before its demise Butte Miners' Union Number One had become—with occasional exceptions when the progressives gained control—an auxiliary of the Anaconda Mining Company. To be elected to an office of any importance in the union meant that one's fortune was made—the company saw to it that the officials from president down to sergeant-at-arms obtained rich leases (a lease is permission to work an ore body on a percentage basis); they were favored with political jobs and the union instead of protecting the miners became a blacklisting agency by means of which undesirables were driven from work in the camp.

With a membership variously estimated at from 6,000 to 10,000, Butte Miners' Union Number One met in a hall that would hold but 600 when packed. The company stools and tools were generally on the job with the result that company mandates were carried out. It is charged that funds were misused in a scandalous fashion; for instance, a man who stood in with the machine might be allowed to draw sick benefits for an indefinite period while actually employed. It is interesting to note in this connection that in the early days of the Anaconda when the stock was being hammered on the stock market, John D. Ryan, now one of the heads of the A. C. M. and a multi-millionaire, induced the officers of the union to buy with the monies of the union \$80,000 worth of Anaconda stock. This sent the stock sky-rocketing and laid the foundation of the Ryan fortune.

In December 1913 the Anaconda Mining Company inaugurated its "rustling card" system. This is a very efficient method of blacklisting undesirables and despite the fact that the union voted to oppose the system—though by a small majority—the officials never took any action on the matter. The "rustling card" is a document that a miner must obtain before he can go around to the various mines and ask or "rustle" for a job. The card does not carry any promise of employment with it—it merely gives the miner an opportunity to find out if any foreman will hire him.

By 1914, with the rustling card system perfected, the company no longer needed the union.

\* The mining department of the I. W. W. had a membership during the year 1923, of 2,680, according to financial reports. This includes a few hundred coal miners, the bulk being in the metal mines.

It was a source of expense to it so the decision was made to destroy it. It is doubtful if at this time more than fifty per cent of the men employed "on the hill" were in good standing in the union. The agreement was what is called a "union preference" arrangement. The company hired whom it cared to but the union was allowed to collect dues and solicit members at the mines. If a man refused to join or pay his dues theoretically he was not allowed to work after a certain period had elapsed. Actually, it meant that the union encountered considerable difficulty in enforcing the rule and much partiality was practiced.

Under these conditions it was not hard to stir up sentiment against the old union. Charges were made that an assessment collected for the Michigan strike had been embezzled, the known corruption angered the honest miners until at one mine the workers refused to pay dues; this was followed by similar action at other mines, an uprising occurred, the officials were driven from office, the records destroyed and the hall blown up.

Charles Moyer, president of the Western Federation of Miners, came to Butte at the time and just escaped with his life. When the checkered history of Butte is recited by those who wish to discredit the radicals it ends here. The moral is drawn that radicals are purely destructive.

### **The Independent Union in Butte**

As a matter of fact, however, the radicals, on the ruins of the old union, built a new one, much to the surprise and disappointment of the Anaconda Mining Company. It was the rise of this militant and honest but poorly-managed organization that upset the plans of the copper trust and forced it to adopt extraordinary measures. The miners and their union were in complete control of Butte and Silver Bow county. Their committee even censored the capitalist press and policed the town.

It was probably the first soviet in the United States. A mayor and a sheriff elected on the socialist ticket were in sympathy with the miners as were most of the population but the governor of the state was Sam Stewart—a copper-collared tool of the Anaconda Mining Company. Enough signatures were obtained to petition the governor for the militia and they were sent in. It is said on the authority of the governor that Moyer himself asked for the militia but Moyer denies this. That he was in conference with the governor, however, cannot be denied. Martial law was declared, the miners' leaders arrested, a judge was brought in from one of the cow counties, the mayor and sheriff removed from office and the new union was destroyed.

Bradley and McDonald, officials of the new union, were tried and sentenced to the penitentiary. Bradley died there—there is more than a suspicion that he was killed—and McDonald was released on parole after a year and a half only to be sent back again. He has since been freed.

With complete control of the industry in their hands the copper barons proceeded to make the most of it. Something like 2,700 known radicals were immediately blacklisted, a private army of gunmen strengthened the rustling card system, copper control of the city and county was regained. The population of the biggest mining camp in the world was reduced to the status of serfs by the extension of the blacklist system to lawyers, ministers, doctors, school-teachers and businessmen. It was dangerous even to whisper concerning company officials or company policy.

Conditions in the mines went from bad to worse. Miners' consumption, "rock on the chest" from the inhalation of ore dust, accounted for seven of every ten deaths. Accidents increased due to the installation of the "rill system" by which the rock is allowed to cave and run down the chutes, making an enormous saving in timber used by the other method. The shift boss was the lord of all he surveyed.

### **Another Great Struggle**

In June 1917 occurred the Speculator disaster that took 164 lives. Timbering in a shaft caught fire. The mine foreman ordered water turned into the collar of the shaft. This changed the current of air in the mine and drove the smoke and gas back on the miners, who, seeking emergency exits found them blocked by concrete bulkheads—in violation of the state mining law. Their bodies were found at the foot of these bulkheads with their fingers worn to the first knuckle from trying to scratch their way through.

A young miner named Manus Dugan saved twenty-three men by taking them into a blind drift and building a gas-tight bulkhead with scraps of timber calked with their clothes. They came out alive after twenty-four hours. Dugan went in search of other victims but ran into gas and died. It was his twenty-first shift after being blacklisted for three years. The company papers urged that a monument be raised to his memory but with the discovery of his radical record the matter was dropped and has never been heard of from that day to this.

Spurred on by the horror of the disaster the miners struck. They formed an independent union to carry on the strike. For six months they battled militia, gunmen and crooked labor officials. A fifty cent raise and a weekly payday, instead of the monthly one, were wrested from the company after crippled Frank Little had been



taken from his bed at night and hung by company gunmen.

That the strike did not result in a permanent organization of the miners is due solely to the attitude of Davidson, executive board member of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, the new name for the Western Federation of Miners. The strikers were willing to join the Smeltermen in a body but he laid down the condition that they could join only as individuals; that they must abandon their strike and go back to work for thirty days, after which the executive board would take up their grievances. This announcement was made the night before the vote on affiliation was to be taken and had the result it was supposed to have. From that moment the strike was lost and this action of the representative of the Moyer organization constitutes one of the great betrayals of labor history. It increased the bitterness among the miners and re-opened the old sores that had been slowly healing since 1914.

The Bisbee deportation took place the same year as the result of a strike in that camp; sporadic revolts of the miners accompanied by acts of company terror such as the shooting of 22 strikers on Anaconda Road in Butte in April 1921, have occurred since but no effective organization has resulted. To be successful, an organization campaign in the metal mining industry, just as in other industries, must have the solid backing of the organized labor movement. The control of the mining camps by the companies is too iron-clad to admit of any other conclusion.

#### **New Conditions in the Industry**

In the last three years a great change has taken place in the personnel of the metal miners. The strikes and shutdown—particularly the nation-wide closing of the mines in 1921—together with the bad working conditions, have driven most of the old-time miners from the industry. Even the copper trade publications cite and complain of this phenomenon. Their places have been largely taken by farmers and farmers' sons who have been starved off the land. This new class of metal mine workers has not the skill—it is not needed so much with the improvement in mining methods—nor the militancy of the old-time metal miner. They are not easily organized but they have not inherited the prejudices and the feuds that have rent and torn the organization in the industry. Many of them still believe that their adventure into industry is a temporary one; they do not know that industry never relinquishes its grasp on its recruits from the soil.

The Silver Bow Trades and Labor Council of Butte has not only been sympathetic towards the

organization of the miners but it has given what assistance it could once it freed itself from the tools of the copper companies. During the past summer it has held organization meetings and encouraged the small independent union to expand, taking the position that organization was the first step and that the matter of affiliation could be settled best after the preliminary work.

Two weeks ago the organization committee of the Council was instructed to go thoroughly into the situation, to meet with the independent miners' union and report back to Council what, in the opinion of the committee, was the best steps to take to support the miners.

#### **Re-organizing the Workers**

The organization committee, consisting of Gildea, Driscoll, Crabler and myself, appeared before the union and after citing the attempts made to organize the miners since 1914, urged them to take up the Butte charter of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. The union voted practically unanimously to do this.

The organization committee then drafted a letter to all affiliated organizations which was endorsed by the Council and which urges them to energetically press for the organization of the miners; to require that all members of other unions go to work in the mines in the jurisdiction of the I. U. M. M. S. join the local of that organization on penalty of surrendering their membership in their craft union when they go back to work in its jurisdiction. The letter also asks the Butte Hoisting Engineers' Union Number 83, affiliated with the I. U. M. M. S., to arrange as soon as possible to refuse to lower miners not belonging to their sister local.

These measures will result in building a nucleus of a miners' organization backed by the rest of the trade union movement if it does nothing else. Employment is bad at present, forces are curtailed and the price of copper is low. About all that can be hoped for this winter is to strengthen the organization as much as possible and be in a position to resist wage cuts and take advantage of the first sign of an increase in production to enter into close relations with the smeltermen's union in Great Falls and Anaconda, to reorganize the Metal Trades Council and build up a sort of district council in the metal mining industry of Montana.

If a fighting organization can be built in Butte it will have a tremendous effect on the industry as a whole and the metal mining companies can be depended upon to assist in organization work by continuing their present policy of treating their employees with less consideration than the machinery.

At the present time there are in the states of Montana, Colorado and Arizona, state administrations that are of a liberal character in contradistinction to the company-owned administrations that preceded them. It is probable that they would not sanction the use of militia in the event of a strike for organization and this is a tremendous asset in any organization campaign.

What is needed are a few workers with intelligence, clean records and courage who are willing to take responsibility and clear away the confusion that now prevails. The old-time miners must be won over to the campaign and the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers must so conduct itself that it can regain the confidence of the old fighters and acquire the confidence of the new recruits in the mining industry. It has opened its charter in Butte and placed the initiation fee at \$2.00, but in my opinion and I think the opinion of every honest miner familiar with the history of the Western Federation and its successor, the greatest stimulus to organization would be the resignation of Charles Moyer from the presidency.

If this does not occur—and there is no reason to believe that it will—it should not be made a major issue. With Butte only fifty per cent organized the control of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers would be in the hands of the miners of that camp. It is childish to believe that one individual can rule an organization wholly against the wish of the membership and I have a shrewd suspicion that the unpopularity of Moyer has been used as an excuse by hundreds of workers who are too ignorant to know anything about the history of the metal mining industry and too lazy and boss-loving to join any labor organization.

Whatever the obstacles are they must be overcome and they will be overcome if the best element among the miners considers the problem of organization from a realistic standpoint; the obstacles must be overcome or conditions in the metal mines will soon rival those in the steel industry.

### Experiments Not Needed

It seems to me that there has been enough experimenting with ideal forms of unionism in the metal mining industry to satisfy the most assiduous seeker of new types of organization. The sum total of these efforts is the conditions I have described, the inevitable result of action based on the mistaken belief that a union of wage-workers can conduct itself in a revolutionary manner at all times, still retain job control and refrain from any compromise with the employers in the shape of agreements, etc. Of the fighting spirit of the group in the metal mining industry who hold to

the idea, of their willingness to sacrifice in every conceivable manner there can be no doubt. They have had the field to themselves for almost ten years and I cite the results in a dispassionate manner. A mass organization of the workers in the metal mining industry can be built only by systematic planning, the enlisting of the support of every section of the labor movement connected with the industry coupled with a widespread publicity campaign. It cannot be done by giving the mine workers the problem of the overthrow of the capitalist system to consider while attempting to organize them around their job interests. For the minority of the class-conscious workers this is all right but it has no effect whatsoever upon the great mass of the miners (who at present are interested only in some relief from the oppressive conditions under which they work) except to frighten them.

### An Industrial Union

The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers is industrial in form and can be molded into a powerful weapon if from the ranks of the miners is developed the intelligent and honest leadership that such a union must have. If that sort of material is to be found among the metal miners—and if it is not found there it will be found nowhere—the militant record of the old Western Federation of Miners will be surpassed by its lusty offspring.

If treachery is encountered, certainly from the wealth of experience the metal miners have had in the last ten years they can find ways to expose it and means to combat it. It has been said, for instance, I have heard it myself from many sincere miners, that Charles Moyer does not want the miners organized. If this were true there is a fine opportunity, in Butte at least, to play a good joke on him. This is childish chatter, however, and while I know that Moyer is just as reactionary as most of the trade union officials, that in the event of the miners being organized he would do his best to run the radicals out of the organization and me out of Montana, I believe he wants to organize the metal mining industry and as far as the radicals are concerned they can look out for themselves.

I do not expect any letters of appreciation of my part in bringing the miners into the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and I will be entirely satisfied with seeing the industry organized once more. I feel that every honest and class-conscious worker should take the same attitude.

We militants have several eons ahead of us in which to collect any credit that may be due us, but not much time in which to help strengthen the labor movement where and while we live.

## "Raic" in Russia

By Robert W. Dunn

SOMEONE reports that everybody in Russia is talking about *smitschka*—the mutual relation between one group of citizens and another, chiefly between the worker and peasant. Certainly the Russians are doing everything possible to bring about a closer mutual relation between the "center" and the village. One aspect of this attempt is treated most interestingly by Maurice Hindus in the *Century Magazine* for January. "Nor," he writes, "when the peasants come to Moscow, they no longer need to wander about the bewildering streets in search of shelter and consul. They can go to the Central Peasant Home, established especially for their benefit." That is one concrete manifestation of *smitschka* between town and country.

But there are other forms of *smitschka* in the land of proletarian rule. One of them was beautifully revealed to me one cold night last winter. It was in the theater of the great *Krasnaya Oborona* (Red Defense) Factory, one of the largest uniform factories in central Russia, a factory of 1600 workers, all but 218 of them women; the factory that turned out most of the uniforms for the Red Army during the severest days of civil war. The *smitschka* I had the pleasure of witnessing that night was between the young students of the Pushkin Musical Institute and the workers of the Red Defense who had turned out on this particular evening to hear the young artists render extracts from "Prince Igor" and the favorite Russian operas. A free evening's entertainment for the women of the Red Defense. Applause and genuine appreciation from these proletarian spectators. A few remarks from the director of the factory (a woman), a short speech by the chairman of the factory committee (a woman) and then the entertainment—a typical Russian *vecherinka*.

I watched the children from Pushkin before the performance as they had sandwiches and tea in the factory club, the home of the former owner and exploiter. I noticed how well they carried the role of guests of the women clothing workers, how easily they mixed with the workers. For were they not all children of workers themselves? Some of them, after finishing their supper, slipped into the club library to talk with the clothing worker librarian (a young man carrying heavy scars from the Wrangel front on his forehead) and to listen quietly to his stories of life in the shop during the first days of revolution, during the days of the struggle against counter-revolution, and then under the New

Economic Policy. As I observed this full fraternization of young student and worker I wondered in what other country one could look upon such a scene. I thought of how much the clothing worker was giving to the young artist of the future Russia and how much these young musicians with their frequent concerts in the factory theatres meant in the life of the worker.

This was one aspect of the Russian clothing worker's world I never forgot as I went farther in search of facts about factory administration, output, management, trade unions and a dozen other items. Later I saw these workers and those in other factories manufacturing civilian clothing, turning out some of the best garments now made anywhere on the continent. As I talked with these pioneers of the modernized and socialized clothing industry I wondered what their American comrades could do to encourage them and definitely aid them. The word RAIC came instantly to my mind, and I asked some of the operators in the Moscow Experimental Factory if they were aware that members of an American garment workers' union and other wage earners 5,000 miles away were investing dollars in the government syndicate that marketed the products and purchased the raw goods for the 34 best garment plants in Russia, including the "Experimental." I found many of them had heard of "RIKE"—as it sounds in Russian—the workers' corporation that had been organized in distant America to perform certain services for Russian industry.

Today when I pick up the paper and read a statement made by a certain disillusioned congressman named Britten that "there is not the slightest incentive for the investment of American capital in Russia," I wonder whether in his brief and superficial summer excursion to Russia he had once the opportunity to spend an evening with the Russian workers, whether he has any comprehension of their real desire for a *smitschka* with the wage earners of America. I wonder had he been with me in the Red Defense at the International Woman's Day celebration whether he would have caught any of the warm comradely spirit of the Russian workers. I doubt if he would. He is apparently not that sort of person. However, Sidney Hillman, who is said to have both a keen business sense and a very warm spirit, saw that "incentive" to help Russia's workers and conveyed the meaning of it to his organization in America. Hence the formation of RAIC in 1922.

Disregarding profit—and it must be noted incidentally that the All-Russian Clothing Syndicate has, after a year's operation, been able to pay dividends at the rate of 10% per annum—there was plenty of "incentive" to make a realist and a friend of Russia want to help her industry. That Sidney Hillman saw. Nearsighted, cold-blooded congressman Britten didn't. But why should he?

All this touches more or less the human side of the RAIC mission in Russia. Let us consider, also, the remarkable production record of the Russian Clothing Syndicate which RAIC helps. The story of this government syndicate during the past year is the story of Russian light industry generally—a distinct improvement both in the quantity and quality of output; a market, slightly seasonal, but with a steadily rising curve of demand.

I talked recently with a RAIC representative who had just returned from a complete inspection trip through all the factories and sales agencies of the syndicate. His picture was incredible enough to one who had been there even less than a year ago. It must seem even more difficult to believe for those who have been treated to the inspired tales concerning the "latest breakdown" (there have been so many, you know; almost as many as there have been deaths of Lenin and Trotsky) of Russian industry.

"The demand for clothes," this RAIC agent reports, "is so overwhelming that steady, uninterrupted work is assured for the clothing workers for a long time to come. The shops can't

begin to meet the demands for their products."

I asked my friend to illustrate, if he could, the breadth of the market for garments within Soviet territory. He continued: "At the present rate of production the syndicated clothing industry is able to produce scarcely enough to meet alone the demands of one-fourth of all the office workers in Russia! There are potentially twenty-five buyers for every suit made, and they have the cash to pay for it, too, on the convenient terms now made by the syndicate. Both cheap garments and the latest models for the "Nepmen" are made in the Russian factories. It is the latter variety, however, that seems to come within the range of observation of visiting foreigners who return with vague reports concerning the scandalously high price of clothes they have seen in the windows of the special stores on *Tverskaya* and *Kusnetsky Most!*—clothes made for foreigners and get-rich-quick tradesmen who possess inflated valuta values. But the bulk of the clothes are made for peasant and worker. These the shop window gazing foreigner neither sees nor prices."

Illustrating, moreover, the demand for better clothes on the part of special sections of the Russian people my informant went on: "Although nearly 90% of the 135,000,000 of present-day Russia are of the land-working class, large sections of this rural population are graduating into comparative civilization. For instance, many of the young peasants finishing their period of training with the Red Army are demanding civilian clothes, something like those they have seen worn in the cities. These young men constitute a sub-



SHOP COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE OF THE MOSCOW EXPERIMENTAL FACTORY



SHOP COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE OF THE MOSCOW EXPERIMENTAL FACTORY

stantial demand for ready-made garments. Then there is also the youth movement represented by the 500,000 wide-awake and self-respecting *Komsomols*. This host of youth wants new clothes in keeping with the more responsible and settled position it occupies in Russian life. These working youths, indeed the average Russian worker, needs at least one suit a year and his wages now give him the buying power to effectively ask for this much. Were the output of the clothing factories increased five times they would still be producing less than the present market can absorb."

Referring to the distributive operations of the syndicate the RAIC representative reported that in addition to the direct sales through the regular retail agencies established by the syndicate and scattered all over Russia, the biggest orders are now filled from factory co-operatives which buy in bulk from the syndicate selling the garments to their workers at cost and on the installment plan. These large orders keep the plants of the syndicate running continuously. One of these orders recently filled at the Moscow warehouse of the syndicate was for 25,000 *chervontsi* (\$125,000) worth of goods to be sent to the workers of one mine in the Donetz Basin. Similar orders are being received regularly from Kiev, Kharkov, Baku and other southern heavy industry centers.

As for the retail agencies operated by the syndicate the RAIC agent reports that, "in every one I visited there was a shortage of merchandise. The call for clothing could simply not be met. But with expansion of plant and the improvements made possible by the capital loaned by the American workers the supply will come nearer and nearer to meeting the current demand."

I asked the RAIC investigator about the conditions of the workers in the clothing shops as regards wages and general terms of employment. He explained that "although the skilled Russian cutter has not the *thrill* of taking home \$50 or more in his weekly pay envelope as does the

Amalgamated worker in the busy season, still the Russian cutter has not the *chill* of walking the streets waiting for a job to turn up. Every qualified worker is employed full time and this security, plus other advantages in the co-operative life of the worker goes far to make up for lower money wages than those obtaining in the American industry." However, my friend pointed out "the real wages of clothing workers have tripled since the organization of the syndicate in 1921 and with the practically free rents and reasonable food prices their condition is certainly far better than that of needle workers in any other continental country."

\* \* \*

But in spite of this happy report no one should be so misled as to imagine the Russian clothing workers are dwelling in God's own Paradise. In fact, they never bargained for revolution on any such terms. Unlike our lyrical socialists, as Max Eastman correctly observes, these Russian workmen looked forward to the revolution as the means by which they could set themselves free to begin to build slowly and by experimentation the kind of factories and the kind of factory government they believed was best for them. The revolution having thus effectively cleared the way the workers are today in the process of doing this very thing. Nothing more can be said. Nothing more need be said.

The facts of life in Russia as contrasted with pre-revolutionary days are clear and unmistakable—a unionized instead of an enslaved proletariat, a centralized and co-ordinated instead of an anarchial and hit-or-miss industry, a chance to build a new order instead of miserable servitude, a spirit of hope and reconstruction instead of impossible despair.

This is the kind of an industry—or general situation—in which true friends of Soviet Russia are asked to invest. This is the kind of revolutionary worker with whom it is the duty and the opportunity of the American trade unionists to co-operate in strengthening Soviet industry and the power of workers' rule.

## GRAND CONCERT

TO BE HELD IN CHICAGO

**Ashland Auditorium, Ashland Ave. and Van Buren Street**

SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 10, 8 O'clock

For Relief and Defense of Those Expelled from the I. L. G. W.  
by the Perlstein-Sigman "Machine"

FEATURING

Minna Isaeva—Soprano

Nita Abrastzova—Soprano

Sam Amtek—Violinist

Freiheit Singing Society

Auspices of the Needle Trades Section of the T. U. E. L.

Everybody Welcome

Admission 25 cents

# The Movement for Autonomy in Canada

By Tim Buck

**A**UTONOMY for the labor unions of Canada, sufficient to enable Dominion-wide united action to be organized in Canadian matters, has become one of the burning issues in the American labor movement. It is of sufficient importance for every militant unionist, on both sides of the line, to give the matter careful thought and study. The strong and healthy growth of International unionism demands a correct solution to the problem.

From the inception of trade unionism in Canada, the movement has been under the influence of powerful ideological and political forces centering in Great Britain, on the one hand, and more strongly under the economic and organizational strength of the American (international) unions on the other. The points of difference between these two most powerful factors affecting the Canadian labor movement have resulted in struggle, further aggravated by the less effective but growing national sentiment expressed in the Canadian Federation of Labor and a multitude of small independent unions. The resulting confusion has been an effective obstacle to thorough organization of the forces of Labor in this country.

## Origin of Labor Congress

Canadian unions have diverse origin; some were directly organized by International union representatives connected with the U. S. A.; others were of native growth, spontaneously arising among the workers in response to oppression; still others were transplanted from the "old country" by immigrants who chiefly composed their membership. Canadian unionism today reflects this diversity of origin, interest, and viewpoint, which presents the difficulties in the way of unified efforts and activity. There is today no central body through which the efforts of a majority of the organized workers can be co-ordinated.

The largest and most important central body is the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, embracing something less than half of the organized workers. Organized in 1873, the Congress was in its early days representative of Canadian Labor, embracing all organizations desirous of affiliating. This was changed in 1902, when the International unions, having a clear majority in the Congress, ousted the Knights of Labor Assemblies and other organizations, and amended the constitution so that no organization operating in a field claimed by any A. F. of L. union could be admitted to membership. As a result the

special problems arising out of the peculiar Canadian situation have not had adequate consideration; the Trades Congress is much weaker than it would otherwise be; and bitter strife is the order of the day between labor organizations that should be working out their common problems in co-operation and mutual support.

An illustration of the losses sustained through the "closed corporation" policy of the Congress is the case of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees. This union was ousted from the Congress at the 1921 Convention in Winnipeg. It is stronger than the Canadian sections of any of the A. F. of L. organizations affiliated to the Congress, is composed of an intelligent type of membership, principally clerks, and has four times as many members in Canada as the International Brotherhood of Railway Clerks. This important group of workers has been arbitrarily isolated from the rest of the railroad workers of Canada and from the general movement, by the fact that it has been barred from the Congress. This case is typical of many that could be cited.

## Congress an Impotent Echo

Despite these handicaps the Trades Congress could still be made a tremendous influence in the Canadian movement. By active participation and assistance in industrial conflicts, and by militantly championing the various struggles of the workers, it could become the real center of trade union activity. Unfortunately, under its present leadership and policies it is a mere lobbying machine, with no power to assist affiliated organizations in their struggles with the employers, with no jurisdiction in trade or organizational affairs, and its officers are even afraid to express an opinion on the burning questions of the day. It is not an organ of leadership. It is but an echo of the past, and under present organizational arrangements can scarcely be anything else.

It is heartbreaking to see strike after strike lost, just for want of some co-ordinating body which could rally the whole movement to the support of those on strike. Even worse is it to see the membership falling away from the unions, because of the impotence and lack of fighting power in the organizations, when the will and the power to struggle is present and requires only a definite lead and inspiration. And in the financial question alone, the complete lack of power to assist affiliated organizations to assist

serious struggles is a fatal deficiency in the Congress.

The recent steel strike in Sydney, Nova Scotia, was a glaring example of the need of a central trade union power in Canada. Their strike against intolerable conditions, endorsed by their International officials and every labor body by which it was considered, was swamped with telegrams and resolutions of sympathy and solidarity—but no money. An assessment of five cents per week, from those who had enthusiastically endorsed the strike, would have changed the whole complexion of the conflict. It would have not only won the struggle, but would have raised the morale of the entire Canadian labor movement.

An even stronger case; when the miners struck against the brutalities of the troops and mounted police in Nova Scotia, the whole Canadian movement was aroused as it had not been since the Winnipeg strike. It needed but a strong lead from the Congress, with some freedom of action for the Canadian "ends" of the International unions, to have achieved Dominion-wide action. But this lead was absent. Instead, the movement was crushed from the States. Lewis revoked the charter of District 26, removed the elected officers, and attempted to smash the organization. District 18 was intimidated to prevent action there, by the presence of an International Commission with plenary powers from Lewis. The solidarity of the Canadian workers was destroyed, and the workers thus defeated. This is the curse of International unionism in Canada.

### **Need of Today is Autonomy**

The history of Canadian Labor reflects a militant spirit which, properly assisted and allowed to develop, would make the labor movement a powerful factor. The lack of opportunity to develop this in action has choked the Canadian movement. Realization of this fact, together with the ominous secession movements of 1919, coupled with the recognition of the necessity of International unionism and its possibilities gave rise to the movement for Canadian autonomy now under way.

Canadian unionism must have a center of action. Notwithstanding the permeation of American capital, Canada is still a political entity, and capitalists of all nations function through Canadian institutions. More than 700 U. S. corporations operate branches throughout the Dominion, and in every case they act in exactly the same manner as the native capitalist. J. P. Morgan, in 1919, demanded that the Winnipeg strike be crushed. But he did not go to Washington, he went to Ottawa, the seat of the Executive of Canadian capitalism. United States capital dominates the affairs of the British Empire Steel

Corporation, but the troops that crushed the Nova Scotia strikes were furnished by the Canadian Government.

The 39,000 miles of railway in Canada is embraced in two systems, each of which extends from coast to coast, and each of which centers in Montreal. While the whole of Canadian railroad workers make a small number compared with the railroad workers in the States, yet they are the most important body of organized workers in Canada, and they have to deal with a highly centralized Canadian Board, centered in the Government at Ottawa. And while an upheaval among the railroaders in Buffalo produces scarcely a ripple in Toronto, less than 100 miles away, the repercussions of the slightest incident among railroad workers in Montreal extends to every part of Canada. But these workers have no organ for joint action, no central Canadian organization capable of acting on Canadian matters.

International trade unionism can be a power in Canada, but to do so it must be able to shape its policies and activities in accordance with Canadian problems. The 11,000 members of the Brotherhood Railway Carmen, the 10,000 members of the Maintenance of Way organization, the tens of thousands of members of the other railroad unions, not to mention the carpenters, the needle workers, the plumbers and what-not, could all be organized into Canadian Departments of their International organizations, without disturbing the structure of International unionism. Such Canadian Departments, co-ordinated for Dominion-wide action through the Trades Congress, would enormously revive the energy and activity of the Canadian movement, would repair the failing morale of the membership, and make unionism a power in the land.

### **Demand for Autonomy Takes Shape**

Three weeks before the 39th Annual Convention of the Trades Congress assembled at Vancouver, B. C., a resolution demanding political and economic autonomy for Canadian trade unions, and the organization of all Canadian locals of International unions into Canadian Departments, was adopted by the Trades and Labor Council of Toronto, and forwarded to Congress for consideration.

The proposal, carrying with it the organization of the Canadian trade union movement with the right to strike, raise funds or engage in political action, created a furore in official circles. Tom Moore, president of the Congress, rushed into the capitalist press with violent denunciations and hysterical talk of the general strike for political purposes. Union officials and Congress vice-



presidents in different parts of the country, erst-while Canadian patriots, suddenly became "100% internationalists," and set up a delirious howl about "disruption," "one big unionism," and Moscow dictation.

All the bitter opposition of these gentlemen to the inevitable development of Canadian autonomy was based, not upon any logical argument, but upon the plea that the Congress had "no power to do it," that the International unions would not stand for the Congress even expressing an opinion in the matter. Even during debate on a resolution for a Council of Action with power to act in event of war, a debate in which not one word was uttered against a general strike against war and which was another demonstration of the need for Canadian autonomy, they only repeated, "Congress has no power." Their only proposal was for a powerless special convention. Discussion on the action of Lewis in revoking the charter of District 26 was ruled out of order for the same reason, with the variation that "Congress has no jurisdiction in this case."

#### **Is Autonomy Nationalistic?**

The Canadian labor movement must be organically united with that of the United States. The proposal for autonomy is perfectly clear upon this point. The mobility of Labor with its threat of international scabbery, the necessity for free transfers, exchange of cards, etc., added to the numerical preponderance of American workers, reduces national unionism to a delusion and a snare. The resolution for autonomy denounces it as such. There is no nationalism in the autonomy proposal.

On the other hand, the concession of autonomy is the one thing above all others which would strengthen and unify the trade unions in Canada, and recover some of the terrific losses of the International unions. The purely national unionism, organized in the Canadian Federation of Labor, while dating its origin from the exclusion from the 1902 Congress, unquestionably continues its existence only because of friction, misunderstandings, and the inarticulate resentment

that has been a constant and growing factor under the present system of controlling the Canadian "ends" of International organizations without any regard to Canadian labor and its peculiar problems.

#### **A Step Toward Solidarity**

Autonomy for Canadian unions, organized in separate departments within the International unions, with well-defined powers and the right to strike, will be a great step to solidarity. The very bottom would be knocked from under a multitude of secession movements, and unity would be comparatively easy to attain in place of the present maze of conflicts in Canadian unionism. The Trades Congress, given power to render real assistance to affiliated bodies, would rapidly become a real center for an active and virile movement.

The progressive and revolutionary unionists believe autonomy to be necessary and inevitable. We also realize that the ruling officialdom will put up the most violent and bitter opposition to it. Autonomy was defeated in the Vancouver convention, by parliamentary trickery, the heavy artillery of the official family, and the shady stage-play of a telegram from a decripit "building trades council"; yet on roll-call vote autonomy received no less than 53 votes against 120.

In a gathering so largely dominated by officialdom this result, after but three weeks of preparation, is more than gratifying to those who believe in the autonomy proposal. Autonomy will not be won in a week, a month, or a year. It will require a hard struggle, not alone within the Canadian movement but above all in the International union conventions. But the needs of the day in Canada demand it, and the good of the entire labor movement calls for support of autonomy from every militant unionist. The left-wing militants in Canada, seeing the vast possibility of fierce struggles in the near future that will require centralized action, and realizing that the needs of the rank and file must be satisfied through such measures, won through a rank and file struggle, are making autonomy the slogan of the day in Canada.

*In THE LABOR HERALD for March*

#### **THE UNITED MINE WORKERS CONVENTION IN INDIANAPOLIS**

*Will be reported and analysed*

#### **WHAT IS HAPPENING IN GERMANY? By Wm. Z. Foster**

World-shaking events are occurring in Central Europe about which little is reported. Foster will give a complete survey of the developments of the past six months, particularly the recent congresses of German labor unions, and the outlook for the German revolution.

*Regular LABOR HERALD features which make this the indispensable magazine for militant trade unionists.*

## Germany's Workers Call for Help

By Rose Karsner

**T**HREE years ago when the worst drought known in the history of Russia unleashed its dogs of famine upon a war-torn country, the German workers, like the American, came to the immediate assistance of their Russian brothers.

At that time the German workers earned little, but they unhesitatingly divided what they had with their less fortunate comrades in Russia.

Now the situation is reversed.

Russia has been steadily building up, while Germany has been steadily running into decline, until the workers are faced with a threatened unprecedented famine.

True to their spirit of international solidarity with the workers of other lands, the Russians are coming to the assistance of the Germans. Not in the spirit of charity. But in the spirit of solidarity with their comrades who are suffering as a result of a decaying capitalist order which makes it possible for the rich to eat and the poor to starve.

The International Arbeiter Hilfe Komitee which mobilized the workers of the world in behalf of the Russians, has now called upon the workers of the world again, in behalf of the starving German workers.

The Friends of Soviet Russia, which is the American branch of this Committee, has

therefore organized itself into the Committee for International Workers' Aid, and as Friends of Workers' Germany has called upon all its affiliations to enter a drive for the relief of German workers, their wives and children.

In response to this call, Boston, Chicago, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Superior, Youngstown and Milwaukee have already replied definitely.

In each of these cities conferences have been called, inviting all German trade unions and fraternal organizations, as well as all other sympathetic bodies to send delegates. Tag days, house to house canvasses, bazaars, socials, moving picture shows and meal drives will be conducted to help open an American Soup Kitchen in Germany.

There is no time to lose. We must all put our shoulder to the wheel and work as we did during the Russian famine. We raised \$930,000 plus \$250,000 worth of clothing and medicine for the Russians. We can do at least half as well for the Germans.

**OPEN THE AMERICAN SOUP KITCHEN BY FEBRUARY FIRST!**

We must have \$500 as initial outlay for equipment and pledge \$2,000 monthly for maintenance after that. We can do it. We know how!

## Menace of Vicious Immigration Laws

By Ben Gitlow

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## International Organization Problems

By A. Losovsky

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Reaction in the Needle Trades

By J. W. Johnstone

IT is in the clothing industry that we see the first real battle between the ever-growing left wing of the American labor movement and the bureaucratic officialdom. This struggle is of vital interest to every militant unionist, and should be carefully studied, because it is one that will be repeated again and again in the other unions and industries as the conditions develop. We all have a great deal to learn from this fight, which is not only a part of a general national situation covering all the unions, but is also part of an international struggle. It is the product of the sharpening class struggle.

The first group of reactionaries to organize a fight against the left wing was the officialdom of the Furriers' Union. Because most of the members of that Union are in New York the struggle was mainly carried on there. The issue involved was, class collaboration vs. class struggle. The members of the union were ready to fight for a better agreement, but the reactionaries led by Kaufman, international president, were willing to sign a defeatist agreement, purchasing co-operation with the employers at the expense of the workers' standards of living. The members wanted to have some control of employment, but Kaufman wanted to give that control exclusively to the employers. The resulting fight is a revolt of the rank and file led by the left wing, against the officials who shamelessly deserted them and went over to the employers.

### "White Terror" in the Furriers

The rank and file, accepting the leadership of the left-wing militants in this fight, were determined to elect them to the offices of the union in the place of those who had deserted to the bosses. Following the classical tactics of the yellow Amsterdam International, the Kaufman machine removed from the ballot all candidates whom they considered were opposed to them. The reaction-

aries further disfranchised many members who had developed leadership in the local unions. By these means Kaufman has kept control of the official machinery.

This had the effect of swinging the membership over to the left wing more solidly than ever. Kaufman then started a reign of terror. A favorite method of his was to go to a union meeting, surrounded by gunmen, pick out one or two



BENJAMIN GOLD

In hospital after being assaulted by reactionaries in Furriers' Union



**BENJAMIN GOLD**

In hospital after being assaulted by reactionaries  
in Furriers' Union

left-wingers and have them beaten up. At a meeting of Local 15, held on Dec. 19th, Benjamin Gold, Fannie Warshafsky, and Lena Greenburg, were assaulted and terrifically beaten at the instigation of Kaufman. The gang of sluggers was led by the chairman of the local, accompanied by the chairman of the Joint Board and an International organizer, while Kaufman looked on with approval.

Gold was stabbed and beaten, and left in a serious condition from which he has not yet recovered. But not satisfied with nearly killing him, the gunmen and stool-pigeons, through their unsavory political allies, had Gold arrested and tried to railroad him to the penitentiary—presumably upon the theory, if theory were needed, that he had assaulted himself. This effort was supported, as have been all the drives against the left, by the *Jewish Daily Forward*. The workers were so enraged that, on Dec. 27th, they staged a mass protest in front of the offices of the *Forward* against gunman rule in the unions and against the gunman supporters.

The demonstrators marched from the courtroom where Gold had been released, to the *Forward* office, carrying great signs reading: "We protest against gunman rule in the union," "We demand a better agreement," "Kaufman co-operates with the bosses and breaks the workers' heads," "The *Forward* defends the sluggers," and others. The demonstration showed the *Forward* to the workers as their enemy. Whenever anything exceptionally crooked and dirty is going on in the unions the *Forward* will be found defending it, just as in Chicago recently it carried Milk Trust advertisements against the striking farmers. The workers will continue their exposures, and more demonstrations like this one should take place.

#### **Sigman-Perlstein in Vaudeville**

In the local elections in Chicago and elsewhere, the reactionary bureaucrats are demonstrating their arrogant contempt for the membership by turning union meetings and examinations of candidates into vaudeville shows. Arrogating to themselves the power of striking off any names from the ballots that do not please them, the cynical reactionaries have abolished all rules of election but their own sweet will.

Perlstein made the examination of candidates in Chicago the occasion of a private vaudeville show of his own. Into the examining-room, crowded with minor officials, candidates, and interested members, comes this little watery-eyed, foxy tool of the crafty Abe Cahan, cock of his own dung-hill, and delivers a bombastic speech. He cites himself for bravery, and decorates himself as protector of the union, threatening punish-

ment to all who refuse to lick his boots. Then the "examination" is started.

The first victim is brought in. He is a conservative, an old member known to all the cloak-makers, and an ex-business agent. But he is opposed to Perlstein. "When was the first union in the world organized?" Perlstein asks. "I don't know and don't give a damn," is the reply. "What is the psychological difference between the I. W. W. and the A. F. of L.?" "What! You are not interested and yet you expect to be business agent?" "Bring in the stenographer and have this man dictate a letter to an employer." "'Gentlemen'!—don't you know that it should begin with 'Dear Sir'?" You are not fit to be business agent. Take his name off the ballot. Bring in the next one." This is a sample of the travesty enacted in examining candidates for office. With only a coarse jest as pretext, all names that are not approved by Perlstein are removed from the ballot. To be doubly sure of electing "machine" men, the ballot boxes are stuffed. The same thing goes on all over the country. Elections are dead in the I. L. G. W. U.

#### **Weakening the Union**

Perlstein came to Chicago a few months ago ostensibly to lead an organization drive. What he has accomplished, and his work sets the pace for other parts of the country, is to completely disorganize the union. He has spent some \$50,000. of the local funds, not in an organization campaign but to fight the progressives. Instead of taking in new members he has wasted the money of the union in expelling some of its oldest members.

The union is at the lowest ebb of its career. It is in a dangerously weak position as the result of the smashing tactics of the officials. At a time when the officials should be leading a great organizational drive, they have been systematically driving the membership out of the union. Instead of efforts to strengthen the hold of the union upon the industry, they display a clownish disregard for the men and women who pay their salaries.

In Philadelphia, where Sigman had revoked all local union charters and reorganized under control of his appointees further trouble is brewing on account of the Czaristic rule. Less than one-fourth of the former membership has re-registered in spite of the strong advice to do so from even the left wing elements, because the resentment against the officials is so strong. In the reorganized locals, hand-picked by Sigman's agents, a new left wing has already crystallized. The local unions just "reorganized" are now again put under the control of reactionary "commissars" for the coming elections. The General Executive Board, meeting in Philadelphia,

has just voted to give Sigman full power to rule anyone off the ballots if he so desires.

Another move, part of the general campaign directed by Abe Cahan and the *Forward* gang, was made against the left when the New York Board of the Fancy Leather Goods Workers decided to suspend all members who have been, or are, or have intention of becoming, members of the Trade Union Educational League. This is a small union with a membership of about 4,000, in which the progressive elements are quite strong. It is exceedingly bad for the union to have this struggle precipitated by the reactionaries, but the left wing will gain strength under the attack because the membership will rally to its support.

### In Men's Clothing Industry

While the reaction has been strengthening itself throughout the needle trades, still in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers we find an entirely different situation. In that union there are three distinct tendencies, right, left, and center. The administration occupies the center position. There is no fight such as exists in the Furriers and the I. L. G. W. In fact in some instances the left wing finds itself lining up with the center in opposition to the right-wing faction. This was the case in the recent elections in Chicago.

The co-operation between left and center was not entirely harmonious; neither was it carried out completely by the administration group. Nor was the left wing greatly strengthened by the co-operation in the election. The main purpose of the agreement was to prevent the right wing from increasing its hold, as it might easily have done if three distinct slates had been in the election. The left wing did not submerge any principles, nor give up the right of criticism or opposition to the administration on issues. It was an agreement of expediency, and to some degree was successful. It has strengthened the Amalgamated very much in the face of the threatened struggles, and is a lesson in good judgment that might well be followed by the officials of the other needle trades unions if they were not so blind or careless of the welfare of their membership.

The Amalgamated is not, however, one happy, contented little family. There are fundamental differences in policy between the left wing and the other groups. The administration is under well-deserved criticism from the left for the dangerous situation in New York, where the manufacturers are cutting material and sending it out to small towns to be finished under non-union conditions. The administration has not been on the job to remedy this menacing situation. The left has not failed to bitterly criticize the choice of Wolf as manager of the Joint Board in New York. Wolf has not the support of the membership. He left the organization to go into business for himself. Now he is called by the administration to be the manager of the union. This is worse than poor judgment. The union is not a business man's club where one can come and go at pleasure. Further, a man who but yesterday was an exploiter himself cannot lead a militant struggle against the employers. The administration is receiving the severest kind of criticism for the return of Wolf, and deserves all of it. This criticism, however, does not break the solid front that all members are putting up in the present struggle. The right, left, and center are a solid unit against the employers.

### A National Conference

In order to take stock of the situation throughout the United States and Canada, and to further consolidate the progressive and left-wing forces, a national conference of the Needle Trades Section of the Trade Union Educational League has been called in New York on February 9-10. Coming at a time when the attacks of the treacherous reactionaries are most bitter, when the employers are preparing a greater offensive against the unions than ever before, when the economic conditions are becoming menacing, this national conference of the needle trades militants is of more than ordinary importance. Every organized group of progressive workers should be well represented in the conference. Out of it the militants will come with a clarified program and renewed strength for their struggle in the interests of the exploited clothing workers.

## Bill Dunne's Speech at Portland

In response to the hundreds of calls for this speech in a more permanent form, the Trade Union Educational League has published it as a pamphlet. It is the most effective kind of educational work to distribute this widely among union men. Every live-wire will want to read it and pass it on. It should receive the widest circulation throughout the country.

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### THE DAILY WORKER APPEARS

ON January 13th appeared the first issue of the new Communist working-class daily newspaper, *The Daily Worker*, published in Chicago. A careful reading of the first issues shows that the new paper is more than living up to its promises. Every page contains interesting and important news, vitally concerning the labor movement and the whole working class—matter which would never reach the workers unless *The Daily Worker* were in the field. In the few numbers issued as this is written the new daily has already found its place as a fighting newspaper of the whole American working class.

Strangely enough, the farmers are among the first to realize the tremendous value of the workers' newspaper. While the first issues were coming off the press, the milk-producing farmers around Chicago were entering upon a great struggle with the Milk Trust, to prevent a reduction in the prices paid them for raw milk. The entire capitalist press has been against the exploited milk producers. The organized farmers found no place to turn for allies, except to the labor movement, and there they found *The Daily Worker* their most militant and valuable assistant. Alliance between the workers and the exploited farmers, against the predatory capitalist interests that control society, receives a new demonstration as the most rational and natural development today. As usual the most militant workers, the Communists, have led the way through support of the milk producers in their fight.

*The Daily Worker* is a Chicago newspaper, but it is also a national paper, standing as the sole fighting organ of the workers throughout the country that speaks every day. It will find its way into every city, town, and village in the country. If its natural supporters get busy it will soon have a tremendous circulation.

### FARMERS WANT TO JOIN LABOR UNIONS

A most important development is seen in the application of the milk-producing farmers in the Chicago district for a charter from the American Federation of Labor. At last the toilers on the farms are beginning to learn the lesson of organization. Quite spontaneously they turn to the labor movement as their natural affiliation. Not in vain has been the experience of vicious exploitation undergone by the farming population of America during the past few years. The farmers are not only in revolt; they are organizing and allying themselves with the rising power of Labor.

The development is, of course, in its first stages only. There will be many things to hinder it, such as weak and traitorous leadership which, yielding to pressure or corruption, will try to turn the farmers' movement against Labor and into the hands of the capitalist parties. There will be temporarily a lack of full understanding between the farmers and workers which may result at times in friction. But the fundamental fact that both groups of producers are suffering bitterly at the hands of the same group of exploiters, which is bent upon reducing farm and factory workers to poverty if necessary to increase its fat dividends, guarantees that the Farmer-Labor alliance will grow and prosper. The farmers around Chicago should receive the heartiest welcome into the ranks of the labor movement.

### MINERS MEET AT INDIANAPOLIS

WHILE the 1800 delegates from the local unions of the United Mine Workers are meeting at Indianapolis in Convention, where the membership will again endeavor to make their Union an expression of their needs and desires, two very significant stories are carried in the news of the day. One item tells of the adjournment of the conference between miners and operators of the central competitive field, to meet after the Convention, and the other is a forecast by a coal boss of the results of the Convention. Both items demonstrate that the miners' delegates at Indianapolis must be prepared to put up a real fight or face inevitable defeat. The first struggle against the coal operators comes at Indianapolis in the Miners' Convention, and takes the form of a struggle against the domination of John L. Lewis.

In Cleveland the bituminous wage conference met, and adjourned to meet in Jacksonville, Fla., on Feb. 11th, after the Indianapolis Convention. Jacksonville is a pleasure resort of the wealthy exploiters, where the union officials are the farthest removed from the pressure of the rank and file, and where the employers can wine and dine them without let or hindrance. Jacksonville for a wage conference means to the miners long-drawn-out negotiations, because the negotiators will be reluctant to leave the pleasant air of Florida, its munificent hotels and sumptuous fare, and it means that the Union representatives will be as far away from the men in the pits as they can well go.

Geo. H. Cushing, prominent anti-union expert of the coal companies, in a confidential circular to business men, predicted a "compromise" with the miners favorable to the companies. But Cushing warns that the question of how unfavorable the compromise will be for the bosses depends upon how strong the radicals are in the Indianapolis Convention. If the progressive elements are strong in the Convention, they will have to be pacified with strong demands against the coal companies; if the progressives are weak, the coal companies may expect to put across their program of keeping the miners down without much trouble. That is the kernel of Cushing's confidential circular to business men.

There could be no more convincing proof to the miners of America that their future progress is bound up in the movement of the Progressive International Committee of the U. M. W. A., which has the only comprehensive program before the Miners' Union. If the delegates express themselves with emphasis in support of the progressive platform, not only will the miners be strengthened beyond measure, but the whole labor movement will take new courage. The miners

have the opportunity, by taking a strong stand at Indianapolis, to put the American labor movement on the go toward new achievements.

### "PROGRESSIVE" CONFERENCE AT ST. LOUIS

WHAT progressive step forward can the workers expect from the gathering of the Conference for Progressive Political Action, which meets at St. Louis, Feb. 12? It is not difficult to form some idea of what will be done, because the voting strength in that meeting is quite definitely known beforehand, and the political ideas that control the votes are known. It is not a wild guess to say that in St. Louis the C. P. P. A. will, in all likelihood, move backward rather than forward, that it will tie itself up to one of the capitalist parties rather than move toward independent political action for the working class. At St. Louis the most that can be hoped for is, that the workers register their opposition to continued betrayal to the Democratic-Republican combination, and lead a section of the C. P. P. A. toward the May 30th, Farmer-Labor Convention in St. Paul. It will be well for all progressive and militant organizations to send delegates to St. Louis, Feb. 12th, to battle for the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party, independent of and opposed to the parties of the capitalists.

### MESSIAH OF THE LABOR FAKERS

ATTEMPTS to pledge the labor unions to support of William Gibbs McAdoo, candidate for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, promise to be a main attraction at the St. Louis Conference of the C. P. P. A. The McAdoo boom comes from the discredited officialdom of the badly-demoralized railroad shop unions, and is but another sign of their incompetence, political as well as industrial. Sterile of ideas, lacking in all class-consciousness, and bereft of working-class courage and daring, they can think of no way out of their present dilemmas except through the advent of some saviour, a benevolent politician from the upper classes.

McAdoo is the Messiah of the railroad bureaucrats because by his famous Order No. 8 during the war, he opened the doors for hundreds of thousands of railroaders to flock into the unions after the union bureaucrats had tried in vain to organize these men. What the incompetent union officials were incapable of doing with all their union machinery, McAdoo did for them with a scratch of his pen. The union "leaders" were munificently provided with per capita tax. True, they did nothing to hold their new membership, and therefore at the first turn of adversity the unions were shattered. The officials are bewailing their lost income. They cry out for their former Messiah. Vote Democratic, for McAdoo, and get another Order No. 8! A simple slogan for simple minds!

McAdoo is a fake Messiah. He is not alone capitalistic himself, by conviction, training, and tradition, but he is also bound by a thousand intimate ties to the capitalistic political machinery of the Democratic Party. He has not even the illusory "independence" of a La Follette in the Republican camp. To offer him to the workers as their candidate is the rankest kind of betrayal. Against the traps and snares of all upper-class saviours from the camps of capitalism, the workers must establish the political power of the exploited masses upon the only solid basis, their own strong, independent political party.

### ABOLISH GUNMAN RULE IN UNIONS

SPECTACULAR gunplay in two unions of Chicago, resulting in the death of two and wounding of several others, occurred on the same day in January. One fight occurred between agents of the Chicago Teamsters and the International Brotherhood; another was between rival groups in the Structural Ironworkers Union. In both instances, as in so many that are familiar to Chicagoans, the differences between unions or between groups within the union were the occasions, but the cause of the trouble was really the "gunman system" that has become an industry in the labor movement.

Professional thuggery as a means of union administration and control is a standing menace to the labor movement. It was introduced into the unions by the agents of the employers, and has been cultivated by the private detective agencies, for the purpose of weakening and discrediting the unions. The tribe of gunmen that infest some unions were originally, if not now, paid by agents of the bosses. They are now being used by the same reactionary union officials who denounce the militants and progressives as "advocates of force and violence." The gunmen must go from the unions, or there is little hope for progress.

The task of ridding the unions of thugs is one that will fall upon the left wing elements. The reactionaries will not drive them out, because they are "useful" against the left wing. This is illustrated in the Furriers Union in New York and in the I. L. G. W. in Chicago. The pacifist liberals will not launch a war against the gunmen, because, being pacifists, they would rather leave the gunmen there than to start a war. More and more the problem of the thugs in the unions becomes one that must be solved by the militant left-wingers. The gunmen are the "White Guard" within the unions; we'll have to find means to drive them out.

### THE "OPTIMISTS" AT WORK

IN a current issue of *Labor*, organ of the railroad unions, Bert M. Jewell, president of the Railway Employee's Department of the A. F. of L. gives an "optimistic" interview. According to Jewell, all is well with the railroad unions; the "sheep have been separated from the goats" by the disastrous strike; and the way is now clear for Jewell and his associates to enter into co-operation with the railroad companies.

Optimism such as this, which accepts a defeat like that administered to the shop crafts as a good thing, and proceeds to link up the union administration with the railroad management, ought to appeal strongly to the employees. It is very good, indeed, for profits and dividends to have such "optimism" among the leaders of the union organizations. But for the workers it is not so good. For those who toil on the railroads, it is the rankest kind of poison. If this is optimism, then, indeed, do the workers have cause to be pessimistic.

The fact is that the railroad workers are seriously discontented. Jewell and his kind are inspiring no faith in their peculiar brand of leadership by their cowardly retreat to the arms of the railroad bosses. The rank and file are stirring and demanding positive action, concrete programs, and new tactics and organizational forms, in order to regain what has been lost in the "open shop" drive, and to go forward to new achievements. If Jewell and his kind will not meet this demand, their day is done as leaders. The railroad workers will create a new leadership that will actually carry on the struggle against exploitation on the railroads.

# THE INTERNATIONAL

**RUSSIA** FROM January 1922 to September 1923, the operations of the state industry have considerably increased. In 1923 the augmentation is twice as rapid as in 1922. According to information obtained, purchases amounted to 376,000,000 merchandise rubles, and sales to 684,000,000. The trusts sold merchandise to the value of 438,000,000, and the syndicates 255,000,000. The purchases of the trusts amounted to 231,000,000, and the syndicates 144,000,000. In 1922 the sale in the interior of the country amounted to about 30% of the total traffic of the Republic. In 1923 an important development took place in this respect, fully 50% of the entire sales being made in the interior of the country. More and more the Co-operatives are taking an active part in the commercial operations of Soviet Russia.

**ITALY** ANOTHER evidence of the failure of the class collaboration as advocated by the Fascists, was shown in the recent negotiations between the representatives of the Fascist trade unions and of the employers association, The Industrial Confederation. Mussolini himself presided over the conference and as usual pronounced a discourse against Marxism and in favor of class collaboration. But the very fact that the two classes, workers on one hand and capitalists on the other, found themselves arrayed against each other was a living proof of the class struggle and a denial of the fundamentals of Fascism. In connection with conference, the Communist deputy, Repossi, declared,

"In reality the conference resulted to the profit of the industrials, for Mussolini declared that strikes would be prohibited and they are the sole arm of defense remaining to the workers. The idea of class collaboration was accepted by the industrials only in the measure that their interests were thereby favored. The formulae 'the national well-being shall also be that of the individual' was repudiated by the growing misery of the proletariat and the aggravation of the miserable conditions of the workers wherever the 'collaboration' is applied. The action voted destroyed the conception of one sole organization comprising both workers and employers, since the industrials will conserve their autonomous organization. It was a new victory of the industrials, to which will shortly be added that of the big agrarians over their workers."

**SPAIN** THE military dictator, Rivera, following the fashion set by so many of his fellows in various other countries, is now carrying on a vigorous persecution of the Communists and other revolutionaries. As usual, he has discovered a "plot." His director general of safety, Arlequi, formerly chief of police at Barcelona, has carried out elaborate raids in many cities. All told, several hundred have been arrested at Madrid, Barcelona, and elsewhere. The "plot," usually fantastic, provided that the government should be overthrown on Dec. 28th. One of the preparations, says Arlequi, was a football game at Seville, where the revolutionaries of Spain and Portugal were supposed to have got together to complete their plans. In the general crisis the National Confederation of Labor, which is affiliated to the Berlin International and dominated by Anarco-Syndicalists, is incapable of making any real opposition against the militant exploiters.

**ROUMANIA** ANOTHER evidence of the splitting tactics of the Amsterdam International is furnished by Roumania. At the Congress of Hermanstadt, in 1922, the unions were reorganized. The Communists had great influence in them and the movement grew. The Social-Democrats, determined not to lose their authority over the unions, began a campaign of expulsions against the Communists. After the Conference of Hamburg, they called an Extraordinary Congress in order to affiliate the movement at all costs to the Amsterdam International. This Congress was held at Klausenborg, a city then under a state of siege. As the Communists were in the majority, the Social-Democrats called upon the police and expelled them. Upon the day the question of international relations was discussed, no Communist was admitted to the deliberations of the Congress. Naturally affiliation to Amsterdam was voted without opposition, under the protection of the police. Following this Congress, the Amsterdammers proceeded to reorganize the labor movement throughout the country with the aid of the police, expelling the Communists from as many strategic positions as possible. This immediately provoked turmoil throughout the whole labor movement and the unity of the organization is threatened. The R. I. L. U. has issued a manifesto to the Roumanian militants complimenting them upon their struggle to maintain the unity of the trade union movement and calling upon them to continue this tactic. "Don't permit the secessionists to execute their miserable plan. Oppose arbitrary exclusions of isolated workers, of groups, or of entire unions; avoid all pretext for a split; sacrifice to unity all that it is possible to sacrifice without injuring the interests of the working class." Unless the Amsterdammers relax in their campaign, it is almost certain that the Roumanian movement will be as badly split as were those of France and Czechoslovakia.

**BELGIUM** FEELING that the labor movement of Belgium is gradually slipping from their hands and into those of the Communists, the Social-Democrats, according to the usual Amsterdam tactics, are proceeding to desperate measures of expulsion. Recently the National Council of the Belgian Labor Party launched an offensive against all adversaries of class collaboration in the trade unions, the co-operatives, the fraternal societies, the musical organizations, physical culture groups, etc., under the control or influence of that organization. The motion beginning this campaign, which will probably wind up by splitting the Belgian labor movement, reads as follows:

"Careful of seeing maintained in the workers organizations the unity which has always constituted the force of these bodies, and wishing to this end to see them placed outside of the campaign of disruption and division directed against them by the Communist Party,

The Trade Union Commission, the Co-operative Office, and the National Union of Fraternal Federations, are called upon to hold a meeting without delay in order to examine the situation and to take the necessary measures to put an end to all *noyautage* (boring from within) in their affiliated organizations, and it is further decided,

That all the federations shall compel their local political groups to exclude, with the least delay pos-

sible, all those who are affiliated to the Communist Party, sustain its journal, or adopt a hostile attitude to the action of the Labor Party.

**ENGLAND** ON Nov. 17th, 1923, the National Federation of Trades Councils held its second annual conference in Birmingham. Over 100 delegates were present, representing 72 trades councils with 250,000 members. In addition, there were fraternal representatives of the Red International of Labor Unions. The National Federation is a new grouping of central labor unions on a national scale. Harry N. Pollitt, president of the Federation and member of the British bureau of the R. I. L. U., said of the movement, in his presidential address,

"The Trades Councils are able to voice what at present has no voice or expression in the whole movement the feeling of the mass of the workers. Expression has got to be found for this, and a place for it has got to be found in the movement, and that is what we are out to do. We are not out in antagonism, as is falsely suggested, to the rightful central body of the movement, the Trades Union Congress. Instead, we are out to bring into that body the expression of the feeling of the masses of the workers. The 'Back to the Unions' campaign has shown that any attempt to carry out a common campaign depends for its execution on the Trades Councils. When it comes to organizing a national campaign, the General Council has no machinery—everything has to be put on the Trades Councils, which at present are not organized for the task. The General Council has in fact to act through the Trades Councils, which are not represented either on the General Council or at the Trades Union Congress. In the same way, when the threat of war arises and the Joint Council of Congress and the Labor Party calls for Councils of Action to be formed, it is the Trades Councils that constitute the rallying center around which such councils are formed. The General Council, in fact, at present is a head without a body. Only the Trades Councils can supply the body and the life blood. This conference has the opportunity to supply what is the greatest need of the movement, a rallying center to gather up a common movement that will so increase in volume and strength as to compel a new leadership in the central organs of the movement, a facing of the problems of the working class, and a unification of the working class army."

Some of the principal resolutions adopted by the Conference were, (1) The right of the Trades Councils to be represented at the Trades Union Congress on the basis of one delegate per Council, and the right of the National Federation of Trades Councils to elect two representatives to sit on the General Council of the Trades Union Congress; (2) To avoid the present unwieldy state of the Trades Union Congress, a system of decentralization into Area Conferences should be established, with the Trades Councils fully represented; (3) That the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, in order to give the necessary active and authorized leadership to the trades union movement, should be equipped with full power to coordinate trades union activities; (4) That the National Federation of Trades Councils formulate a program based upon the following propositions, (a) improved industrial organization, (b) the elimination of jurisdictional disputes, (c) the development of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress as Labor's general staff, (d) the formulation of a fighting policy for the trade

union movement generally, (e) the attitude of the trade union movement to the organized unemployed, (f) the attitude of British trade unionism to international labor organizations. A constitution was adopted, likewise a strong resolution on the German situation. The officials of the Trades Union Congress look askance at this new national central body, but the secretary of the latter reported that there is a very strong sentiment among the Central Labor Councils for such an organization, and that before another year is out large numbers of them will be affiliated.

**GERMANY** IN Weimar the organized opposition in the German trade union movement held a national conference on November 25th and 26th. There were present delegates representing 360 local trade union bodies of various sorts. From the reports submitted by the various delegates it was evident that the rank and file of the unions, utterly disgusted with the betrayal policy of class collaboration pursued by the Social Democratic leadership, are in revolt and are willing to follow the lead of the Communists. It was a striking demonstration that the control of the German labor movement, industrial as well as political, is fast falling into the hands of the left wing. One of the chief things done by the conference was to select a committee to negotiate with the leaders of the A. D. G. B. (General German Trade Union Federation) on the subjects of (1) the abandonment of the present disastrous policy of class collaboration, (2) the re-organization of the trade union movement upon an industrial basis, (3) the calling of a special trade union congress. Since the Weimar conference the committee there appointed has been in communication with these right wing official trade union leaders, but the latter, blind or indifferent to what is going on in the movement, refused absolutely to grant the request for a special congress. The result is that the committee is going ahead and calling the special congress itself. Many trade union organizations throughout the country have endorsed it already and it promises to assemble a majority of the workers of Germany. There are imminent possibilities that it may lead to a split in the labor movement. In next month's LABOR HERALD we will have a special article dealing with the whole German labor situation, political and industrial, and at that time we will deal more exhaustively with the historic Weimar conference.

Fritz Ebert, President of the German Republic, has been expelled from his trade union, the Saddlers' organization, for conduct hostile to the interests of the working class. The reactionary *Vorwaerts*, organ of the Social Democratic Party, is indignant over this "outrage" and alleges that it is due to the unholy machinations of the left wing.

**SWITZERLAND** IN Innsbruck on December 2-3 the International Workingmen's Association held an international conference. This was intended to be a congress but the weakness of the organization prevented the holding of any such pretentious gathering. There were present delegates from Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Uruguay and Holland. Little more than routine organization work was done by the conference except to adopt two resolutions attacking the methods and goal of the Communist Party in Germany and the tactics of the "united front" in all countries. The conference demonstrated the extreme weakness of the Berlin International. The next congress will be held not later than September, 1924.

## RUSSIA NEEDS SKILLED WORKERS FOR KUSBAS

The Chicago Group Kusbas, which is organizing workers to fill this need, meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, 3 P. M., at Labor Lyceum, 2733 Hirsch Blvd., Chicago.

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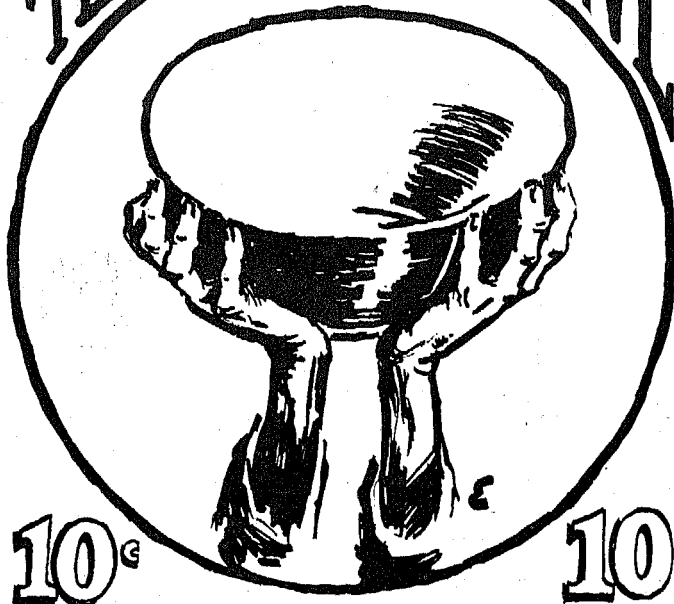
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