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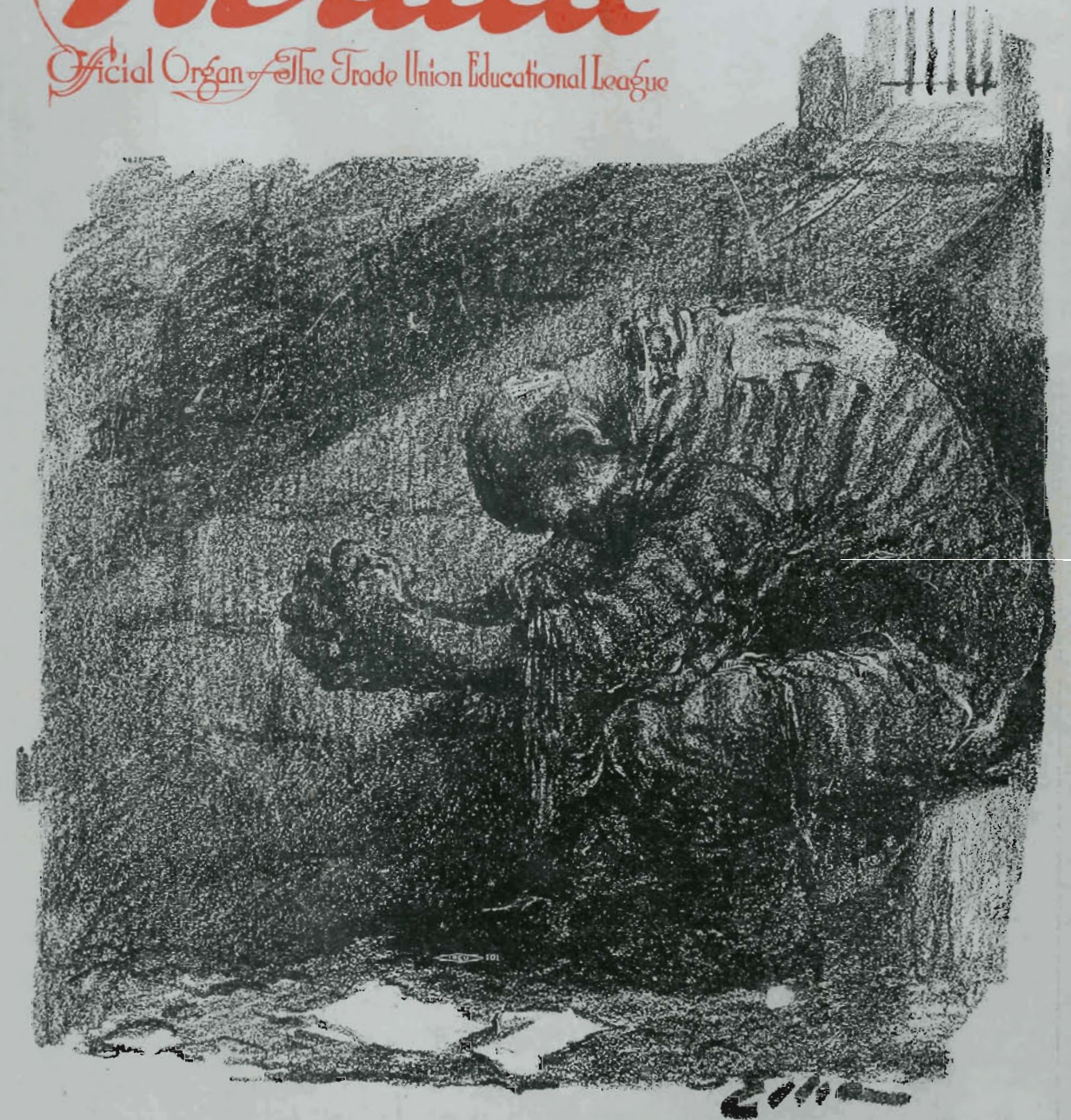
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Official Organ of The Trade Union Educational League



June 1922

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By Wm. Z. Foster

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June, 1922



No. 4

The Building Trades Problem

By Arne Swaback

THE Building Trades unions are face to face with a terrific war, intended to break their power. A complete combination of all the hitherto scattered forces of the bosses is out to establish the so-called "open-shop," and the unions are in retreat before the assault. The committees of the bankers, the manufacturers, the captains of industry, carefully prepared the union-smashing campaign and are taking one industry after another. Having driven the unions out of the steel mills, slapped the railroad unions in the face, and lined up the forces of Government and the press, they are now engaged in battering our hitherto strongly entrenched building trades unions.

The fight was started in city after city, throughout the country, and extends from coast to coast. In some places the bosses have made rapid headway against the unions; in others the workers have put up a most determined resistance. In every case a well worked out plan was followed, involving the daily newspapers, the courts and legislatures of the various states and cities, and the special organizations combining all the employers' forces, variously named "American Plan" associations, Citizens' Committees, etc. The newspapers began the campaign of propaganda: "Rent is too high! That is caused by building trades wages, which must come down. Then the building industry will begin to boom." This was the key-note, to obtain the support of the 'public.' The pale, faint-hearted clerks and the other white-collared wage slaves echoed: "Wages must come down."—Public opinion was created, and the employers could proceed with the next step.

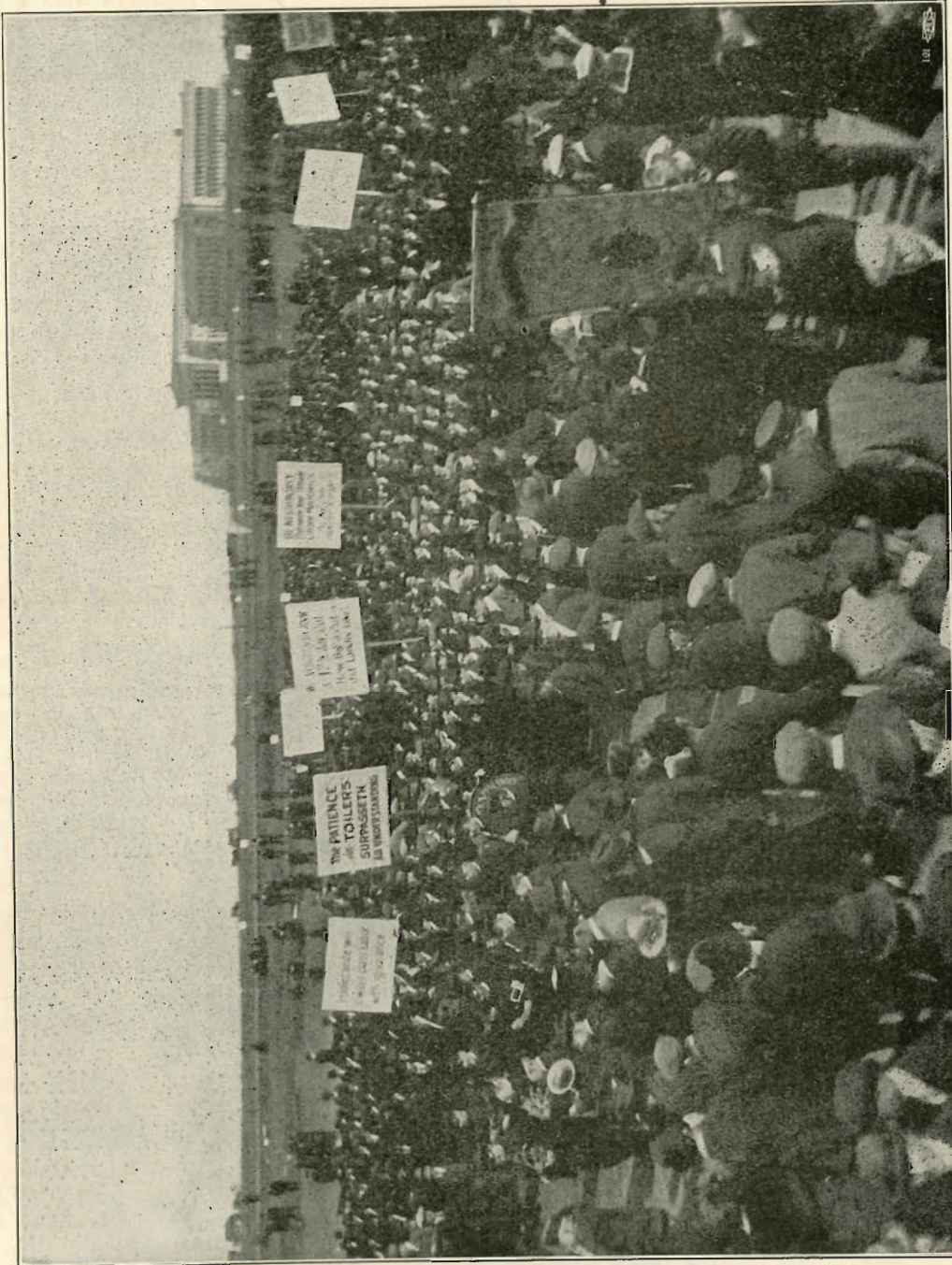
Then comes an avalanche of legislative investigations, charges of graft and corruption, wholesale arrests, commissions of inquiry; and finally the decision not to renew contracts with the unions, but to cut wages, destroy union regulations, and put the industry on the "open shop" basis. "Arbitration" proceedings put the seal of official approval upon the schemes, and

the battle is on, with the employers on the offensive. These attacks have everywhere thrown confusion into the ranks of the workers. The bosses have cleverly taken advantage of the divisions between the crafts, played off one against the other, and broken up the solidarity of the Building Trades. The workers are beginning to wake up to this situation, and today we are given some cause for encouragement by the sight, in a few cities, notably Chicago, of the workers recognizing the immediate necessity for complete unity.

The Chicago Building Trades Struggle

Resistance to the "open shop" drive is seen at its best (and also examples of its worst) in Chicago. The most emphatic protest yet made by Labor in this struggle was registered in the great parade held Saturday, April 29th. This day will be marked in red letters in labor history. It was a monster demonstration and protest against the encroachments of capitalism, embodied in the so-called Citizens' Committee and the Landis Award. A parade was arranged by a joint publicity committee of the building trades unions; more than 125,000 workers marched shoulder to shoulder. Their banners registered their solidarity and readiness to fight to the end against the menacing enemy. Traffic was stopped for hours in the heart of the city by this demonstration of the United Front of the building workers. It registered a decided move forward by Labor.

Already this is being felt, even by the bosses. It was a solemn warning to the "Citizens Committee" that the workers are preparing to stop their retreat. True, the bosses were able to get in their underhand work even in this parade. Their agents managed to keep some of the unions from taking part, by playing up old grudges and prejudices at the last moment. But it was made so evident to all that the workers were preparing themselves for action, that the simple show of strength, marching down the streets shoulder to



125,000 CHICAGO WORKERS DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THE LANDIS AWARD

shoulder to the music of bands, has created a change in the situation.

The militant mood of the workers is shown by a story going the rounds of the union halls. Samuel Gompers was in town for the occasion. One of his henchmen asked permission to have an automobile in the parade. He was notified that all must walk in this parade. Gompers declined to do so and the parade went its way without him.

In the strike leading up to this demonstration, many stormy events took place. On May 1, 1921, the employers served notice of wage reductions. The unions resisted, and many of them were locked out. A strike followed, and after weeks of struggle, arbitration was agreed to, with the usual detrimental effect to the workers. Judge Landis became the arbitrator, by consent of a number of the smaller unions. The carpenters, painters (whose agreement had not expired), and three other unions, comprising in total membership a large majority of the building workers, refused from the beginning to submit to arbitration.

Landis, in his notorious "award," not only judged the questions in dispute; he also enlarged the scope of his decisions to cover the unions not parties to the proceedings, and assumed jurisdiction over working conditions, writing the following "open shop" conditions into the award:

"There shall be no stoppage of work individually or collectively under penalties prescribed."

"There shall be no restriction against any manufactured material, except prison made."

"In case of scarcity of help, non-union men may work with union men until such time as union men may be obtained."

These clauses meant breaking the power of the unions, and their ultimate destruction. The workers protested violently. For a time there were many spontaneous strikes. But a number of the leaders began to manouver their unions into accepting the "award." Meanwhile, the capitalists had organized the "Citizens Committee" to enforce the award, raised a war-chest of millions, set up a scab-supplying agency, mobilized bank credits against the small contractors, and completely united their forces. Unions refusing to work under the award were declared "outlaw" and a bitter war began; armed guards were placed on the jobs to protect imported scabs, who were working side by side with union men. The strike has been marked by extreme violence. Bombings, both of union and non-union workers have taken place. The "Citizens' Committee" has declared publicly that it will slug two union men for every scab that is beaten up. As we write this the police of the city are raiding the building trades offices on a great scale, arrest-

ing hundreds of union officials and members, charging them with complicity in the killing of two policemen during a bombing affair. The whole city is in a turmoil, unequalled since the days of the Haymarket riot.

The Building Trades Council finds itself practically helpless. Its past fights have been against the contractors. But no longer is this a case of fighting against disunited bosses. The council has been shown in its true light, as a loose federation with each craft really acting for itself, and it cannot cope with the situation. A number of unions have meekly submitted, others have struck, and others have bargained for separate concessions from the bosses. The "Citizens' Committee" has become arrogant, and other unions which took up the fight have been "outlawed," and the general confusion is increased.

Several desperate efforts have been made, from the ranks of the workers to obtain unified action. But such moves are frustrated by the International officials, and they also meet the resistance of many local officials. They seem to dread the thought of the rank and file workers getting together. But when the agreement of the painters expired, April 1, 1922, this large body got into the fight. Their District Council called a conference of delegates from the outlawed trades, and the joint publicity committee was created. This body united and crystallized the opposition to the "award" and has finally brought the conflict to the new stage evidenced by the big demonstration above-mentioned.

What has happened in Chicago indicates fairly well the general situation in the building trades. True, in many places the unions have not fared so well, and have been almost completely defeated; in Chicago there is still struggle. But everywhere the workers are in retreat; Seattle, Butte, Salt Lake, Denver, Boston, San Francisco, and other cities, bear witness to this. The employers are united with millions of dollars to spend to break the unions. The unions are divided, and their treasuries are rapidly being emptied.

Division Causes Workers' Defeat

The source of our weakness is readily found. Our industry is a veritable chaos of craft unions, pulling in different directions and fighting each other. Within many of these craft unions are split-hair divisions, where members are confined to certain branches, and fight about the inner lines of demarcation. Our Councils, and the Building Trades Department, which could be the basis for establishing unity of action, merely serve as places where these fights may be carried in different forms.

Craft divisions are largely responsible, in turn,

for the poor leadership, and lack of vision among the officials. These men, from the lowest to the highest officials, have been nourished in an atmosphere of craft exclusiveness. They have worked for years in deadly enmity toward other crafts, bred of the fear that their jurisdiction may be infringed upon. Accustomed by this condition to attempting to gain advantages for their own craft at the expense of others, it is only another step to find themselves working with the bosses against the others. Thus they lose sight entirely of the broader aspect of the common fight against exploitation.

Most of the other evils which hold back our unions and deprive them of power, also find their breeding ground and natural habitation in craft division. Countless opportunities are open to the dishonest few, that element which can always be found in any aggregation of men. With the rich openings for graft, it is often the most unscrupulous business agent who can build up the most power. If he is willing to enter into an alliance with the employers, he is able to keep his adherents at work, while those who have the temerity to question his control at the union meetings, can be forced to walk the streets in idleness. This petty tyranny has created an atmosphere in some unions which has proven fruitful soil for the poisonous seed of the "open shop" propaganda of the employers. All these forces work for the boss, who cleverly makes capital of them; and all can be traced directly back to the fundamental cause of craft division.

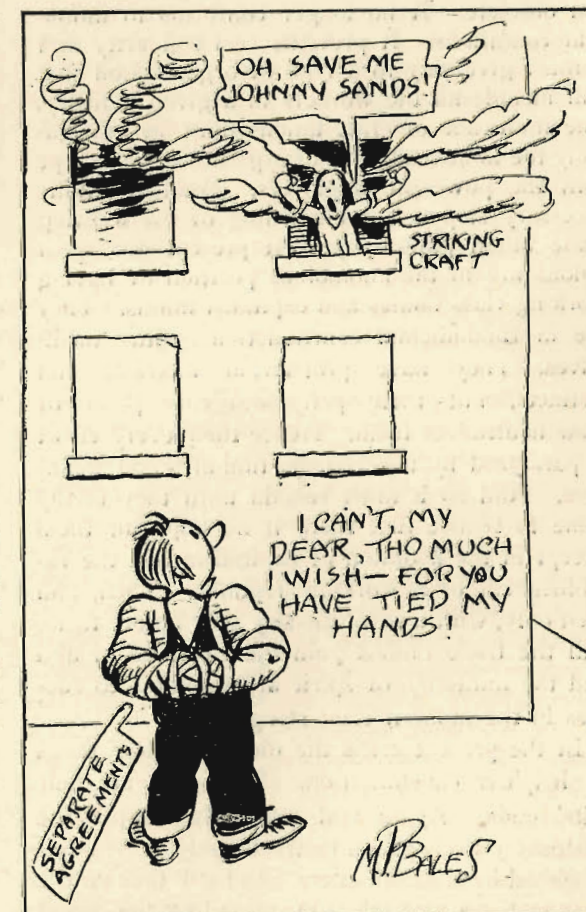
Internal strife has been a terrible evil in the past. Today it is disastrous. In the face of the united attack made upon us by the employers, it threatens to destroy our organizations. It will certainly do so, if a remedy is not found. The remedy is amalgamation. Truly our present situation is "Amalgamation or annihilation."

The Bosses Show the Way

The employers do not allow sentiment or prejudice to prevent them from organizing thoroughly. Amalgamation has no terrors for them; they want power to crush the unions, and know that to have power they must have unity. So everywhere we see them join forces. No where is this more strikingly illustrated than in Chicago. During the present bitter struggle they have amalgamated their organizations, the Associated Building Contractors, and the Building Construction Employers Association, into one solid body. Contrast the employers' militant policy of solidarity with the backward stand taken by the building trades union officials on amalgamation. Almost at the very moment that the bosses were amalgamating, Mr. Gompers was fulminating in

the capitalist sheets and denouncing as Bolsheviks and disruptors the workers who are advocating for their unions the same measure of amalgamation that the keener-sighted employers were actually putting into practice. Unity of action can be guaranteed only by unity of organization, and the Building Trades Unions will stand on their feet with power to protect their members only when they have completely unified their organizations into one union to cover the entire industry.

The time has now come for the militant unionists in the building industry to take the lead; they must organize all their forces upon a great campaign of education, to infuse their unions with the new spirit, and give them an understanding of the effective modern forms of organization. Our unions must be molded to the form which will meet our needs. Amalgamation of the unions of the entire industry will give us the united front capable of meeting the forces which seek to destroy us, and powerful enough to defeat them. The reconstruction of our unions is the immediate program of militant unionists, which will lay the foundation of control by the workers, and the ultimate establishment of the Workers' Republic.



Call for National Conference of the Trade Union Educational League

MILITANTS! At last the time has come for us to draw up our programs and to organize our forces throughout the labor movement. The Trade Union Educational League is about to hold its first National Conference. The meeting will take place in Chicago on Aug. 26th and 27th. Militant union workers from every locality and industry are herewith cordially invited to attend.

The labor movement is now passing through the most serious crisis in its entire history. With unexampled aggressiveness, the employers are smashing one section of it after another. Orthodox trade union methods and tactics are unavailing to stop this "open shop" drive. Drastic new measures will have to be applied, or the labor movement will be annihilated and the working class left helpless in the grip of the exploiters.

The multitudes of craft unions must be amalgamated into a series of industrial unions. The prevailing craft form of unionism is out-of-date and obsolete. It no longer conforms to industrial conditions. It prevents real solidarity and it must give way to a type of organization that will include all the workers in a given industry. The multitude of craft unions must be amalgamated. Only the industrial form of organization can cope with the powerful employers. Another vitally necessary step is the discarding of the existing trade union philosophy. At present our labor unions are in the anomalous position of having working class bodies and capitalist minds. They are in fundamental contradiction with themselves. They have proletarian interests and instincts, but their petty-bourgeois point of view neutralizes them. Hence their every effort is paralyzed by uncertainty, timidity, and weakness. And so it must remain until they finally come to realize that there is no hope for them except in the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' republic. Then, and then only, with a revolutionary goal before them, will the trade unions gain the clearness of aim and the militancy of spirit indispensable to success in the modern class struggle.

In the present crisis the old officialdom stand in helpless consternation. They are at their wits' ends. Again and again they apply the customary trade union methods, only to be overwhelmed by fresh disasters. But still they do not change these methods. Disregarding the patent fact that employers have enormously increased

their strength in recent years by consolidating their organizations, amassing vast riches, and becoming intensely class conscious, the trade union leaders cling desperately to their own antiquated system. They are constitutionally opposed to all real organization betterment and habitually fight it to a standstill. Intellectually they are frozen over solid. There is hardly a twig of progress showing above the cold and lifeless surface of their collective mind.

But if the static trade union officials fail to perceive the necessities of the movement, the moral courage to acknowledge them), the dynamic rank and file will and must seize the initiative itself. Hence, the National Conference of the Trade Union Educational League. This representative gathering of rank and file workers will not only point out the needs of Organized Labor, but will also outline a campaign of education to satisfy these needs by revamping the prevailing philosophy, amalgamating the unions, and giving them new leadership.

The Trade Union Educational League is opposed on principle to dual unionism. It is not a labor union itself, nor does it propose to become one. It is solely an educational body. It aims, not to split the mass organizations, but to unite and strengthen them in every possible way. The proposed conference will not be held for the purpose of furthering secession movements, but to work out an organized, intensive campaign of constructive, militant education in all the industries. Representation will be based upon the local general groups of the T. U. E. L., each of which shall be entitled to six delegates—if there is no such group in your town, organize one at once so that you may be represented. Trade unions and central bodies may send only fraternal delegates. Each participating organization shall take care of the expenses of its delegates.

Do you believe that Organized Labor should have a real rebel spirit? Do you believe that the craft unions should be amalgamated into industrial unions? Do you believe that the trade union movement should have new and militant leadership? If so, come to the National Conference of the Trade Union Educational League. It will be one of the most important gatherings in the history of the American labor movement.

Wm. Z. Foster, Sec'y-Treas.

Towards Unity in the Building Trades

By Joe Petersen

THERE is serious division of Labor's forces in the Building Trades. Both nationally and locally our forces are broken up. We are finding it impossible to get common action, in the face of the most terrific attack which our unions have ever had to face. We are attempting to meet the situation with antiquated, 18th century methods of craft unionism, while the employers have united all their forces so that they act together in the entire industry. Due to the disease of jurisdictional disputes, our organizations are falling back before the enemy.

Wars between the unions over jurisdiction result from the craft divisions existing between us. When the process of building was simple and the employers were competing small contractors without great capital, then the divided craft unions had a chance to make a showing and obtain a few concessions. But the industry has been changing. In the process of building, a revolution has taken place. New methods have been introduced, new materials have become common, and machinery is playing an ever greater part in the industry. Today, while suburban building remains technically simple, the dominating factor in the industry is the standard city building of steel and concrete. The new elements brought in by this change, cut across our craft lines. This brings the craft unions into conflict. The amount of work being limited, each craft wants to get the lion's share. We then have a mad scramble among them, often several claiming that the nature of the work places it under their jurisdiction. There is usually plenty of evidence on all sides, with nothing to decide between them but power. So they fight. The test of battle has for many years been the only one to receive respect. The result is a continual, bitter fratricidal struggle, with consequent loss of power and demoralization.

The Employers' United Front

While we have been fighting among ourselves, the employers have been busy in another way. The rapid development of large and expensive machines in building, with the use of steel and other new materials, did not affect the bosses in the manner it did the unions. Instead, it became a power for unifying the employers against our organizations. More and more capital was required for machinery and equipment, greater sums were needed for building investment; it naturally followed that the industry came into the hands of the trust companies, great banks, and

the agents of the Steel Corporation. Large construction has thus come to be directly controlled through the giant construction companies and banking interests, while the great bulk of small building is kept in line by the control of building loans.

This concentration of capital and financial control, has been going on for a long time. Following it has come the unification of the building trades employers into ever more powerful associations. These have continually been combining and amalgamating, until today the building interests have one organization, directing throughout the country the fight against the unions. The so-called Citizens' Committee in Chicago combines practically all building interests, controlled and directed by the great bankers. In other cities the unions are similarly fighting the united power of the capitalist class.

Our Unions Lag Behind

The increased power of the employers has been forcing the unions to also close up their ranks. The bosses find, with each new step in their consolidation, that they have more power as against the workers. Their greed for huge profits immediately causes them to attack our wages and working conditions. We resist one at a time with our craft unions, but find ourselves losing. Then we finally search for ways of acting together. For years the writer, who is a practical building tradesman has taken part in these efforts toward unity. Thus, although the workers' organizations are continually lagging behind those of the capitalists, they are nevertheless constantly changing and coming gradually closer together.

During the years 1900-1910 there were many amalgamations brought about of closely related crafts. The movement gained great headway for a time, resulting, among others, in uniting the steamfitters and plumbers; the carpenters and wood workers; the granite cutters, polishers and rubbers; the stonemasons and bricklayers; the marble workers and several independent unions; and the hod carriers and the excavation laborers. The reactionary leaders did their best to head off the movement, but even they were forced to give it lip-service. Samuel Gompers, in addressing the marble workers convention in 1909, expressed the hope that all men engaged in the stone industry would soon be in one powerful organization. The movement culminated in the organization of the Building Trades Department

of the A. F. of L., in 1908. This was a definite recognition of the common interests of all unions in the building industry, and a step toward unification.

The organization of the Building Trades Department was a very "radical" step. The writer remembers quite well the fights that raged around this issue. Many of the same arguments now used against the program of the Trade Union Educational League were then hurled against the idea of forming the Department. But in spite of the reactionary fulminations, the "radicals" of that day went ahead and established the Department.

The new body was intended to eliminate the worst features of jurisdictional wars, and to bring about greater unity between the various craft unions. It was a great step forward. At least it got the unions in touch with one another, and laid the basis for some approach to common action. But its results, especially under the pressure of the employers' present organization, have not justified the high hopes placed upon it. It has exhibited the fundamental weaknesses of all federations. In moments of greatest crisis, when strength is needed most, it has a disconcerting habit of giving way, leaving the unions in dire confusion. The wars of jurisdiction rage on. The Department is only another field of battle. Union resources are still taken up more with fighting each other, than in fighting the employers. The bosses are also affected by these

struggles; strikes over jurisdictional claims continue, and the "fair" employer is in the same danger of them as the "unfair" one. The net result for the unions is loss. Federation has not met the situation.

Two False Remedies

Efforts to change this situation have been many. Two of them should be pointed out, because, coming from widely different sources, they are equally false and dangerous to the workers. One is the effort of the employers to set up "impartial" boards to decide upon jurisdiction; the other is the program of dual unionism advocated by the I. W. W. and others. Untold mischief has been done by both of these quack medicines of unionism.

The movement for a national board to arbitrate jurisdictional disputes was launched by engineers and employers. The proposal for such a board, composed of architects, engineers, employers and employees, was brought before the Atlantic City convention of the Building Trades Department. One delegate, speaking for the adoption, said that he believed it would go far toward eliminating the radical element from the building trades. The proposition was adopted. The organization which this same delegate represented is now out of the Department because of defiance of this board of awards. Differences between the unions cannot be settled by any outside agency. They must be eliminated by the growth of solidarity inside, and the unification of the various unions. Instead of

solving problems of jurisdiction, the board of awards has been a tool for further dividing the workers against one another. Those unions which, like the Carpenters', refuse to accept its decisions are obeying a fundamental instinct of the trade union movement not to allow non-workers to dictate solutions to their problems.

The program of building new "ideal" unions, to replace the imperfect craft unions, has been one of the chief evils of the labor movement. Disgruntled and rebelling elements have thought to take a short cut to solidarity, by breaking away and starting all over. Actions of this kind have done nothing but increase the confusion and weaken the labor movement. Today it is plain to all intelligent men, that progress cannot come in this way. Every one of the many efforts in this direction has failed, and dual unionism is dead in the building trades. The militant union men have learned to be on the watch for this tendency, and to root it out in its beginnings.

For Building Trades Unity

The way out of our present mess lies along the road of amalgamation, the unification of all building trades workers for common action on wages, hours, and policies in the industry. One union covering the entire building trades is required.

Such a plan will not mean wiping out craft lines, wherever these meet some need of the workers. Instead, it will take the form, outlined in 1913 by the famous Tveitmoe resolution adopted by the Building Trades Department but not carried out, which groups together the closely related crafts, such as the mason trades, pipe trades, iron trades, wood-working trades, etc. In a Building Trades Industrial Union these groups would form departments, under the general executive which would have supreme power on questions of wages, hours, disputes, etc. Within these departments the old craft units could be retained as sections and separate locals, so long as wanted to handle purely craft matters. Related crafts will also have the machinery for handling their own peculiar problems, in the departments. But in the struggle against the bosses, they will all be united under one executive committee, concentrating the entire power of the building trades workers.

The technical obstacles to this program are not great. Unlike the railroads, the building trades (with the exception of helpers and laborers) are very close together in wage scales. The adjustments necessary are easily provided for by the department and craft sections. The advantages are so evident and so immediate, that they completely overshadowed any little objection that may be raised.

A great source of weakness today is the thousands of workers in the small towns, where there are not enough of their craft to make a live local union. The small-town worker is just as good material for unionism as the ordinary union man in the city, but he does not have the association of numbers of his fellow craftsmen to keep him in line, as the city worker has. Imagine what would happen to our great city local unions if they were divided up into little groups of three or four, or even 15 or 20. The organization would die out. That is what happens, particularly in the smaller crafts, when you leave the large centers.

The Building Trades Industrial Union could immediately rally all these workers to the union. The cities like New York, Chicago, and the like, would need little change in the local unions. The next smaller cities could unite the little fragments of locals together according to groups thus giving them size and strength and a feeling of power. The little towns could have department locals, or even one local of all building workers in the villages, even if there should be only one or two in each craft, and have a fair size local union which could be alive and healthy. Consider that this would eliminate the entire supply of scabs, relied upon by the bosses in fighting the union, and judge the value of such a united organization in increasing our power. Every building trades worker in the country would soon be a union man with a paid up card and membership in a live local.

Greater power for the union, that is what amalgamation means. The employers are out to smash our unions. They do not discuss the right or wrong of it—they have the power. The only thing that will save our unions and defeat the bosses is greater power. When, instead of a score or more of executive committees at the top, each making a different decision and pulling different ways, we have one committee uniting in itself the combined power of the building workers, then we will stop our retreat and move forward to new victories. Amalgamation is the road to that goal.

Take this up in your union and urge action be taken to get all our unions together, for the purpose of consolidating their forces. Get your local union to act; take it to your district council; then put it up to your international executives and conventions. Demand that your officials take action. Vote for those union men for office in your union, who stand for this program. Help to defeat those who oppose it. Discuss the question wherever building trades workers get together, and make this the dominating issue in the entire industry.



BUILDING TRADES WORKERS ON THE MARCH

A Tale of Two Cities

By J. B. Salutsky

The Conventions of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in Cleveland and Chicago.

THERE is nothing easier than to label a thing or an event. A living, complete reality is thus easily reduced to a formula, and there you have it: merely catalogue it and shelve it in your memory or conscience. But then—what? Then nothing.

Labels Don't Explain

A mere fact in history or in life, which is history in the making, is of no significance whatsoever unless it generates new force and determines development. And so is the knowledge of a fact of no value unless the fact is conceived in its living connection with what had preceded it and what follows it. Naked facts, torn out of their immediate environment, are but incidents or accidents devoid of much meaning. The knowledge of facts outside of their historical soil is fruitless, barren of results, and the labeling of facts, perhaps at times an easy pastime, is at all times a waste of time. Yet it passes quite often as judgment and it helps to create what the market is willing to designate as public opinion.

I. L. G. W. U. Not Reactionary, nor A. C. W. of A. Revolutionary

The two conventions of the two large unions in the needle industry held the other day in Cleveland and Chicago, are illustrations of the above. Here large gatherings of labor, organized and aggressive, militant labor made inroads into history, legislated their immediate future and determined, in so far as it can be determined, what their policies shall be in the days to come. But what do we see? The press, the transfer-agent of public opinion, satisfied itself with the recording of a number of happenings at these conventions, for the most part an uncritical sort of recording. It then had the happenings duly labeled, and the "movement" is ready to proceed to other "unfinished business," most likely to "finish" it in much the same fashion. The label is the finishing touch in portraying life.

The convention of the International Ladies Garment Workers was reactionary throughout, and that of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America was the one bright spot on the marred background of the American labor reality. Thus public opinion summed up the two momentous labor gatherings, and that is all so many of us are satisfied to know. But when we know all this what do we know? Even if a step further

is made and personalities are introduced to supplement the facts, we still are none the wiser. Suppose we accept, without critical analysis, the verdict of newspaper-made history that Benjamin Schlesinger, of the I. L. G. W. U., is a died-in-the-wool reactionary, and Sidney Hillman, of the A. C. W. of A., is the spirit incarnate of revolution, what then? How much more do we then know?

Opposition In Both Conventions Rather Weak

Only eight hours of travel divide Chicago from Cleveland, the seats of the two conventions, yet measured in units of political and spiritual advancement, as evidenced in the two needle industry conventions, it would seem that there is a quarter of a century of distance between the two cities. That much may be readily admitted if judgment shall be based on appearances. But is it right to do so? Does judgment by appearances lead us anywhere? Hardly, as a matter of truth.

But let us have a glance at facts.

The convention of the I. L. G. W. U. ran under the sign of fight on the left wing. In the convention of the A. C. W. of A. the left wing felt quite at home. As one onlooker termed it, there the opposition was extremely anxious not to embarrass the administration, otherwise it was rather comfortable. It would be interesting, then, to discern the objectives of the opposition or the left wing in either case. And this is not at all easy to do, as it was shown in an article in the preceding issue of THE LABOR HERALD. The opposition in the needle industry is not homogeneous, it is in the making as yet and it lacks both in clarity of vision and in oneness of purpose. And, it may be added, it also lacks most badly in training.

Some Objectives of the Left Wing

However, in as much as a liberal allowance for the newness of the situation permits, the following may be considered the program of the most purpose-conscious element of the opposition or left wing in the needle unions:

1. The democratization of the organization structure by means of introducing shop representation.
2. The consolidation of all needle unions into one concentrated fighting body.
3. Lining up with the aggressive world body

of the trade unions (the Moscow or Red Council of Labor Unions).

How the Conventions Differed on the Large Issues

On all of these issues the two conventions took a stand widely different.

On the first point the stand of the I. L. G. W. U. is definitely negative, whereas the A. C. W. of A. made an effort to meet the issue somewhere halfway. The convention of the A. C. W. of A. empowered the incoming administration to change the organic law of the union, wherever the demand for it will make itself felt. And it was let to be known that the general office is in favor of a change in the structure of the organization that would bring the shop as a unit nearer to active participation in the government of the union.

Again, on the issue of consolidation of the unions in the needle industry, the stand of the Amalgamated was decidedly positive. The A. C. W. of A. is for one centralized union in the industry and opposed to a loose federation of the needle trades, which is sponsored by the I. L. G. W. U. Whether a resolution of this kind is necessarily a step toward consolidation in the near future may be questioned, since it is known that the International (the I. L. G. W. U.) is determinedly opposed to such a consolidation.

Now, on the point of international affiliation, the reports were rather misleading, in so far as the Chicago convention of the A. C. W. of A. as concerned. While the press had it, that "the left met with crushing defeat on the issue of international affiliation," the following is the truth in the case. There were introduced a number of resolutions advocating affiliation with the Moscow Council of Trade Unions. These resolutions came from locals and the delegates stood instructed by their mandate of election to have these resolutions brought before the convention. However, in the convention resolution No. 67 evolved and it met with the unanimous approval of all the left or opposition delegates. It also was favored by the administration and it was carried unanimously. None of the other resolutions favoring direct affiliation had any supporters or votes. It inevitably would follow, that there could be no "crushing defeat" under the circumstances, and there was none.

Resolution 67 reads:

Whereas, the whole tendency of modern times is toward the international co-ordination of all movements and enterprises, whether they be of labor or capital; and

Whereas, These are times of monster combinations of capital, over-reaching all national

boundaries, engaged in sinister attempts to defeat and crush the labor movement both within each nation and on an international scale; and

Whereas, A well-defined movement to defend the sacred cause of labor by co-ordinating our industrial organizations on an equally broad international scale is shown in the communications to the Amsterdam Trade Union International from the Moscow International of Labor Unions, inviting the former to participate in the formation of a United Front of all the labor unions of the world; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, in its Fifth Biennial Convention assembled, express its approval of the efforts for a United Front of all the labor organizations of the world, and give its heartiest co-operation in the fight against organized capital.

Adopted.

Only those who are intentionally blind could discover a defeat for the position of the left in the adoption of the above resolution. But it is an old story that with so many wish is the father to the thought.

The I. L. G. W. U., whose defenders—right or wrong—talk a great lot of unity, would not stand for any "Moscow nonsense," even be it a genuine effort to bring about unity of all labor.

If the actions on the just enumerated three cardinal points is to be taken as the basis for judgment there would be reasonable ground for the notion that the I. L. G. W. U. turned reactionary and the A. C. W. of A. has gone decidedly radical in those convention days. But is it really so?

Why the Difference in Attitude

One cannot escape facing the following question, and the question is to be answered if we are to understand what's what.

The question is—What is really responsible for the difference in attitude taken by the A. C. W. of A. and the I. L. G. W. U. on a number of points of great significance? Was it due to a difference in leadership or was a different composition of membership responsible for the difference in attitude? Or—perhaps there was really no such great difference at all in the attitude of one organization or the other?

As a matter of fact, some ten years ago, one would find an exactly reversed situation with regard to the organizations under consideration. The I. L. G. W. U. was then the one radical organization, and the United Garment Workers of America, the parent body of the present Amalgamated, was reactionary in many respects. Since then the leadership of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union has changed and in so far as the personnel is concerned the change was rather toward the more progressive type. And the split that has taken place in the United

Garment Workers of America and caused the growth of the Amalgamated was not a split along lines of radicalism, or industrialism, or internationalism, only questions of autonomy and leadership were involved in that controversy. Why then the great change?

The make-up of the two organizations, in so far as the membership is concerned, is not different. The same racial groups, practically distributed in the same ratio, make up the I. L. G. W. U. and the A. C. W. of A. The industry, that is the market, the technique, the earnings are closely neighboring, except that the system of work prevailing in the women's wear industry still retains a greater part of mechanical skill, whereas in the production of men's clothing the operations are further simplified by a wider application of machinery and by a minute specialization and division of labor.

Logically speaking, there should not be room for a great difference in tactics, if actions of large bodies are motivated by environment.

Of course, it is inconvenient to discuss the problem of leadership since it involves the analysis of personal motives or abilities. Yet it would be nothing short of violation of truth to assert that the leadership of the two organizations differs very widely on the point of radicalism, at least in so far as formal profession of faith is concerned. In point of fact, the leader of the I. L. G. W. U. is a prop of the Socialist Party and President of its most powerful daily paper publishing company, whereas the head of the A. C. W. of A. is politically non-attached.

Bossing or Leading

There is, however, one difference in the make-up of the leadership of the two organizations, and rather a vital one. It lies not in any official label but in the very conception of leadership. In one case it is an attempt to boss a situation that is underlying the policy of the leadership, whereas in the other case the tendency is to lead, to control the situation by creating or accelerating the conditions of the situation. Benjamin Schlesinger is a red-card Socialist, and Sidney Hillman will tie himself with no political group or philosophy. Yet the one succeeded in having even his own party members oppose his policies, whereas in the other case, the administration appears to be the expression of the living spirit of the entire organization. It is the great, old yet ever new problem of leadership that is to be looked for in the search for light in the situation.

The administration of the I. L. G. W. U. had its convention under its complete control. It could have its way without resorting to wholesale political murder of opposition delegates. Yet

it did so. The spirit of vindictiveness was manifest throughout the sessions of the body. And also did the administration of the A. C. W. of A. have the convention under its full sway. The opposition was numerically weak, consisting of the disgruntled elements, controlled by the politics of the Jewish Daily Forward, politics foreign to the life of the organization; and of the left wing groups who had constructive or misguided notions of organization reform, but throughout confined to the problems of the union. But the administration did not seek to antagonize the opposition by fighting their ideas because of the spiritual fatherhood. It tried to meet squarely every issue as it arose, and the result was exceedingly gratifying. No one left the convention "licked," unless he came for what he was not supposed to get there. A "defeat" on a point of principle, in a union, is never a *casus belli*, never causes animosity, if the fight for or against the principle is a gallant one. That much in favor of the A. C. W. of A. leadership will be conceded by any one who saw the convention in operation.

To sum up: The two conventions did not differ very widely in point of radicalism. Both remained on the safe ground of reality in so far as the actual problems concerning the life of the organization are considered. But, whereas one body, blinded by a partisan animosity and by a perverted notion of bossism instead of leadership has created ill-feeling and narrowed down the sway of the convention to the degree of pure-and-simplism of a most primitive type, the other organization managed its way through difficulties and presented a sight novel in the practice of the American labor movement. It was not so much the actual difference in the attitude taken by one organization or the other, on one point or the other. It was the method of approach to a solution of the problems of the movement that divides the two otherwise similar organizations.

CHILI

THE industrial, commercial, and agricultural employers of Chili have just combined themselves nationally into an organization called the Association of Industry. It is headed by a General Council, composed of one delegate from each province, and one from each industry. The Association intends "to take all possible steps with a view to harmonizing the legitimate interests of employers and workers." It declares it will "defend the right of the individual to work by all means in its power and will give assistance to members who are faced with difficulties owing to sympathetic strikes and similar disputes."

Dr. Joseph Goldstein, "Russian expert," is quoted by the Chicago Tribune to the effect that "End of Soviet Regime is Near." Where have we heard these "news" before?

From George to Dick

Dick Harridan, Engineer, St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Friend Dick:—

We all reached home sober and feeling better for the trip. But since coming back from there I have been thinking over some of our kitchen-table discussions regarding the union, its policies, etc., and I want to put my side up to you in a workable form so you wont fail to understand clearly the point I wanted to make. Here it is:

You are an engineer and probably understand an engine and what it will do better than I do. Now suppose you had a heavy train, say 2,000 tons, to move, and it was all ready and you were anxious to move that train to its destination in the least time and at the least cost; and suppose your future more or less depended upon your making a good showing on this particular trip.

You find it will take equal to a 160 ton engine to do the work, and you are told to select your power to make the run. Suppose you go over to the roundhouse and find that they have 16 engines of 10 tons each, and one engine of 160 tons, ready for the road. Would you take one engine of 10 tons and make 16 trips? Or would you take the 16 engines and make one trip, taking coal 16 times and water 16 times, and calling 16 more tallow pots, and taking chances on 16 sets of machinery getting out of order and chances of all not starting together, or some being in reverse when you started, or maybe an engineer asleep on the job, or playing hookey to same steam?

Or would you take the 160 ton engine, where you had the whole power necessary concentrated in the one lever under your own hand? I ask you, as an intelligent engineer, which of the three would you do?

There can be no question at all about your answer. You would take the big engine. You would do the job in a workmanlike manner. Sure, you would.

Now the railroad workers have just this kind of a practical proposition before them at the present time, and they are trying to combat the railroads by using the 16 little engines, or Brotherhoods, against the companies who are using the biggest engine they have on hand, and who are trying hard to construct one still bigger by misusing the power of Government, if necessary, to whip us. You might not be able to get all the power out of the big engine, or general amalgamated union, at first, but you would soon be able to handle it and to get definite results.

If we cannot combine all our organizations into one, as you seem to fear that we can't, then we must admit we haven't as much intelligence as the railroad companies have. If such is the case we are a bunch of incompetents and our cake is dough under any circumstances. Think it over, and look around your yards to see if you haven't got a railroad spy among you and the boys, suggesting the ideas you expressed the other night, because such ideas are in perfect accord with those that the companies wish you to hold. Perpetuating craft divisions amongst us fortifies the companies and makes them unbeatable. Amalgamation of our many unions into one is the only thing that will give us sufficient strength to defeat them. We must have a general railroad union.

With kindest regards for yourself and all union men and the friends that assembled Saturday night, I am, As ever,

GEORGE

The League Under Fire

By Earl R. Browder

NINE pages of inflammatory denunciation in the *American Federationist!* This is the new high point in the campaign against the Trade Union Educational League, the beginning of which was reported last month in THE LABOR HERALD. In the May issue of his house-organ, Gompers runs a long screed of slander and vilification, continuing the attack he started in his April issue and on his trip to Chicago, Cleveland, and other cities. "Organizers" are busily carrying on against the League all over the country; Gompers' pocketpiece, Matthew Woll, is sent to make a slanderous attack at the Convention of the Railway Employees' Department; and General Presidents of unions all over the country are taking up cudgels against the League. Nearly every International journal has obediently taken a shot in the same direction within the past month, with a few honorable exceptions. The natural culmination comes with Gompers' resort to the capitalist press in his flamboyant May 1st manifesto.

In a hysterical fear of everything which even smells of progressive and militant action by the working class, Gompers is hurling charges recklessly right and left. He is flatly and positively against real labor solidarity, and denounces its advocates as "disruptors." What are his arguments? Does he attempt to prove his charges? Not at all. He is content to damn the League as a "secret" organization intent upon destroying the unions (one version), or to deliver them up to Lenin (second version—take your choice). Gompers' panic, however, does not prevent him from extreme care in choice of words, where direct charges whose absurdity he well knows, might lay him open. By skilful juggling of words he manages, without saying so directly, to make the charge that the League is being financed by "Bolshevik Gold." The invitation extended to him in Chicago, to inspect the books of the League, is carefully ignored.

Why Reactionary Leaders Shudder

The reason for the panic, witnessed by this unprecedented campaign, is very simple. It is, that the League has received a tremendous response from the labor movement. The amalgamation movement, one of the most important points in the program of the League, has taken on great headway, and is sweeping through the unions. It has been adopted by dozens of central labor bodies, and by hundreds of local unions. The resolution adopted by the Chicago Federa-

tion of Labor, especially, has reverberated throughout the labor movement of America. The national convention of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, just closed at Dallas, Texas, adopted a resolution for amalgamating the railroad unions into one industrial union, and also passed the Chicago resolution favoring amalgamation of all craft unions upon lines of industry. In the convention of the Railway Employees' Department, described in detail elsewhere in this issue, there was a powerful sentiment for this measure, which was only headed-off by most strenuous efforts.

The facts are that Gompers' influence in the labor movement has been to stultify and stop all progress. Such a condition is the reason why the League, boldly proclaiming a program of uniting our unions for effective action, calling for militant leadership, and affiliation with the International of working-class solidarity, the Red Trade Union International, has been given so enthusiastic a welcome. It is the first sign of real life in the labor movement, and as such it rallies those in whose hearts hope still springs.

It is not a violation of confidence to say that one of Gompers' principal sources of worry is the knowledge that a surprisingly large number of high international officials in the unions are sympathetic to the League, and are quietly supporting its program. Hardly a week passes without several of these men, from various sections, dropping into the office of the League to wish it success and pass a word of encouragement. They want to see some constructive work done, and they know the old machine offers no hope. The reactionary officials have a keen sense for this atmosphere of wholesale "disloyalty" to their rule; they do not know how to meet it. So, with Gompers at the head, they launch a mock reign of terror. They do not realize that these very tactics are forcing many union men into the ranks of the League who would not otherwise go the whole way upon the League program. Today Gompers is forcing the issue,—“Gompers and standpatism” or “The League and progress.” All of which is the best possible testimonial to the correctness of the League's position and the effectiveness of its work.

The Merits of the Argument

We have grown accustomed to have our regular “May Day Scare” thrown into us each year by A. Mitchell Palmer and similar “Department of Justice” officials. Accompanying the warn-



ings of "revolution" and bombings, it became the regular procedure to announce a devious plot financed by the unholy Bolsheviks and their everlasting gold supply. The game was playing out, however, and in the year of grace, 1922, the capitalist politicians evidently considered that it was too stale for further use.

Not so Sam Gompers. With a sprightliness surprising in one so old he springs to the vacated place of A. Mitch. Palmer and dons his discarded mantle. The columns of the great capitalist press of the big cities open wide, and with screaming 8 column headlines the manifesto of Gompers to a waiting world is brought forth. Under the blazing heads is carried two columns of such nonsense that even the capitalist papers have been unable to refrain from joking about it. Gompers' charge against the League is in the form of innuendo, and reads as follows:

"W. Z. Foster, who had no money, went to Moscow and came back and announced that he was building a great secret machine to undermine the American labor movement and turn it over to the Red International, owned by Lenin. He began publication of an expensive magazine and proclaimed a thousand secret agents in a thousand communities."

Disregarding the direct lies contained in this paragraph, which are apparent to any reader and which were dealt with in the last issue of THE LABOR HERALD, we will deal only with the indirect statement that the League is financed by Bro. Lenin of Russia. We have already pointed out that Gompers was offered the opportunity, while in Chicago, to examine the books of the organization, but he refused to do so. In the face of this, the repetition of such a stale and mouldy charge is distinctly in bad faith. The League demands that he produce proof of his assertions, or cease his slander.

Mr. Gompers, in all his decades of opposition to everything smacking of progressive or radical tendencies, has never before displayed so much bitterness or attacked anything so viciously, as he is now attacking the Trade Union Educational League. Not content with the use of most of the conservative trade union journals, he needs must turn to the capitalistic dailies. The latter, significantly enough, gladly give him all the space

he can use, and from coast to coast they eagerly print and comment upon his fulminations. Gompers himself, and a flock of his "organizers,"

have been going from place to place, denouncing the League and organizing the opposition against it. But his only weapons are still, as they have been from the beginning, slander, prejudice, vilification, and untruth.

Strangely enough to those who do not know the latent discontent in the trade unions, all of these spectacular, witch-burning orgies of Mr. Gompers, so far from hampering the work of the League, have proved the most decided stimulant to its work. Dulled by past failures, and discouraged by the reactionary official character of their unions, many militants had failed to awaken to the call sent out by the Trade Union Educational League when it was organized. These former livewires had lost hope, and looked upon the League as another forlorn cause, doomed to futility. It took the demonstration of reactionary officialdom in a panic of fear to convince them that progress is not only possible, but waiting to be called forth to transform our labor movement into a living, growing power.

Samuel Gompers can no longer hold back the tides of progress by empty words. The workers are getting ready to go forward, and cannot be much longer fooled. If the pathway to the future carries them to industrial unionism, to the discarding of fossils like Gompers, to affiliation to the Red Trade Union International, they are not afraid of these things or their names. The time has passed when the scare-crow of Bolshevism and the bogie-man of revolution, manipulated by the hands of Gompers or of Palmer, can longer block the road to better organization and more working-class power. The program of the Trade Union Educational League has pointed the way along this road, the masses in the unions are beginning to see the way, and now that they have started it will take more than words to stop them.

The Railway Employees' Department Convention

By Wm. Z. Foster

FROM the standpoint of constructive work, the convention of the Railway Employees' Department, recently held in Chicago, was an almost total failure. This was because it neither understood the supreme need of railroad labor, nor did anything to satisfy that need. What railroad workers require above all is a solidification of their ranks, a unifying of their forces so that they may make effective resistance to the powerfully organized employers. But to bring about this vital measure the convention did virtually nothing. Judging it by results accomplished, it was a standpat, visionless gathering which refused even to express a desire for real solidarity.

But, strange to say, if the convention achieved little or nothing in a constructive way, it nevertheless displayed a great volume of radical sentiment. From first to last there was a strong minority, which on a couple of occasions actually became the majority, fighting steadily and consistently, if not always wisely and effectively, to strengthen the bonds between the affiliated organizations and to draw them into amalgamation. In fact the business of the convention was little else than a constant struggle between this minority seeking to progress on towards industrial unionism, and the international officials striving to maintain the present craft alignments. It was a case of industrialism versus craftism. Over it the battle between the two forces raged ceaselessly and manifested itself in every conceivable fashion. It was the bone of contention in the discussions on such questions as the election of new classes of officers, raising of per capita tax, jurisdiction, amalgamation, admission of unions, strike votes, and dozens of others. It pervaded everything, made all issues. And the worst of the thing was that upon almost every issue the industrialists lost and the craftists won. That was the calamity of the convention, the sense in which it was a failure.

The Fight Begins

One of the first big clashes came over a proposition to enable the Department to elect its own Executive Council. As things now stand the Executive Council is made up of the Presidents of the several affiliated craft unions. The effect of this is to reduce the Department convention

to merely an advisory body, because the Presidents, although handling the business of the Department, are not responsible to it, but only to their respective craft unions. The proposed arrangement would upset this and bring the Council directly under the control of the Department convention. It was an industrialist proposal of first rank and its adoption would have gone a long way towards solidifying the organizations. Hence, the international officials turned their heaviest guns against it. Practically all the Presidents denounced it, likewise many Vice-Presidents and Organizers. But, notwithstanding all the alarmist outcries that its adoption would wreck the whole movement, the resolution actually got the votes of a majority of delegates, so strong was the desire to unify the ranks. The vote was 141 for and 138 against. The project was defeated only by an appeal to the antiquated system of voting by craft units. The six important crafts split three and three on it, but two delegates, one casting the vote of the whole Clerk's organization, and the other of the Switchmen's, made the final vote three crafts for and five against. The thing was lost.

Another battle raged around the question of increasing the per capita tax paid by the Internationals to the Department. At present it is 1½ cents per member per month. The proposal was to increase it to 10 cents. This was another industrialist measure. Giving the Department more money meant to strengthen it and give it more independence in the face of the craft unions. The International Presidents perceived this very clearly. They wanted to keep the purse strings in their own hands, to keep the Department poor so that they might dictate its policies. It was pointed out that last year the income of the Department, through donations, etc., all of which came from the craft unions, amounted to 9½ cents per member per month. But when it was proposed that this should be collected by a regular per capita tax guaranteed to the Department, and not through gifts and voluntary assessments under the arbitrary control of the Presidents, most violent objection was raised. One after another the International Presidents, or their spokesmen, took the floor and stated that if the increased per capita tax was adopted their organizations would quit the Department. Such

tactics, together with all sorts of wild denunciations, it took to force the delegates into line so that a majority could be scared up to defeat the proposition.

Real Revolt Looms

The never-ending battle of the progressives for solidarity of the railroad trades manifested itself sharply again on the general question of affiliation of the various unions with the Department. Two distinct tendencies to this end were in evidence: one to bring into the Department all the real railroad unions, and the other to exclude the numerous craft unions that were trying to edge their way in so that they might expand at the expense of the existing organizations. Under the latter head the Painters and the Steamfitters were barred, because their entry meant merely to divide and weaken the railroad workers, not to unite them. Under the former head an invitation was extended to the four Brotherhoods to become part of the Department, and the Stationary Firemen were taken in over the strenuous opposition of the administration. This action was taken because it was felt that the Firemen would lend strength to the Department by coming in.

But the real fight occurred over the request of the Maintenance of Way for readmittance into the Department. The Committee reported that this should not be granted until the organization straightens out its jurisdictional squabble with the Carpenters and is reinstated in the A. F. of L. But the progressives would not agree to this; they launched a determined fight for re-affiliation of the Maintenance of Way regardless of consequences. They could not see why the ranks of the railroad workers should be split and this important organization kept detached from the rest simply because petty politicians in the A. F. of L. saw fit to give aid and comfort to the Carpenters' ridiculous jurisdictional claims.

The fight started by Del. Kutz moving to amend the Committee's report so that the Maintenance of Way might be admitted immediately, regardless of its suspension from the A. F. of L. Amendment ruled out of order on the ground that a section of the laws provided that only organizations in good standing in the A. F. of L. can affiliate with the Department. Kutz appealed from the decision, urging the very clever sophistry that the law in question was not in force because it had been laid on the table pending further action by the Convention. It was a quibble, but so eager was the convention to strengthen its ranks by taking in the isolated union, and so little respect did it have for the A. F. of L. heads, that it actually voted in major-

ity to support Kutz's appeal. The appeal was lost, however, as it failed to secure the requisite two-thirds vote.

Undeterred by this preliminary defeat, the progressives waxed dangerously radical. One delegate got vociferous applause when he declared:

"I believe the time is here and now when we should decide who is going to affiliate with the Railway Department and who is going to decide which organizations shall come in.—Are we going to let the carpenters and joiners, the cigar makers, the pattern makers, stone cutters, barbers, peanut peelers, peddlers, packers and polishers tell us who is going to affiliate with this Department?—It is time for us here and now, American Federation of Labor or no American Federation of Labor, to say that the railroad men of all crafts shall be united."

Further attacks were pressed against the Committee's report. Amendment after amendment was offered, but they were all declared out of order on the same grounds. Finally there was nothing left to do but vote on the report. Then the progressives were able to make their majority count by voting down the report. This left the matter before the convention without any recommendation. A motion was then made to admit the Maintenance of Way forthwith. This, too, was ruled out of order as unconstitutional, and the rebels lacked the necessary two-thirds vote to upset the ruling.

This last blow left nothing for the progressive majority to do but to amend the tabled section of the Department's laws so that affiliated unions should not be required to belong to the A. F. of L. This they hoped to be able to do with their majority vote when the matter was brought before the body again by the Law Committee. But when the occasion arrived they were asleep at the switch. Chairman Jewell put the section to the house and it was adopted without objection before the delegates realized what it was all about. This put the progressive majority in the same old difficulty of requiring a two-thirds vote in order to get action. They moved to reconsider the action just taken and though polling 82 votes as against 79, failed to get the requisite amount. An appeal from the decision of the Chair for having declared the section adopted without taking a formal vote on it went the same way. Further attempts to amend the laws so that the Maintenance of Way might be admitted failed similarly. So, finally, the Progressives had to confess themselves beaten and give up.

The fight of the majority to seat the Mainten-

ance of Way, notwithstanding specific A. F. of L. law prohibiting it, was a remarkable illustration of the strong rebellious spirit in the convention. This spirit was the more noteworthy in view of the fact that fully 95% of the delegates were paid officials, system chairmen, each receiving anywhere from \$300.00 to \$600.00 salary, plus expenses, per month. If such high-paid officials were in this mood it may well be imagined what was the state of mind of the rank and file of workers on the roads. The International officials had to constantly exert all their power and influence to keep the convention from running away from them. On nearly every important issue the Presidents, who are usually reluctant to speak, had to take the floor to hold the delegates in check. So standpat was their attitude and so unpopular did they become, that their appearance on the floor was usually greeted with ill-concealed groans.

The General Strike Vote

All through the convention the reports of the committees and speeches of the delegates were replete with details of how seriously the organizations are suffering under the "open shop" attacks of the companies. This, in fact, was the basis of the strong radical sentiment prevailing. Most of the delegates realized that the unions were being driven back and they were eager for almost anything that would solidify and strengthen them. A streak of desperation ran through all the convention's proceedings. This came strongest to the fore in the discussion on the question of a general strike of the six shop trades as a means to put a stop to the "farming out" of work, the institution of piecework, the establishment of company unions, and the many other measures used by the companies in their militant efforts to destroy the unions and to reduce the workers to slavery.

From the beginning it was evident that a strike vote would be carried. The only question was what kind of a strike it should be, a sectional or general one. After reviewing the hostile attitude of the Pennsylvania, New York Central, Erie, Western Maryland and many other railroads, the Resolutions Committee presented a resolution providing for the taking of a national strike vote of the six shop trades if the grievances complained of could not be straightened out within sixty days after the close of the convention. This radical proposal did not suit the Administration and they immediately began to war against it. Their plan was to confine the strike merely to the roads affected. Hence Jewell himself pleaded with the convention for an amendment to that end, saying:

"I am going to earnestly suggest to this convention that the second resolve of this resolution be amended so the strike ballot be submitted to the membership on the several railroads that may on the date of the taking of this strike vote, be involved in the conditions complained of in the whereases of this resolution."

The amendment was obligingly made by a delegate. But the convention reacted violently against it. They would have none of its policy of leaving one part of the shopmen at work to scab upon those that were on strike. The sentiment was overwhelmingly for a united stand against the common enemy. So strong was this that not even the International Presidents dared oppose it. For the most part they confined themselves to straddling and to pointing out the difficulties that would have to be faced were a national strike called. Some urged that the unions had no money to finance such strike, and they were told that the men were hungry now and they might as well starve striking as working. Others called attention to the fact that some of the roads had signed contracts with the shop unions, but the contention that the roads took them serious and that the unions should consider them sacred, was laughed out of court. It was, indeed, the time of the radicals. In their determination to fight and to fight unitedly against the oppressor, they swept all before them. The Jewell Administration amendment was overwhelmingly beaten and the original resolution providing for a national strike vote unanimously adopted. It was the one victory of the rebellious spirit of the convention, and it was a veritable triumph.

The Amalgamation Scare

From the opening day of the convention it was apparent that amalgamation of the many railroad unions would be one of the most important questions to be considered. The delegates, most of whom realized the imperative necessity of doing something to greatly strengthen the unions, were full of the subject. They talked of little else. No less than 40 resolutions demanding amalgamation in some form or other were before the convention for action. The very air was electric with get-together sentiment.

All this greatly alarmed the old-time railroad union leaders. In fact, some of them became almost panic-stricken. From top to bottom they ascribed the sentiment to the Trade Union Educational League, which lately had been very active among the railroad workers. Their plan was to scare the budding amalgamation movement to death. Caucuses of the delegates were held and dire warnings issued of the sad consequences to follow if amalgamation was encouraged. In this

campaign Mr. Gompers himself did yeoman service. In a conveniently arranged trip to Chicago, where the convention was held, he publicly attacked the League most vigorously. Not content with this, he sent his man Friday, Matthew Woll, to the convention itself to campaign against the League. Ostensibly Mr. Woll was to advocate the union label, but in reality he spent over half his platform time heaping coals of fire upon the head of our much-maligned organization. His harrangue to the delegates consisted of the usual torrent of lies and abuse that are doing service in certain circles as argument against the League's constructive program. How frightened he was at the sudden growth of our educational movement, promising as it does some real progress in the unions, may be judged by his lengthy plea that the delegates should not allow themselves to be made "the tail of a book-selling proposition," as he dubbed the Trade Union Educational League. He declared that the labor movement was watching to see that this alarming calamity did not take place. Seldom has anyone more openly insulted a convention's intelligence than Mr. Woll with his peurile warnings. But then, he was so anxious to head off the League and to save the railroad workers from its terrible machinations that he did not realize the asininity of his remarks.

The Thing Fizzles

The general air of expectancy and (for the reactionaries) alarm about the amalgamation movement increased as the first days of the convention passed and the big fights developed over various projects tending towards industrialism. Especially the battle over the election of the Executive Council directly by the convention added fuel to the flame. Another factor was a mass meeting called by the League and attended by fully half of the delegates, at which Wm. Ross Knudsen and the writer made addresses on amalgamation. Practically everybody looked forward to a battle royal on amalgamation in the convention, with a good chance for the principle at least to be adopted. But little came of it. When the actual issue came before the delegates it proved pretty much of a fizzle. The industrialists shied away from it badly and made a poor fight. It is not too much to say that a large portion of them were influenced by the intimidations and red-flag wavings of the standpatters. The measure received only a fraction of the support that it should have, considering the temper of the convention. It was one of the ironies of the convention that the body of the delegates fought consistently for at least a dozen different measures, all making for the fusion of the railroad organizations and the building of the De-

partment into an industrial union, but when they came squarely up against the issue of amalgamation, the very thing that their many fights on the floor were leading straight to, they fell down and failed to support it. When they came face to face with their actual goal they did not recognize it.

The amalgamation question came before the convention in a minority report of the Law Committee, submitted as a substitute for the famous 40 resolutions and calling for a referendum vote of the affiliated unions on the proposition. The standpatters sailed into this, belaboring it from all sides. The historian of the future, studying the development of the movement after the unions have reached the industrial stage, will snicker at the arguments made against amalgamation at this convention. Fully 99% of them were the most trivial nonsense of the outpourings of violent prejudice. Never was the real question of amalgamation met. The poor old Knights of Labor, which all the world knows was merely a mass organization, was dug up from its grave and made to serve as an industrial union. Likewise the American Railway Union and the One Big Union, both secession movements pure and simple, were cited as horrible examples of the folly of amalgamation. Even President Wharton, who used to be a progressive, was not above putting forth such intellectual trash. He was a pinch-hitter for the Administration and was brought into the convention to close the debate on amalgamation, which he did. It would be a waste of time and space to analyse his trivial remarks on the subject at issue.

But if the standpatters made no real arguments against amalgamation it must also be admitted that the latter's proponents made few in favor of it. They were too much on the defensive. They spent too much time telling what it was not and too little telling what it was. Outside of a couple of speeches, there was very little meat in the many talks favoring amalgamation. Quite evidently many of the industrialists had been a little overawed by the violent campaign made against it by Mr. Gompers and other officials. Also, two mistakes were made by the minority of the Law Committee. The first was in reducing the proposition to merely an amalgamation of the eight trades affiliated to the Department, whereas it should have covered the whole sixteen. But something much more serious was their failure to present a concrete plan of amalgamation when called upon to do so. Jewell put their shoulders squarely to the mat when he demanded something more definite than the mere

(Continued on page 30)

Struggles and Difficulties in the German Labor Movement

By Fritz Heckert

BEFORE the war, the German trade unions were counted as the most progressive labor organizations in the world. They stood under the immediate influence of the Social-Democratic Party. But even more rapidly than did the party, they passed from the policy of revolutionary class struggle to that of reformistic opportunism. With the outbreak of the war the leaders of the German trade union movement became unquestioning followers of the militarists. They threw themselves into the arms of nationalism and did all possible to increase national hatred and to further the war slaughter.

From the beginning of 1915 we find the trade union leaders carrying on a sharp struggle against the anti-war elements. "Whoever is not for the war policy of the unions is our enemy and must be relentlessly fought," so said Fritz Paepflow, president of the Building Trades Union. The head of the Sailors' Section of the German Transport Workers' Union, Paul Muller, wrote after the capture of Antwerp: "The black-white-red flag waves on the walls of this old seaport, let us hope forever," and the editor of the miners' journal declared in the Summer of 1918, "Ninety per cent of German trade unionists are for holding the conquered territory."

In this frame of mind the labor leaders ceased all struggle against the capitalists, declaring social peace with them and helping them legally tie the hands and feet of the workers with anti-strike legislation. Every revolutionary they considered a mortal enemy to be fought by any means. They denounced the oppositional elements to the military and civil officials, and many were either sent to the trenches or thrown into jail. The leaders were bitterly opposed to the revolution, until the fateful 9th of November, 1918, when, for good or evil, they found themselves drawn into it.

In the days of October, 1918, when the military and economic collapse of the Empire took place, the German trade union leaders, headed by Karl Legien, drew up the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft** with the coal and steel king, Hugo Stinnes. The *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* still stands unshakably fast, in spite of the revolution, which gave power into the hands of the workers, and notwithstanding a thousand disastrous experiences with it later. The end of the war left in Germany a

starving and poverty-stricken proletariat, likewise a wrecked industrial system.

The working class, brought by Capital into these difficulties, and disillusioned by the overwhelming defeats in the war, stormily demanded the repudiation of the trade union policy of class cooperation. They insisted that property rights in the means of production be abolished. So originated the watchwords, "Socialization of the mines and the industries," and "Control of production by the workers." And again it was the trade union leaders, in cooperation with the Social-Democratic parliamentarians and theoreticians, who sabotaged the struggle of the workers to revolutionize the economic system. The great strike of the Ruhr miners and iron workers in the Spring of 1919, fought to socialize the mines and the steel works, was betrayed by the trade union leaders and drowned in blood by the Social-Democrat, Noske. The central organ of the Social-Democratic Party, "*Vorwaerts*," directly demanded the assassination of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, saying: "Four hundred dead in a row, and Rosa and Liebknecht not there, not there."

The principal theoreticians, Kautsky and Hilferding, told the workers that socialization of production is not possible. They compared the broken down German industry with a quarry and "Quarries cannot be socialized." Then, to deceive the workers, a socialization commission was established. Up to this day it has done absolutely nothing. With the lie that socialization is at hand, the German Government managed to save itself from the assaults of the workers in June, 1919, and to escape an overthrow.

Although the German trade union movement had shrunk to only 700,000 members at the end of the war, in 1919 it grew to over 9,000,000 members in the Socialist trade unions and almost 4,000,000 in the others. With only a total of 17,000,000 workers in agriculture and industry

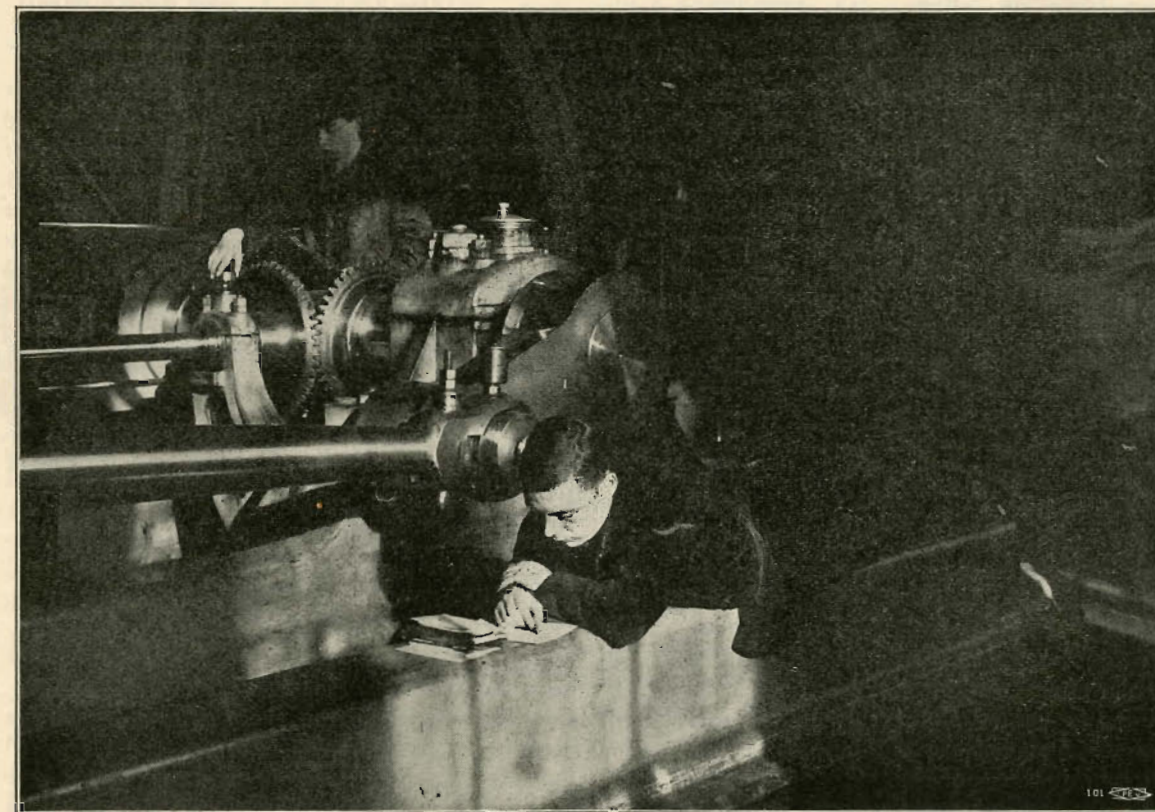
*The *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* is a sort of economic parliament, made up half of representatives of employers' organizations and half of representatives of trade unions. It covers all industries, and has shop, local, district, state, and national sections. Its function is to settle all disputes arising in German industry. The whole mechanism is an elaborate institution to kill militant action and to establish class-cooperation.

in general, 13,000,000 organized workers represent an irresistible power. But the trade union leadership has never understood how to use this power in the interests of the workers. Yes, apparently they have never even had the intention to do so. It is no wonder, therefore, that the employing class, which after the collapse of its imperialistic dreams was completely helpless and exhausted, has been able to take courage, to reorganize itself, and to begin to wring from the workers one after another of the latter's hard-won concessions. Indeed, an opposition in the movement sought to win the trade unions for another policy, to give them a new leadership. And it appeared as if this opposition would overthrow with success, the opportunists. Under the leadership of the Independent Socialist, Robert Dissmann, the great Metal Workers' Union, numbering 1,800,000 members, was conquered. But soon the membership of this big organization learned that Robert Dissmann was only a "word-radical," who from the moment he arrived at the head of the Metal Workers' Union, pursued exactly the same opportunistic policy as his Social-Democratic predecessor.

In 1920, the opposition split: the Right-Independents, under the leadership of Dissmann, went back into the camp of the class-cooperationists

about Karl Legien: while the Left elements affiliated themselves with the small Communist opposition in the trade unions. It was clear that the right wing of the opposition, although publicly pledged to the postulates, "revolutionizing of the trade unions," and "dictatorship of the proletariat," really had no other goal than the winning of a few easy-chairs in the labor movement. When this end was reached it ceased its struggle and joined hands with its former enemies. On the other hand, the left wing of the opposition expended its energies to give the entire labor movement a new fighting spirit and to make it more capable for the struggle. Ever clearer became the differences between the two factions: *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* and class cooperation on the one side, and relentless class struggle on the other. The more the right-wing trade unionists became prisoners of their class-cooperation policies, the bitterer became their struggle against their opponents. Where they could, they drove the latter out of the trade unions.

At the end of the war the buying power of the German mark equalled 45 pfennigs of pre-war time. In the course of a year its value had fallen to 1.6 pfennigs. Wholesale prices, according to official figures, were 43 times as high in 1922 as in 1913. To offset this wages had



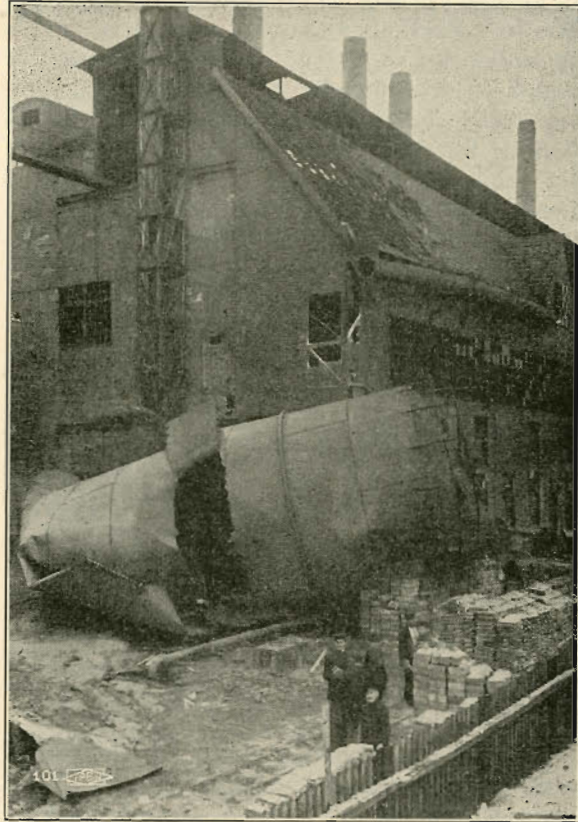
GERMAN STUDENT-SCABS, FURNISHED BY THE EMERGENCY TECHNICAL ASSOCIATION

mounted only 15 times. At the close of 1921 the productivity of the average German worker was only three-fifths of what it was in peace time, and his actual wages barely half as much. Rapid decay of the national economy and rapid decay of labor power, are the consequences. The future offers only the saddest prospects. The cost of living for the workers, from the end of October, 1921, to the end of February, 1922, mounted 120%. A broader and stronger wave of price increases is now coming on.

The trade unions have done nothing serious to organize the defensive struggle of the workers against these conditions. It is true, however, that the Socialist trade unions enunciated ten demands for the workers to fight for, and which should save the working class and the national economy from collapse. The chief demand was the seizure of 25% of all wealth. That meant confiscation, for State purposes, of Capitalist property to the extent of 50 billion gold marks, and the socialization of the mines and other natural resources. With this help the ruined industrial system was to be set right again. The working class saw in the realization of these demands the possibility to protect their standard of living and to reconstruct the broken down industries. Yet the trade union leaders failed to push these demands, and the Social-Democrats have concluded a tax compromise with Hugo Stinnes, which freed the bourgeoisie from the confiscation of their property in return for the latter's loan of a billion gold marks to the State. Consequently the workers have been loaded with new taxes, which swallow up 30% of their entire income.

Against this insane policy the working masses are in revolt. The strike of the railroaders and the solidarity demonstrations of the workers generally on behalf of the strikers are visible signs of the indignation of the working class. The policy of the trade unions, serving only the interests of the capitalist class, has led to the result that the workers, badly divided, could be easily defeated by the employers. Consequently a great indifference towards the unions is becoming manifest in the masses. The revolutionary trade unionists are, therefore, devoting their entire efforts to unite the scattering fights, the united front of the working class against the capitalist class is their slogan. And likewise they are fighting no less resolutely against those revolutionary workers who turn their backs on the trade unions and therewith leave the field entirely free for the old bureaucracy to carry out its injurious policies.

In all national trade unions, in all localities, in all shops, the revolutionary trade unionists



SOME RESULTS OF SCAB LABOR

have formed groups whose duty it is to show the working masses the necessity of a united struggle against capitalism and the necessity of the revolution. They point out to the workers that the class-cooperation policy of the trade union bureaucracy leads only to ruin. During the past few months this intensive educational work has had great success. Everywhere, grows the influence of the revolutionary elements. But this brings upon their heads equally the hate of the bourgeoisie and that of the trade union bureaucracy. Thousands of the best workers have been deprived of their means of livelihood, thousands of the best fighters have been expelled from the trade unions. Still our comrades are undismayed. They see in the hate of their opponents that they are upon the right way, and they will allow no measure to turn them from their course of revolutionizing and conquering the trade unions. During the week after the railroad strike numberless victims paid the penalty for their zeal. But every day shows us that headway is being made, and we are determined that the organized German workers, in the very near future, can again be pointed to as the most progressive in the ranks of the world proletariat.

How I Became a Rebel

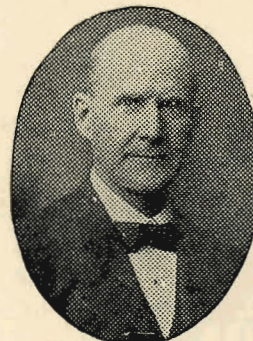
A Symposium. Part I.

Editors' note;—A fundamental part of the general revolutionary program is to make rebels; to develop men and women who have definitely broken with capitalism and who are looking forward to the establishment of a Workers' Society. But how can such rebels be made? To throw some light on this all-important query, THE LABOR HERALD has asked prominent figures in all branches of the radical movement, to explain briefly just how, why, and under what circumstances, they became convinced that capitalism had to be done away with. The symposium will be completed in our July number.

By Eugene V. Debs

THERE was never a time in my life when I was not with the weak and poor and against the rich and strong who oppressed them. At fourteen I was a wage-worker in a railroad shop. My pay was fifty cents for a ten hour day. I had my lesson in wage-slavery early in life and never forgot it. In later years many offers came to desert the ranks and climb to the "top" but they were all refused. It suited me better to remain a slave than to become a master. Upon that point I never had a doubt.

At sixteen I was firing an engine and at nineteen, in 1875, I joined the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen as a charter member of the



EUGENE V. DEBS

Lodge instituted at Terre Haute. In 1892 I resigned the office I held in the Brotherhood to organize the American Railway Union. The craft no longer satisfied me. The great body of railway employes were not organized at all and the American Railway Union, based upon the industrial principle, embraced them all. The railway managers recognized the menace of the new industrial power of their united employes in the Pullman strike in 1894 and combined to destroy it. The federal government, subservient to the railroads, gave willing support. The strike had been won clean and the victory was complete. Not a wheel moved. The roads were paralyzed and the managers helpless. What followed? Injunctions, arrests, and fed-

eral troops with shotted guns and orders to kill. Next? The brotherhood officials in alliance with the railway officials and orders issued to the craft unions to fill the places of the strikers. Next? The office of the American Railway Union raided without warrant of law by government thugs, the clerks driven out, the records carted away, and the officials thrown into jail in accordance with the law and order program of the railway corporations. My blood boiled as I sat with my associates in the foul, rat-infested jail at Chicago. A six-months' sentence followed, jury trial having been denied. In jail there was time for sober reflection. Revolutionary literature came through the bars. My blood cooled and my head cleared. The class struggle came into bold relief and I saw clear as the noonday sun how and why the government came to do the bidding of the railroads abjectly as a trained monkey obeys his master.

In the darkness of a prison cell I saw the light, and when I walked forth I was a socialist and from that day to this I have been the relentless and uncompromising foe of capitalism and wage-slavery.

By Wm. Ross Knudsen

FRESH out of High School, with a bourgeois psychology and fame as a roller-skater, well dressed and with a beautiful crimson necktie as a headlight, I put on my best efforts and strolled into San Diego, California.

There was a free speech fight on, but of it I knew nothing. Suddenly a policeman's hand shook my shoulder, and when, insulted, I resisted, I was slammed in the jaw; completely subdued, I was brought before the police sergeant, absolutely in the dark as to what was the cause.

"Here's another Red, Sergeant."

Completely bewildered, I looked about in a frightened manner. Those ahead of me were questioned regarding Socialism, Unionism, I. W. W., etc. I thought I was in a bughouse.

"Where are you from?" "Who are you?" "Are you an I. W. W.?"

I tried to answer questions that I did not understand. "What are you wearing that red



WM. ROSS KNUDSEN

necktie for?" I finally convinced them that I was a poor "boob" and gained my freedom.

Once outside I began to puzzle my mind. Socialism? Unionism? Red neckties? and while still trying to connect them together, I suddenly came upon a radical hall. In I went and was soon buying all the pamphlets and literature in sight. As I turned to go with my arms full, a sudden commotion broke in upon my thoughts. A raid upon the hall was being made, and again I faced the sergeant.

This time I failed to explain, and into the tank I went. Here I found men talking, arguing, and singing. Next thing I knew, the fire hose was turned into the tank. I tried hard to away from the water; cracked in the back with the full force of the stream from the hose, I fell a moment later in some feet of water.

The brutal actions of the police, the confinement with these rebels, and my mental reactions to all this, caused me to have a great interest in learning what it was all about. I investigated. I read all the literature I could get. Reading and thinking produced the result—a Red.

By Upton Sinclair

WHEN I was young I was taught ideals. I was taught them very earnestly, and I took them seriously. As I grew up I tried to apply them, and I discovered that the world did not mean for them to be applied. Neither the ideals of Christianity, which I learned, nor those of the poets whom I was taught to love, had any place in the practical world of affairs. Naturally I wanted to know why this was so, and I kept on inquiring and speculating about it. So inevitably I came to realize that our whole industrial and financial system is founded upon a set of ideas diametrically opposed to those of Christianity and of humanity.

Our political system was supposed to be better: that is to say, co-operation and the rights of humanity was supposed to prevail there. But our politics were corrupt, and I discovered that it was big business which did the corrupting. When I realized this, and spoke out about it, I found that the upholders of the present system invariably either ridiculed me, or became indignant with me. So gradually I became a rebel, and I am kept in the mood of rebellion by everything I learn about the present world; by every



UPTON SINCLAIR

newspaper I read and every morning's mail which comes to my desk.

By Lincoln Steffens

MY approach to the social problem was political. I was a reporter, a muckraker; and I had been a college man; American, German, French universities. My working theory, therefore, was unscientific. The social problem was to me a political problem; and the political problem was moral. Bad men made our good government bad and good men would make it good. Honestly I believed that.

Honestly I "exposed" seventeen cities. They were all corrupt. They were all corrupted in the same way, to the same end. Regardless of men. The sources of corruption in all seventeen cities were the same. This suggested that general, not merely personal forces were at work, and that the problems of all our cities were all one problem and that the solution must be one.

At that time many city people thought that, while the cities were "bad," the state governments were "good" or "better." I took the trail to the states, and I "did" eleven of them. They were all corrupt. They were all corrupted in exactly the same way. They were all corrupted just as the cities were corrupted. And, as in the cities, the sources of the corruption in all my eleven states were the same.

But the national government: that at least was "good." I wrote a series of articles in Washington, giving particulars which in general showed that the Federal Government was not only corrupt like the cities and the states; it was corrupted in the same way, by the same interests.

In the long course of this investigation I met all sorts of men in politics: good and bad, crooks and reformers. It made no essential difference. The best and ablest reformers I watched at work were either beaten or corrupted. The process of corruption went on over or under or through them. Evidently the problem was not a moral problem and the solution was not—goodness. Bad men did not cause the evil; good men could not do much good.

Still thinking in terms of good and evil, I asked what did the evil, and to find the answer I passed by men and started for the roots. That's what "radical" means: a digger for the roots of so-



LINCOLN STEFFENS

called evil. What are they? Not who, but what? I had to start with, the generalization that the sources of our political corruption in all branches of the American Government were the same. They were all one. What was that one Thing?

Business. I wrote it "Big Business;" railroads, public service corporations, etc. I did not see till later that back of big business was little business. All I saw was that big business corrupted politics and government. But that was a long step for me to take. My theory was that it was the other way around; that business was "good," politics was "bad." I thought what many men still think; that is was politics that held-up, blackmailed and corrupted business. To find that it was business that held down, bribed and corrupted politics, was progress.

I dropped politics for awhile and studied business. I reported the exposure of the Life Insurance companies. There were three of them. We began with one. That proved to be corrupt: as corrupt as a city; worse; and the sources of the corruption were the same as in a city, a state, the national government. And then, when the investigation extended to the other life insurance companies, the second and third big companies were found to be all corrupted in the same way as the first. Some of us then howled for a look into the lesser companies and they

were just like the big ones. Some natural law was at work.

How about other businesses? Abiding my time, I got a chance to look deep into three railroads: The Pennsylvania, the New Haven and the Southern Pacific. All corrupt; all corrupted alike and—all like the insurance companies and the government.

One thing at work everywhere!

Yes, everywhere. Wherever I looked I saw it. It was business. It was successful business men who contributed to our political parties, gave money to our universities, supported our churches, bought up newspapers. It was business that corrupted all these things and, worst of all, "got" Labor and Business too. The controllers and grafters in business control and graft upon all life. Here and abroad. For I went to foreign countries and, though I never wrote much about them, I did study and so can say that in the four greatest countries in Europe, the corruption is just like that of the United States, in politics, business, journalism, colleges, churches, organized Labor.

What did it mean? It meant a lot of things to me, but suffice it for the moment to say that, to me, it meant that the social problem is not political and not moral; it is a business, problem. Therefore it is an economic problem, one and the same all over the world; and that the solution is likewise economic.

A Reactionary Hooked

A SAMPLE of the type of "argument" being used at present in the International journals in their frantic efforts to head-off the amalgamation movement is the following, taken from the May issue of the Blacksmiths' Journal. Speaking of the great strike of the International Typographical Union, the editor says:

"Did the International Typographical Union hit the rocks, threatened with destruction, never again to be resurrected? Did calamity howlers rush into the fray with an o. b. u. saviour? Did they yell Amalgamation? Not on your tin type."

Unfortunately for our brother of the Blacksmiths' Journal, the International Typographical Union is exactly one of those organizations which see the utter folly of the workers fighting in small detachments, instead of all in one body. It certainly did "yell Amalgamation," for at its Quebec, 1921, Convention, right in the midst of the fight mentioned, it adopted the following classical resolution on amalgamation:

"Resolved, that this Convention favors the amalgamation of the various printing trades unions, to the end that there be but one union in the printing industry."

Nuff sed! Let the editor of the Blacksmiths' Journal and some others that might be mentioned, wake up.

Metal Workers Awake

By Jay Fox

THIRTY years ago when a dozen of us metal mechanics were delegated to organize the first Metal Trades Council in Chicago, the initial step was taken in the evolution of the idea that, in the near future, is going to reach its culmination in the amalgamation of all our unions into one metal trades organization. At that time none of us had the least idea of amalgamation, although we felt the need of united action on the part of the metal trades. Affiliation through a council was, naturally, the first step. It was for the future to determine the practicability of our move and to carry the idea further if it failed to fulfill the need.

The ideal of the most advanced of us at that time was a Metal Trades Council that would take full charge of our relations with the bosses and swing all unions behind the demands of each.

We did not know to what extent our separate International union relations would interfere with such a plan. It had to be tried out first. In fact, we never thought that our crafts unions might be improved upon. It was not up to us, at that early date, to have such a far-off idea as that of a union that would take care of us all. Yet the idea is very simple and most logical. I am sure that if anyone had proposed such a union he would have been laughed at.

We were all such staunch believers in the craft union idea in those days, that we did not admit helpers. Thus there were two unions in the blacksmith shop, in the boiler shop and foundry; and the machinists would not admit men who operated drill presses, bolt cutters, or turret lathes. The theory was that we highly skilled men had nothing to gain by bothering with helpers or semi-skilled men. But in time we learned that these workers did cut some figure in the shop, and that in a strike, by staying on the job, they made it much easier for the boss to get on without us. So we proposed amalgamation to the helpers and now, with the exception of the foundry, we are down to one union in each department. The molders amalgamated with the core makers, but somehow left out the other foundryworkers.

Thus far only have we gone in the way of actual amalgamation in 30 years. However, our 30 years of association in our Metal Trades Councils have prepared the way for the greater amalgamation. We have learned a few simple things about our relations with each other and

about our joint relations with the boss, that is well worth the years of effort.

Not Craftsmen, Just Employees

We have learned that as union men all of us have the same point of contact with the boss. Whether we be molders, blacksmiths, machinists, boilermakers, patternmakers, engineers, firemen, or whatnot, when we approach the boss with an agreement our craft distinctions disappear and we become "employees" seeking to bargain for our services collectively. The more of us there are in that collectivity, the better bargain we will be able to strike. Having this knowledge we begin to look around for a form of union that will always insure us the biggest crowd when we wish to negotiate terms of employment. A union that would represent every person in the plant is the ideal organization. For, why have more than one union, since one will fulfill the desired function, and do it best? I don't think I need to elaborate upon this phase of the subject. Every metal mechanic knows it is only too true, that our greatest obstacle to united action is our different International affiliations.

We have tried to carry out this idea of unity of action through our M. T. Councils, but our success has not been at all what it should have been. Not that the councils are at fault. The councils are all right, and must remain as the local central bodies through which our various local unions will function, as for example, the carpenter's district councils. The trouble with us is that the power behind the councils is scattered and we have a dozen different constitutions and a dozen sets of International officers. The result is, that it is almost impossible to get joint action at any given point with the assurance that funds will be forthcoming in case of need from all the Internationals. Some of the Internationals may be financing strikes elsewhere and don't feel able to undertake burdens. Such Internationals either forbid their men to strike or tell them they may do so on their own responsibility. Thus the opportunity for united action at strategic moments is lost, and our whole theory of metal trades unity falls to the ground.

The fault does not lie with the Internationals. It is the system that is at fault. How can we have united action locally when we haven't got it nationally? The Internationals can never agree upon a working code so long as they have separate treasuries and separate rules; such

a thing is utterly impossible. There can never be unity of action where there is not unity of control and direction.

Lost if Present System is Continued

We metal trades workers know very well that there is absolutely no hope for us to get anywhere as individual unions. We haven't got a ghost of a show going up against the big corporations. As a matter of fact we make no impression on them at all. The few members we have in their employ are working under cover, a sad comment on our twentieth century unionism. Pretty soon there will not be anything except big firms; then where will we get off at?

With the industry concentrating into big corporations, whose managers organize for the purpose of fighting unionism, it is little short of criminal for us to continue in the old way, each union for itself and the "open shop" swallowing us all. We working men are the slowest creatures in creation. We get into a rut and stay there till we wear the bottom out of it. The bosses don't wear out any shoe leather beating down old trails. They have long since not only seen the value of greater unity but are rapidly putting it into practice for the better exploitation of us, the producers, and the consuming public.

However, we do move in time. The machinists have already taken action on the question of amalgamation, with the result that they are ready at any time to elect delegates to an all-metal trades convention for the purpose of amalgamating our different unions into one. It is well that the machinists should be the first to make the call, they have the largest union.

It is now up to the live men in the other unions, the men who without glory and without pay, after their daily grind in the factories, have carried the burden of unionism, the men without whose splendid devotion to the cause our unions would be non-existent; it is up to these obscure heroes of labor to undertake the task of inducing their unions to take similar action, so that they may at last enjoy the ripe fruit of their years of untiring devotion to the cause of their fellow men.

IN THE LABOR HERALD FOR JULY

The Conventions of the Railway Trainmen, the Conductors, the Railway Clerks, and the Firemen, will be analyzed by Wm. Z. Foster.

Special articles on the Printing Trades Unions by leaders in the industry will be a feature.

Reports on the labor movement in Europe, economics for trade unionists, and other features.

EARLY RETURNS IN THE MACHINISTS' ELECTION

WITH the final count still to be heard from in the election of the Machinists' Union, the vote for President is reported on May 16th, as follows:

Wm. H. Johnston, 30,898

Wm. Ross Knudsen, 10,218

The platform upon which Knudsen made his campaign was uncompromisingly for industrial unionism in the metal trades, struggle against the employing class, and affiliation to the Red Trade Union International.

A LETTER FROM E. K. H.

May 4, 1922

Editor, LABOR HERALD,
Chicago, Ills.

Dear Comrade:

I wish to make a correction in my article of April, ANVIL—OR HAMMER? In my summary, I inadvertently omitted mention of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, who come under Group Three.

Many duties that telegraphers and clerks are called upon to perform are very similar in nature. This also applies to the signalmen and such telegraphers who are towermen or operate interlocking plants, levermen who are not telegraphers but who are admitted to membership in Order of Railroad Telegraphers, etc. Adjusting of plant, small repairs, etc. are made both by signalmen in regular line of duty, and by the towermen, telegrapher-levermen, in emergency cases.

The logical procedure in amalgamation is to first bring together such groups whose work may overlap, and after this is accomplished, bring about the larger amalgamations as to industry. This will create less friction and eliminate many difficulties which might otherwise develop.

When we consider the solidarity of Capital as evidenced in the almost impregnable interlocking of directorates in finance and the basic industries, one of which is railroading, the utter folly of continuing craft separation becomes apparent.

A master or ruling class mostly always takes the first step. It is only after bitter experience that Labor, the ox that bears the burdens of the world, learns and strives to correct its mistakes. That time has arrived.

Fraternally yours,

E. K. Henry

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Trade Union Magazine

Official Organ of the
Trade Union Educational League
WM. Z. FOSTER, EDITOR

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DEMAND TOM MOONEY'S RELEASE

THE Governor of California has many times stated as his excuse for not taking action in the Mooney Case that "Labor is not interested in the freedom of Mooney and Billings." The entire case against these two men has been shown, point by point, to have been a frame-up. Every piece of substantial evidence brought against them has been proven rankst perjury. No one doubts that they are completely innocent of the charges upon which they have been in prison for years. District Attorney Brady has requested Governor Stephens to grant them pardons. But the Governor answers, "Labor is not interested."

As a matter of justice, what difference does it make whether Labor is interested or not? What has this got to do with the case? Since when has justice openly become a mere question of politics? The Mooney frame-up is a stench in the nostrils of the whole world; it stands as a living indictment of our entire system of "justice," which has two codes, one for the poor and one for the rich. Mooney is proven innocent, but there is no way to release him from prison. Imagine the prisoner a wealthy man; does any one doubt that he would have been released long ago? No case in modern times has shown such a bold and shameless miscarriage of justice; even the famous Dreyfus affair is not to be compared with it. There is not the shadow of reason for the men's imprisonment.

The Mooney Case is only the most glaring of our many travesties upon justice in labor cases before the courts. Hundreds of other labor men are still in prison on frame-ups differing only in degree from this one. But the Mooney Case, particularly, symbolizes the whole struggle against a corrupt and heartless capitalistic machine.

Unfortunately, there is a germ of truth in Governor Stephens' statement, that "Labor is not interested," and that is exactly the reason why Mooney and Billings are not released. If the trade union movement had given proper support to the case, the victims would have been out of prison long ago. Notwithstanding that their continued incarceration is a monstrous crime, Governor Stephens will not act until he is forced to do so. He wants to hear from the labor movement. Well, let him hear.

The case is in the hands of Organized Labor. Every local union in the country should take im-

mediate action in the matter. Each central labor body, district council, state federation, and international union, should take the matter up. Governor Stephens, in Sacramento, California, should be bombarded with resolutions, letters, and telegrams, demanding that Tom Mooney and Warren Billings be released. Upon the action of our unions will depend the fate of these champions of Labor. Act at once.

THE LEAGUE CONFERENCE

ELSEWHERE in this issue is printed the Call for the First National Conference of the Trade Union Educational League, to be held in Chicago, Aug. 26th and 27th. This conference will be the constituent body of the League, and will officially launch the national movement and its organization.

This gathering will be the first time in our labor history that practically all of the aggressive, forward-looking, radical and progressive groups have come together for the purpose of planning on a large scale for the educational work which is to consolidate and strengthen our trade unions, making of them the fighting instruments which we must have if we are to stop the present retreat of our organizations and go forward instead of backward. In addition to the delegates from the League groups, who will make up the conference proper, there will be delegates from sympathetic and radical organizations in a consultative capacity. It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of this gathering, or to overstate its significance for the future of American Labor.

Out of this conference of the active unionists of the movement will come a New Charter for Labor, holding up for the guidance of the militants everywhere the true principles of militant trade unionism, and the ideal and goal toward which our organizations must struggle, and which give meaning and value to the trade union movement. Into the darkest corners of the labor movement, light will go, giving new hope and courage, and adding strength to the arms and brains of all who work in the cause of Labor's emancipation. Every militant union man will at once become active, and make sure that his locality has representatives at this, the most important labor gathering of the period.

THE TEXTILE STRIKE

THE wonderfully heroic struggle of the textile workers is being waged against terrific odds. From week to week it has gone on, with no signs of a settlement, or of weakening upon the part of the workers. The rich barons of the textile mills are determined to add to their enormous wealth, wrung from the toil and sweat of these men and women, by increasing still further their exploitation. With the weapon of immediate and quick starvation, they hope to force the textile workers to accept a condition of abject slavery.

In contrast to their wonderful stand against the mill owners, there is a deplorable lack of unity within the ranks of the strikers. It is pitiable to watch the quarrels between the Amalgamated Textile Workers, the One Big Union, the United Textile Workers, and the other unions, with their mutual recriminations in the press, picketing of each other's

meetings, and other un-tradeunion-like conduct. If ever there was need for amalgamation and the fusing together of unions, that need is now in the textile industry. If these organizations were united, the chances for the workers to win a substantial victory in the present strike would be increased ten-fold. This needed unity can only be achieved if the rank and file in the industry get busy and demand it. That should be the immediate program of every live union man in the textile unions.

DISCARDING THE RAILROAD LABOR BOARD

THE decision rendered by Judge Page, in the Pennsylvania restraining case, which is described by Chairman Hooper as a "fatal blow at the Railroad Board," was to be expected. At the time the Transportation Act was passed and the Board established, economic conditions were favorable to the workers; the unions were in a strategic position, and employers considered it necessary to tie them down. The Board was consistently a tool in their hands to defeat the workers. But now the conditions have changed. The companies wish to take advantage of the industrial depression and unemployment, and feel strong enough to handle the situation alone. They want a free hand, and are ready for an open fight. After the Board has served their purpose, and is now an incumbrance, a convenient court is found to deal the "fatal blow."

Let no railroad men be deceived; notwithstanding the present opposition to it by the companies, the Railroad Labor Board has been, and is, their enemy. Like the courts, such institutions are set up to protect the property rights of the employers. If the unions had challenged the powers of the Board, when they were strong, no one can doubt that the courts would have ruled against them. But now that it is the employers who want to get rid of it, considering the lack of solidarity among the unions presents an opportune moment for a fight, the courts are obediently at hand to serve the interests of property. Protection of the property owners against the workers—that is the supreme purpose of all capitalist Boards and capitalist courts.

GOMPERS' CHALLENGE

THE challenge issued by Mr. Gompers, during his recent visit to Chicago, and our acceptance of it, was detailed in our May issue. No reply has come from him. Instead, Mr. Gompers has thrown out a smoke-screen of abuse, and resorted to the use of the capitalist press to slanderously attack the League and its secretary. How long does he think that progress can be dammed up by waving the red flag and scaring the membership?

Mr. Gompers, we are still waiting for you to make good your challenge to debate the issue, of industrial unionism through amalgamation, versus, craft unionism.

CATHOLIC INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

THE National Catholic Welfare Council has issued a statement, endorsing the general proposition of organization of labor by industry, rather than by craft, purely as a matter of efficiency. Many people will be surprised to see

the Church undertaking to advise the workers on matters of organization.

Both main branches of the Christian Church, Protestant and Catholic, have for some time had a social program calling for demands upon the capitalist system, much more fundamental than that of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. Such conditions exist nowhere else in the world. Everywhere but in America the labor movement is ahead of the churches in such matters.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Church, having a more advanced program of social action than the standpat Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, is now undertaking to teach the unions how to improve the structure of their organizations.

BUILDING BOSSES AMALGAMATE

WHEN the Chicago Federation of Labor went on record for amalgamation, the reactionary leaders roared in protest. And no section of them howled louder than those in the building trades. They could see the end of all things sane and holy in this outlandish, Bolshevistic proposal to unite the forces of Labor.

But the bosses look at such things more intelligently. While the uproar about the Chicago Federation resolution was on, the building trades contractors quietly announced the amalgamation of their two principal organization into one united body. They know, even if Labor does not, that in solidarity lies power, and they are out to win. Vain prejudice and violent propaganda do not blind them to their own interests. While Labor stalls about, allowing stupid and mercenary leaders to divide its forces, the employers are keenly awake, and are rapidly consolidating their organizations.

The employers were not so sharply in need of unity; they had but two principal organizations, with membership reaching only 1500. On the other hand, the building trades workers are divided into 150 local unions, and two dozen internationals. Nevertheless, the bosses are the ones that unite, while the workers' leaders shy away from amalgamation. Surely it is time for Labor to show as much intelligence as the employers do.

EVERY student of the labor movement should carefully read the accounts, on another page, of the reorganization now going on in the labor movement of Australia, Norway, and France. Changes of the most drastic character are being made, and will undoubtedly give rise to much discussion. Editorial comment will be made in this department next month.

RAILROADERS VS. MINERS

THE miners' union is in a life-and-death struggle. The second month is closing on one of the bitterest strikes seen in this country. While the struggle drags out, the mine owners are increasingly using private thugs, and state police, against the strikers and their families. The conflict is approaching its crisis, and the issue is the existence of the strongest union in the American labor movement.

While this goes on, the railroad men are busily at work; good union men can be seen daily, hauling

car after car of scab coal. The Coal Kings are cashing in on the strike at tremendously increased prices, with the assistance of the railroads. In fact, if the men on the railroads had entered into a deliberate alliance with the employers to break the miners' strike, they could not work more effectively to that end than they are doing. Knowing, as every wide-awake worker does, that the great industries of steel, mines, and railroads, are owned by exactly the same financial interests, they should recognize the need for one common fight against the common enemy. But still the unions seem not to have learned that their interests are class interests, not craft interests.

Such a shameful situation cannot be accepted without protest. The question of active solidarity with the miners should be raised in every local lodge and system federation; railroad men should get their organizations unitedly to refuse to handle scab coal.

FOSTER MAKES WESTERN TRIP

BEGINNING early in July, the secretary of the Trade Union Educational League will make a trip through the West, covering the principal cities. He will lecture on "The Crisis in the American Labor Movement." If your city has not received a date for a meeting, write to the League, and an effort will be made to arrange such a meeting. The routing will be closed within two weeks.

AN OPINION OF THE LABOR HERALD

IHAVE just read No. 3 of THE LABOR HERALD. It is the most stirring reading that has come to my eyes in many long months. I can't resist the temptation to say that the quality of it is astonishing—astonishing to me, who expected much of it. The startling thing about it is its complete success in getting away from "dead matter," or "boiler plate" filler, and, what is perhaps more noteworthy, its plastic adjustment to the entire gamut of national Labor Union events and situations of the day.

"The first article on the Coal Strike is such a relief from the miles of unenlightening news-type that I've been reading—it is informative. Then the same gait is kept up all the way through, or, in fact, the juciness of the stuff increases with each page. Knudsen's stuff makes a man know a lot of things about the Metal Trades that he didn't know before—interesting thing that you like to remember.

"And then—Gee whiz! I can't keep it up; it would be too much like a recommendation column in Lydia E. Pinkham's advertisement.

"The mere fact that THE LABOR HERALD has drawn together an array of writers who can only be classified as the best trade union brains in the United States, is enough. That it is being edited in such a manner as to play a steady stream of

a consistent point of view upon all of the labor events as they occur, makes it a thing to be wondered about.

"I keep asking myself how it happened. Yesterday, there wasn't anything but a desert of half-dead, unconnected, meaningless "labor papers" kept going by artificial respiration; and suddenly today we find a garden teeming with ripe fruit. Evidently, the makings of it were there all along. And now, irrigation.

"Salutsky's article on the needle trades situation is very keen, I think. It is big calibre stuff. For meaningfulness, it is almost like a business letter. Nobody would write a business letter unless he had to convey certain information. I'm delighted to see that this month's LABOR HERALD is just as merciful upon its readers and the paper supply, as any business manager is in writing letters.

"Well, I haven't said much, but you must know that my heart is pumping fast with enthusiasm for the marvelous thing you are doing. And I'm very happily amused with seeing that you smoked Sam out. I hope you printed a big edition.

Robert Minor.

RAILWAY EMPLOYEES' CONVENTION

(Continued from page 19)

word amalgamation and they replied that they had no plan to offer. The greatest argument against amalgamation was the failure of its advocates to adequately present and defend it.

The convention accomplished absolutely nothing in a constructive way, save possibly the ordering of the strike vote, and that could have been done about as well by the Executive Council itself. Representing the craft idea, the Administration was content to defeat the progressive stuff proposed by the industrialists. They, themselves, proposed nothing new. Apparently, in the present desperate situation of the railroaders, they believe there is nothing to be done but to run around in the same old circle. The convention left off just where it began. It was the old story of marching the army up the hill and then marching down again. This is a sad fact but a true one. The only encouraging feature of the convention was the prevalence of such a large body of progressive thought. This indicates a similar condition among the rank and file. It is to be hoped that this spirit will grow and expand so that when the next convention of the Department assembles the delegates will come instructed to merge our many weak and detached railroad unions into one, militant, all-conquering combination. To bring that about is the task now before live wire railroad workers.

THE INTERNATIONAL

FRANCE

THE Provisional Administrative Council of the Unity General Confederation of Labor—C. G. T. U. (the revolutionary half of the French union movement which recently split away from the old General Confederation of Labor—C. G. T.) has published a projected constitution for the new body, to be discussed by the movement in preparation for the coming convention in St. Etienne. The proposed statutes differ widely from those of the old organization. Most of the differences are devices to prevent bureaucratic domination by the officialdom and to place control in the hands of the rank and file. The French militants have had more experience in fighting autocratic officials in their unions than any other rebels in the world; first in the big struggle beginning 30 years ago when the original Syndicalists won control of the organizations from the primitive union autocrats, and then in the recent desperate battle with the yellow Syndicalist leaders, which resulted in splitting the whole trade union movement in two. In these internal wars for control they have learned just what forms of organization serve best as seats of autocracy and which yield most to rank and file pressure. On the basis of this dearly-bought experience they are trying, in the proposed constitution, to place the direction of the new organization as far as possible in the membership. Their experiment, coming as it does from such seasoned militants, will be of the utmost importance to the whole labor world. The official statement accompanying the projected statutes, says:

"In working out the present constitution, the Provisional Administrative Council has been inspired constantly by the necessity of placing the entire confederal organization under the direct and permanent control of the membership.—Henceforth, the C. G. T. U. will live, not merely through the activity of its superior organisms, but especially by setting in motion all its cells, by the initiative of all its members."

In the new statutes many means are proposed to check the growth of autocracy, such as limiting the officials to one term of office and making them ineligible for re-election until after a term of years, etc. But the most fundamental of all is the drastic shearing of functions and importance from the national industrial unions and the transference of these functions and importance to organizations called regional unions. Before the significance of this can be realized we must glance a moment at the former state of affairs.

In some respects the old C. G. T. was a unique organization in the world's labor movement. It was in reality a double federation. Its national executive committee had two secretaries and was divided into two sections, one of which was made up of a representative apiece of all the local trades councils, or bourses du travail. This peculiar type of organization dated back to the early struggle for control between the Syndicalists and the reactionaries. The former secured their first stronghold in the local trades councils and eventually used them as the means to revolutionize the national industrial unions,

which were more susceptible to autocratic rule. Hence, the Syndicalists developed a great liking for the trades councils, and when they came into power in the C. G. T. they insisted that the trades councils be organized nationally together and accepted as a distinct wing of the movement. Both wings were supposedly of equal power.

At first the nationally organized local trades councils, because of their great prestige for having revolutionized the movement and given birth to modern Syndicalism, were the dominant wing. But gradually the national industrial unions, through having greater economic functions, got the upper hand. Little by little, with the passage of the years, they took on more and more influence until, finally, the local trades council section of the C. G. T. became little more than a withered appendix. The result was that when the recent fight developed between the "lefts" and the "rights" in the unions the former, although again capturing the local trades councils quite easily, had a desperate struggle with the "rights" entrenched in the national industrial unions. And now that the split has occurred, and in consideration of their bitter experiences with the national unions, it is not strange to see the "lefts" emasculate these natural seats of autocracy and turn their functions over to the type of organization which they have been able to control and get results from, in this case the regional unions.

The regional unions are local trades councils. They are based upon industrial, rather than political or geographical lines. They include all the local unions in given industrial districts. Being local in character they will lend themselves more easily to rank and file control. Under the new plan they are given full autonomy to organize and direct the battle of the workers in their respective jurisdictions. Quite evidently, if they grow and prosper, their prime weapon will be the local general strike of all trades. Nationally they are linked together in the National Confederal Committee, the highest committee in the C. G. T. U. In fact, they make up the whole committee, whereas the national industrial unions, so powerful in the old C. G. T. and all other labor movements, are denied all representation whatsoever on the committee. The national unions are reduced to little more than technical societies; henceforth the burden of the struggle will fall upon the regional unions. The official statement has this to say about the functions of the two types of organization, national industrial unions and regional unions:

"The regional unions fill an evident need; they arise irresistably out of the industrial evolution and concentration registered in late years. They are called to bring about the harmony of the labor movement, by wiping out the trade barriers which hinder the proletariat from realizing its true moral unity. The regional unions are the complete cells of federalism; the perfect expression of the C. G. T. U. in their organization, their functioning and their action."

"It is quite evident that—the birth of the regional unions leads us to determine the new role of the national industrial unions, which is

materially different from the old one. If these bodies continue to co-ordinate the national trade action, it is undeniable that their task has been considerably lightened by the regional unions. The perfect liason between the regional unions and the national industrial unions will make the role of the latter all the easier. The national industrial unions especially shall study the industrial life of the country, each in the specialty which concerns it. Upon them particularly will fall the duty of studying technical improvements, assembling statistics, and making investigations of all sorts, so as to permit the C. G. T. U., in full knowledge, to direct its defensive and offensive action, and to indicate, so far as possible, the constructive task of trade unionism."

AUSTRALIA

A GENERAL amalgamation of all the trade unions in Australia, on the O. B. U. plan is now taking place. The union is being constructed upon the department plan. Three unions, the Miners, Laborers, and Transport Workers, have already come in on the plan. They number approximately 200,000 workers. Other unions are now balloting and will unquestionably decide to join. Thus is rapidly coming to fruition many years of work and propaganda by Australian rebels. The latter have been fortunate in their methods. For a long time past they have concentrated their efforts upon the old unions, seeking to merge them together and to infuse them with revolutionary ideals. Success is now being achieved. The new organization, built of the old ones, is distinctly revolutionary in character and promises soon to play a most important part in the industrial life of Australia.

NORWAY

THE Norwegian trade union movement is now considering (and will probably adopt) a fundamental plan of reorganization somewhat akin to that being applied in Australia. The aim is to transform the present loose national federation of trade unions, controlled by bureaucrats, into a compact class organization dominated by the rank and file. At the 1920 convention of the Norwegian Federation of Labor the following resolution was adopted:

"The congress recommends that the Federation of Labor be reorganized on the basis of local trade union councils. These local councils will in all essential points take over the rights and duties of the present trade unions. The Federation will be divided into groups corresponding to the great industries."

A committee of nine was appointed to investigate this proposal, and its report is now before the various organizations for consideration. The question will be definitely settled at the trade union convention in 1923. Two plans have been submitted by the committee for the proposed re-organization. One, endorsed by the majority, establishes the local trades councils as the basis of the labor movement. These bodies, each of which are to be made up of the local unions in its locality, shall have a large degree of autonomy in handling trade disputes. The local trades councils are to be organized nationally in the Norwegian Federation of Labor. The latter shall take over complete control of the whole labor

movement. It shall be divided nationally into eleven sections, one for each of the basic industries. These sections shall be composed of amalgamation of the present trade unions and their industrial lines shall extend down to the trade councils. In addition to its eleven industrial sections, the Federation shall have four technical sub-divisions, as follows: statistical, social information, socialization, and shop committees. The national funds shall be controlled by the Federation, the eleven sections or industrial unions having no finances of their own. The plan submitted by the minority agrees in the main with that of the majority, except that it would entirely abolish the local and national unions and base the labor movement upon the shop organization system.

The proposed plan of re-organization, which will almost certainly be adopted, is manifestly Syndicalist in character. In fact the whole movement constitutes a striking victory for the Syndicalists (lately joined by the Communists) working within the Norwegian trade unions. For many years they have steadfastly refused to follow the secessionist plan, once so popular in the neighboring country of Sweden. As early as December 27-28, 1913, they held a convention in Trondhjem and outlined the plan that now seems about to be adopted. And since then they have worked ceaselessly to make it prevail. The success of their efforts shows the worth of intelligent propaganda within the old labor organizations. The prevalence of the plan will probably carry with it affiliation to the Red Trade Union International. The reactionary officialdom are fighting the whole project tooth and nail.

FINLAND

BY a vote of 12,881 for and 5,813 against, the Finnish trade union movement has voted to affiliate with the Red Trade Union International. This is an indication of the rapid growth of radical sentiment in the former organization. During the past year the Communists have succeeded in securing a majority of the Executive Board of the Confederation of Trade Unions, and of several important national unions, including the Sawmill Workers, and Laborers.

ARGENTINA

AN amalgamation plan is now being carried out to fuse together the unions in the metal industry, including the Federation of Metal Workers, bronze workers, motor engineers, and tin smiths. This move followed upon the heels of a consolidation of the employers forces.

SWEDEN

FOLLOWING the merging of the Swedish Federation of Bakers and Pastry Cooks and the Swedish Federation of Butchers, a new organization has been formed, called the Swedish Federation of Food Industries. Further amalgamations of important groups of unions are looked for in the near future as part of the workers' program to offset the growing power of the employers by strengthening their own ranks.

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