

# THE LABOR HERALD

Official Organ of The Trade Union Educational League



JUNE, 1924

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# THE LABOR HERALD

Published monthly at 1113 Washington Blvd. Subscription price \$1.50 per year. The Trade Union Educational League Publishers. "Entered as second class matter March 23, 1922, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois- under the Act of March 3, 1879."

Vol. III.

JUNE, 1924

No. 4

## Doings and Misdoings of the Month

### What Has Become Of The Plumb Plan?

**Q**UITE naturally railroad workers defend the pending Howell-Barkley bill, which is aimed to abolish the railroad labor board and substitute a new kind of board, when the railroad companies are opposing such action.

It is remarkable that labor union officials, both in the railway unions as well as in the U. M. W. of A. resolutely put aside the whole loaf of nationalized industry with union control and operation, and ask for some stale crust of conciliation that amounts to class collaboration. The Plumb Plan is a long way from the ultimate solution, but why have the railway union officials put aside even this weak step in the right direction to work for such sham reforms as that provided in the Barkley Bill?

### Time To Can Berries

**G**EORGE L. BERRY, president of the Pressmen's union and strike-breaker of the New York and other strikes, was a "home guard" in the war and is Vice-Commander of the American Legion. This should be noted in connection with Major Berry's visit to Seattle and his reception there by a committee typically representative of American Fascist reaction—a democrat politician, Mr. Ryan; the labor faker president of the Washington State Federation of Labor, Mr. Short; and a 100 percenter called Schwellenbach, State Commander of the American Legion.

Bear in mind that on November 11, 1919, a mob of Legionaires and lumber trust agents with guns and ropes in hand tried to raid the Lumber Workers' Union hall at Centralia, Washington. The lumber jacks, knowing from three previous raids, that the mob sought illegally to break up the union and hang and shoot its members, resisted with arms, as they had a right, not only a legal right, but a duty to defend in this manner the whole working class. Yet the American Legion is responsible for the farcical trial of the union defenders, and the fact that eight of them are in Walla Walla prison,

-serving 40-year sentences.

Now comes Short, head of the Washington labor unions, and associates with the murderers of workmen and agrees by his silence and inaction to the living burial of eight workers loyal to their class. Yet the Central Labor bodies of Tacoma and Seattle sent a group of union men to attend the Centralia "trial" and adopted the "labor jury" verdict of innocence and urged release of the Centralia victims. What are the unions of Washington doing that Short is allowed to consort unpunished with the White Guard murderers? And a so-called labor daily in Seattle covers the mess with servile slobber!

Berry, of course, is understood. He wants to be candidate for vice-president on the democratic ticket. And Short wants to keep his nose in the trough. But the union men of Washington who know that the eight I. W. W. lumber workers at Walla Walla defended the working class, have nothing to lose but their inertia, and should turn from the Berry-Short-democrat gang to the Farmer-Labor Party of Washington which has resolved that the Centralia victims' release should be a part of its program. The Farmer-Labor Party cannot bring freedom from wage slavery to the working class, but backed by the workers of Washington it could and would bring freedom to the eight Centralia victims and, in other states, it could end the "criminal syndicalist" persecutions.

### We're Drunk Because We're Sober!

**W**E notice in Gompers' recent testimony before a Washington committee that he was "apprehensive as to the future," but only because we have no beer! Sam gave some left-hand logic, to-wit: "Because a man can get no liquor he becomes dissatisfied. The dissatisfied man becomes the durnkard. The United States is a whiskey drinking nation." Just why we should be dissatisfied as long as the whiskey holds out is a question Sam failed to explain. The

more you think over this "discontent equals drunkards" circle, the funnier it gets.

Mr. Gompers also said that he had "never opposed commercial combination." It is all right for the bosses to combine, but for the workers to amalgamate their unions—that would be "Fosterism." He added that "relations between employers and labor at present are good." Good for the employers, he should have added.

With the Steel Trust cleaning up a record net profit of over \$50,000,000 in three months, Mr. Gompers' failure to organize the steel workers contradicts the story of "good relations."

### The Christian Guardians of Government

**T**HE Teapot government at Washington gets more complicated every minute. After peddling the oil reserves and trading off Muscle Shoals, the capitalist politicians are expected to raffle the Rocky Mountains to raise a campaign fund. But just now plots are being discovered. Here are the plots:

1. Daugherty, Burns and company plotted to get rich by graft. 2. Senator Wheeler started to investigate, so Daugherty and Burns plotted to have Wheeler indicted.

3. Burns testified to this, also that when the Burns Agency was guarding munition plants during the war for the Allies, its agents in New York took \$100,000 to plot against these plants for Germany—an old trick for Burns. 4. The Department of Justice agents who worked to uncover plots to defraud the government say that these plots went unpunished because of plots between the plotters and Daugherty. 5. The chief of these witnesses, Gaston Means, who had a trunk full of documents, has all of them taken from his house by men with official badges exhibiting an order signed by Senator Brookhart. He keeps the order but Brookhart says it is forged; and the documents—where are they? 6. A most respectable ship captain shows papers proving that Hoover used a million dollars of relief funds in plots against Soviet Russia. 7. Another Hoover plot to give sixty million dollar fishing rights in Alaska to the fish trust. 8. A plot to discredit the investigations by stories that all the witnesses are "of no character and of discreditable record." 9. Daugherty says the soviets are behind the plot to oust him.

A fair share of these "soviet agents and criminals" who testified against Daugherty are his own friends and agents. Some are staid citizens like Huston Thompson, Chair-



"THE BOY STOOD ON THE BURNING DECK WHENCE ALL BUT HE HAD FLED"

man of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and nobody will believe that Judge Landis testified against Daugherty because the soviets asked him. Harry still keeps the flag waving. The best plot of the month, however, is that claimed by the Japanese who say that all the pow-wow about Jap immigration is a plot by the American politicians to get attention off of the Teapot.

#### Things That Ain't

**S**OME folks who don't know how to read newspapers and who have a trusting nature think that Congressman Foster (no relation to Wm. Z.) meant something when he introduced a bill to provide for a constitutional amendment reading, "The Congress shall have power to limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of persons under 18 years of age."

Though congressmen are not by nature endowed with trusting dispositions, usually requiring cash on delivery, Congressman Foster had to explain to his accomplices gathered around the Teapot, that a "child labor amendment" doesn't at all mean to stop the labor of little children, of which about 2,500,000 under 10 years of age sweat and toil in American industry. On the floor of the House, April 25th, he said:

"Many misconceptions regarding the child labor constitutional amendment have been held. Some people are opposing it who would favor it if they understood the facts.

"This constitutional amendment is not a child labor law; its purpose is simply to declare that Congress shall have power. It is not expected that Congress under this grant of power will pass legislation affecting children up to 18."

One might ask the honorable congressman just what the hell his idea is in merely giving Congress power to stop child slavery if "it is not expected" to have that effect. Perhaps such a provision would make some simpletons believe this government was taking care of child labor.

#### Another One

**R**EMEMBER reading in the papers about a big plan to make the money kings come across in the next war? To make the dollars of the bankers subject to draft along with men? Pure hokum!

This is shown by the following questions and answers given in the U. S. Senate, April 21st:

"Senator Caraway: 'There will be no more sales of Liberty Bonds, but when a man has a bank account that will be drafted along with

the boy?'

"Senator Spencer: 'I know of no such plan.'

"Senator Caraway: 'But the dollar would be permitted to work at whatever rate of profit it could find, as it did in the last war?'

"Senator Spencer: 'It would be hard to regulate that entirely.'"

It may be hard for the Teapotters, but in 1917, when the Russian army got sick of fighting for capitalists and began to shoot them, the profits of the war makers were not only "regulated" but abolished.

#### Coolidge Campaign on The Shoals

**W**HEN our Presbyterian president, by the grace of God and bad crab meat, succeeded to the office of Warren G. Harding, he laid his hand on the bible and swore "to follow the policy of his illustrious predecessor." He has. What the "Ohio gang" had not carried off in the Teapot, our good churchman, Calvin, began to trade off for political support.

The story runs along like this: Henry Ford was being boosted as presidential candidate last year, but Henry wanted the great power resources of Muscle Shoals given him on a tray, and for nothing. Coolidge had Muscle Shoals and wanted Henry to forget about being president. Investigation of the Senate Agricultural Committee uncovered the following: Clear up till last October, Ford kept attacking Coolidge and Weeks for opposing Ford's bid for Muscle Shoals. On October 12th at 10:25 a. m., a Ford man named James Martin Miller called at the White House. Two hours later he sent Ford a telegram which said, "In private interview had with President Coolidge he said 'I am friendly to Mr. Ford, but wish some one would convey to him it is my hope that Mr. Ford *will not do or say anything* that will make it difficult for me to deliver Muscle Shoals to him.'"

That was pretty rich, we'll say. But wait. Ford at once stopped attacking the administration, and on December 3rd, Ford called on Coolidge at the White House, giving another name, and talked with Coolidge. Three days later Coolidge sends a message to congress, asking it to hurry up with Muscle Shoals. Then, just 13 days later, on December 19th Ford announced that he would not run for the presidency but would support Coolidge. When Coolidge denied what Miller's telegram said, Miller under oath stated that Coolidge was using "crass political dissimulation"—which is highbrow lingo for a "damned lie." Muscle Shoals is a bigger pot than the Teapot.

# Aspects of the French Labor Movement

By Wm. Z. Foster

SINCE the formation of the Communist International five years ago many new developments have taken place in revolutionary organization. Various forms, previously unknown in most countries, have been developed and popularized. Among these are shop councils, shop nuclei, and trade union committees. In Russia, the vanguard of the revolution, these vital proletarian institutions are highly developed. In all the other countries of an industrial character they are on the order of business and are coming into existence with greater or lesser speed. At the present time the French labor movement, industrial and political, is re-aligning itself according to these new needs. What progress is being made and how it is taking place should be of interest to American militants.

## Shop Councils

Shop councils are organizations of the workers directly on the job. They are delegate bodies of all the workers employed in given enterprises. Being right in the shops, they are much closer to the masses and their problems than local trade unions can ever be. They are the basic mass industrial revolutionary organizations. When militant and well organized under capitalism they exert a strong control over the "hiring and firing" of workers; they see to it that all union regulations are scrupulously respected by the employers; they closely follow the course of their industry and undertake to learn the intimate details of how the business is conducted.

In case of strikes the shop councils, as they represent *all* the workers, unorganized as well as organized, bring much larger masses into the struggle than the trade unions can bring. Eventually the shop councils are destined to become the real local units of the trade unions. They are always industrial in form. But it is during the revolutionary crisis that they play their supreme role. It is by means of them, as in Russia, that the revolutionary workers actually take charge of the industries and make the first efforts at operating them under the new social order. In the reconstruction period they are the means to put into effect the industrial policies of the workers' government.

From its inception the Communist International has realized the great importance of the shop councils and it has ceaselessly stimulated the labor movements in the various countries to build up shop councils. Great progress has been made in Germany, but it is with the French movement that we are dealing here.

The shop councils movement in France is about two years old. It has taken on importance only since the formation of the C. G. T. U. (Unity General Confederation of Labor.) This revolutionary organization is giving them whole-hearted support. It is interesting that the reformist C. G. T. (General Confederation of Labor) is opposed to the shop councils on principle, claiming that they are by nature rivals of the trade unions. In Germany the reformist leaders have about the same attitude, although they dare not express it so frankly. They content themselves with quietly cutting the heart out of the shop council movement—one of the few conquests of the 1918 revolution—while at the same time pretending to be friendly to them.

The shop councils movement in France, although intended for all industries, is at present making greatest headway among the miners, textile workers, furniture workers and metal workers. In each case it is the unions that are taking the lead. But as they are very weak they are unable to set the movement up properly from the start. They do not as yet actually found the shop councils, except in a few instances. The stage the movement is in at present is the calling of meetings of delegates from the various shops, factories or mines in a given industry and district. These delegates are elected by the workers, organized and unorganized, at such mass meetings of them as may be called in connection with the various plants. Later, the actual shop councils are formed.

Many meetings of delegates so elected have taken place recently in France. These meetings take on the aspect of conventions. On March 9th, 600 delegates, metal workers, representing 250 plants, principally in the Seine district, met at Paris. On the same day 195 miners' delegates held a similar convention in Denain. They represented nearly

all the mines in the district. Some were affiliated to the C. G. T. U., some to the C. G. T., and many were unorganized. Conferences of a like character are being called in various other industries and districts. The whole C. G. T. U. is stirred by the shop councils movement.

Briefly, the immediate aims of the movement are as follows: 1) To build up the shop councils in all industries. 2) To build up the trade unions. 3) To develop the demands of the masses and to secure the support of these masses in the struggle against the employers. The movement takes on greater volume with the passing months, particularly in view of the pressure now being put upon the French working class by the rapacious employers. This movement is doing much to enhance the already great prestige of the C. G. T. U.

## Shop Nuclei

Shop nuclei are political organizations based upon industry. They serve eventually as the bases of the Communist Party, even as the shop councils must be the foundation of the trade unions. The shop nuclei consist of organizations of all the Communists within a given enterprise or industry. They bring the political struggle of the Party right into the shops. They are a revolutionary departure from the old territorial form of organization developed by the socialist parties everywhere. They root the Party right in the heart of the industries where the class struggle rages ceaselessly. Thus they enable the Party to really function as the vanguard of the proletariat, by so situating it that it can dominate the shop councils and lead the workers in their daily struggles.

The shop nuclei lock the political and industrial movements together and make of them one rounded organization. Just as the trade union movement needs the shop councils to actually put it into contact with the great laboring masses and their problems, so the Communist Party needs the shop nuclei for the same purpose. Without shop councils and shop nuclei both the industrial and political movements of the workers must remain disjointed and largely isolated from effective contact with the masses.

Even as in the case of the shop councils, the Communist International, from its inception, has recognized the supreme need of shop nuclei. At its First Congress Zinoviev stressed this point heavily. Nor has the C. I. ceased pounding upon the matter since. It

has now come to be generally understood that a party cannot really be a Communist Party unless it is actually based upon organized nuclei in the shops, mines and factories. Consequently, throughout the International, the shop nuclei movement gathers headway. More and more the revolutionists are breaking with the old social-democratic idea of organization simply by industry or geographical division and are taking on the shop nuclei form, which has proved the backbone of the Russian revolution and which is so strongly insisted upon by the Communist International.

But the reorganization of the Party from a purely territorial to a shop nuclei basis, despite its advantages, is not being accomplished in the various countries except slowly and with much difficulty. This is the case in France, as well as elsewhere. Only in April, 1923, did the French Party seriously take the matter in hand and launch the shop nuclei movement definitely.

This has now taken on considerable volume, especially in the larger centers. At present the Party is organized territorially. In the future it will have two bases: where the workers work and where they live. In Paris and other big industrial centers nuclei are now being organized in all the principal industries. For the time being the dues collecting function is being left to the local branches, as before, but eventually the shop nuclei will take this over. As the movement requires substantial volume in the big cities, it will be gradually spread to the smaller places, until eventually the whole Party, or as much of it as can be so adapted, will be reorganized on the shop nuclei basis. Whatever the difficulties confronting it, and however slow its progress, the French shop nuclei movement, even as that of the shop councils, is definitely under way and is being taken seriously by the militants.

## Trade Union Committees

One of the big issues in the French trade union movement (the C. G. T. U.) for the past two years, was the question of the organization of trade union committees by the Communist Party.

In 1921, at its Marseilles Congress, the Party decided to form such committees, or nuclei. But nothing definite was done about it. Frossard was secretary and, having the Jauresist conception that the Party should stand aside, attend to its own political work and leave the trade unions alone to perform



their industrial functions, he sabotaged the whole project so long as he was in office. The Party committee that had been appointed accomplished practically nothing. In 1922, at its Paris Congress, the Party took the matter up again and laid more elaborate plans for a national trade union committee, together with corresponding committees in all the national and local unions. Their function was to organize and propagate communism in the unions.

This action at once made the matter a burning issue in the C. G. T. U. The opposition, consisting of "pure" syndicalists, anarchists and Frossardists, made a wild protest. They declared that if the Communist Party were allowed to have such committees it would be the end of the trade union movement as such, for it would lose its independence and degenerate into merely an appendage of the hated Communist Party. They emphasized this issue as an argument against affiliating to the Red International of Labor Unions.

The matter came to a head in the Bourges, 1923, Congress of the C. G. T. U. By a strong majority, the Congress decided not only in favor of the R. I. L. U., but also to permit organized revolutionary propaganda within its ranks provided that the members of these nuclei would submit unquestionably to the decisions and discipline of the unions. The whole issue threatened to split the C. G. T. U.

But, after creating all this commotion, the trade union committees have not amounted to much. There is a national committee of 13 members (appointed by the Party) but they are not very active. There are also a few committees in the larger centers but they are not very active or well organized. Pierre Monatte, a veteran militant in the French labor movement, was one of the

three national secretaries of the trade union committee. He recently resigned and levelled a strong criticism at the whole system. In the pioneer land of organized trade union nuclei, the trade union committees are not making much headway.

#### The Triple Movement

All three of these movements—shop councils, shop nuclei, and trade union committees—are necessary to the labor movement. The shop councils are the basic organization industrially of the masses; the shop nuclei are the organized revolutionists within the shops and the shop councils, and the trade union committees are the organized revolutionary nuclei within the trade unions. They do not conflict with each other, but complement and complete the general revolutionary structure.

But France, like other countries, is finding out that it is a real task to learn the functions of these new forms and to adopt a balanced program with regard to them. At present there is a tendency towards a sort of faddism in the matter. Instead of following a broad policy which includes all three of the movements, each in its proper place, there is a tendency to favor one or another of the movements at the expense of the rest. In such a competition the trade union committees are not faring very well. They represent an old, tried, and homely movement and do not attract as much attention and service as the newer and more glittering shop councils and shop nuclei movements.

The working out of a real balanced program, with all three movements given their proper function and place, is, therefore, one of the most urgent needs now confronting the French labor movement. What is wanted is a comprehensive plan embracing at once the shop councils, shop nuclei, and trade union committees.

## Greetings to the Italian Daily!

The left wing unionists, indeed all revolutionary workers of America, will hail as another accomplishment of the Workers Party which will give tremendous assistance to the labor movement, the new Communist daily paper in the Italian language started this month in Chicago for general circulation throughout America. This new daily in Italian will greatly aid the militants, especially in

the needle trades, the textile and in the mining industries. Subscriptions outside Chicago are \$5 per year with special bundle rates for distribution at a cent and a half a copy. T. U. E. L. adherents who are in contact with Italian workers should make use of this new medium of education.

Address: *Il Lavoratore*, 1113 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago, Ill.

## Amalgamated Clothing Workers Resist Reaction

By Earl R. Browder

IN spite of all its defects, and they were many and serious, the Sixth Biennial Convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, held in Philadelphia, May 12th to 17th, stands out as the most encouraging event in the labor movement in recent days. A militant left-wing was present, defined its position and its program, and though defeated on all propositions but one by the centrist administration, consolidated its position and strengthened all progressive tendencies in the A. C. W. of A.

Every issue of consequence was between the left-wing on the one hand, and the combination of all other forces on the other. The right-wing reactionaries largely surrendered their identity in the convention, so that, although they received consolation in the seating of Local 2 delegation, they were immensely weakened. The policies of the administration having a progressive tendency, amalgamation, labor party, collaboration with the Russian workers, etc., were emphatically endorsed by the overwhelming sentiment of the convention. Black reaction, such as now reigns in the I. L. G. W. U., and which had also been stretching out its claws for the A. C. W. of A., was completely balked.

But if there is any reason for militants to be encouraged by this convention, this must not be allowed to obscure the defects—and even dangers—that were disclosed therein. Outstanding among these is the timidity of the administration on issues which demand decision and energetic action, while the main body of the membership is lulled into a feeling of security and contentment by the general atmosphere of progressive measures. Such a situation, if it were not for the presence of a fighting left-wing, would be exceedingly dangerous; and it is only by constant growth and development of the left that the continued welfare of the A. C. W. of A. can be guaranteed. This is illustrated by four principal struggles of the convention.

#### The Question of Local 2

Smell of battle was in the air, early in the convention, because every one knew that the seating of Local 2 delegation would raise the issue of recent occurrences in that organization, during which all sorts of irregularities took place in the struggle in which the right wing wrested control of the local offices.

The left-wing had demonstrated, by a great membership meeting, that the control by the right was artificial, and therefore contested the delegation, whose election had been accomplished by violence and illegal removal of names from the ballot.

Report on Local 2, from the credentials committee, was delayed until after the case of Local 5 had been decided. In the latter, it was evidently an artificial protest, brought to offset the contest of Local 2 by the left. The administration gave the decision to the properly elected left-wingers—palpably a maneuver, the whole thing, to help cover the injustice done later in seating the illegally elected Local 2 delegation.

When the committee recommended seating the delegates of the right-wing, the whole matter of their elections as delegates was aired in the convention. The right-wing did not attempt to refute the charges made. A general denial for the record was considered enough, and the real plea made was to "preserve the reputation of the union." The administration threw its vote to the right-wing, although President Hillman disavowed both sides and made no commitment on the issue. The vote was 171 combined right-wing and administration, and 89 left-wing votes. This left-wing strength stood solid throughout the convention, and at one time swelled into a majority. It was the first registration of the left in the A. C. W. of A. as a whole.

In this battle the delegates of the New York cutters' union were the center and militant factor of the right-wing. By their tactics they soon had the whole convention noting them. Rumors were rife of threats on their part to stage disruptive demonstrations, as their means of bringing pressure to bear upon the administration votes. They got the votes and seated the Local 2 delegates, but the whole incident did more to destroy the right-wing prestige than all the left-wing propaganda could have done. It was the only time that the right showed its own face.

#### The Issue of Week Work

A resolution calling for the establishment of week-work in all markets, as against piece-work or standards of production, was another crucial point in the convention. The New York market has week-work, established through many battles, while other systems rule

in other centers. The administration proposed that the issue be left for settlement in each market according to conditions and the desires of the membership in each place.

The left-wing was, of course, the militant champion of week-work. It battled solidly for this measure, which is one of burning interest to the rank and file. The right-wing, which finds its principal strength in New York, felt that it did not dare champion piece work, even though they are known generally to favor it, because of strong rank and file opposition. A few even spoke for the week-work resolution. The administration was in a delicate position, for if the right-wing had, against its convictions but yielding to the pressure of the New York membership, voted for week-work, it would undoubtedly have been carried over the administration's protest. But most of the right-wing did not vote at all, 51 delegates absenting themselves or abstaining, so the administration measure was carried by a vote of 131 to 99.

#### June 17th Versus July 4th

Participation in political action in this election year came up in a large number of resolutions calling upon the convention to endorse the June 17th, St. Paul, Farmer-Labor Party gathering, to send delegates, and advise local unions and joint boards to be also represented. The administration on this issue took a typical centrist, middle-of-the-road position; it proposed to send delegates to June 17th and also to July 4th at Cleveland, pledged to work for the formation of a class farmer-labor party that would unite all the independent political forces of labor. Discussion on this issue was sharp but short; the question had been maneuvered to near the end of a session, so that the delegates were impatient to adjourn. Participation in both conventions was approved by a *viva-voce* vote which indicated about the usual division of 2 to 1. Both reports before the convention, however, committed the A. C. W. of A. to participation in a farmer-labor party and to fight for its formation, so that the decision was thus far unanimous.

#### Proportional Representation

The fourth battle of special significance was on the issue of proportional representation on joint boards. At present many joint boards have equal number of delegates from each union, regardless of size. This is the basis of much bureaucratic control which is the especial heart's-desire of the right-wing. The left-wing proposed a referendum to the membership,

establishing a rule of proportional representation in every market, with the recommendation of the convention that it be adopted. On this issue the administration was really neutral—at least in speech and vote, wherever its sympathies may have been. The left-wing added 23 votes to its solid 89, and, with the rest of the center group not voting, carried its proposition over the right-wing, by a vote of 112 to 71. It was the only clear-cut left-wing issue that won a definite victory in the convention and the only immediate achievement of a definite nature.

#### Relation of Forces in the A. C. W. of A.

Analysis of the votes cast on the four issues mentioned, will show that the numerical relation of forces of center group, left, and right-wings is expressed approximately as 121, 89, and 71. Of these groups the center is the broadest, but is less definite and clear-cut than either of the others, and owes its strength largely to the skillful piloting of Sydney Hillman, who dominates it completely. The right-wing is small, growing smaller, and has a very narrow base, relying largely upon the survival of craft spirit among the New York cutters who occupy a strategic position in the industry. The left-wing has assumed larger volume than the right, and in addition has a broad base in the organization, including all language groups and all trade sections of the industry.

It will be readily apparent that the left, as organized and led by the Trade Union Educational League and the Workers Party, has by its militant and aggressive championship of the most vital needs of the needle workers, by its clarification of its position and program, grasped the attention of the entire industry. It has prepared the way for a great and solid growth of power and influence. At the same time it has assumed a responsible and sober attitude toward organizational matters that augurs well for its ability to hold and consolidate its growing influence. It was significant that one of the most effective speeches for standardizing dues payments, bringing up the dues of many centers to the standard of Chicago, \$2.00 per month, was made by a left-wing militant, in the face of a demagogic appeal to the interests of the poor rank and file by the right-wing. Its clear-cut and militant program, its growing definiteness of organizational connections, its responsible attitude toward the union generally, and the rapidly-growing confidence of the rank and file—these are the great attainments of the left-wing in the A. C. W. of A. during the past two years, and they were registered at this convention so that all the world could

see. This is the most important achievement in the clothing industry, not alone from the point of view of revolutionary progress, but also for the healthy growth and development of the union itself and the everyday struggle for better conditions.

In the arid desert of the American labor movement, where conventions as a rule are more reactionary than chambers of commerce or bourgeois clubs, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America brings a refreshing breeze of proletarian spirit. True enough, it has some of the poison of class collaboration in its veins, its 'progressive' administration is often sadly indecisive and yielding under pressure from the right-wing, and only by the con-

stant prodding of all the militant elements among the rank and file can it be kept steadily going forward. But, after all the necessary criticism has been made (and the sharpest criticism may be the most friendly act, when its good faith is recognized) the Amalgamated has again shown that it deserves its reputation as the leading labor union of America. May the left-wing militants combine more strongly, develop their programs more clearly, participate ever more actively in the left of their union, that the present healthy condition may be made the starting point for more radical, lasting, and profound achievements in the clothing industry.

## Madmen Control the I. L. G. W. U.

THE seventeenth convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, meeting in Boston, May 5th to 17th, marked the 25th year of that organization's history. It might have been a great event in the forward march of the union, where the victories and defeats of the past should be reviewed, the structure and policies of the union remodeled and brought up to date to achieve more solidarity, effectiveness, and fighting spirit, and the whole organization renewed in its enthusiasm and hopefulness. Not so with this convention.

A grievous wound, striking into the very vitals of the I. L. G. W. U., was the outstanding result of the Boston convention, instead of the constructive progress that might have been achieved. Like mad dervishes of the Orient, the organization, under the control of a set of irresponsible ignoramus, lacerated its own body, and cut into its most vital organ—the militant rank and file workers who for decades have struggled and sacrificed to make the I. L. G. W. U. a strong and powerful union. The expulsion of hundreds of the most loyal and active members was approved in Boston.

Blind fanaticism could go no further than the exclusion of such tried union fighters as those who were expelled from the union, victims of the insanity of the *Forwards* gang in control. All of these people are known throughout the industry, by the rank and file, for their services and sacrifices. Some of the expelled went to the convention to appeal their expulsion, leaving the direction of the strike work, which had been placed in their hands on demand of the workers involved in spite of their exclusion from the union. They are good enough to do the work for which no others so well-fitted were available, but they are not

allowed to hold membership and vote. It is hard to realize the enormity of the crime against the working class that is summed up in these expulsions confirmed at Boston. Words are pale and lifeless things. The disgust, contempt, resentment, anger, and indignation that is aroused in the breast of every thinking worker in the garment industry is beyond measure or expression.

How was such a monstrous crime possible? Does the membership of the I. L. G. W. U. sanction this self-mutilation of the union?

No, the rank and file is not guilty of this crime. It is possible only because a gang of cynical, small-minded, and ignorant men, tools of a private institution, the *Daily Forward* and Abe Cahan, which is determined to rule the Jewish workers for the benefit of its income from advertisers, found themselves temporarily in control. They became drunk with their power. They determined that they would never give it up. To preserve and perpetuate their control it was necessary to silence all opposition.

The result of such a determination was the expulsion policy launched last year. The fruit and flower of it is seen in the Boston Convention. Tens of thousands of members were disfranchised in the elections to the convention, by the expulsion or ruling off the ballot of all left-wingers. Then at the convention 16 delegates in opposition to the destructive policy, elected in spite of the terrorization of the membership against them, were unseated from the convention. Even then, the fifty-odd delegates who still remained and voted against the insane gang in control, represented more members than those who were in the pockets of Sigman & Co.

This was brought about in more than one way. Expulsions, disfranchisements, and ruling off the ballot, were not good enough. One other effective means used was the systematic organization of a large flock of small, new locals, just before the convention, and the flooding of the convention with delegates from them. Thus, from New Jersey alone, from territory hitherto unorganized and from locals of 25 to 100 members, came 60 delegates, representing less than 1,100 members altogether. At the same time the 16 delegates unseated represented locals totalling more than 25,000 members. Even if the unseating had not taken place, even if the ballots had not been tampered with, even if the expulsions had not occurred, even if the great locals with the majority of the membership had been allowed to elect the left-wing delegates who really represent them—still the administration gang would have succeeded in disfranchising the majority, retaining their control by this contemptible gerrymander.

And what did they do, these corrupt bureaucrats, when they had the convention in their pockets? Did they demonstrate how much more "practical" they were, how much more concerned with the every-day needs of the workers, than the "impractical" and "idealistic" left-wing. No, not at all. Their practicality is exhausted when they secure control of the treasury. For the workers in the garment industry they have nothing practical at all to offer. They are completely bankrupt. For 11 days of the convention they did not deal with one single matter of interest to the broad masses of the workers. They were so busy expelling delegates, and making laws to convert the union into their own private property, that they had no time or energy for anything else. Only in the last two days of the convention was any other business transacted at all, and then in only the most perfunctory and hasty fashion, not a single measure being presented to meet the critical situation confronting the industry.

#### Left Wing Only Constructive Force

There is not time to prepare an exhaustive analysis of the convention proceedings and results for this issue of THE LABOR HERALD which goes to press just as the convention is concluding its sessions. Next month we will have complete reports and summary, with the proposals of the needle trades militants as to how this serious and critical situation is to be met and overcome.

The left-wing in the I. L. G. W. U. cannot know any defeat, in spite of all the obstacles

and set-backs that present themselves. It cannot know defeat because, first, it represents the majority of the membership, and the masses of the workers will ultimately rule, overcoming all bureaucratic machinery that holds them. And second, it must go forward to victory because its program represents the only possible path for all the workers to protect themselves against the exploitation of capitalism.

In Boston the left-wing presented a program that emphasized (1) consolidation of locals in each branch of the industry, to make possible workers' control; (2) unemployment insurance; (3) employment bureaus controlled by the union; (4) abolition of overtime work; (5) economy in the administration of the union, with a maximum wage for officials of \$75 per week; (6) proportional representation of local unions in joint boards, to do away with the present minority control; (7) the shop delegate system; (8) the labor party; (9) amalgamation of all needle trades unions into one powerful organization; (10) reinstatement of all expelled members, unity of all elements in the industry, no discriminations and cessation of expulsions against the left-wing.

#### On With the Fight!

As against this constructive and vitally necessary program, the gang in control set up a new constitution, which centralizes all power into their own hands, gives power to take over the administration of all local unions and joint boards, delivers every individual member to the mercy of each whim of the G. E. B., and makes this petty group of bureaucrats a self-perpetuating little autocracy. The I. L. G. W. U. has been turned, insofar as it could be by this gang of trade-union freebooters, into their own private property. They have killed the workers' democracy.

The workers in the ladies' garment industry are faced with the most profound crisis in their history. To solve it will require the utmost of energy, determination, courage, and intelligence. The whole future is the issue of the struggle. There is no room for weakness, pessimism, or despair. Those who fight for the program of the left-wing, fight with all the forces of history on their side. The reactionaries are in their last desperate struggle before they go into a shameful oblivion. While the present may be dark in the I. L. G. W. U., it is up to the courageous and intelligent militants to make it but the darkness that precedes dawn. On with the struggle for the vital needs of the working class! That is the slogan of the militant garment workers.

## Socialist Reaction Rules Furriers

By S. C. Cohen

The Sixth Convention of the International Fur Worker's Union of the United States and Canada, held in Chicago from May 12th to 17th inclusive, attended by 50 delegates from 18 local unions and five joint boards, was the most reactionary since the A. F. of L. Convention. But as it was not entirely a "labor-faker" body as the A. F. of L. Convention was, the only explanation for its shameful behaviour is the fact that the rank and file of the Furriers' were robbed of any expression at Chicago. It follows that the only hope is that the rank and file learns to resist suppression by any and all means and make its voice heard and its rule effective.

The Kaufman-Cahan-Hillquit gang which rules by force over the Furriers today is a little picture of the German socialist-Fascist dictatorship with its arms elbow deep in workers' blood. Just as the workers of Germany are turning in disgust from the "socialists" to whom the Fur Workers' Union contributed \$1,500 last year, so will the "Forward" gang meet its deserts soon or late. Just as the New York "Leader" died expensively of jaundiced "socialism" in spite of \$5,000 donated by the Furriers, so will perish, ultimately, the yellow-socialist-gangster control over the workers in the union. But just now the gang seems to have learned nothing from these lessons of history.

The Kaufman machine made sure work of it. The new Constitution provides for an absolute monarchy. The G. E. B. will act as the Credential Committee for further conventions. The Constitution is now amended to provide that anyone who attends or takes part in a protest meeting or an unauthorized meeting against the union or the officialdom of the union, or one who will "slander" or "libel" the union or the officialdom, is subject to suspension or expulsion.

Secure in its future autocracy—or so it thinks—the machine cancelled any hope of membership control. The Convention rejected the proposal that G. E. B. members be elected by referendum, rejecting also any referendum on assessments. It continued the present G. E. B. in office, adding one man to take the place left vacant by the impeachment of Tenth Vice President M. Suroff, the New York leftist, who dared write articles for the Freiheit.

#### T. U. E. L. Measures Carried!

Over 100 resolutions were suddenly jammed through in five hours. The resolution for Russian recognition proposed by Delegate Steinberg from Local 40, was at first opposed on the ground that "the facts were not right," but Meyer London opportunely spoke up for "self-government" and so another resolution favoring recognition was adopted.

In the face of a foreign-born membership even the Kaufman gang had to endorse a resolution against the Johnson Bill and in protection of the foreign-born workers, despite the fact that these measures originated and are urged by the T. U. E. L. This is the one bright spot on a dismal background. Nor could the Convention do more than sidetrack the mass demand for a labor party. It rejected St. Paul and sent three delegates to the C. P. P. A. at Cleveland.

Charges of B. Gold against Sam Cohn, President Kaufman, A. Soifer and others for the murderous assault upon him last December 19th, in Local 15, were tabled and Gold was forbidden attendance even as visitor at the Convention. Likewise tabled was Suroff's appeal. After these acts and Kaufman's threat last December against the New York members that "blood will run!"—the Convention blandly adopted a resolution condemning Fascism or any "dictatorship!" Likewise, a resolution demanding that the A. F. of L. sever friendship with the American Legion was defeated on the ground that everyone has a right to belong to any organization he chooses, except, of course...?

A resolution against the "propaganda" of the T. U. E. L. was introduced by Delegates Currie and Holsworth, who never heard of the League until they entered the convention, which accepted the motion by the same vote with which it had approved of the T. U. E. L. "propaganda" in protection of the foreign-born! Thus vital is the T. U. E. L. program!

The most indecent and despicable act of the Kaufman gang was the appropriation of \$100 for the "political prisoners" of Soviet Russia, while at the same time referring to the G. E. B. an appeal from Sigman for aid to Sacco and Vanzetti! After this, who can "slander" the officialdom of the Fur Workers? But the membership—that is different!

# Russian Labor on the Eve of 1924

By R. Reznikov

**T**O tell the full story of the progress of the Russian workers during 1923 would take many volumes. In this brief article, we can give no more than illustrative figures and general summaries, with which interpretative keys the reader who wishes to understand may unlock the door to fundamental knowledge of the Russian workers' condition.

Chief among the indications of progress is the numerical growth of workers employed which indicates a development of industry in successful reconstruction after ten years of ruinous war and civil war. The pace of reconstruction during 1923 can be seen by the fact that from January to October the number of workers in state-owned industries increased 10 per cent, and in private and cooperative industries 8 per cent. Of course this is in addition to the progress made before 1923.

Another indication of industrial revival is the increased membership of the unions. For example, from Oct. 1, 1922, to Oct. 1, 1923, the membership of the unions increased from 4,564,000 to 5,541,000—a gain of 21.9 per cent. When capitalist countries, almost without exception, show a tragic decline in union membership under the onslaught of capitalist reaction, this wonderful progress of the Russian unions is sufficient answer to the calumnies of Gompers and the anarchists against the Workers' and Peasants' Government. It is inspiring to know that in the dark world situation the percentage of unorganized workers in Russia even in 1922 hardly amounted to 5 per cent.

## Causes and Quality of Unemployment

With this industrial reconstruction, growth of unions, and increasing numbers of employed workers, we confront, however, a parallel and peculiar increase in the number of unemployed registered at the Labor Exchange. This apparently paradoxical situation is easily explained when we understand the peculiar conditions now existing in Russia. Firstly, it must be definitely understood that unemployment in Russia is not a result of any curtailment in industry. On the contrary, industry has grown by leaps and bounds since the liquidation of the war fronts and inauguration of the New Economic Policy, and we see that during 1923, while unemployment grew steadily, production increased about 50 per cent.

The causes of the unemployment are based, of course, on the wreckage of national economy inherited from the old regime and inherent in the civil war. It is still far from complete restoration. The second great cause is the reduction of the former parasitic ruling class into the status of the workers, making them dependent upon their own labor. Consequently, the Labor Exchanges are filled by this bourgeois element now seeking work as unskilled laborers. While unemployment is, undoubtedly, an evil, we call the attention of the revolutionists in capitalist countries to this particular difficulty of ours as not unworthy of emulation. The third great reason is found in the fact that while tremendous masses of men were previously engaged in civil war, now demobilization, new and concentrated forms of industrial management, and the drastic reduction of government employes, precipitated these masses onto the labor market.

During 1923 the number of unemployed rose from 328,000 to 793,000 but in order to understand its true character one must retain in mind the above mentioned causes, together with analysis of the quality of unemployed elements. Intellectuals account for 36.3 per cent of the total, unskilled workers and miscellaneous (usually bourgeois) elements are 39.3 per cent, and industrial workers only 24.4 per cent. The unskilled are nearly all peasant types, coming to the cities for various reasons, but there are many country people also in the industrial classification. These are workers who, when the famine struck the cities, went back to the better fed farms and villages, and who now are returning to the cities. Even the intellectual class has tended to move from the smaller towns to the cities attracted by the city culture, although the peacetime reduction in the forces of government employes has been the chief factor disemploying this class.

## Unemployment Insurance and Relief

The rush of people to the cities may be seen by the fact that the population of Moscow has increased from 952,255 in 1920, to 1,481,117 in 1923. Of course a great number of parasitic elements try to register as unemployed at the Labor Exchange, some from pure laziness and others from the additional counter-revolutionary desire to make the workers' government and unions pay them the many benefits en-

joyed by the unemployed while they surreptitiously engage in trade. We have weeded many out, but many manage to remain, though the total is diminishing.

As to unemployed union members, we are gratified by the fact that on October 1, 1923, only 7.9 per cent of the unionists of Russia were on the unemployed list. When one considers that a non-union member is here, as a rule, a non-worker, the percentage of unemployed unionists is not at all large. The railway men are least affected, while the artists and public food workers are the worst off.

The unemployed are, however, fairly protected by many exemptions and by unemployment insurance made up from contributions amounting to two per cent of the total payroll. Nothing is taken from the workers' pay, the employer alone—government, private or co-operative—paying the social insurance.

There are 5,200,000 insured workers, and of the total insurance payments made in the year—over 32,000,000 gold rubles, 28,000,000 was paid by the soviet state, because, it must be remembered, the government employs seven-eighths of all the workers of Russia, private industry being insignificant by comparison. Besides this insurance there are the many forms of relief given which would swell this cash total several times over. And then the unions have their own relief system for organized workers which is very effective. Indeed, union members and, especially industrial workers, are better taken care of than the other unemployed, who in general must get along on a standard about equal to the lowest paid workers. The summer exodus to the country will bring relief to many.

## Wages

General and local agreements govern the wage scale. An average of 82 per cent of the union membership were covered by collective agreements during the first half of 1923. This figure has increased since then though no exact data is available; yet we are safe in saying that the number of workers whose conditions are not covered by agreements is insignificant. This is clear when the primary fact is known that not much over three per cent of the workers are unorganized. We Russian Communists call the attention of Gompers and company to this condition, asking them the question:—Under which governmental system, your "democracy" or the soviet dictatorship of the proletariat, are the labor unions most successful in organizing the working class? Even the unorganized are included in our collective agreements, for our workers

are protected by the most complete and favorable labor laws in the world—and union membership is entirely voluntary.

It is, of course, the first care of the unions to get the highest wage possible when making these collective agreements. So a sliding scale is arranged by which, as production increases, wages also increase. This scale is adjusted every two weeks on the basis of the current prices charged for a minimum living standard including 24 articles of food and other necessities. You see by this method that when we say there has been an increase in wages, we mean *real* wages and not *nominal* money wages (like your "big money" wages of the United States which today buys only two-thirds as much as in 1923).

## 1923 Wages Increase 25 Per Cent

Reckoned then, upon the basis of a living standard budget, the average wage, even in January 1923, stood at 153.2 per cent, that is, 53.2 per cent above the budget; but by September 1923, wages rose to 174.4 per cent or 74.4 per cent above the living standard. You must remember that these wages are outside the free communal service given the workers, such as low rent, heating, light water, etc. October showed a still greater increase, textile workers getting a raise of 33 per cent and the railwaymen even as much as 55.1 per cent. The whole year will show an average increase of 25 per cent real wages for our workers.

While it is quite true that the progressive but painful reconstruction of our industry has held down the average wage returns to an October 1923 figure of 62 per cent in relation to 1913, since then a further increase makes it approximately 85 per cent of pre war wage standard. The workers who were lowest paid under the Czar received the highest increase, naturally; but when you consider that soviet industry has not yet reached 50 per cent of pre-war production, the wage scale of the workers compared to the pre-war times shows very clearly how our workers' government is turning all possible surplus value into increasing the living standard of the working class.

With the exception of a few cases in private industry, there were no strikes in Russia during 1923, that is to say no real strikes in state-owned industries. Strikes are perfectly legal and the unions are ready to engage in them, only it is unnecessary, since they find that it is sufficient for the union to declare that it considers a certain situation will lead to a strike and give the administration a few days warning, to have its demands granted or quickly adjusted by conciliation boards, or, failing

this, settled by arbitration courts. Even brief stoppages of a few hours or a day are rare, and we find that the first half of 1923 shows only 7.8 per cent of the disagreements between workers and administration settled in favor of the latter by conciliation and arbitration courts.

We have spoken of the 5,200,000 workers covered by insurance. This operates in case of either temporary or permanent incapacity, unemployment as mentioned above, child-birth, death of the insured or any member of his family. During temporary incapacity full pay is given. Besides medical aid of hospital and dispensary, thousands of workers receive sanitarium treatment at the luxurious mountain and beach resorts of the Crimea and Caucasus, places the workers could not dream of under the Czar. Besides these, a tremendous chain of health resorts, where healthy work-

ers go for vacation and change of scene, covers the whole country. During 1923 the number of totally incapacitated invalids taken care of increased by 41 per cent, and, besides, we doubled the allowance for each invalid. Compared to the millions of neglected miserables in every capitalist country and to the pitiful effort of the American labor bureaucracy to check rank and file revolt against their rule and against the capitalist system by a niggardly insurance system the workers themselves must pay for, our soviet insurance is security itself. As to hours—the eight-hour day is enforced in Russia, with only six hours for unhealthful and confining trades.

The revolutionary class struggle is thus the safest guarantee of the unceasing improvement of the situation of the working class and of the fullest protection of its economic interests.

## It Is Moving Ahead

By Alexander Bittelman

THE creation of a strong class party of workers and poor farmers is well on its way to a successful consummation. All signs point in the direction of a great change, of a new epoch in the lives and struggles of the oppressed masses of America. The Convention of June 17th promises to close the period of mere preparation and blaze the way for an organized political struggle against American capitalism which will be led and directed by a powerful Farmer Labor Party. The future looks very bright and hopeful, indeed.

During the last month a great step forward has been taken in this direction. One labor organization after another has expressed its willingness and desire to participate in the Convention of June 17th. Almost all of the existing state Farmer Labor parties, which contain in their ranks the particularly mature sections of the workers and poor farmers, have thrown in their lot with the June 17th Convention.

In a number of eastern states new Farmer Labor parties have been formed which have definitely aligned themselves with June 17th. The same has happened in Illinois just a few days ago, where a state Farmer Labor organization was brought into existence that will place behind June 17th all the creative and struggling farmer-labor forces of the state of Illinois.

And so the thing is moving ahead with fine speed and in excellent spirit—all of which augurs very well for the future of the American labor movement. It is moving ahead despite all the difficulties which are being put in its way by that strange combination of capitalism and reactionary labor leaders.

Or, perhaps, this combination is not so strange, after all. Once the true nature of Gompersism is clearly understood, there remains very little cause for surprise at the disgraceful spectacle of a labor leader playing the game of capitalism with more zest and enthusiasm than the capitalists themselves. For there cannot be the least doubt that Gompers and his crew are giving capitalism better and more effective service that even the open agents of the large corporations.

Old man Sammy continues to play the old tune: "Don't mix in politics! Don't bother with independent political action! This is too radical, too Communistic and therefore too dangerous for the American workers."

Translated into simple, human language, what does it mean? Nothing less nor more than this: That the American worker continue to live in subjection to his capitalist masters. That the trade union movement of America continue to lie exposed, defenseless, to all the devilish machinations of the open-shoppers and enemies of Labor generally. That the American working class surrender for all time

the only powerful instrument at its disposal to combat and protect itself against the brutal capitalist exploiters. It means, in short, to deliver the American workers, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of Gary, Schwab, Morgan, Daugherty, Coolidge, etc., etc. That's what the Gompers-Game amounts to.

To call this attitude of Gompers reactionary is to use a totally inadequate term. It is rank betrayal. It is conscious and systematic service to the enemy.

However, even this is slowly coming to an end. The old reactionary machine may continue yet for a while, but the foundations of its power are already in decay. The minds of the rank and file workers, as evidenced by the success of the movement for a Farmer Labor Party, are daily becoming more susceptible to new ideas and conceptions. There is now in the midst of the American labor movement a wave of restlessness, anxiety, and a strong urge to move forward. This, even by itself, is a good guarantee that the rule of Gompersism, at least in its spiritual domination, is coming to an end.

### Cleveland Conference Doing Its Bit

The Conference for Progressive Political Action (C. P. P. A.) is supposed to be progressive. It calls itself so. It pretends to be more progressive than pure and simple Gompersism. But is it, really?

There was a time when even John Fitzpatrick, who is now coming back as a "reformed" and humiliated son, into the old Gompers fold, did not think the C. P. P. A. progressive enough for the American workers.

John Fitzpatrick is now singing a totally different song. But, no matter. He is wrong now. He was right then. His proletarian instinct, before it became beclouded by his recent fears and anxieties, had sensed correctly the nature and possibilities of the C. P. P. A. This so-called progressive outfit is just as progressive as Gompers.

Why? Because the only test for progress in the American labor movement of today is *Independent Political Action*, a class political party of workers and poor farmers. He who is indifferent or opposed to independent political action and to the immediate formation of a class Farmer Labor Party is a reactionary, no matter what language he uses. The only real progressives in the American labor movement today are those who favor and work for the formation of such a party.

Measured by this criticism the C. P. P. A. is not one iota progressive. On the main issue of the day it stands almost in the same place

where Gompers does. And, what's more, it is doing its darned best, to hamper the efforts of those who *are* working for independent political action.

### July 4th Fighting June 17th

The C. P. P. A. will hold its next conference in Cleveland on July 4th. The forces which are moving in the direction of a class Farmer Labor Party will hold their convention in St. Paul on June 17th. It is a fight, therefore, between July 4th and June 17th, the latter being the center of all those favoring independent political action.

On the other hand, July 4th. What is it trying to do? Just keeping the American labor movement from going ahead. Just trying to revive and perpetuate old prejudices and false conceptions. Still laboring under the discredited theory of electing "good" men on the tickets of the old parties.

It is timid, wavering and confused. When the C. P. P. A. comes into session on July 4th, it may decide to do many things, but it will not do the one and only thing that the American working class is really interested in—it will not form a class party.

If it can manage to keep itself together, in spite of the conflicting forces of which it is composed, the July 4th Conference may perhaps get behind Senator LaFollette as the presidential candidate on an independent or "third party" ticket. But even that, which marks the highest point of "progress" for the C. P. P. A., would be totally inadequate for, if not directly contrary to, the interests of the working class.

Senator LaFollette is at best only a middle-class liberal. The things he is concerned with are the interest and the well-being of the small manufacturers, merchants, the professional classes, and the well-to-do farmers. He has very little to do with the workers and oppressed farmers. It is not their mind that LaFollette and his friends are speaking. What the workers need is a party and a leadership of their own. And that is what June 17th stands for.

Such is the line-up in the American labor movement today. *June 17th or July 4th*. Every progressive and really creative force in the American labor movement is lining up with June 17th. The opposition of the reactionaries and false progressives against the June 17th Convention is of very little avail. The rank and file workers and poor farmers have sensed the truth and are moving hopefully and enthusiastically toward a class Farmer Labor Party.

# The Red International's Third Congress

By Harrison George

WHEN the delegates to the Third World Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions—the Profintern—assemble at Moscow on July 5th—a postponement of ten days from the date first announced—four years will have passed since the birth of this organization which in that short time has gathered 13,000,000 unionists of 42 nations under its banner.

Great strides forward have marked the progress of revolutionary unionism since the Second Congress eighteen months ago, and the rich experience of the period needs to be summarized for guidance of the whole International.

The Red International of Labor Unions, contrary to its enemies, capitalist, reformist and anarcho-syndicalist, is not an artificial creation, but an organization arising from the profound necessities of the world's workers. These necessities themselves are born out of the internal contradictions of capitalist production, which is entering its historical period of decline and which finds itself unable to maintain a solid ruling class of capitalist exploiters and to permit at the same time even a miserable life for the working masses. If the workers are not to starve to death by millions they must resist. If they wish security even for the slightest reforms, they must not only resist but pass to attack upon capitalism and finally overthrow it.

An added force behind the Profintern is the groping discontent of the masses with their reformist leadership which turned patriot during the war, tricked them into the trenches, and after the war continued the treachery by thwarting every revolutionary effort of the workers. In one country they would deceive the masses with fine words, in another they would crush the masses with unexampled savagery—socialist savagery.

## Forces Making the R. I. L. U.

Instinctively the masses of the world turned toward Russia. They did not understand the Marxian explanation of the soviet power of the Russian workers, but they perceived—even by the capitalist hostility centered upon the Workers' Republic—that the Russian workers had by armed revolution ended, for themselves, the imperialist war and had seized power over one sixth of the land area of the globe.

This tendency found its counterpart within Russia itself. There the workers, though they had absorbed the lessons of western unionism prior to the revolution, had been able really to build their unions only after they had conquered political power. As workers of revolutionary purpose these unions naturally began seeking international connections for their 5,000,000 members. Finally all these rivulets met in the organization of the new center for the revolutionary unionists of the world—the Red International of Labor Unions—the Profintern.

## Revolutionary Metaphysicians

Besides the heavy reformist assaults the Profintern had to meet guerrilla attacks of the anarcho-syndicalists. This group, so diverse that it is inherently unable to agree internally, finds its chief center in the so-called "international" at Berlin (the I. W. M. A.). This futile group, so far as it has any program at all, is dedicated to "individual development." But its sole activity is attack on the soviets and an attempt to split the left wing of the unions to add another handful to itself.

The profound difference between the Profintern and the Amsterdam International is that the Profintern starts out from the objective, Marxian analysis that capitalism is historically dying, but is too slow in doing it and must be given a *coup de grace*. The Amsterdammers believe that capitalism is only temporarily sick, and that if the workers will only sacrifice enough to reconstruct capitalism, in some distant time they may inherit production by peaceful and democratic means without fighting for it.

The anarcho-syndicalists make no objective analysis. They base their actions upon their own desires instead of upon conditions. The Amsterdammers are far and away the largest and most stubborn element, since they reflect the traditional hold of capitalism upon the minds of the masses.

Since the Second Congress, the Profintern has developed to the highest pitch the worldwide struggle to win the masses from the reformist control of the Amsterdammers. Besides the basic program for revolution and the normal resistance to international reaction which has swept across the whole world, the Profintern has developed an international fight against Fascism—which it points out is an

international counter-revolutionary menace—and a definite program of action against capitalist wars. To meet these great problems the Profintern proposes the United Front.

The United Front is based upon the fact that capitalist pressure forces even the most politically conservative workers to struggle, while putting the capitalist-serving leaders of these workers in the contradictory position of pretending to struggle against capitalism while really endeavoring to restore it to pre-war strength.

Time and again the Profintern has proposed to Amsterdam: "We disagree with you on many things. We are for the dictatorship of the proletariat. You are against it. We are for revolution; you are for class collaboration. But we agree with you that the eight-hour day must be saved, that wages must be in-

creased to meet the cost of living, that Fascism is a menace that we must oppose and that war again threatens to engulf millions if we do not act. Let us lay aside our points of difference and leave only these points we agree upon. Then let us together wage a relentless struggle for those points—for your points, not ours." The Amsterdammers have refused this United Front, and as they refuse it before the eyes of the masses they become discredited with their own following.

Despite the opposition of the Amsterdammers, the Profintern proved on gigantic scale the sincere proletarian purpose of its United Front program. A great rank and file conference was called at Frankfort to aid the resistance to French occupation of the Ruhr and the terrible threat of war such occupation implied. Factory and shop delegates, members of both Amsterdam and of the Profintern met in spite of Amsterdam leaders. Socialist and Communist workers together planned and executed militant action in the Ruhr.

Scores and hundreds of French Communists

and German Communists threw themselves into illegal propaganda work among the French soldiers of occupation in the Ruhr. Marcel Cachin and other prominent Communist members of parliament were thrown into prison by their government for opposing occupation by seditious agitation among French soldiery. This fine work has won the Ruhr masses to follow the leadership of the Red International, as is shown by both the solid Communist vote and the miners' strike. The Frankfort Conference is a monument of achievement to the Profintern.

*Greetings to the Third Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions! Greetings to the Profintern, the leverage power of the revolutionary proletariat! Hail to the hosts of the Red Profintern, which swings into united action on the fulcrum base of the experience and intelligence of international Communism! The Red International wipes out all sectarian and racial barriers separating the workers of the world! It gives vision and light to despairing masses blinded by reformists and traitors! It mobilizes every proletarian force! It is rolling the whole world onward to revolution. Long live the Red International of Labor Unions!*

Again in May 1923, the R. I. L. U. broke through Amsterdam resistance and met Edo Fimmen, one of its secretaries who, as head of the Amsterdam Transport Workers, signed a United Front agreement with the Transport Workers of the Profintern for joint struggle against war and Fascism. Control Committees were agreed upon in all ports and railway centers, but the Am-

sterdammers in scandalized haste removed Fimmen from his leading position and checked effective action. However, the Profintern is again calling for a conference of Transport Workers.

On the agenda of the Third Congress are the problems reflecting new and large struggles. Among these are the problem of Shop Committees and Trade Union Committees; the international struggle for the eight-hour day and the vital subject, never before studied and clarified upon a basis of world experience, of strike strategy. Other vital subjects are the organizational structure of militants, the attitude of revolutionary unions to the various industrial internationals and the question of trade unions and co-operatives.

Thus we see that in the Third World Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, the revolutionary unionists of all the world—ready to profit by their collective experience and to modify or adopt any tactical measure to accord with objective calculation—will meet to chart out the course of struggle—the struggle for proletarian power.

## Illinois Miners Vote for Howat

By J. W. Johnstone

**A**N overwhelming vote calling for a special convention of the United Mine Workers of America, for the purpose of reinstating Alex Howat; unanimous endorsement of industrial unionism, and pledging the miners' unions to fight for its realization throughout the labor movement; abolition of the appointive power of Farrington, and the establishment of elections for organizers—these are the great victories for the left-wing miners in the Convention of District 12, Illinois, in session in Peoria while this is being written.

**T**HE hundred thousand miners of Illinois, during 1923, worked less than three days a week. At present 150 mines are closed down, while the other 224 are working less than half time. Every day brings word of other mines closing temporarily or permanently. Nearly \$500,000 is owed to miners because the operators have refused to meet the payroll. Thousands of families are suffering from hunger and want. This is the background of the Illinois Miners' Convention.

What comes out most vividly in this convention is the utter bankruptcy of the present leaders. Not one constructive thought or suggestion has been expressed to the miners for a way out of their present difficulties. Nothing but apologetic blustering attempts to justify the existence of these officials.

"Our hands are tied either by the Constitution or the present three year agreement," is Farrington's excuse, conveniently forgetting that he was chairman of the wage scale committee that put over the present agreement. "It is precedent, these clauses were in the constitution, and in the past agreement before I became your president," is his ridiculous plea. That he should make precedent does not seem to occur to him.

One delegate stated that his employer owed him \$600.00 and his family was starving, but that his was only one of many families in that locality in this predicament. Another delegate stated that the company had closed down its mines owing the miners the huge sum of \$350,000 in wages, another \$11,000, etc. Farrington confessed that he has nothing to offer that could help these men collect their wages, except to refer it to the next wage scale committee which will meet three years from now.

In trying to protect his dictatorial right to appoint all organizers and field workers, Farrington said, "If your president is to have no extraordinary power, then he should not be obliged to bear any extraordinary responsibility. If his power is to be reduced, then his responsibility should be reduced." Yet he refuses to shoulder any responsibility at all, hiding behind the constitution or the agreement. "We can't compel the companies to pay the back wages, it is not in the agreement, we cannot demand installment of safety appliances because it would violate the present contract, we cannot do anything about these things for three years, and we doubt if we can do very much then." Such is the amazing attitude of these bureaucrats who demand that their dictatorial powers be continued.

That Farrington sees himself slipping was shown by the galaxy of reactionary spell-binders that bored the convention for two days. Victor Olander, Secretary of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, Oscar Nelson, Vice-President of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and many other labor and ex-labor officials, all lauded Farrington, fawning at his feet and all sounding the same note—class collaboration.

### Olander's Treacherous Bunk

The most treacherous of all labor politicians in Illinois is Olander. He never talks for the benefit of his audience, it is always for the benefit of the capitalist press, and he carries his stenographer around with him to take down his speech for publication. When he got through speaking, the visitors must have envied the miners' exalted position in society: "From slavery to freedom, from poverty to plentitude, from ragged and starving urchins to rosy-cheeked, well-dressed, well-fed children, from misery to happiness," such was his picture of conditions for the miner, in spite of the fact that he himself had heard the woeful tales of poverty from the delegates, in spite of the fact that he himself heard Farrington state that thousands of families were starving, that conditions for the past two years had been terrible, that it is going to get worse instead of better, and that Farrington did not know what to do about it. This capitalist apologist could only draw a lying, rosy picture, preach class collaboration, stab the progressives and Communists in the back while

maintaining a saintly air, and then preach tolerance and brotherly love. He was very careful to state that he did not include the Socialists in his attack, that they were all right because they, also, fought the Communists.

### The Three-Year Betrayal

That the present three year agreement was drawn up in accordance with the wishes of, if not actually by the coal operators, was brought out clearly in a resolution. This showed how explosions occur, how they could be prevented, and demanded that the president and officers use all their power to have a law enacted that would compel the coal operators to install certain safety measures. The resolution was adopted, but in the discussion the progressives brought out the fact that nothing could really be done during the life of the agreement without the consent of the operators.

Farrington admitted that the progressives were right, that the present contract did not allow the miners even to try to change the present mining laws, if it added to the cost of production, without the consent of the companies. This means that the miners will have to allow themselves to be blown to pieces for another three years.

The resolution showed that after an explosion occurs the mine is ventilated and the gas driven out, then the mine inspectors examine the mine and report, as the resolution grimly says, that "the company has complied with the mining law, and the dead men with the gas law." This treacherous betrayal of the miners cannot be altered because of the sacredness of the contract, according to Farrington, without the consent of the operators.

"Why blame me? you voted for the agreement," Farrington claims. His "extraordinary powers and responsibility" fade into thin air. All that the miners voted for was against a reduction of wages and a three year agreement. The only ones who were familiar with its contents were Farrington and Lewis, et al, and their relationship with the operators is shown in Resolution No. 73, which asks an explanation from Farrington and Lewis of letters

printed in full in the resolution, exchanged by these worthies on Nov. 2nd, 9th, and 22nd, 1922, in which they accuse each other of accepting money from non-union coal operators for allowing their mines to run under non-union conditions during the last strike.

Farrington, in his defense of his appointive power, points out in his report that the employees of the Steel Trust, Standard Oil, and thousands of other blood-sucking business institutions, are not elected by the stockholders, so—therefore—the appointive power should remain. This is the tenor of all official reports. They make no difference between a union and a business institution.

To listen to president Farrington and Secretary Nesbit report, gives the feeling that it is a stockholders meeting, where the employ-

ees have been inveigled into a profit-sharing scheme, with the owners of the firm trying to convince them that they have made a good financial investment. The human element, the class nature of the union, the fact that the preamble of the U. M. W. of A. states that its goal is the full social value of the miners' product, all these have no bearing upon these apologists for capitalism and lackeys of the operators.

In this report Farrington says, "I hold no brief from the Illinois operators, but I do for the

Illinois miners; but in order to do that, I must help the operators find a wider market for their coal. Without markets there can be no work. The consumer will get his coal where he can buy it the cheapest. The mining industry is fully 50 per cent overdeveloped. Therefore, there is only one way whereby we can get more work for Illinois, and that is to cheapen the cost of production to such degree as will enable the Illinois operators to sell their coal in competition with the coal mined in non-union and sparsely organized districts where the cost of production is much less."

Respect for contract, elimination of strikes in violation of contracts, work when the operator has work to offer, careful workmanship, loading clean coal, reducing the amount of slack by careful shooting, giving an "honest" day's work, cooperation with the management

### 100,000 MINERS STAND WITH HOWAT!

*"Resolved, That District No. 12, of the U. M. W. of A., demand that a Special Convention of the United Mine Workers of America be called within three months for the special purpose of giving a fair and impartial trial to Alexander Howat and his associates."*

*The above was carried at the Peoria Convention of the Illinois miners, District 12, May 21, 1924. This is a body blow to the tyrannous Lewis machine! ..Militant coal miners, on with the fight!*

in doing things that are "right". All these things will tend to reduce the cost of production and bring more work to Illinois, thus relieving some of the distress—this is the pitiful program of Farrington.

This tells the whole story. The six-hour day, the five day week, nationalization of the mines, the establishment of a workers' government, the social value of their product, all are pushed in the background and the union is to become an auxiliary to the coal operators' association. According to Farrington there is

no other solution but that miners must work harder, work cheaper, and produce more coal than the non-union miners. However, militant miners are growing stronger. They understand the class nature of the struggle. They showed their growing strength in the National Convention, and that they will come out of the struggle with a stronger left-wing movement is a foregone conclusion. The militant miners feel, however, that any permanent improvement cannot be accomplished until the Lewis-Farrington machine has been completely smashed.

## Trade Union Disunity in Holland

By Martin E. Waldorf

IF unity in the field of labor unionism is the standard by which we judge the health of a labor movement, the Dutch workers' organizational situation indicates serious disease. One would suppose that in so tiny a country as Holland, with a stable and homogeneous population, the normal pressure of capitalism upon the working class would find reflection in one dominant conservative organization center with perhaps a smaller dual center of revolutionary opposition.

It is rather astonishing to the average reader, therefore, to find that Holland has just given birth to the seventh national trade union center! This is the Central Trade Union of Intellectual Workers. Its membership is very small, but even the other six long established national organizations have altogether only 410,000 members.

These six organizations are as follows: the Netherland Trade Unions (N. T. U.), with 182,000 members; the Catholic Unions, with 108,000 members; the Christian (Protestant) Unions, with 56,000; the Neutral Unions, 44,000; the National Arbeiter Secretariat (N. A. S.), which is the revolutionary body, with 14,000 members; and the Anarcho-Syndicalist Unions recently created by a split, with about 4,000 members.

It is disheartening to see so many conflicting organizations with such a small aggregate membership. It is worse still to observe that in two and a half years the Dutch unions as a whole have lost 273,000 members. The causes for this tragic slump in organization reside in subjective conditions of internal strife

among Dutch labor both politically and industrially, and, secondly, in the objective decline of the post-war revolutionary upheaval. A revival can be expected when the clarification now taking place in revolutionary ranks begins to bear fruit, and when this clarified movement meets the advancing wave of revolution fore-shadowed by the continental elections and the English strikes.

In reckoning the forces possible to be mustered for the class struggle, one must leave the so-called "confessional" unions entirely outside the proletarian army. It is a sufficient comment upon the backwardness of the Holland working class to point out that practically half the union workers of Holland are organized in Catholic or Protestant unions which teach religion instead of class struggle, which weaken the fighting spirit of the workers and which unite their members by every ideological tie to the capitalist system. These religious unions are worse than useless, they poison the minds of the masses. Before the eyes of rebellious workers they hold up the cross of renunciation and submission.

The "Neutral Unions" are even more peculiarly out of place in the class struggle. These are what some would call freak organizations, which exist by reason of the general confusion in working class ideology upon the basis of that hoary excuse for inaction that "both sides are wrong" in the class struggle and, therefore, the only logical action is inaction and "neutrality." In practice, of course, there is no neutrality in the class struggle,

and a policy of neutrality and inaction is a positive help to the capitalists and a positive harm to the workers. Yet Holland has 44,000 of such "unionists."

The largest workers' organization is the Netherland Trade Unions (N. T. U.), which is closely connected with the reformist Social Democratic Workers Party formed in 1894 by Troelstra, the internationally known leader of the Dutch socialists, who, like the German variety, advocate a "gradual" program of attaining socialism through obtaining one little reform after another. Unfortunately for this theory its utter bankruptcy is apparent in the shameless and complete betrayal of—not only revolution—but even reforms for the workers by the German Social Democrats who for six years have protected German capitalism from revolution. Yet up to July of last year the N. T. U. registered 182,000 workers who still accepted reformist leadership. J. Oudegeest is the leader of the N. T. U. and is at the same time an officer of the International Federation of Trade Unions (the Amsterdam International).

The N. T. U. is a split away from the older, but now the smaller organization, the N. A. S. This occurred in 1905, largely through Troelstra's desire to create a union center which he and his socialist ideas could directly control. The N. T. U. and the Social Democratic Workers Party have, indeed, an official agreement. While the slump in membership since 1920 has taken away 70,000 members from the reformist N. T. U., the N. A. S. suffered an even greater percentage of loss by the dropping out of 29,000 of its 50,000, 1920 membership.

### Anarchist Splitters at Work

But even that steady wasting away was not the end of misfortune for the revolutionary "independent" N. A. S. Its pre-war fight against social democratic reformism naturally attracted to the N. A. S. a proportion of anarcho-syndicalist elements which were numerous in Holland because it was the native land of Domela Nieuwenhuis who exercised considerable influence as an anarchist and friend of Prince Peter Kropotkin upon the Dutch movement.

After the first enthusiasm for the Russian revolution, the section of the anarchists who oppose all government—even a workers' government, began to attack Soviet Russia. It naturally followed that when the question of affiliation to the Red International of Labor Unions was raised in the N. A. S. by the Communist minority, the anarcho-syndicalists bit-

terly opposed such affiliation.

When the question was carried to a referendum vote last year, the proposition to affiliate to Moscow carried by a small majority. The anarcho-syndicalist minority in the N. A. S., directed by the anarchists of Berlin, refused to accept the vote. The Berlin sect wanted a split, and though the officers of the N. A. S. did not consummate affiliation to the R. I. L. U., and although Losovsky, Secretary of the Red International specifically stated that the R. I. L. U. advised against affiliation at the price of unity among the Dutch workers, still the anarchists insisted on and carried out a most ruinous split of the N. A. S.

Altogether, 7,000 workers left the N. A. S., and there remains only 14,000 members. However, the anarcho-syndicalists, led by Lansink, did not profit by this criminal disruption in proportion to the loss. Only about 4,000 actually went into the Lansink Federation which at once affiliated to the Berlin anarchist group. While the N. A. S. was left with only 14,000 members in its ten different unions, headed by the Transport Workers with 4,500; the syndicalist federation is even weaker with about 4,000 divided among twelve unions, the largest being the Metal Workers, with only 1,500 members—all dual, not only to the unions of the reformist N. T. U., but also to those of the N. A. S. Lansink's Federation also suffers from a quarrel between anarcho-syndicalists and anarcho-reformists.

### Typical Dualist Excuses

It must not be forgotten, of course, that the N. A. S. itself is dual to the national unions organized in the N. T. U. The leaders of the N. A. S. assert they are justified in this by "the great difficulty" of doing left wing work inside the N. T. U. The N. A. S. leaders speculate in the following way: "Although it is difficult to do left wing work in the N. T. U., still the revolutionists *must* and *can* get influence in the N. T. U. Not, however, through demolishing the N. A. S., but through strengthening the N. A. S. This method will increase the attractive power upon the members of the N. T. U. in order that the left wing therein shall be formed, which shall force the reformist leaders to co-operate in the real activities of the struggle against capitalism, and if need be to remove the unwilling leaders."

This rather obvious defense of a dualist position—the same the world around—was given in reply to the resolution of the Communist Party of Holland passed at the Groningen Congress, calling for organizational unity of the N. T. U. and the N. A. S. The Ruhr occu-



pation and the German events had, certainly, cried out for the United Front if not for organic unity among all western European workers. The N. A. S. resisted the suggestion of even its most insignificant units entering the N. T. U., yet it agreed to work in a United Front with the reformist N. T. U. if the latter could be forced into acceptance of a united struggle.

The N. A. S., however, claims that the N. T. U. does not want the United Front. The N. A. S. points to the vacillation of Edo Fimmen, Amsterdam leader of the Transport Workers who, though he fought inside the Amsterdam International for the decisions of the Berlin Transport Workers Conference last year, in November he gave way to the reformist Stenhuis in the executive meeting of the N. T. U. and declared that what he said in favor of the United Front does not refer to Holland. The N. A. S. contends, therefore, that the United Front can be formed only from below, in the factories. It is willing, in spite of Fimmen's ambiguous speeches to cooperate with him and his following in the N. T. U., though not without some misgivings and suspicion as to his trustworthiness.

#### Better Prospects Ahead

Discouraging as this sectarian spirit and disunity may be, the situation of the Dutch workers will probably become so crucial that, together with theoretical clarification and a new and more objective tactic in trade union work, a revolutionary response will come out of the efforts of R. I. L. U. adherents in both the N. A. S. and N. T. U.

Depreciation of the French and Belgian money, among larger causes, has had a depress-

ing effect on the economic situation of the Dutch workers. Unemployment is steadily increasing. No less than 12 per cent of the workers are out of a job, in the metal industry 22 per cent are jobless. Government employes must take a cut in pay, while the railwaymen took a cut during February without resistance.

For over three months 22,000 textile workers have been locked out by employers to force a ten per cent cut in wages. The reformist union of Transport Workers signed an agreement accepting a cut in pay for the Amsterdam dockers, making it impossible for the N. A. S. to put up a fight. Here, too, the United Front was turned down by the reformists.

In common with all international reaction, Dutch Fascism is raising its head. The Catholic and Protestant unions aspire to furnish the Fascist unionists and strike-breakers, while armed "civic guards" are the element of aggressive force against the workers. The man who pictures himself as the Mussolini of Holland is Minister of Finance, Colyn, one of the big men of the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company.

While the largest body of labor in the N. T. U. is governed by reformists who refused up till now to enter any United Front with the revolutionary N. A. S., a tactical revision of trade union work will undoubtedly result in a movement toward the left in the N. T. U. With the important bearing which German events has on Holland, we must expect that the present dark picture of Dutch labor will brighten with the external revival of revolutionary action. In 1919, when the tide was running high, the N. T. U. and the N. A. S. executives sat in conference and discussed and carried out common actions. That time will come again—in the not so distant future.

## Bill Dunne's Speech at Portland

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# Progressives Challenge Penn. Machine

By Fred H. Merrick

THE simultaneous conventions of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor and the Farmer Labor Party of Pennsylvania just closed, shocked the complacent Maurer machine as it had never expected to be. A fighting left block of about twenty delegates appeared at both conventions and proceeded energetically to assert itself and its program, including the nomination of candidates.

Since the Pennsylvania labor movement was beginning to get confused, it was imperative that one vital issue be set up, which would unify factions, inspire the discouraged, and mobilize Labor's army in the greatest industrial state of the nation. This one vital issue is now *Independent Political Action*. Therefore, the key to the strategy used in both conventions is the effort to present this issue in such a way that it could not be evaded.

By a week of persistent pounding on this issue the key purpose of the left bloc was accomplished, an amazing accomplishment in view of the relative smallness of the left group. Without exception the evaders' policy was unmasked. In every case their numerical victories were moral defeats, including the vote on John S. Otis for president against Maurer.

#### Strategy in the Farmer-Labor Convention

Since President Maurer appeared at the opening of the Farmer Labor Convention and delivered an address which clearly accorded with the contentions of the left wing, except endorsement of the June 17th Convention, that convention became the issue. In every debate the left wing used Maurer's speech as a text. He had not condemned June 17th, so his plea for unity was clearly explained by the militants as being possible only through the St. Paul meeting. Maurer's statements to the effect that the time is now ripe for independent political action and his note to pay little attention to leaders coincided with the views of the left wingers. The July 4th advocates were kept busy explaining Maurer's speech.

The issue of June 17th came up in two separate resolutions. The Resolutions Committee brought in a queer substitute designed to catch all possible votes, but pledging the delegates to July 4th. Vigorous and instructive debate on this made the issue so clear that at one time the overwhelming majority were in favor of June 17th.

In that ticklish situation John Lever of the Philadelphia machinists became life saver for the "rights" by a motion to refer back to the Committee with instructions to report a resolution that would favor sending a delegate to both conventions. This was opposed by the "lefts," because if there was no real issue at stake there was no need of two conventions, and they would not consent to confusion of the issue even to gain a delegate to June 17th. Their viewpoint was that the reaction from the Cleveland Conference will be favorable to the "lefts" when the next Pennsylvania Farmer Labor Convention takes place. The motion to refer was defeated and the motion for the substitute prevailed over the negative votes of the "lefts."

#### Broader Base of Representation

One important change in the Constitution was to allow affiliation of all trade unions in the State of Pennsylvania, including such unions as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. The previous provision admitted only as many of the A. F. of L. unions as were affiliated to the State Federation of Labor.

While the convention was representative of the organized workers of the state, the farmers did not have a single delegate. There were 130 credentials presented. Every corner of the state sent somebody, particularly the four big industrial districts of Philadelphia, Anthracite, Coal Mining and Pittsburgh. Industrially there were: Hard and Soft Coal Miners, Machinists, Railroad Shop Crafts, Carpenters, Painters, Steel Workers, Potters, Molders and Office Workers; and among them such men as John Brophy, President of District 2, U. M. W. of A., Vice-President Marks of the same district, A. T. McNamara, Business Agent of District 6, of the Machinists, the President of one of the largest Potters' locals in the country, and delegates from the second largest local of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers in the United States—as well as delegates from several Central bodies.

It is important to note certain clauses in the final resolution adopted at the Convention as to immediate policy now binding upon the party, namely:

"Providing our delegates to these two conventions (National Farmer Labor and

Conference for Progressive Political Action) do nothing that will cause our Pennsylvania Farmer Labor Party to lose its identity, legal or otherwise, as the independent political part of the unions affiliated with the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor and Farmer organizations of Pennsylvania."

The new Executive Committee consists of nine members, the president and secretary being ex-officio. Of the seven voting members, four were active delegates in the convention and voted at all times uncompromisingly for an immediate and aggressive policy of organization and action as against wavering.

The new officers and committeemen are as follows: Chas. Kutz, Machinists, president; Paul W. Fuller, U. M. W. of A., secretary; John Lever, Machinists, Philadelphia; William Welsh, U. M. W. of A., Nanty Glo; A. T. McNamara, Local 52, Machinists, Pittsburgh; J. C. Small, Local 79, Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, Canonsburg; William Guiler, U. M. W. of A., Charleroi; John Otis, Local 536, Machinists, Turtle Creek; Fred H. Merrick, Office Workers, Pittsburgh.

#### The State Federation Convention

The objectionable June 17th having been eliminated in the Farmer Labor Convention, Maurer's position was made more difficult, for how could his baby be refused when it had been purged of Communist contamination? But Maurer's adherents had not yet learned that Maurer still adhered to the Gompers non-partisan policy in reality. They were to be shocked by the revelation.

The Farmer Labor group presented a resolution asking the Federation to contribute the ridiculously small sum of one cent a year per capita for the Farmer-Labor campaign. From the howl that went up one would have thought someone proposed to blow open the safe. The Resolutions Committee brought in the most wonderful substitute.

Charles Kutz, for four years president of the Farmer-Labor Party, immediately attacked the substitute and branded it as the handiwork of "an old-party politician." Maurer, then, in his effort to justify his position, rebuked Kutz, saying, "When you pull off a trick of this kind again, Charley, I wish you would come and see the Executive Committee and find out what their wishes are!" Maurer's speech was carefully calculated to satisfy the Anthracite non-partisan group led by Thomas Kennedy of the U. M. W. of A.

Marks, vice-president of District 2, U. M. W. of A., answered Maurer in an able and effective manner, thereby making the first public breach between Maurer and the District 2 group.

Of course, the substitute of the committee carried over the opposition of the Farmer-Labor forces, but when the reader peruses the following statements embodied in the Committee's report, he will realize that Maurer's parliamentary "victory" was a moral defeat:

"Labor unions are primarily economic organizations and their identity must remain as such. The paramount duty of the economic organizations of labor is to look after, further and protect the interests of labor as they affect wages, hours and conditions of employment.

"In view of the generally complicated political situation as it affects labor, we recommend that the Executive Council of the Federation, which will be in touch with the situation shall have authority to convene a special convention of the State Federation of Labor."

To which, President Kutz ably replied: "If, in its wisdom, the Executive Council shall call a special convention it will find ready for its purpose the Pennsylvania Farmer Labor Party as the duly constituted political party of labor."

Thus have Maurer and the "Old Guard" been brought face to face with the issue of independent political action.

#### Progressive Policy Wins

As in all bodies of labor where progressive influence is felt, the convention endorsed recognition of Soviet Russia and Amalgamation of craft unions. It refused to endorse Strike-Breaker Major Berry for Democratic vice-presidential nomination. Another real demand was that for the repeal of the infamous Flynn "anti-sedition" law.

As logical sequence to the appearance of the Farmer-Labor bloc, was the Communist challenge to Maurer in the form of the nomination of John S. Otis, a young machinist and Pitcairn shop striker. He polled 57 votes despite every possible pressure to get him to withdraw in order that the issue would not be raised; all in vain. The cloud no larger than a man's hand has appeared on the horizon of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor. The "Old Guard" has but one recourse. They may steal the progressive thunder by at once coming out for a real class Farmer-Labor Party. That they will not do. So another historical period begins.

# Labor Conditions and Labor Unions in Japan

By LOUIS ZOOBOCK

This is the first article of a short series on labor conditions and the labor movement of Japan, the foremost competitor of American imperialism in the East.

The industrial development of Japan is proceeding with great rapidity. In industry and commerce the last shreds of the feudal feeling are being torn to pieces; the domestic industries are being replaced by modern shops and factories; capital is being concentrated in the hands of a smaller group; already 14 families and great firms practically control the wealth and industries of the country.

On the other hand, the power of the industrial workers is steadily growing; the voice of discontent against the capitalists is acquiring volume and intensity; the proletariat is awakening to a sense that it has to look after its own interests; it is out to completely abolish industrial slavery of the capitalist wage system.

Capitalism in Japan came in with a rush, and as we shall see, it brought with it conditions which existed a century ago in industrial Europe. In the short half century from the time Japan entered the modern world in 1868, her trade increased from \$13,000,000 to \$12,141,000,000 in 1920, or more than one hundred and sixty fold. The world war, particularly, gave an impetus to Japanese industry. During the war, the whole of the Far East supplies from Europe were cut off, and Japanese industries were called upon to meet the deficiency.

Many new industries sprang up; the old trebled their output; 1400 new factories were added during this brief period. And as the textile industry flourished after the Chino-Japanese war, as gas and electricity companies sprang up after the Russo-Japanese war, so, during and immediately after this war, great progress was made in the engineering and chemical industries. As a result of this rapid advance of industries, the number of industrial workers grew; and at present, it is estimated, that the industrial population of Japan numbers over 3,000,000. This includes 700,000 factory workers, 465,000 miners, 200,000 land transport workers, and over 500,000 seamen.

This marvelous progress of Japan's industries has been accomplished as a result of ruthless exploitation of the workers; it has been accomplished at the expense of the young girls of Japan, "who have been driven from their homes" into "prison-like cotton factories, compelled to live a slave's life..." The factory conditions of Japan have been, perhaps, still are, the worst in the civilized world.

The pitifully low wages which the Japanese worker gets renders it impossible for him alone to support dependents. Without the work of his entire family, he is helpless. Thousands of workers,—mostly women and children—are recruited from all parts of the country "to feed the factories which have multiplied faster than workers could be obtained." In 1920, according to official statistics, there were 824,303 female factory workers out of a total of 1,554,727.

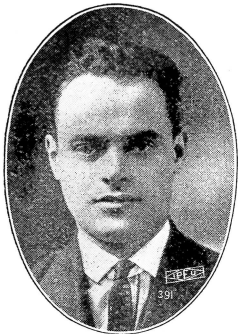
Since then the number of female workers has slightly decreased, but the general conditions remain practically the same. Four-fifths of the workers in the spinning mills are women and girls, of which nearly two-thirds are under the age of 20. Most of the female workers are recruited from the rural population. It is common for the girls to be contracted for at an early age; at 12 or 13, on leaving the primary school, these small girls are sent into the large cities where they are barely to earn a living though they work from daybreak till six, or till 9 or 10 at night when the pressure of work is heavy.

Most of the cotton factories run two shifts of 12 hours each. The dust, the heat, and the lack of ventilation, are described as appalling. Added to this, the girls are commonly housed in dormitories in the mill itself and their rent and food must be paid to the mill owner. The accommodations in the dormitories are exceedingly bad. In small factories where there are no special accommodations for lodging, the workers are compelled to live in a part of the factory building or in attics destitute of sanitary devices such as ventilation, sunshine,

(Continued on Page 128)



LOUIS ZOOBOCK



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A Militant, Constructive Monthly  
Trade Union Magazine

Official Organ of the  
Trade Union Educational League  
EARL R. BROWDER, EDITOR

Subscription price, \$1.50 per year

Published at  
1113 Washington Blvd.  
CHICAGO, ILL.

Member of The Federated Press  
Make checks payable to  
The Trade Union Educational League

### LET US SEE SOME ACTION.

EVER since the capitalist courts began to use the injunction against organized labor, The American Federation of Labor has uttered dignified and sonorous pronouncements against injunctions. For thirty years we have listened hopefully to the words of officialdom proving beyond all doubt that injunctions are an arbitrary use of judicial power not founded in any law and only valid in the legal custom of this country because organized labor lets the courts get away with it.

Thirty years of talking and explaining and expostulating have accomplished nothing, except to give the judicial despots of this country the idea that American labor could be kidded along indefinitely. In this the courts are more than half right so long as labor permits its officialdom to confine itself to the moldy moralisms of Mr. Gompers, warmed up to serve as a protest against any new strike-breaking injunction.

Twenty-two years ago the A. F. of L. quite correctly said that if by injunctions, "our rights as workers to quit work at will, and to induce others to quit with us, can be taken away, then . . . the workers will be compelled to look to more revolutionary measures for redress of existing grievances and the obtaining of better conditions." After a quarter of a century in which our right as workers to quit work at will, and induce others to do the same, has become the battered and unrecognizable plaything of capitalist judges—where, Mr. Gompers, is your stuffed club of "more revolutionary measures" with which you threatened your millionaire friends of the Civic Federation?

True, fourteen years afterward—surely our officials are patient men when dealing with capitalist courts!—the A. F. of L. said: "We recommend that any injunction dealing with the relationship of employer and employe be wholly and absolutely treated as usurpation and disregarded, let the consequences be what they may."

Eight long years have passed since this altogether worthy recommendation was born. It is now changing into long pants and will soon be old enough to vote—but have our trade union officials ever attempt-

ed to put these fine words into practice? On the contrary the leaders of the railway shopmen did nothing effective to break down the Wilkerson-Daugherty injunction, John L. Lewis cravenly betrayed the miners by surrendering to Judge Anderson with the words—"We cannot fight against the government," and Mr. Gompers himself, although in Chicago for some time recently while girl garment strikers were walking the picket line in defiance of the injunction against the I. L. G. W.—Mr. Gompers secluded himself and did not go near either the strike or the strikers.

The injunction can and must be discredited and defied. Alexander Howat proved that it was possible in his fight against the slave-making Kansas Industrial Court. Howat is a leader who took his duty to unionism seriously enough to go to jail. For doing so he was betrayed by Lewis. But the miners know, and the Industrial Court is broken. The militant unionists must look ahead and prepare the workers around them for wholesale defiance and violation of the next anti-labor injunction.

### THE DICTATORSHIP OF NEUTRALITARIANS.

AS TIME passes the outstanding achievement of the "labor government" of England is seen to be the growing disillusion of the English workers in expecting this "labor" government to struggle for the interests of labor.

Perhaps the British workers expected too much from the adjective "labor" tacked on to the generally suspected noun "government." They were not suffered long to endure the misapprehension that the adjective really meant a great deal. When on March 28th the tram and bus men were on strike in London, and the subway, railway and electrical workers connected with them threatened to join the walkout, Premier MacDonald, emulating the best manners of the "socialist" government of Germany, asked and received from King George V, a royal proclamation of "a state of emergency," which is a polite term for martial law.

"Of course," said Mr. MacDonald, "I hope that neither side will take that as a threat. It is only for the purpose of giving protection to those in legal and proper occupations." This illustrates the courteous manner in which a "labor government" which is not a government of labor goes about the unpleasant business of strike-breaking.

The above might seem to conflict with the studied attitude of neutrality the MacDonald government attempts to assume when the "rights" of labor are considered in the abstract and a concrete strike is smashing at the doors of capitalist control. But we must remember that the English Labor Party can hardly be said to be a class party of labor, as it defers second to labor and first to that mythical thing called "the public." Margaret Bondfield, the lady Secretary to the Ministry of Labor explained this by saying that her department had exercised its powers "impartially" during the strike on the docks. "It had no right to take sides," she added, "but only to investigate facts and put them before

the public." This despite the fact that it is not on record that "the public" ever went on the picket line for a strike, however justified by facts, in human history.

In one thing only has the "labor" government made some show of accomplishment, aside from raising the pay of Mr. Clynes from £2,000 to £5,000 a year for the honor of being Lord of the Privy Seal, while asking nearly two million unemployed to live on a starvation dole. The Budget of Mr. Snowden, chancellor of the exchequer, has cheered every bourgeois heart. He has cut the taxes. British workers, too, are supposed to be greatly enthused, yet their cheers are inaudible. The employed as well as the unemployed workers who are existing at or below the bare subsistence scale, can take no joy in the abolition of duty on automobiles or even on the infinitesimal reduction on sugar and tea—which reduction will be only a gain for the dealers and not for the poor who buy by the penny's worth.

No wonder that dispatches state Snowden's report "cheered the London market," while Sir Robert Thorne, former Tory chancellor of the exchequer "could only say that but for a few details it was a budget such as he would like to bring in himself."

### THE GERMAN ELECTIONS.

THE 4,000,000 votes cast for the Communist Party of Germany are significant of more than the fact that this will give the party which calls for proletarian revolution over sixty seats in the Reichstag. The Communists of Germany are not so foolish as to reckon from this amazing increase from 400,000 to 4,000,000 votes since last year that the workers are going to be permitted to gain their program for expropriation of all capital and for a workers' republic through election contests and a parliamentary majority.

To the Communist the election is only a counting of noses to see the relation of forces which at a crucial point will pass from peaceful contest to armed combat in the final struggle for power. It must be remembered that Lenin, in the 1917 election before the Bolshevik revolution, counted Bolshevik votes strategically. Although the Bolsheviks did not have a general majority, Lenin explained that in and near the large cities and among the armies whose positions mattered in an armed fight for power, the Bolshevik vote showed that they could safely stop electioneering and begin the armed struggle for power. This sort of logic is utterly incomprehensible to parliamentarians and to anarcho-syndicalists who reason only from their own prejudice against "politics," but the history of Communist struggle is proving it most effective.

Wm. Z. Foster, in a recent issue of the Daily Worker, tells of his impressions of the pre-election meeting he attended in Berlin. He says that the Communists made no speeches, but simply exhibited by movie film the history of socialist treachery. In spite of the fact that the Party was illegal and that Fascist shots were fired in an attack on the hall, the place was packed. More significant than all was the unemotional mood of the crowd. Mis-

ery was there, and cold and hunger—but the spirit of the crowd was one of deep determination; no cheers, no laughter—but silent vows of the final struggle.

### POISONING THE SHOP CRAFTS.

THOSE who precipitately endorse the axiom that "labor is not a commodity or article of commerce," would do well to explain the equal haste they show in adopting the so-called "co-operation plan" of Wm. H. Johnston of the Machinists to supply the railway corporations with labor of a guaranteed standard of skill and speed for a minimum consideration, in the same manner, to use Johnston's own words, as the corporations "contract arch-brick, superheaters or lubricating oil."

Such inconsistency is expected from fair-weather "progressives," liberals and so on. But just as this discrepancy in the philosophy of union labor reactionaries is seen by the thinking and militant workers, so should they be quick to point out the spread of the class collaboration poison through the veins of labor unions wherever they connect up with the infamous scheme of Johnston. This fake progressive is now trying not only to befool and betray his followers by the "B. & O. Plan," but also to bring disruption into the Federated Shop Crafts by an adroit and indirect agitation for going back to craft isolation by excluding one craft at a time, beginning with the Carmen.

An example of this underground campaign of the class collaborationists may be seen on the Milwaukee system, where the natural discontent with the limitations of a make-shift federation and the discouragement of the shopmen's defeat, both of which are chargeable to the officials and to those of the crafts which remained at work, are being skillfully turned into a movement backward toward craft separation.

The Executive Board of System Federation No. 76, has been compelled to issue a warning against this movement to isolate the crafts again, beginning with the Carmen. Johnston denies, of course, that he encourages elimination of the Carmen from the Shop Crafts. He and his henchmen, however, in meetings of machinists only, slyly propagate the idea by talk of how "the machinists have stood the brunt of the battles, and of the great sacrifices their craft makes" to carry what they call "dead timber." In meetings of the Federation they sit silent when this poison results in the Federation idea being attacked by motions to eliminate the Carmen. In the face of these acts, Johnston's denial will not carry very far with the shopmen.

This propaganda serves a double purpose. It helps the railroad get a supply of labor that is just as helpless as "arch-brick, superheaters and lubricating oils." Also it is meant to raise enough confusion and conflict between the now loosely federated crafts that they will blindly turn back to craft isolation instead of going onward with clear eyes from the present insufficient make-shift of federation to a solidly organized industrial union by amalgamation. Militants must fight against destruction of the Federation, poor tool though it is, and point the way to a better instrument—the way of amalgamation.

## THE INTERNATIONAL

**GERMANY** THE tremendous increase in the Communist vote, registered in the German general elections when the number of Communist ballots increased from 400,000 of one year ago to over 4,000,000, gives some idea of the tremendous changes going on within the working class of that country. The Social-Democratic Party is bankrupt, and its years of treason are now understood and execrated by millions of German workers. The final barrier to the proletarian revolution in that unhappy country is at last giving way.

Certainly the treacherous knife of class collaboration had to sink deeply into the flesh of the German workers before this result was achieved. The country was delivered to the military rule of Von Seeckt, agent of Fascist capitalism, by vote of the Social Democracy. More than 3,000,000 workers are totally unemployed, and 2,000,000 more are on part time. Even full employment means semi-starvation, under the coolie wages prevailing. The eight hour day is gone, in spite of the basic law of the "Republic." The German working class is being slowly strangled.

A vital part in the disillusionment of the German working masses, preparing the present revolutionary swing to the Communist Party, was the trade union officials' war upon the Communists and the campaign of expulsions and splits launched against them. Deliberate sabotage by the officials of all action to protect wages and the eight hour day, and their shameless collaboration with the capitalist class, had caused 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 workers to leave the General German Federation of Trade Unions (A. D. G. B.) in the middle of 1923. The trade union movement was threatened with dissolution. Led by the Communists, the left-wing undertook to stop the wholesale exodus by the inauguration of a fighting policy. On Nov. 25, they called a left-wing conference at Weimar. Attending were 275 delegates, representing 181 local central councils of the A. D. G. B., as well as trade unions directly, unemployed councils, etc. The work of the conference has been described in detail in previous issues of *The Labor Herald*. A committee of 12 was named to confer with the officialdom to arrange a general congress. The committee was not received by the Executive Bureau. In the meantime the left-wing program has been ratified by numerous organizations and has become the rallying center of the disillusioned masses, retarding the exodus from the unions. In the Ruhr, Rhine, Westphalia, Saxony, Kiel, Stettin, Cologne, Darmstadt and Berlin districts, the masses endorsed the Weimar program. In Solingen, on Dec. 16, 1,000 delegates of the factory committees unanimously condemned the treason of the leaders of the A. D. G. B. Every day new elections to councils, factory committees, etc., have been returning Communists.

The S. D. P. leaders (Leipart, Tarnow, Paplow, Schulze, et al) saw their power slipping from them in spite of all their efforts. They had at all costs to continue their service to German capitalism. There was but one course left them—to expel en masse the left-wing which was multiplying overnight. The financial income had almost entirely stopped, so far as the usual sources were concerned, due to unemployment, depreciated currency, and starvation

wages. The bureaucrats called upon the Amsterdam International which, with the assistance of Gompers, provided the money needed for the expulsion campaign. On Jan. 16, the Executive Bureau of the A. D. G. B. officially announced the policy of expelling the left-wing. On Feb. 20, the bureaucrats of the Berlin Trade Union Council demanded of its members to sign a written declaration that they were not members of the red groups or that they would sever connections. In the Rhineland the officials expelled 14 local councils which had participated in the Weimar conference; likewise in Solingen and Remscheid. The Communist majority newly-elected to the district committee of Halle-Merseburg, was not recognized, and appointed functionaries were installed in their places. In Gladbach the union offices were taken from the left-wing with the assistance of the police. At Crefeld the entire opposition was expelled. Columns could be filled with simple recital of facts of this nature.

The result has been to increase the Communist vote tenfold. In trade unions, factory councils, unemployed councils—wherever workers gather—the Communists have won the leadership. It is the reflection of this basic fact that we see in the general elections, the 62 Communist members of the Reichstag, the 4,000,000 votes. The groundwork has been laid for the German revolution. The masses are beginning to move.

Attempts to introduce compulsory labor in Germany are meeting with strenuous resistance from the workers. This has taken the form of strikes, which have occurred in Berlin, Baden, East Prussia, Saxony, Frankfurt, Pomerania, Rhenish Westphalia, and other places. Wherever the strike has been employed compulsory labor has been defeated. The reformist trade union officials have co-operated with the military authorities in endeavors to suppress the strikes, but to little effect, except in Dresden and Hamburg, where they organized bands for compulsory labor.

**FRANCE** **B**ALLOTING in the general elections in France on May 11th, resulted in a great shifting of votes to the left. The reactionary National Bloc lost its majority, the Royalist Party was practically wrecked, and the reformists and petty bourgeoisie of the Left Bloc became the largest group in the Chamber of Deputies. All of which signifies that in France also the masses are blindly reaching about for a way out of the intolerable situation. That the blindness is gradually being cured in the working class is indicated by the Communist vote. Representation of the Communist Party in the Chamber was increased from 14 to 26 Deputies, an increase which, although not so startling as the tenfold increase in the German Communist vote, is the beginning of the same process of revolution in "victorious" France that is proceeding with such velocity in "defeated" Germany. With every passing month of the capitalistic Peace of Versailles, the working masses of every country are awaking to the fact that they were defeated in the world war, and that the workers have their real victory, the victory over capitalist government and exploitation, yet to win in every country except Soviet Russia.

**ENGLAND** THREE outstanding items mark the high points of recent days in the British labor movement. These are the lessons of the dockers' and the tram and bus strikes impressing themselves on labor in general, the fight between the coal miners and operators before the court of inquiry, and the negotiations still going on between the emissaries of Soviet Russia and the "labor government" spokesmen for British capitalism over the terms of settlement between the only real workers' republic and a "socialist" monarchy.

The official organ of the Transport and General Workers' Union in comment upon the extraordinary power shown by that union says:

"The unanimity, both in the Passenger Services Group and the Docks Group strikes, is probably unprecedented. The completeness of stoppage in the docks throughout Great Britain and the absolute response of the busmen and trammen of London indicate the wonderful development of trade union organization. The power of our union has been developed by the peculiar form of organization adopted whereby both the craft and industrial principles have been recognized and a disciplined solidarity secured among all members of the union."

We thus see the genuine benefits resulting from industrial unionism which takes account of all real craft interests without permitting those interests to be twisted into so many excuses for strike-breaking by first one craft against the second and vice versa—all to the benefit of the employers.

Another interesting feature of these strikes is the lesson taught the workers as to their "impolite" inclination to strike even though it embarrass the "labor" government. The Transport and General Workers' Union has the following to say upon this question:

"The Union has had to face criticism because it pursued a vigorous industrial policy while its own political friends are in office in the State. We welcomed a labor government as keenly as anyone, and have made our contributions to the building up of a labor political movement which made that government possible. We appreciate the importance of political action. Nevertheless, the industrial situation has not been our making. The employers took full advantage of the slump period to drive the workers' standards down to the lowest level, and that created after the war experience, a feeling of deep resentment. Forward movements were, therefore, inevitable and the demands made were perfectly legitimate. We regret that these movements have to come to a head with a labor government in office. But to check it would be to dispirit the workers, to weaken their faith in industrial action and to encourage the employers."

The dispute between the coal miners and mine owners has been pressed vigorously by both sides, the new left-wing secretary of the Miners' Federation, A. J. Cook, playing a courageous role in gratifying contrast to the servility noted whenever Lewis of the American coal miners "confers" rather than "disputes" with American operators. The miners are demanding for a wage equal to the 1914 rate, plus the cost of living increases and the Sankey award of two shillings.

The third great interest of British labor over the negotiations has been heightened by the political demands made by the British bankers upon the Soviets through the British negotiators. This was a demand such as Secretary Hughes has been making for the Soviets to give up their social ownership and hand over industry to private capitalists. Rakovsky, the Soviet Charge d'Affaires, rejected the terms in the following language:

"The memorandum demands the re-establishment of private property, the abolition of government monopoly in foreign trade and a change in our law. Our answer to such an attempt is a categorical—'Never!'"

A tremendous scandal against Arthur Henderson, "labor" Home Secretary, broke out when it was discovered that by his orders two Scotland Yard detectives were secreted under the speakers' platform at an open conference of the Communist Party. They were found and dragged forth, yelling hysterically, and turned over to policemen who released them.

**ITALY** **O**N Mar. 24, the Executive Council of the General Confederation of Labor (C. G. L.) held an "important" meeting. As an example of the bureaucratic paralysis that grips this body of collaborators with Mussolini, it is illuminating to examine the decisions of this meeting. They were:

1. Approved the accounts and the proposed budget of D'Aragona.
2. Decided to join the campaign of the Amsterdam International "against war," and charged the Secretary to "sign the manifesto."
3. Named delegates to the Amsterdam Congress.
4. Approved speech by its representative at Textile Congress and political and trade union orientation of the official organ.
5. Decided to discipline the Rome central council for protesting against collaboration with the Fascists.

Not one item or word about the burning issues before the Italian workers: maintenance of the eight hour day, protection of wages, struggle against Fascism, rebuilding the shattered unions, etc. The only positive action was to punish the Rome council for opposing collaboration with Mussolini. Truly the Italian labor movement has a bitter struggle ahead of it to overcome such treachery!

**INDIA** **W**HILE Bombay strikers are dying of starvation and machine guns and Indian Communists are on trial charged with "sedition" for daring to organize the Indian slaves of British imperialism, protests from both Indian and British are rising against the "labor" government of England that permits such damnable business and which appoints a despot like Lord Olivier to the Indian Office. The Indian Trade Union Congress, which met in April at Calcutta, although dominated by petty-bourgeois leadership, had to listen to inspiring messages from both the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions, urging the Indian masses to fight not only for national freedom but for proletarian emancipation, and warning them against British "labor" imperialism while pledging international support in a fight against such traitors as the Amsterdamers.

## Labor Conditions and Labor Unions in Japan

(Continued from Page 123)

etc. In either case, bedrooms are in defiance of hygienic rules. The workers on the night and day shifts are obliged to use the same cots, which are neither aired nor dusted, and never exposed to the sun, since as soon as one shift leaves them another takes its place.

As a result of these conditions, tuberculosis is causing great suffering among the women workers. Of the 200,000 new girls entering industry yearly, it is estimated that 13,000 leave because of serious illness, chiefly tuberculosis, before the year is over. In general, the average life of the cotton mill hand can be placed at from five to six years after entering the mill.

Even in the mines, the percentage of female workers is great. Thus, according to the Report of the Bureau of Mines, the number of miners at the end of June 1920, was 439,159, of which 108,300 were women. Of this total number of female miners, 68,321 were working underground where in many places the temperature remains at about 90 degrees. Here the coal is dug by men and carried by women in two shallow baskets each weighing about 25 pounds loaded. Stripped to the waist, the women toil for a pittance for 12 hours each shift.

### Hours of Labor

The hours of labor in the factories and mines of Japan are exceedingly long, 12 and 13 hours a day being the usual number worked in most industries. In cotton factories where machines are run both day and night, it is not uncommon in days of prosperity to put operatives to 18 hours work. At the weaving factories, working hours seldom fall below 12, but generally range from 13 to 16. The case is slightly better at power loom factories.

The working day of the child in and out of the factories ranges from 10 to 11 hours. Women workers usually work the same number of hours as men. It is only since July 1923, that the working hours of female workers in cotton and spinning factories were reduced to 10 hours daily, a concession "voluntarily" granted by the Cotton Spinning Association.

In the mines, the working hours are 10 for some underground workers and 12 for surface workers.

In the steel mills, the working day is 12 hours. Only 12 per cent of the workers of

Japan enjoy an 8 hour day, which they have won through the activities of their unions.

The wages paid to the industrial workers of Japan are very low. According to the Japanese Year Book (1920-1921), the average daily wage in 1920 was 55 cents for men and 27 cents for women. In the poorer paid industries the women average only 20 cents a day. An investigation conducted by one of the leading economists of Japan revealed the fact that the average wage paid to workers in the leading industries in Tokyo is less than 50 cents a day. In some iron and steel mills, the minimum wage for unskilled labor runs as low as 20 cents a day, and the maximum for skilled workers \$1.00 or \$2.00 a day. At the end of 1922, the investigation made by the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce showed that wages were only 10 per cent above the 1920 figure.

### Wages

The miners receive somewhat lower wages than the factory workers. At the end of 1922, the wages of miners varied in different districts from 64.8 cents to 1.25 per day for men, and 24.9 cents to 85 cents for women, while in other industries a blacksmith, for example, receives from \$1.25 to \$1.30 per day, printers and assistance 89.7 cents to 94.7 cents, and a female worker in a cotton factory, 50 cents a day. Irregularity of employment tends to lower still further the wages of the miners who work on an average only 18 to 20 days per month.

To recapitulate, labor in Japan is working long hours, for low wages and under conditions of poverty. As shown by the statistics of the Ohara Institute of Social Research of Osaka, 92.7 per cent of the families of Japan live on an income of less than \$250 a year. The workers of Japan are compelled to work in factories under unhygienic conditions with dust and chemicals in the air.

The workers have no homes of their own, no land, and no tools; they are forced to live in the poorest quarters of the industrial cities in an average space of less than 10 feet square per family; in many cases families of five are found working, eating, and sleeping in one small room. The working girls, as shown, are compelled to live in overcrowded dormitories, surrounded by high brick walls, and fed by their proprietors with food not fit for pigs. As a result of all this, consumption and other epidemics take a terrible toll from the workers.

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