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Official Organ of The Trade Union Educational League



DECEMBER 1923

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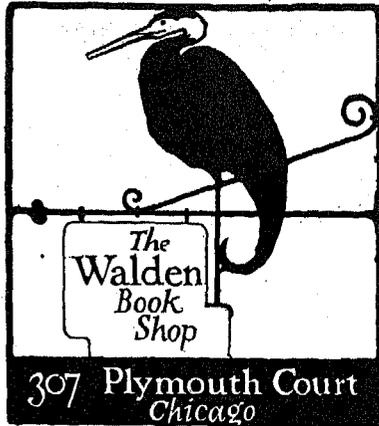
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This photo shows a small section of the huge throng of workers who attended the funeral of a Communist, slain by the German Fascisti, which was made the occasion for a monster demonstration in the streets of Berlin, against the Government.

# THE LABOR HERALD

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DECEMBER, 1923



No. 10

## The Development of Independent Working Class Political Action in Minnesota

By C. A. Hathaway

*Member of the State Committee of the Farmer-Labor Federation*

*Editor's note:—Since this article is written the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party group called a conference in St. Paul for the purpose of arranging a national convention of all Farmer-Labor forces. This conference agreed to call a convention to be held in St. Paul, May 30, 1924, to which all producers' political and economic organizations will be invited. The convention will nominate a candidate for president and adopt a national platform. Thus the Minnesota group has paved the way for uniting the political movement of farmers and industrial workers in this country.*

**I**N the American Labor Movement today, there is probably no question (with the possible exception of amalgamation) receiving so much attention as that of independent working class political action. The use of the courts, the police and the army against the workers in all of the larger strikes since the war, has proven to the rank and file of the unions that the present government is nothing more or less than an instrument for the protection of the capitalists. Each day they are becoming more conscious that the only remedy is the establishment of a workers' government.

Gompers and his allies in the Conference for Progressive Political Action, with their policy of "reward your friends and punish your enemies," are trying their utmost to steer this sentiment into the pitfalls of "non-partisanism." Minnesota has had her taste of the action that they propose. But the workers and farmers of Minnesota found that the same state government, that used its power to protect the employers during strikes and to legislate against the interests of the farmers, could also change election laws and otherwise obstruct the efforts of the producers to gain control of either of the two old parties. A careful perusal of the history of the party in Minnesota will dust away many of the cobwebs of "non-partisanism."

In 1918 the Farmers Non-Partisan League forces, fresh from their victories in North Da-

kota, came into Minnesota and entered their candidates in the Republican primaries. These candidates were defeated, due largely to the attacks of pro-Germanism directed against the movement by the capitalist politicians and their tools, the daily press. A second important reason was that, unlike North Dakota, a considerable portion of the voters in Minnesota were industrial workers and only a weak effort had been made to gain their support. However, the officials of the League won over a considerable number of trade unionists by their active support of the workers during a street car strike in the Twin Cities; with the result that a resolution was introduced in the convention of the State Federation of Labor, held at Virginia, Minnesota, in July, 1918, instructing the officials to call a political conference of farmers and workers. This resolution was adopted and the conference called in St. Paul on Aug. 25th, 1918, with delegates from the labor unions and from the farmers' league. Through the medium of conference committees, a program was adopted and candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General were chosen to be filed as *Farmer-Labor* candidates. There was considerable opposition to the choice of this name on the grounds that it would be a class party, but inasmuch as there was only two months in which to carry on an educational campaign, it was felt that a name must be chosen that would rally the workers and farmers to the new party. How well they chose is best answered by the fact, that although defeated, they polled better than 110,000 votes, displaced the Democratic Party and became the official second party in the state.

After this campaign however, many of the conservatives in the movement, who had opposed independent political action, came out with the usual "I told you so" and advocated going back to Gompers' policy. But those in the movement who were conscious of their class interests persisted in their political policy. A labor political conference was called by the more radical ele-

ments in New Ulm in 1919, one day prior to the convention of the State Federation of Labor. At this conference a "Working Peoples Political League" was formed made up of affiliations of local unions and provided for the formation of ward and township locals. William Mahoney, President of the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly, was elected Chairman and Thomas Van Lear was elected Secretary. Both of these men had received their training in the Socialist Party and at that time were both "boring from within" to win the trade unions over to independent political action.

In 1920, the Working Peoples League and the Farmers League held their separate conventions for the purpose of nominating a state ticket. The groups who believed in the bugaboo of "non-partisanism" were in control of both conventions with the result that the candidates were filed in the Republican primaries. As usual they were defeated because, as Mr. Mahoney, President of the Working Peoples League said in a statement, "It was not possible to get the workers into a Republican primary."

The more radical men in the movement had, however, taken steps to protect the legal status of the Farmer-Labor Party by filing a slate of candidates. After the defeat of the regular ticket (that is the ticket put up by the two conventions) in the Republican primaries, the candidates on the Farmer-Labor Party for Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General were withdrawn to permit the voters to support the regular candidates, who had been refiled as "Independents." The independents were defeated in one of the most bitter political campaigns in the history of the state. The outstanding feature of the campaign was that the candidates remaining on the Farmer-Labor ballot received almost 200,000 votes without any campaign being waged for them. The entire energy of the two leagues had been put behind the "Independent" candidates. In a statement made by Mr. Mahoney relative to this campaign, he said:

*This was the evidence that many of us were waiting for as we knew at the outset that the movement would inevitably end in such an independent party. It was just a matter of education. The non-partisan idea is alright in a great emergency when some one principle or measure is involved and that of a superficial character; but it never can result in building up a permanent and reliable political agency. It is impossible to shift the forces hither and thither and it must eventually result in defection and disintegration.*

During these years from 1918 to 1920, the leaders of these movements had been persecuted by the state officials and by the prostitute capital-

ist press. In their four election campaigns they had been referred to as pro-Germans, as I. W. W's, as Socialists, as Bolsheviks, as Free Lovers, in fact everything that would tend to discredit them in the eyes of the voters. The workers in the breweries were told that the Farmer-Labor candidates were "dry," and "dry" elements were told that these same candidates were "wet." Protestants were told that certain candidates were catholic, and catholics were told that these same candidates had renounced their church and joined the bolsheviks. But in spite of this barrage from all the petty tools of the capitalist system, the Farmer-Labor Party increased in influence. This attack did, however, have a direct bearing on the development of the movement, inasmuch it led some of the leaders to hedge in order to regain their respectability.

Shortly prior to the 1922 convention, A. C. Townley, the "Boss" of the Farmers Non-Partisan League, had served a jail sentence for his alleged pro-German remarks in a speech delivered at Jackson, Minn., during the war. As a result of this enforced vacation he seemed to have lost faith in his program of securing control of the state. He came into the farmers' convention in the spring of 1922, with what he termed the "Balance of Power" plan. This plan, if adopted, would have meant the complete destruction of the Farmer-Labor Party and would have been a serious setback to the movement for independent political action by the workers and exploited farmers. It would have sold us out to our exploiters as effectively as the plan of Gompers has sold us out in the past and as the plan of the Conference for Progressive Political Action would sell us out now.

The farmers were pretty well sewed up to this plan, but the labor convention refused to be trapped and voted unanimously for independent political action through the medium of the Farmer-Labor Party. A committee from the labor convention went before the farmer convention and won them over to the Farmer-Labor Party in spite of their leaders. Shipstead was then nominated for U. S. Senator and Magnus Johnson for Governor, together with a full state ticket. The entire ticket was nominated in the Farmer-Labor primaries without opposition.

Many of us then thought that the battle for an independent party of the farmers and workers had been definitely won in Minnesota. But, alas, it was not so. The laws of the state provided for the manner in which political parties were to be controlled. We found that our two non-parti-



C. A. HATHAWAY

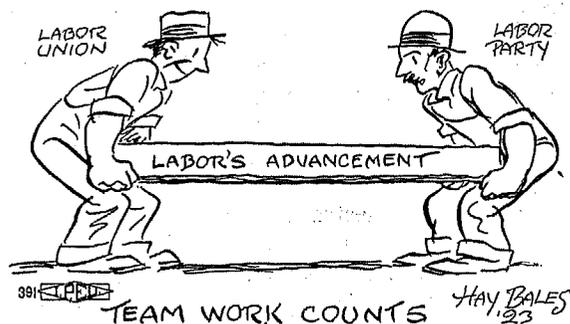
san leagues did not fill the bill. We had to let the candidates appoint the state committee, but in order that you can appreciate the complications arising out of this, we will again let Mr. Mahoney, who by virtue of being the president of the Working Peoples League, was appointed on the State Committee, speak:

The state committee was made up of persons named by the candidates with the advice and sanction of the state committees of the farmer and labor leagues.

It was the intention that the state committee of the party should be a composite body made up of representatives from the leagues and from other elements; and thus unify the activities and economize the expenditures of all elements. The state committee was designed to be a joint campaign agency.

But this did not suit some of the members nor meet the views of the state committee of the Non-partisan League. It was felt that this was an encroachment on the field worked by the league in the past and a proclamation was issued to the members of the league to give no regard to any other organization and to transact all business of the league through the league headquarters.

It took some time to overcome the effects of this declaration, but a truce was patched up and the campaign was continued with some degree of friction and duplication.



In spite of the internal difficulties, Shipstead was elected to the U. S. Senate by an overwhelming vote. Magnus Johnson was defeated for Governor by a very small margin and would, in the opinion of many, have been elected had he received the active support of the *Minnesota Daily Star* and the Farmers League. The entire ticket came very close to being elected.

The difficulties arising out of this campaign taught us one very important fact and that was that it was impossible to win elections with three different autonomous state committees; the legal committee, and the committee of each of the leagues. An agitation was immediately started throughout the organizations for uniting the existing organizations into a concrete Farmer-Labor Party. This agitation was given an added impetus by the death of Senator Knute Nelson and the resulting necessity of hurriedly nominating a candidate to fill the vacancy in a special election. Although this election resulted in a landslide for Magnus Johnson, it added further

to the difficulties of the organizations by piling up a big campaign debt, which none of the three committees were willing to assume.

A resolution was therefore introduced in the Duluth convention of the Working Peoples Political League, held in July of this year, instructing the officials of the League to call a conference of all elements which went to make up the Farmer-Labor Party in the state for the purpose of finding ways and means of unifying the party. This resolution was adopted.

After the adjournment of the convention negotiations were opened with the legal state committee and the officials of the Farmers Non-Partisan League relative to sending out a call for a convention. The chairman of the legal state committee agreed to the idea of a convention for the purpose contained in the resolution, but he took exception to inviting the farmer league or the trade unions to such a conference. He, being a lawyer, insisted that the laws of the state provided for the formation of political party conventions and refused to call it on any other basis. This, of course, dumfounded the trade unionists and farmers who had built this party; and, of course, they could not permit the exclusion of the trade unions. Many local unions and the central bodies in both St. Paul and Minneapolis passed resolutions demanding admittance. In compliance with this demand the officials of the Working Peoples League and the Farmers League issued the conference call over the head of the legal state chairman.

The conference was held in Minneapolis on Saturday, September 8th, with about 350 delegates present, representing trade unions, co-operatives, farmers organizations, and progressives. This was said to be the largest convention of the Farmer-Labor forces ever held. The convention was practically unanimous in its desire to overcome the serious duplication of effort and discord that had prevailed in past campaigns. It was felt that to actually proceed with the creation of a new organization might lead to some misunderstanding. A plan of organization was adopted creating an organization to be known as the Farmer-Labor Federation and a promotional committee of seven together with the officers of the convention were elected to see that the plan was put before the various groups for ratification.

The trade unions have since ratified the idea from one end of the state to the other. The eighth and ninth congressional districts have held conventions and done likewise. Other district conventions are expected to O. K. the plan in the near future. A state ratifying convention will be held in January at which time the Federation

will be formed and candidates will be nominated for all state offices.

It is true that a few reactionaries have hurled charges of communism. The *Minnesota Daily Star* ran a series of articles attempting to show communist domination of our recent convention, but this has been laughed out of court by the trade unionists and farmers alike. Many letters of protest have been sent to the *Star* from all over the state. The movement in Minnesota has always been a constructive, aggressive movement. Men are judged here by their actions in the daily struggle of the workers and not by the fact that they may be socialists, communists or believe in any other of the various "isms."

The movement in Minnesota is developing more and more into a movement of industrial workers and exploited farmers. Each day the workers and farmers are coming closer to a realization of

the ultimate nature of the political struggle in which they are engaged. The capitalist press is now shouting communism at the movement in Minnesota, as well as nationally, in much the same manner that they shouted socialism, I. W. W.ism, and bolshevism back in 1918, 1920, and 1922. But the workers and farmers in Minnesota are becoming accustomed to being called names; they are steadily organizing their forces for the battle of 1924, in which we hope to drive the tools of the steel trust out of the capitol in St. Paul, and place a workers and farmers government in its place. Neither will the cry of communism prevent us from uniting with the farmers and workers in our sister states for a drive for control of the National Government in 1924. Minnesota is setting the pace in sane, constructive, independent working class political action; we hope the other states will fall in line.

## Gompers Shows Seattle Where to Head In

By Hulet M. Wells

**T**HE Seattle Labor Council got too progressive and the heavy hand of A. F. of L. discipline fell sternly upon it. So much is known to that part of the American labor movement that takes enough interest in itself to read the labor news. On the minds of these readers the incident produces one of two effects. To the ordinary unionist with a more or less listless interest in his organization, the experience of the Seattle Council is a warning not to stray from the narrow limits within which they have been given permission to play. On the other hand the impatient radical is apt to see in the affairs further evidence to bolster up the theory that it is useless to attempt to improve the trades-union organization from the inside.

The growth of either of these impressions is regrettable, and in my opinion they are not borne out by a full understanding of the conditions surrounding the Seattle controversy. For this reason I am glad to comply with the request of the Editor of *THE LABOR HERALD* to describe the facts of the Seattle troubles as I see them.

To begin with, the Seattle Labor Council is not radical. To my knowledge its personnel has been overwhelmingly conservative for the past two years. Before that there was a period when the activity of a progressive group made the Seattle Council a center of interest and developed a social spirit truly inspiring. Those were the days when the Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders were the largest local union in the world; when the General Strike brought all the crafts together in a peaceful demonstration of solidarity

that threw the labor haters of the country into a spasm of hysteria; when the Longshoremen's Union refused to load arms for the enemies of Soviet Russia; and when the Seattle delegates led the movement that swept the Triple Alliance of the A. F. of L., the Railroad unions, and the organized farmers, into independent political action, making the Farmer-Labor Party at one bound the second party in the state.

Among the other activities of those times were the inauguration of educational classes under the name of the Seattle Labor College, the Duncan Plan for amalgamation into industrial unions, and an intensive effort at organization, especially of women workers, the Seattle Council chartering one such union who were barred from the Federation because of their sex. Perhaps the greatest achievement of this period was the successful launching of the first daily newspaper in the United States directly owned and controlled by organized labor.

These are a few of the outstanding features of that era of progress and good feeling. To the readers of *THE LABOR HERALD* in these darker days the picture must seem almost imaginary. Seattle still has a good labor movement and one that is far from reactionary, but the spirit of the old days has gone out of it. Who is responsible for that? Gompers? Certainly not. Minor controversies over routine matters arose from time to time between the Council and the Federation officialdom, but these were always adjusted after the usual formal correspondence. During the whole period that I have described Mr. Gompers

or his Executive Council made no effort to circumscribe Seattle labor activities.

When charges were recently brought against the Seattle Council by the heads of the parent body specifying that the Council was persistently defying the Federation laws, the Seattle Central Labor Council had been for two full years a prosaic plodding organization, attending strictly to ordinary trade-union affairs and evincing not the slightest desire to defy authorities with whom the majority were in strict accord. What possible reason could there be for digging into the ancient history of Seattle labor to find some plausible excuse to bully a central body genuinely anxious to maintain amicable relations with the Federation? Before answering this question it is important to answer another, namely, what caused the Seattle movement to backslide from its position in the forefront of the labor struggle to its present conservative status.

Probably the decline in its militant activity can not be traced to any single cause. Seattle, like other sections, was hit by the industrial depression of 1921 and by the general anti-union drive, but still more by the closing of the shipyards. But aside from these factors, a sudden blight which fell on this promising labor movement can be traced to a bitter factional fight arising out of a phenomenon absolutely unique in the trades-union movement, as far as my knowledge goes, an adventure in frenzied finance that milked the savings of thousands of workers into the pockets of the promoters of dubious stockselling schemes.

Along with other labor activities the cooperative movement had received a great impetus. I,

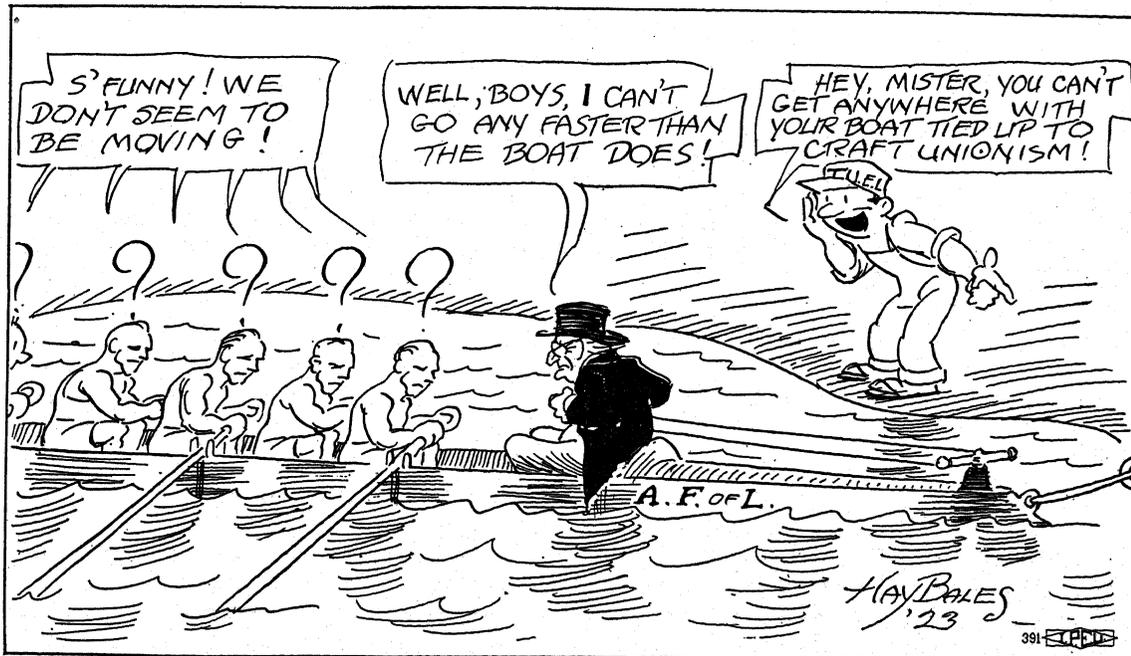
for one, was glad to see it. I had never felt like giving my time to that kind of work; there were other things to do that interested me more; but I have always felt that trades-unions, working-class political organizations, and workers' cooperatives should complement and mutually assist each other, as they do in Europe. The trouble with the so-called cooperatives that sprang up in Seattle was that they were not of the right type. For many years Dr. James P. Warbasse has been trying to guide the cooperative movement with sound advice. Never was his counsel more needed than in Seattle at the close of the war.

Most of the ventures started in this city were not based on the Rochdale plan and those that were suffered from unwise management. Others were mere joint stock enterprises financed on capital invested by people who happened to belong to the trade-unions. Both kinds were, however, started from commendable motives. But suddenly there appeared a third type of alleged labor cooperatives, mere get-rich-quick schemes promoted for the benefit of a small group of insiders. An orgy of wildcatting followed. A few shrewd men had seen the possibilities of capitalizing the prestige of organized labor at its highest point by baiting worthless stock with the names of well known labor leaders.

Million dollar corporations sprang up over night. The money of the hoodwinked workers rolled in in a golden stream. The old hokum of a shady finance was new to the labor movement and worked like a charm. No scheme was too wild to draw its quota of suckers. The unions were combed for smart young men to take courses in salesmanship. The widows and orphans were fair game. In vain men like George F. Vanderveer, the head of the Labor Council's Legal Bureau, attempted to stem the tide. Their warning voices were lost in the stampede of the workers to give away their money to the men who were going to buy out the capitalist system and turn it over to the toilers.

An episode so disgraceful can only be characterized in stinging words. It is no mere desire to be charitable, however, that impels me to say that probably some of

(Continued on page 31)



# The Origin and Growth of the British Labor Party

By J. T. Murphy

*Editor's note:—When John H. Walker, former leader of the Farmer-Labor Party, covered his retreat back to the Gompers' non-partisan policy by stating that it was by this method that the British Labor Party had been built, he counted upon the general lack of exact knowledge about Britain to enable him to get away with it. The following article, written by an authoritative British writer, shows up Walker's subterfuge and gives a picture of the early development of the British Labor Party that will be valuable to American workers.*

**T**HERE exists a mistaken notion in many quarters as to the emergence of the British working class into politics and the significance of the rise of the British Labor Party. Formally, the British Labor Party came into being in the year 1906 and consequently there are those who refer to a few years preceding and tick off the date and personalities of the period, and there is the whole story.

Having seen the workers enmeshed in the snares of Liberalism, they argue the necessity of the workers passing through the school of liberalism to labor. But the formation of the British Labor Party in 1906 marks not the birth of British working class politics but their re-emergence after years of slumber.

British working class history falls into three distinct periods—the revolutionary years from the beginning of last century to 1849; the years of modern trade unionism dominated by insurance and friendly society features; the re-emergence of class politics in the founding of the Labor Party.

The 18th century ends with Britain in the midst of the industrial revolution, and Europe shaken by the French Revolution which was busy breaking down the barriers of feudalism. The 19th Century begins with war in Europe, a thoroughly class conscious ruling class in Britain, nervous of the growing proletariat, a working class struggling bravely to build the first trade unions amidst the most violent persecution.

The dual forces of the industrial revolution and war, drove the village workers into the towns to be alternately swallowed in the factories or cast on the streets by unemployment. A social war raged which brought to the front most of the problems which are vexing the minds of the workers today. So bitterly was the class war conducted that the question of the independence of the workers in the struggle seemed an axiom out of the range of discussion and remained so until the collapse of chartism when totally new conditions began to prevail.

Industrial capitalism got to its feet. A period of commercial expansion opened up before British capitalism. The world market was open before her. No real competitors were ready to challenge her supremacy and the sharp characteristics of the class war which so vividly mark the earlier years of the century are almost completely removed by liberalism. Real wages advanced, conditions became easier, and amidst obvious prosperity and improvements the clarion calls to class-war action seemed vaguely distant and unreal.

This was the period when liberalism prevailed in the minds of the masses. They had no votes and even after the extension of the franchise in 1867 only a small minority could vote. The unions were securing improvements by registration and collective bargaining. It was not until severe crises accompanied by extensive unemployment and the legal onslaught on unionism, changed the whole conditions that new forces and factors arose which made imperative the demand for organized political independence on the part of the labor movement. The period of uninterferred expansion was passing. New productive forces were seeking outlets in the same market. The period of economic and political instability had begun and with it a re-awakening of the class issues which had dominated all the earlier struggles of the century. The war of 1914-18 did not sweep these issues away, but accentuated them, and drove the workers into the Labor Party, whilst the post-war period has taken matters farther still. It has not only shown the utter futility of the workers letting their politics out to Liberal or Tory parties, but has raised the question even more sharply of cleansing the Labor Party itself of the psychological policemen of the bourgeoisie.

The revolutionary epoch of the latter part of the 19th Century which finally liberated capitalism from the last vestiges of feudalism were the years wherein the proletariat learned its first lesson of organization and class war. The intervening years between then and now were the years of gestation wherein the workers without political vision, builded greater than they knew. Now, in the new epoch of revolution, the British Labor Movement is in ferment, questioning not the advisability of the formation of a Labor Party but its clarity of vision in the interests of the workers and its freedom from capitalistic control.

The origin and development of the British Labor Party, therefore, lies deep in the history of

the working class struggle. It is not the beginning of independent working class action, but a part of a process whereby the workers hammer out their instruments of struggle and final victory as the following narrative, I hope, will make clear.

### Class War Politics

The working class movement of Britain was born in the midst of a revolution of which it was not the leader but the product. The history of the industrial revolution 1762 to 1830 is more than the record of industrial expansion and development; it tells of the production of a vast army of workers desperately in need of a fraction of the wealth they were creating, who had had no experience of organized struggle but were compelled to organize or perish; of a ruling class which was being re-inforced by a rising industrial and commercial class and yet which maintained a conservative class-conscious rulership which would not concede anything without a fight. The Hammonds have vividly described in "The Town Labourer," "The Village Labourer" and "the Skilled Labourer" the arrogant superiority of the governing class and the enormous difficulties the workers had to overcome. They say:

The classes that possessed authority in the State and the classes that had acquired the new wealth, landlords, churchmen, judges, manufacturers, one and all, understood by the government, the protection of society from the fate that had overtaken the privileged classes in France . . . The poor man is esteemed only as an instrument of wealth.

With all power in the hands of an oligarchy there was no question before the workers as to how to use a vote or select a representative in parliamentary democracy. To make their presence felt at all they were driven to political demonstrations, strikes, appeals for modification of the law or the application of old ones. The whole period from 1756 up to the first twenty years of the 19th century is characterized by these methods. Trades Unionists were punished as rebels and revolutionists guilty of sedition. But persecution did not stop the process and the process was producing the large new class of commercialists who were anxious to play a more important role in the formulation of the politics of the country. From these ranks such men as Francis Place lined up with the workers and played an important part in the political campaign for the legalizing of Trade Unions.

Within the first forty years of the 19th century there is hardly a phase of class warfare that is not brought into the foreground of political ac-

tivity. Petitions and demonstrations, machine smashing and sabotage, demands for armed revolt, one big union of the workers, adult suffrage, a Parliament of workers, the Co-operative Commonwealth, the abolition of Parliament, sudden social revolution, all came to the front. Out of the turmoil came the first definite political organization in the form of the National Union of the Working Classes, under the leadership of William Lovett, demanding manhood suffrage. This organization was involved in much of the reform agitation which culminated in the political changes of 1832, and then passed away.

The innovation of Owenism needs only to be mentioned to remind us of the magnitude of the political ferment and the class character of the agitation. The failure of the grandiose schemes both of Co-operation and unionism and the disillusionment following the victory of the middle class in 1832, paved the way to the growth of Chartism. From 1837 to 1844 is the hey-day of this movement which constitutes the next great organized political activity of the British working class. From end to end of the Kingdom the organization grew in volume and power. Lovett was the author of the *Charter* and a remarkable leader assisted by many able men—Brontierre O'Brien, Stephens, Harvey, and a host of others, though not all of these were well received by the workers. The class consciousness manifested itself in the refusal of the workers to have any leader who did not belong



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to the working class. It was this fact which strengthened the position of Lovett and enabled him to launch the London Workingmen's Association in 1836 which became a powerful factor in the Chartist movement. The *Charter* demanded Universal Suffrage, the Ballot, Annual Parliaments, Payment of Members and Abolition of Property Qualifications.

These demands reveal at once both the reason of the association with liberalism and the lack of independent labor representation. In 1836 there were 6,023,752 males over 21 years of age and only 840,000 had votes and owing to the unequal state of representation about one-fifth of that number had the power of returning a majority of members. That is a "little" different from the political situation in America and Britain today, whilst the non-payment of members coupled with the property qualification made independent working class representation almost impossible. The obvious tactic was to use liberalism in the Parliament as an ally until it became possible to assert

independent labor representation. This explains much of the influence of liberalism in the labor movement, and why even when the unions took up the question of Parliamentary representation and provided funds the first labor men were nearer to liberalism than to class-war politics.

Elementary as the Chartist program undoubtedly was, it guided the great political activity fermented by the terrible conditions which prevailed throughout this period. But with the lack of political experience, the immaturity of social science and the consequent lack of theoretically equipped leaders, with often bad leadership, impatience and want of education among the masses, it was utterly impossible to consolidate the movement and give it a political goal with the pathway to it clearly defined.

The beginning of a new period of economic expansion on the part of British capitalism swept the groundwork away from Utopias, violent upheavals, and mass agitation, and left the workers to assimilate their experiences in a period of thriving liberalism.

#### **The Coming of the Labor Parties**

From the fifties up to 1875 the industrial expansion of England is phenomenal. She became the workshop of the world, and the workers were able to benefit from this expansion. The main body of workers became absorbed in the development of the trade unions and the Co-operatives. In so far as either movement had any political consciousness they renounced class warfare and conceived the idea of their organizations as a permanent part of what appeared to them a permanent social order. Although the First International Workingmen's Association, formed in 1864, held aloft the banner of class war for a few years and undoubtedly influenced the trade unions which were attached to it, the political ideas within these organizations and of the workers in general reflected the doctrines of liberalism.

The immediate tasks which the workers could accomplish were well within the limits of liberal capitalism and only the exceptional political student could see beyond these limits. Liberalism reluctantly accepted the existence of the unions and so long as the conditions which obtained did not compel the workers to use the unions as instruments to challenge the fundamentals of the system, adaption and compromise were the keys to the development of society and the pacification of the workers. No wonder Gladstone was triumphant.

Nevertheless, the development of the unions even under the domination of this philosophy brought them, time and again, face to face with situations which demanded common political and

industrial action. From as far back as 1825, joint committees of the unions were formed to combat the combination laws, again in 1834 to protest against the punishment of the Dorchester laborers, again in 1838 to conduct the case of the Trade Unions before a Parliamentary Committee. These were transient, but by 1860 permanent Trade Councils were established in Glasgow, Sheffield, Liverpool and Edinburgh, and London in 1861. The latter became the most important and for a number of years was dominated by the Junta (a group of able leaders among whom were George Odger, Howell, William Allen of the Engineers, Apple-garth of the Carpenters). The Councils arouse out of strikes but became the instrument for participating in general politics.

In 1862 the London Council joined in the agitation in support of the Northern States against Negro Slavery. In 1866 it joined in the agitation of the Franchise Reform Bill and co-operated with the International Working Men's Association in the demand for Democratic Reform from all European Governments. The London Council joined with Alexander McDonald and Alexander Campbell of the Coal Miners, in bringing the Glasgow Trades Council into a campaign for the amendment of the Masters' and Servants' Acts. This campaign led to the first National Conference of Trade Unions in 1864 and through it to big agitations which succeeded by 1867 in securing amendments to the Act. In this campaign they used John Bright but the question of the independence of the movement as a workers' movement was never in question. It was such questions as the Masters and Servants' Act, the legalizing of the unions, collective responsibility of unions for disputes, rights of pickets, etc., which sharpened the issue of political action.

With the passing of the 1867 Franchise Reform Bill the movement for independent Labor Representation received an impetus. The Trades Councils urged the small proportion of Trade Unionists to register. Next, to vote for candidates who would support Trade Union demands. By 1868 Trades Union Congress had been established and in 1871 a Parliamentary Committee was set up. The unions began to run independent labor candidates. George Odger was a candidate in the elections of 1869 and '70. In 1874 the Miners, Ironworkers and a few others voted money for parliamentary candidates. At the next general election 13 labor candidates were run against Liberal and Tory candidates. "At Stafford and Morpeth the Liberals accepted what they were powerless to prevent," says Mr. S. Webb, and Alexander Macdonald and Thomas Burt of

the National Union of Miners became the first Labor members of the House of Commons.

The path of an Independent Labor Party was this one opening up out of the struggle of the Unions. Whatever may be said about the political conceptions of the first Labor men, in the actual struggle they stood against the liberals and Tories of the day.

The extension of the franchise had come by pressure from the unions and the rising middle class. Immediately this victory was won, although the Reform Bill of 1868 gave the vote to only a small minority, it gave the chance, immediately seized to establish independent labor representation. The question of support for liberals at any time only arose where there was no chance of independent labor representation.

By 1880, this process is accentuated by the economic crises of the period. New political parties arose catching up again the threads of the politics of the Chartist movement and Socialism. The Social Democratic Federation founded by H. M. Hyndman propagated the Marxian doctrines of the class war, while the Fabian Society led by Mr. Webb, began to try its hand with Socialism in practical politics. The Independent Labor Party, under the leadership of Kier Hardie, took up the cudgels for Socialism. All of these became important factors in the working class movement struggling for clarity of political purpose and warring against liberal thought in the ranks of the workers. The dual process of the struggle of the unions against legal limitations, and the Socialist agitation thriving on the recurring social crises, brought to a head the question of uniting all the working class forces into a federated labor party.

The Trade Union Congress of 1899 brought matters to a decision after all the numerous efforts to secure a Labor Party. James Holmes of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, drafted the following resolution:

This Congress having regard to the decisions of former years, and with a view to securing a better representation of the interests of Labor in the House of Commons, hereby instructs the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress to invite the co-operation of all the Co-operative, Socialist, Trade Union and other working class organizations jointly to co-operate in lines mutually agreed upon in convening a special congress of representatives from such of the above mentioned organizations as may be willing to take part to devise ways and means for securing of an increased number of Labor members to the next Parliament.

James Sexton of the Dockers, seconded. 546,000 voted for, 400,000 voted against.

A committee consisting of four of the Parliamentary Committee was set up. This included Words (Liberal), W. C. Steadman (Fabian),

Will Thorne (S. D. F.), A. Bell, Kier Hardie, J. Ramsay McDonald, Harry Quelch, H. R. Taylor, S. B. Show and E. R. Pease. On February 27th and 28th, 1900, sixty-three years after the London Working Men's Union had formulated the People's Charter, 120 delegates met in London and established the Labor Representation Committee with McDonald as Secretary. By 1906 the Committee was transformed into the Labor Party. But in the interval the vexed question of liberalism was settled. Richard Bell who was on the first Representation Committee, sent his "good wishes" to the Liberal Candidate against G. H. Roberts, the I. L. P. Candidate. The latter had the reputation at that time as a fiery Socialist and internationalist. But Arthur Henderson and David Shackleton who were very moderate labor men, supported him.

The action of Bell created a ferment and the matter was settled by the Newcastle Conference 1903, when it was agreed that "members of the E. C. and officials of affiliated organizations should strictly abstain from identifying themselves with or promoting the interests of any section of the liberal or conservative parties . . .

The victories in 1906 general election established the Labor Party and the work of Kier Hardie, whom we can regard as the outstanding figure of the modern movement to establish the Labor Party, was thus on the way to success. He had been assisted ably by McDonald, Sexton Quelch, Bruce Glacier, J. R. Clynes, Pete Curran, Tillett, Smille, Henderson and Snowden. Whatever the political differences of the parties they were intent on thrashing the differences out within the framework of the Federal Party. All the party organs plus the unions, plus the efforts of such as Blatchford, who at that time created a remarkable impression by his writings, joined in the campaign for the independent party of the workers. Blatchford probably put the case simplest of all. He asked, "Do you elect your employers as officials of your Trade Unions? Do you send employers as delegates to your Trade Union Congress? You would laugh at the suggestion.

"If an employer's interests are opposed to your interests in business, what reason have you for supposing that his interests and yours are not opposed in politics? If you oppose a man as an employer, why do you vote for him as a member of Parliament? During a strike there are no Tories and Liberals amongst the strikers; they are all workers. The issue is not between Liberals and Tories; it is an issue between the privileged classes and the workers."

It was this kind of argument plus the experiences of the Unions which brought the Labor

Party to the front and made it possible to unite the varying working class organizations upon specific programs of action. A constitution was framed broad enough to permit the various parties to be a part of common organization without infringing their programs which they sought to get adopted by their colleagues of the working class movement. The Socialists struggled vigorously against the liberalism within the party but remained in the Labor Party. In recent years

the Socialists who took the lead from the "lib-lab" elements are battling against the Communists. In this they are losing ground for the conviction is growing in the ranks of the labor movement that differences in political policies should be fought out within the ranks of the workers, that only by presenting a united front against the common enemy is it possible for the workers to achieve victory.

## The Social Role of Fascism

By Wm. Z. Foster

**W**HEN the struggle between the working class and the capitalist class reaches the intensity of a final fight for power, which accompanies the breakdown of the capitalist system such as we are witnessing today in Central Europe, there arises a new social phenomenon, the Fascist movement. Fascism is the illegal violence of the anti-labor forces against the working class, carried in an organized form onto the scale of a mass movement. Arising out of the historical situation presented in Europe, the period of collapse of the old system, it spreads throughout the capitalist world. Even in America, where the capitalist system is still strong and unchallenged by any mass movement of the workers, Fascism is showing its head, notably in the Ku Klux Klan movement. As the most immediate menace to the labor movement, the Fascisti present a problem that Labor must study and understand, if it is to be combatted successfully. The understanding of Fascism, what it signifies to Labor, and how it can be combatted, is best begun by a thorough study of the history of Fascism in its most classic example, the black-shirted troops of Mussolini in Italy.

### What Happened in Italy

In Italy a great wave of social discontent developed during the war and the period immediately following. This took on a strong anti-capitalistic tendency. There was a wide-spread feeling and belief that the capitalist system had outlived its usefulness and that it had to be superceded by a new order of society. In this situation of almost universal discontent the organized labor movement, because of its definite program and structure, was able to take the lead. It impressed its proletarian conception upon the whole movement and convinced the broad masses that the new and expected reorganized system of society should and must be established under the leadership of and control by the working class. The organized workers were able to direct and

impress their conception upon the growing upheaval. They were the undisputed leaders of the discontented masses.

The workers' leadership stretched far beyond the limits of the industrial proletariat. The peasant masses were deeply influenced by the workers' program and were prepared to try it out. The middle class also had become convinced of the inevitability of the revolution and, to a great degree, had resigned themselves to it even if they had not become convinced of its desirability. Even the capitalists themselves were paralyzed by the scope and intensity of the movement, and were unable to break the nightmare of fear which clutched them. The Government stood aside and watched the waves of revolution mount higher and higher, but it could not act—its will was broken by the almost universal conviction that the working class was soon to take over the powers and reshape society. The army was crippled by the same overwhelming idea, and was an impotent instrument. We may obtain some slight conception of the situation by comparing it with that obtaining in Great Britain today, where all classes of society are convinced that the Labor Party will form the Government in the near future; the difference between the British situation and that in Italy after the close of the war being that the former presents only a minor crisis in British life and the change expected is only a change of Government, while in Italy the whole nation looked for a profound social reorganization. The Italian workers were sweeping on from victory to victory and practically all Italy expected them to establish a workers' society in the immediate future.

### The Workers Lose the Lead

The great movement reached its crisis in the Fall of 1920, in the metal workers' strike which culminated in the occupation of the factories by the workers. More than a half-million metal workers seized practically all the metal factories

in the country, and began to operate them without capitalist superintendence. Workers in other industries began to follow the stirring example, and workers' councils sprang up everywhere. The peasants fell into line with the seizure of the land, inaugurating a profound agrarian revolt in support of the workers' movement. The expectant masses were convinced that the long-looked-for revolution was beginning. The Government was demoralized and powerless, and the whole capitalist class was in dismay. The stage was set and the actors ready for the Italian proletarian revolution.

In this critical moment the whole revolutionary movement was steered into collapse and disaster by the men at the head of the workers' parties and labor unions. These yellow leaders were men whose entire training had been in the peaceful era of reformism and compromise with capitalism. They were constitutionally incapable of dealing a death-blow to the capitalist system. Despite their revolutionary phrases which had infused the masses with hope, they backed away from the actual fact of revolution when they faced it. They settled the revolutionary strike of the metal workers on the basis of an ordinary trade union action, and thus practically cut the head off the surging anti-capitalist movement.

This betrayal of the revolution by the reformist labor leaders had a shattering effect. It destroyed at one blow the faith of the masses in the workers' program and movement. It seemed that the very concept of the proletarian revolution itself had failed. Almost immediately the air of expectancy of a workers' society was dissipated amongst all classes. Even the workers themselves became disheartened and discouraged, and largely lost faith in their own cause. They had builded their hopes upon false leaders and now paid the price of their folly. The great effect of the debacle was that the organized proletariat lost the leadership of the discontented masses, who were disillusioned by the ignominious failure of the profound revolutionary movement.

#### **The Capitalists Regain the Lead**

A central fact in the situation was that, although the workers' revolution failed, the widespread discontent which had given it such great volume and intensity still existed and had to find expression somehow. The capitalists, who had been roused from their lethargy by the collapse of the metal workers' strike, were able to turn to their own advantage the far-reaching discontent which had been balked of its revolutionary aim. They seized control of the masses, which they had temporarily lost to the organized workers in the revolutionary upheaval, and set out

to re-establish and strengthen the capitalism against which the workers' yellow leaders had not dared to throw the mass movement. The instrument through which the capitalists carried out their counter-revolutionary movement was a new one, which brushed aside the democratic trappings of capitalism. It was the Fascist movement.

In the popular mind in this country the striking feature of Fascism was the violence by which it came to power in Italy. But the real significance of the movement lies in its program. Fascism found a whole new set of objectives against which to throw the prevailing discontent. For one thing it inculcated an intense nationalism on the basis that it was due to the machinations of foreign powers against Italy that the latter was kept poor and oppressed. Also it turned the fury of the people against the Jews, upon the supposition that this race typified the international bankers who were the Italian people's enemies. But above all it attacked all branches of the labor movement, which it blamed for the high cost of living, the oppressive taxes, the shattered condition of industry, and almost every other social evil.

It was easy for the Fascist leaders to convince the great middle class and peasantry that the organized workers were deeply at fault, because, in the sharpness of the class struggle, the warring capitalists and workers had reduced production and profit to a minimum. So long as the workers had retained the initiative and had kept the masses' mind fastened upon the proletarian revolutionary program, they could blame all this industrial disorganization upon the capitalist. But when they lost the initiative through their yellow leaders' treachery, the capitalists were able to blame the chaotic situation upon them. The capitalists made their conception prevail that the cause of the social disorganization and discontent was the 8-hour day, the high wages, the many strikes, and the low productive efficiency of the industrial workers, which they attributed to the labor organizations. Then they could and did enlist great numbers of the middle class and peasantry in a most violent campaign, the Fascist movement, to smash the offending workers' organizations and to drastically reduce the toilers' standards of living. They prepared the way for a reorganization of industry on an efficiency basis at the expense of the workers. They made the most heroic efforts thus to pump life into the dying capitalist system.

#### **The Disintegration of Fascism**

In a word, the Italian situation, in its broad outlines, was that before the metal workers' strike of 1920 the organized working class was able to use the prevailing social discontent for revolu-

tionary aims; but, after that strike, because of the disillusionment it brought, the capitalists could and did use the same discontent for their counter-revolutionary purpose of revivifying capitalism at the expense of the workers' standards of living. The workers did not destroy the capitalist system, so the confused masses considered it logical enough to patch up that system which they believed the workers could not or would not abolish.

Although Fascism achieved power because it succeeded in rallying the discontented middle class and peasantry, yet it has had nothing substantial to offer them for their support. The Fascist program presents a mass of contradictions, just as our own Ku Klux Klan does in this country. Finding its mass base in the disaffected middle and agrarian classes, its every practical step and its every policy has, nevertheless, been in the interests of big business. In fact, the re-establishment of capitalism at the cost of all other classes and particularly of the working class, is the basis of Fascism. All of its promises to the discontented masses have been unfulfilled; the burdens of taxation have not been lightened, prices have not been lowered, currency has not been stabilized, increased production when achieved has benefitted only the larger capitalists, the looting of the public treasuries has been carried out on a larger scale,

and in every way the middle classes and peasantry have been given a thorough course in disillusionment of Fascism. The inevitable process of disintegration within the Fascist movement must go on.

For the working class the world-wide Fascist movement provides many lessons. One of these is the total inability of reformist leaders, who are always weak and futile, to conduct the labor movement successfully through revolutionary crises. There must be real fighters at the head of the movement with a program to carry the working class on to new stages of the class struggle when confronted with a revolutionary situation. Another lesson is that the working class must retain the initiative, and establish and maintain its leadership over all of the oppressed masses. It must impress its program and its goal upon the minds of the lower middle class and farmers, as the only substantial hope for the solution of their problems, and thus establish such sympathetic contact and alliances with these classes that their support or neutrality in the revolutionary struggle is secured. They must be intellectually disarmed so that they cannot be used for Fascist ends. If these two lessons can be driven home to the labor movement everywhere, then the terrible scourge of Fascism now afflicting the working class of the world will not have been in vain.

## Militant Miners' Leader to Prison

By Tom Bell

**J**IM McLACHLAN, fighting leader of the Nova Scotia miners, has been sent to prison for two years because he sent out a circular denouncing the military rule in the steel strike in Sydney. The case began on July 6th, when McLachlan, secretary-treasurer, and Dan Livingstone, president, of District 26, United Mine Workers of America, were arrested on a charge of "spreading false tales" regarding the actions of the police. The arrest took place three days after the strike of the miners of Cape Breton against the use of troops and mounted police against pickets of the striking steel workers. Jim McLachlan had sent a circular letter to the miners' local unions telling them of the incident and calling upon them to resist this method of smashing the unions, by striking the coal mines belonging to the British Empire Steel Corporation until the troops were withdrawn. This circular, furnished to the courts by the stool pigeons of the Steel Trust, was made the basis of the charges against McLachlan and Livingstone.

The two arrested men were taken to Halifax, 200 miles away. The Attorney General tried to

prevent them from obtaining release on bail on the grounds that they would return to Glace Bay, and because McLachlan had said, "To hell with the Dominion Coal Co." The trial took place on August 15th. Although McLachlan was arrested on the charge of "spreading false tales," at the trial the only charge was "seditious conspiracy against the Provincial Government and the Dominion Coal Co." The witnesses against him were two corporation officials, the chief of provincial police, and the chief of police of Sydney. The Attorney General, in his address to the jury, stated that the truth of McLachlan's statements in the circular did not matter. If the circular contained such information as would cause "discontent and dissatisfaction" among the people, that was "seditious libel" and punishable.

The evidence against McLachlan was merely that there was a strike on at the time the circular was sent out, that the police and troops were sent to Sydney to "protect property," and that in the opinion of the witnesses the circular had caused "dissatisfaction and discontent." The Attorney General declared that the issue was

whether the doctrines of the Soviet Government should prevail in Nova Scotia. He declared: "The issue is not whether the statement is true or false. There are many things which are true but cannot be published. It is not a question of the truth of the statement but a question of whether it was said with the intention of creating dissatisfaction and disturbance." Speaking of the raid on McLachlan's house, the Attorney General maintained that it did not matter whether it had been illegal or not.

The Judge who presided at the trial was a former solicitor for the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Co. He charged the jury strongly against McLachlan. The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and Jim was remanded until the end of the month for sentence. Since then he has been sentenced to two years in the penitentiary. An appeal has been entered but the Chief Justice has refused to grant bail, and McLachlan is in prison.

This case has removed from activity a man who for 20 years has led the miners of Nova

Scotia in their struggles against the coal operators. He was secretary of the U. M. W. of A. District in 1909, and has been re-elected continuously since then. In 1909 the coal operators, with the help of troops and scabs, broke the organization, and the militants were blacklisted and driven from the district. Jim McLachlan stuck with the task of organization, and from 1916 on he succeeded in organizing the miners 100% in the U. M. W. of A. He has consistently fought the corporation and led the miners in the struggle for better wages and conditions. He supports the progressives in the union, and is a member of the Workers Party of Canada. Although jailed by the courts and deposed by John L. Lewis, he has the backing of the vast majority of the miners in Nova Scotia, who are bending every energy to secure his freedom. McLachlan will be needed to lead the great wage struggle that will come in January when the existing agreement with the corporation expires.

## The Awakening Miners

By Thos. Myerscough

ALL eyes will soon be turned toward Indianapolis, Indiana, and thoughts toward the Biennial Convention of the United Mine Workers of America that is to be held in January, 1924. Why all this interest? Have not the Miners' Conventions been held almost without interruption in Indianapolis? Yes, but it is doubtful if ever a convention of the miners, or of any other union, presented such opportunities for working-class progress as does this gathering.

One great change that has taken place, and that will make this Convention different from previous ones, is that the membership is replacing its former apathy by an aroused interest in the affairs of the Union. The vast army of underground slaves is coming at last to a realization of its position in the capitalist economic structure; it is finding that not only is it the underground section of civilization, but that it is also the underdog section. And the miners are profoundly dissatisfied. They are beginning to hunt the scalps of those responsible for their continued slavery. They know fundamentally that it is capitalism itself that is responsible, and that those who uphold capitalism are helping to further enslave them. They see the union officialdom as one of the powerful pillars of that capitalist system. The rousing of the rank and file thus takes on from the beginning the nature of a struggle against the dictatorship of the official family.

The January Convention will, without doubt,

develop this struggle for the first time on a national scale. The lines of the contending forces are being more clearly and tightly drawn every day. On the one side are Lewis and his army of *appointed organizers* and field workers; on the other are the arousing rank and file led by the Progressive International Committee. The Lewis forces, the "pay roll army", are well known to those who have attended previous Conventions of the U. M. W. of A. and seen then in action, scheming to save their official hides and clinging to their meal-tickets like the proverbial drowning person to the straw. Neither are the Progressive forces entirely unknown to U. M. W. of A. Conventions, but never before have the progressives presented themselves as a real force as they will this time. In the past they have isolated themselves into small groups by thinking entirely of their own particular grievances. The result has been that the reactionaries have played off one group against another, cancelled the power of their protest in this manner, with the inevitable result of more discontent and chaos.

The January Convention will start a new page in the history of the struggle for progress. For the rank and file have learned more fully what the words "solidarity" and "united front" mean, as used in the parlance of the working class. Of course they have heard these same words countless times from the lips of the reactionary

officials. For example, I have on my desk two letters, one written by a rank and filer to Secretary Wm. Green, and the other Green's answer, *unsigned*. They vividly recall to me one September day in 1921, when a member of the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. said to a gathering of U. M. W. of A. luminaries in an Indianapolis hotel that "Billy Green is the cleverest, shrewdest politician in the American labor movement." It appears that Green made a Labor Day speech at Arden Downs, Pa., under the auspices of the Washington County Central Labor Union. This district is inhabited largely by an aggressively radical group of mine and tin-mill workers, and it is evident that "Billy" decided to color his speech to fit his crowd. The first letter I mention, from the rank and file miner to Green, reminds him of this, and says:

"During the course of your Labor Day address at Arden, you made the assertion that to attain our ideals, to get what we long for, and that for which we yearn, we must put up a united front. You also said something about solidarity." The letter then goes on to describe the united front with the employers, and the solidarity with the enemies of the miners, that the officialdom of the U. M. W. of A. set up in District No. 14, Kansas, and in District No. 26, Nova Scotia. Is this what the reactionary officers mean when they talk of "solidarity" and the "united front," he asks.

Of course everyone knows that these are radical slogans, and when used by the reactionaries, such as Green, are pure demagoguery and meaningless phrases. This "Billy" Green demonstrates in his reply, which in officially majestic style says: "It is clear from your communication dated September 5 that your application of the meaning of the words 'solidarity' and 'unity,' as referred to in my Labor Day address at Washington, Pennsylvania, is entirely erroneous. You refer to the action of members of our Union in District No. 26 and District No. 14, and apply the word 'solidarity' to their action." Green then goes on to prate about the sacredness of contract, how the officers of these Districts "flaunted and disregarded" the laws of the Union, but nary a word does he say about the violations by the employers that started these controversies, nor the fact that in both cases all the merits were with the workers until Lewis, Green & Co. sided with the employers on the flimsiest of pretexts.

Green closed his letter with a rehearsal for the Portland Convention, in the following paragraph: "It is this sort of solidarity and unity to which our organization is committed and to which I referred in my Labor Day address. If there are those who profess to be members of the United

Mine Workers but who do not believe in a contract-making policy, who believe in some other process, such as that advocated by the Communists and I. W. W. organizations then such persons should stand out in the open and say they do not believe in the United Mine Workers of America, but they believe in the I. W. W. organization and Communism." It would be hard to find a clearer declaration than this of Green's, that "solidarity" in the mouth of the reactionaries means solidarity with the coal operators; it was a logical development that soon afterward the U. M. W. of A. officials sponsored the Searles "expose," calling for a "united front" with the employers to fight the radicals, and denouncing the Herrin miners—an "expose" since exposed as having been written by a man in the pay of the coal operators and peddled to Lewis, Green & Co. because it was too rotten for the bosses to pay good money for.

At the coming Convention the principal weapon of the reactionaries will be, without doubt, the "red menace" scare with which they will try to club the delegates into line. They will muster all their forces to throw the red-scare into the hearts of the delegates before and after they arrive at the Convention. They will not get as much results from this as they expect. The miners are so accustomed to black menaces that lurk in the mines, that they will not be easily scared by a waving of red. All the hysterical ramblings of Lewis, Murray, Green & Co. will not stop the membership from marching forward with their progressive program. The "exposures" by Searles (for which he spent \$17,000. of the miners' money) have enraged them against the officials but not against the progressives. Say "red" to a miner and he will laugh at you and say: "Sure I am red; I was born with red blood in my veins, and when it turns yellow I want to be put away. Many of us live in red houses, like to grow red flowers if we are fortunate enough to have a garden, and many of us raise red chickens and keep a red cow. 'Red' is quite familiar to us, and doesn't scare us a bit."

There is no doubt that the rank and file of the Miners Union are going to make a struggle for their progressive program at the January Convention. They are going to fight for *nationalization of the mines*, for a real *Labor Party*, for the *election of organizers*, for the *organization of the unorganized*, and for the other items of the progressive program. All the red-scars of all the yellow fakirs in the world cannot make them back down. The attitude of the progressive rank and file of the U. M. W. of A. is, to paraphrase the popular song: "Yes, we have no freedom, but we'll have some b'ginger, and soon!"

# Toward Industrial Unionism in Germany

By Paul Hoyer

ONE of the burning issues in the German labor movement today is that of industrial unionism. That is—the German workers have long gone beyond the stage of discussing whether or not industrial unionism is desirable. Industrial unionism as a goal has been accepted by the whole General Federation of Free Trade Unions; the only point of debate is, how rapidly the transformation from the trade to the industrial organization shall take place.

The militants in the German labor movement achieved a notable victory a year ago last July, at the triennial congress of the General Federation in Leipzig. Besides the usual items of business common to every labor convention, four major problems had been placed on the agenda for exhaustive discussion: works councils and their relation to the unions; industrial unionism; "Arbeitsgemeinschaften" and economic councils; and labor legislation. On each of these topics the discussion was initiated by a speaker designated by the Executive Board, who with the approval of the board brought in a resolution covering the particular subject in hand. The first move of the militants was to insist that a second speaker, known to hold opposing views, be appointed for each of these subjects. In this they were successful.

Now, in connection with the subject of industrial unionism, the board had appointed Fritz Tarnow, president of the Wood Workers' union, to prepare the discussion and to present a resolution. That resolution reaffirmed the belief of German labor in industrial unionism as a final goal, but made it quite plain that "a general, sudden, and arbitrary reorganization of the trade unions is neither purposeful nor practicable." According to the resolution, "The congress declines to favor mandatory measures for the creation of new forms of organization; rather does it leave it to the individual organizations, by mutual agreement to bring about such changes as may seem expedient to those concerned."

This resolution seemed altogether too milk-and-water-like to the more aggressive trade unionists. Headed by Robert Dissman, president of the Metal Workers, they introduced a resolution which went through with flying colors, though in opposition both to the administration and to the committee on resolutions. This resolution declared that "a fundamental change in the form of union organization is necessary." It charged the executive with drafting, within the

shortest practicable time, a "plan for the organic development of industrial unions." More than that, it called by name the inter-related industries, the component trades within which should, in its opinion, be linked together in industrial units. These included the following: the metal industry, building, graphic arts, transportation and communication, textiles, public works and civil service, farming (including wine cultivation and gardening), forestry, the leather industry, and the food industry.

What made the whole situation at the triennial congress the more interesting was the fact that Tarnow, who held the brief for the trade or craft principle, is himself president of a union that comes close to being an industrial union, in that it constitutes an amalgamation of eleven unions in the wood working industry (such as carpenters, wheelrights, turners, etc.); and that the Dissmann resolution, when presented to the chairman of the convention, bore the signature of a number of labor leaders—the heads of large organizations—who were usually classed as rather conservative. The communists in the convention had introduced a resolution of their own, even more mandatory in character than that of Dissmann, but they refrained from pushing it when they saw that the Dissman version had a good chance of prevailing over the Tarnow-Administration resolution.

Since that convention, practically every convention of individual trade unions has been face to face with the problem of deciding whether for it, too, the time has come to join with other related trade unions in making one industrial union. I shall speak about the results of these referenda later on. For the present, a word or two should be said about the present position of the German trade union movement from an organizational standpoint.

It is a significant fact that the eight million organized workers in Germany are grouped in only 46 national unions. That figure in itself shows what a process of amalgamation has already taken place. Take, for instance, the Metal Workers' union, which now embraces all but two trades that have anything to do with the metal industry (namely, the coppersmiths and the engineers and firemen, who have thus far declined to come into the fold). As I have shown in a previous article, the Metal Workers' union is an amalgamation of 35 trades unions. Or take the

clothing workers. Their union embraces 25 trades having to do with the making of men's, women's and children's clothes of every description, besides a number of specialties such as millinery, embroidery, suspenders, ties, and even lamp shades. Or, again, the building trades workers. Their union represents an amalgamation of such trades as the masons, the glaziers, the pottery workers, the stucco workers, etc. Other unions which represent amalgamations of allied trades in the same industry are the following: bakery and confectionary workers, factory workers, lithographers, wood workers, transport workers, employes in municipal and state undertakings (such as power plants, gas works, etc.), choir singers and ballet dancers, hotel employes, and workers in the food producing industry.

German labor as represented at the Leipzig triennial congress, however, thought that 46 unions were still too many, and they also realized that further amalgamation in itself would not necessarily lead to industrial unionism. As Dissmann pointed out in his argument, a considerable number of metal workers were employed in connection with the mining industry. These workers would have to be relinquished by the Metal Workers' union and turned over to the miners, in whose union, of course, there would have to be a metal workers' sub-section. Again, it was pointed out in the debate that the shoe makers might be considered either as belonging in the wearing apparel workers' industrial union (in much the same manner, for instance, as the wig makers have suggested affiliation with the clothing workers), or they might be considered as a necessary part of the leather workers' industrial union.

Or again, take the railroad workers: should they belong to the transport workers' industrial union or to the "industry" of workers engaged in state undertakings? It was because of this necessity of defining each industry in question that the executive was charged with working out a practical plan. I understand that a special committee is at work on this problem, but that it has not yet made its full report. The militants insisted, however, that the necessity of definition and even of arbitrary assignment of individual unions or union members to this or that industry does not militate against the plan of industrial unionism itself. Once the industries have been agreed upon and the unions and parts of unions that should be regarded as belonging to them, then each industry will be completely covered and the sad spectacle avoided of twenty or thirty union representatives, each salaried by a different organization, coming before the same boss or group

of bosses in a given industry, with often conflicting demands!

I come now to the steps that have been taken in the direction of giving effect to the Leipzig resolution. The first important convention after the Leipzig congress was that of the clothing workers. Their convention at Munich in July, 1922, which I had the good fortune personally to attend, voted by an overwhelming majority to amalgamate with the hat makers and furriers. Unfortunately the hat makers, who held a referendum last September, failed to register a necessary two-thirds vote for the measure. The furriers, however, voted in favor of amalgamation either with the clothing workers or with the leather workers, however the national federation might prefer.

The clothing workers were less enthusiastic about the proposition that, after the furriers and hat makers had joined them, they should in turn amalgamate with the textile workers and make one large industrial union of the textile industry. As was pointed out repeatedly in the discussions, two different groups of capitalists control the clothing and the textile industries. If the employers who manufacture the textiles were also engaged in making the fabric over into wearing apparel, say the clothing workers, then of course our interests and those of the textile workers would be identical. In the general trend toward concentration in Germany, they acknowledge, the possibility that the two groups of industrials may unite is not at all unthinkable. But until and unless such inter-locking takes place on the employers' side, there is no point to bringing textile and clothing workers under one hat.

I have gone somewhat into detail about the clothing workers' position, because it shows on the one hand that German labor is beyond the stage of debating whether or not industrial unionism shall take place, but that on the other there is division of opinion as to just what the term "industry" shall comprise.

Other conventions followed. The building trades union decided boldly on January 1, 1923, to start in as an industrial union, no matter how many or how few of the allied trades still outside the amalgamation might come in by that time. Result: the glaziers and the pottery workers joined them by the appointed time, while the roofers and asphalt workers declined, and the painters, though favoring the industrial union idea, found that many of their members were engaged in industrial plants and not in the building industry, and that therefore, until the whole German trade union movement is reorganized on an industrial basis, it was unwise for them to give

up their organization and merge with the "Baugewerksbund." The chimney sweepers, the wood workers, the factory workers (who are a union of workers at linoleum, wax cloth, wall paper, artificial flower, and feather manufacture) held aloof.

Another organization which decided to go over to an industrial basis was the Transport Workers' union, which met in the fall of 1922. It decided to start in on January 1, 1923, under the name of "Deutscher Verkehrsbund," and to embrace everything that was identified with the transportation and communication "industry." It was especially anxious for the railroad workers (who, by the way, are organized in one union and not, as in the United States, in 16 organizations) to join them and thus practically to make an all-embracing industrial organization possible; but the railroaders are still holding off, partly because of the fact that they are state employees and do not see exactly to what commitments their affiliation with workers in non-state enterprises may lead them.

As far as the graphic arts are concerned, it should be noted that there are now four unions for the graphic trades—the printers, the book binders, the lithographers (including photographers, engravers, xylographers, etc.), and the apprentices in these three branches, who are organized in one union. These four unions have for several years maintained a joint council, somewhat like that now obtaining for the various unions in the clothing industry of America. This joint council performs many of the functions which the executive of an industrial union of the graphic trades would perform. But actual amalgamation has thus far been prevented by the action of the largest of the four, the printers' union, which insists that such questions as the sick and death benefits must first be regulated and brought to a uniform basis, before amalgamation is practicable. In point of fact, the four unions have already taken the step of revising their by-laws so as to make them practically the same for the four bodies. Amalgamation and reorganization on an industrial basis is apparently well under way.

A rather interesting situation obtains with reference to the trades that have to do with the manufacture or preparation of articles of food and drink. There, the bakery and confectionery workers by a large majority as far back as 1921 voted in favor of uniting with the brewery and mill workers and with the butchers and meat market workers. The meat workers also voted in favor. Likewise the brewery and mill workers. But when it came to carrying out what all favored, it was found that really the hotel work-

ers and the workers in cafes and restaurants, too, belonged to the "industry"—or at least the persons who have to do with cooking and serving. Negotiations were begun with the hotel and restaurant workers' union, but without result. The brewery and mill workers, tired of waiting, then simply started out by themselves under the name of "Lebensmittel und Getraenkearbeiter" (Workers in the Food and Drink Industry); and they have left the door open for this nucleus to become an industrial union. In Berlin the situation has advanced to the point where on October 5, 1922, the Hotel and Restaurant Helpers, the Bakers, and the Butchers adopted a resolution in joint session after a number of preliminary conferences, in which they call attention to the fact that practically all trades in question favor amalgamation and the creation of an industrial union, and in which they urge that the policy of dilatoriness be abandoned and effective measures be at last taken to bring about what everybody concerned desires. Meanwhile the communist group among the tobacco workers is agitating for this trade, too, to be amalgamated with the Food and Drink Workers' Industrial Union when this is consummated.

The leather industry is well on the way toward industrial unionism. A recent referendum of the saddle makers, upholsterers and leather pocket (brief cases, etc.) makers carried the day for those favoring amalgamation with the shoe makers and leather workers. The shoe makers, too, while disinclined toward the idea of amalgamating with the clothing workers for forming a wearing apparel workers' industrial union, are reported in favor of joining with the leather workers. Their president, Joseph Simon of Nuremberg, has long been a champion of industrial unionism.

As far as the miners are concerned, it is obvious that all who have to do with actual coal digging are already in one union. But to make the union an industrial one, it is also necessary that machinists, carpenters and other non-coal-digging workers in the mining industry be joined to the miners. Once the whole German labor movement goes over to the industrial basis, some of the unions that now hold on to their members engaged in the coal industry will be quite ready to yield them up to the miners' federation.

The above analysis reviews the situation in the principal industries and trades of Germany. When once the various combinations that I have outlined above are effected, most of the 46 unions in the German movement will have disappeared and a few industrial unions will have taken their place. Certain unions, like that of the machinists and firemen or of the ship carpenters, will simply

be divided up among various industrial unions and disappear. The machinists and firemen, for instance, will belong to the metal workers, or the miners, or the municipal and state workers, depending upon where the individual machinist or fireman works. The ship carpenters will probably be divided up between the metal workers and the building trades. It is perhaps rather natural that both these unions should thus far have been unalterably opposed to industrial unionism. Their trade union will disappear completely!

That leaves, then, only a number of small unions to be considered within the scope of this article. There are, for instance, the fire department workers. But these will naturally belong to the municipal and state workers' industrial union. There are the musicians on the one hand, and the chorus singers and ballet dancers on the other. The least they can do is to amalgamate in one union. Perhaps they should join with the movie operators. Just where to put the chimney cleaners I leave to the General Executive Board

of the German Federation to figure out. The barbers have themselves suggested that they belong into the wearing apparel workers' industrial union, since the cut of one's hair is quite as vital to one's apparel as is the cut of one's clothes! The gardeners would probably, under the industrial scheme, be amalgamated with the land workers (farm hands).

To sum up: industrial unionism is beyond the theoretical stage in Germany. The German labor movement is face to face with the concrete problem of how to transform from a trade to an industrial basis. The German has a faculty for going at everything rather slowly and deliberately, but also thoroughly. But in the case of the organized workers' movement, the capitalists themselves are compelling speed, for German industry is rapidly falling into the hands of but a few men and trusts. To this concentration of capital and management; the German workers see full well, they must answer by a concentration of their ranks along industrial lines.

## Compulsory Arbitration

By Jay Fox

THE politicians have found a new and most plausible excuse for the continuance and intensification of their persecution of Organized Labor. The worker's principal weapon so far employed in their struggle with organized capital in this country is the strike. The capitalists realize this fact to a greater extent than do even the workers, and have schemed for many years to have the public outlaw strikes by the passage of a federal law. But they have not been able to put it over. They have lacked a catchword with which to build up a sufficient body of public sentiment favorable to their plot. Now they have it: "The public must not be discommoded by the stoppage of industry."

You hear the politicians mouthing that phrase now, like a cage full of parrots, and the newspapers echoing the voice of the masters from Maine to California. The innocent public must be protected from the wicked strikers by making it a crime to strike. Congress must pass a law abolishing strikes. And why not? Strikes are ugly things. They cause much suffering at times, and they always stop the ready flow of dividends into the money bags. The bosses have labored for many years and spent millions of their hard-earned money in an effort to protect the dear public from the ravages of strikes; still the rabid strikers continue to practice their barbarous sport of demanding a decent living for themselves and

their families, never giving the least thought to the convenience of the poor suffering "public" of which they are themselves the most vital part.

As a matter of fact, the workers *are* the public. Take away the capitalists, storekeepers and professionals, and the "public" would still be there in its hordes, composed entirely of workers. The worker is both striker and public, but he is not recognized as the public in any of the deliberations in which the public is involved. It is always the professional man or small capitalist who is selected to represent the public. The professional is a potential capitalist. His decisions, where he has a voice, go for the capitalists. On the Railroad Labor Board the representatives of the "public" voted solidly with the capitalists. As a matter of fact, there is no third party in the economic and social world. One is either worker or capitalist. Now and then a professional man comes out openly on the side of the workers. But not often. Economically and socially the professionals have more to gain by voting with the capitalists than with the workers. And once that is known the matter of where the professionals stand is a settled question. The professionals don't represent the public by a damsite.

The cry that the public must be protected from the ravages of strikes is a false cry. It is a trick invented by the capitalists to get support in their

war upon Organized Labor. If the capitalists can only get the strike outlawed they have the unions licked. Arbitration sounds good to the ears of a pacifist, but it does not hand out justice to the workers. The capitalists know this only too well, and since they have been unable to destroy the organizations of Labor by the use of gunmen they are now anxious to have the "public" take the matter in hand and use the standing army.

### Stay On the Job or Go to Jail

The next congress may pass a law for the "protection" of the "public" and for the "benefit" of the workers, forcing the employers to submit to arbitration, and, incidentally the workers also. Then a board of arbitration will be appointed by the president, an "impartial" bunch, like the Railroad Labor Board, and we will have economic peace for ever after. The board will decide what we shall eat, where we shall live, and the kind of clothes we will wear, for our wages regulate all these details of our lives. From the board's decisions we will have no appeal. We must not strike, for it will be a crime to repudiate the actions of the board. It will be clearly up to us to stay on the job or go to jail.

Of course, they won't debar us from quitting, individually; not right away. That will be left for a later date. It will be the next step in the progress of the movement for universal peace and freedom of industry. That there is a principle in law which decrees that what it is legal for a person to do individually cannot become a crime when done in the company of others, is not here nor there in these progressive times. It is old stuff and our forward-looking supreme court would so declare it. If the unions call a strike

the act will be denounced as a conspiracy against the public welfare and fines, imprisonment, and dissolution will follow.

### Words Won't Win Labor's Fight

Without being a prophet or a seer one can see this condition approaching. The public is being prepared for it by a subtle propaganda that only Wall Street knows how to put over. And there is only one thing that can prevent this approaching doom of the Labor movement—a vigorous drive for amalgamation and organization on the part of the unions. Action is needed now as never before. Amalgamation must be speeded up and drives for membership must be inaugurated. Words won't win Labor's fight for life and liberty. Action is the demand of the hour. If our officials won't change their tactics and get busy along these lines, men and women from the ranks must take the lead.

President Gompers assures us that he has checked Wall Street's union smashing campaign. We wish it were so, but it is not. Wall Street is not worried by grandiloquent words. Neither must we permit ourselves to be lulled into a false security by the sound of the old man's voice. The very best excuse for doing nothing is the belief that there is nothing to do. If the executive council thinks there is nothing to do, that the danger is passed, while all around the enemies of Labor are busy framing for its downfall, then that council is blind and incompetent. If it sees the dangers surrounding the Labor movement and will not act, it is false.

Whatever the cause, it is plain the official machine does not move. Thus it is up to the wide-awake workers to get together and prepare the Labor movement for the impending struggle.

## League Entertainments and Dances

*Dances and entertainments are being held in many cities throughout the country, for the benefit of the Trade Union Educational League and to extend its work. The National Committee sent out a uniform letter to all local Leagues asking them to get busy on this plan to raise funds, and the response has been good. Chicago is arranging a Grand Ball on New Year's Eve, at which several thousands are expected. Within a short time response has come from New York City, Boston, St. Paul, Los Angeles, Canton, Spokane, Cleveland, Portland, Valier, West Concord, Johnston City,*

*Milwaukee, Gary, Christopher, and several other points. A splendid spirit of cooperation has been shown, with a determination to make things move, typified in a letter from Yukon, which says: "We will go on with the dance, I assure you. Whatever happens, except sickness or death of our workers, we will have the entertainment for the benefit of the T. U. E. L." If every member of the League will help in the same spirit, it will be possible to fully finance the work of our organization for the season. What are you doing?*

# Railway Carmen Vote on Amalgamation

By O. H. Wangerin

**W**HEN the amalgamation issue became a burning one in the railroad unions, the lodges of the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America were among the most enthusiastic advocates of the Minnesota Plan. Responding to the desire expressed all over the country for action to actually bring about this much-needed move, Lodge No. 299, of Minneapolis, initiated a referendum on March 22nd, 1923, which was seconded by 55 other lodges in 28 States and Provinces in the United States and Canada. But the Grand Lodge officials, instead of complying with the laws of the Union and submitting the referendum to the membership for their action, ordered that the referendum should not be sent out.

Lodge No. 299 has not been content to allow this usurpation of power to pass unchallenged. It is again submitting the proposed amendment to the laws of the Union, providing for energetic efforts towards amalgamation of the railroad unions, to the Grand Lodge and, at the same time, has sent out a letter to all other Lodges telling them of their action and asking support in the move. The letter says, in part:

"Lodge No. 299 firmly believes that the General Executive Board acted wholly without authority in denying the membership the right to vote on this important proposition, and it has therefore decided to resubmit the amendments to a referendum vote. In view of the fact that our reply to the General Executive Board's letter was refused space in our Journal, and so that the membership may hear both sides of this vital question, we believe that it is only fair that we state herein why the proposed amendments are again submitted to our membership. . . .

The pretexts upon which the Executive excused its violation of the Union Laws are taken up, one by one, in the latter and shown to be false and inconsistent. But the heart of the whole opposition to amalgamation is laid bare when the General Executive Board is quoted as saying: "We want to here call your attention to the fact that advantage accruing to the membership through improved working conditions, increase in pay, etc., have been brought about through the instrumentality and aggressiveness of our own Brotherhood." "It is our judgment that whatever benefits may accrue to you in the future will be the result of your own activity, loyalty and cooperation with your own organization." Lodge No. 299 says, commenting upon this language:

"It is the language of craft unionists, pure and simple, who do not believe in one organization for all railroad workers. They deny the truths of the past and refuse to acknowledge the needs of the

future. If, after all, everything came as a result of our own efforts, why then have we spent so much time and trouble on federation? And as for the future, if we must, as the General Executive Board says, depend only upon our own craft union, then indeed we are in a bad way. The great strike, still lingering on many roads, has proved beyond all question of doubt to all who can or will learn, that no single union or loose federation of any of the 16 organizations can possibly stand in the face of the powerfully united companies."

When the amalgamation referendum was first proposed by Lodge No. 299, it received a great amount of enthusiastic support; it is now being submitted again, and again every legal technicality has been complied with so that the G. E. B. will have no reason whatsoever for preventing the vote from being taken. The spirit of the carmen throughout the country, in common with hundreds of thousands of other railroad men, is expressed in the letter of Lodge No. 229:

"The membership must make itself heard in no uncertain terms. If we stand for amalgamation now is the time to act. It is not enough simply to be for amalgamation, we must act to bring it about, using the orderly and legal channels provided by the laws of our union. As a result of the shopmen's strike many of our unions are scattered and shattered, with immeasurable suffering for thousands of our members. The whole structure of railroad unionism is threatened with annihilation. The only thing that can save the situation is a complete amalgamation of the 16 unions into one all-powerful organization."

Reports on the progress made by this referendum, which is of historic importance in the development of industrial unionism in America, are now coming in. A partial list of the lodges that have already indorsed the amendment submitted by Lodge 299 was printed in the Nov. 22nd issue of the "Railroad Amalgamation Advocate." Section 9 of the Carmen's Constitution says: "If the proposed change is indorsed by five Local Lodges, no two in the same state, territory or province, the Gen'l Sec'y-Treas., shall publish it in the next issue of the Journal and shall, at the expense of the five Local Lodges, submit it to a general vote of the membership." Already over ten times the necessary number of indorsements as required by the constitution have been received, coming from every section of the United States and Canada, and among which are the largest and most powerful lodges in the Brotherhood. This sweeping indorsement demonstrates beyond all shadow of doubt where the membership of the B. R. C. of A. stands on the question of amalgamation and the referendum when submitted to a vote next January will be overwhelmingly adopted.

# Legal Status of the Russian Workers

By Moissaye J. Olgin

**T**HE labor unions of Soviet Russia are grounded in the law of the state. Their functions are twofold. As labor unions they represent the workers and employees of private and public economic enterprises and defend their interests. As part of the proletarian dictatorship they participate, through representatives, in most of the economic and political institutions of the state, including the management of the state-owned industries. It is, however, as representatives of labor that they are treated in this article.

It has already been stated that the unions are organized on an industrial basis. Their chief activities are: 1. establishment of a scale of wages for each industry, by the Central Executive Committee of all Russian unions according to schedules worked out by the respective unions, (The scale of wages is being revised periodically, ordinarily once a month, to meet the changes in the prices of commodities, the fluctuations in the currency, and also to profit by improved economic conditions which allow for a rise in wages; the scale cannot go below a minimum wage established for the Republic each month by the central government—the Council of People's Commissars); 2. establishment of collective agreements between the workers on the one hand, the managers of public and private industrial enterprises on the other; 3. supervision and control over the industrial enterprises in order that the terms of the agreements, the labor laws concerning wages, hours, overtime, vacations, etc., be carried out; 4. cultural work. The latter two functions are mainly carried out through the Factory Committees.

In accordance with paragraph 16 of the Soviet Constitution, the law provides that "all state organs are obliged to render the labor unions and their combinations all possible assistance, putting at their disposal well equipped buildings for use as labor palaces, union headquarters, granting them rate reductions on the mails, the telegraph and telephone, the railways and the water transport, etc." The headquarters of the union are, accordingly, located in the best palaces and houses requisitioned from the bourgeoisie.

The nucleus of the union is the Factory Committee. It is being elected by the workers of each industrial establishment, or their delegates, at a general meeting. The number of the Committee members is no less than three and no more than ten. It is the representative of the work-

ers on the spot and forms the local nucleus of the industrial union. Representatives of all local Factory Committees of a certain branch of industry form the local committee of the union. The Factory Committee is the *sole* representative of the workers within the industrial establishment. No other committee of representatives may enjoy the same rights as the Factory Committee.

The functions of the Factory Committees are: 1.—to see to it that all rules and regulations concerning wages, hours, safety, health conditions, social insurance, etc., be observed by the administration; 2.—to represent the worker before public and state institutions, 3.—to improve the material and cultural situation of the workers; 4.—to aid (in state-owned industries) in improving the work of the industrial establishment and in regulating the economic organization in general.

The members of the Factory Committee are being elected according to rules laid down by the respective unions. The members of the Committees do not lose their regular wage provided by the employers (whether private or public) while they are serving on the Committee. Members of the Committee can be discharged by the employers (within regulations set for all workers) only with the consent of the respective union. No hindrances are to be put by the administration of an industrial establishment to the activities of the Factory Committees. The members of the union administration or their special agents, have free access to all the shops, divisions, departments, laboratories, etc., in a given industrial establishment. The administration of the establishment is obliged to put at the disposal of the Committee well equipped rooms, with heat and light, for use as Committee offices and also for general meetings of the workers or their delegates. General meetings of the workers or their delegates where public functions are being performed, such as the election of delegates to union conventions, or election of representatives to institutions of social insurance, or election of Soviet representatives, are to be held during labor hours, no reduction in wages being allowed for time thus spent. Other meetings, of a private nature, are to be held outside of labor hours.

The basic labor day for all industrial work, including the transportation system, is a maximum of eight hours. The labor day for underground work and for dangerous or especially unhealthful occupations is six hours. The labor day

for young workers between the ages of 16 and 18 is six hours, similarly for brain and office workers, excluding office work directly connected with production where it is eight hours. Seven hours of night work are considered equal to eight hours of day work. Where production allows it, the basic night shift is seven hours. Where it is impossible, a corresponding addition of one-eighth or one-sixth to the wages is provided.

Overtime is prohibited unless required for the safety of the Republic, to prevent public calamities, or to make emergency repairs in the means of transportation and communication, in the lighting, heating and canalization equipment. Overtime is also permitted in order to repair industrial equipment where there is the danger of interrupting work for considerable numbers of employers. In such cases the total hours of overtime should not exceed 120 in a year and should not exceed 4 hours in two consecutive workdays. Payment for overtime is time and a half for the first two hours, double for all hours above two.

A weekly rest period of consecutive 42 hours is provided by law. Six hours of the sixth day being considered a full day. This makes a maximum of 46 work-hours weekly. Work performed in rest days (in emergency cases) is paid double. All workers whose employment was not interrupted for more than two weeks in the course of 5.5 months (even if they changed the place of employment) are entitled to two weeks vacation yearly. Workers engaged in especially unhealthy or dangerous occupations receive a month's vacation. Persons under 18 years of age are also entitled to a month's vacation.

Night work for women and young workers under the age of 18 is forbidden. Occupation in especially unhealthy or dangerous undertakings is prohibited for the same categories of workers. Eight weeks before and eight weeks after childbirth, women are freed from work. For women brain workers, the terms are six and six weeks. The employment of workers under the age of 16 is prohibited.

Law and practice distinguish between the *collective agreement* and the *labor contract proper*. The collective agreement is being concluded between the labor union on the one hand, the employers of labor (public or private) on the other. The agreements may be general, for the entire industry, or local, for one or several establishments. The terms of the agreement apply to all employees whether they belong to the union or not. No collective agreement may give to the members of one union privileges over the members of another union. No collective agreement is binding in those points which render the situa-

tion of the workers worse than is provided by the labor codes. No union is to pay damages for the violation by its members of the terms of the agreement.

The labor contract proper is concluded between employees or groups of employees and employers without the aid of the union. The terms of a labor contract should not render the situation of the work worse than is provided by the labor codes, the collective agreements and the shop regulations. In other words, while the law does not compel the worker to use the medium of the union for the conclusion of a labor contract, it prohibits him to go below union conditions. The change of ownership of an industrial establishment does not invalidate the labor contract. The transfer of workers from one establishment to another cannot take place without their consent. No secret information or agreements between employers concerning conditions of employment are allowed. Labor contracts can be declared null and void by the respective labor unions. The employers have then the right of appeal before the machinery for the settlement of conflicts.

Conflicts between employers (public or private) and workers can be settled in various ways, through a number of bodies. The body closest to the workers is the Tariff-Conflict Committee composed of an equal number of representatives from the Factory Committee and the administration of the industrial establishment. The jurisdiction of the Tariff-Conflict Committee embraces only the application of the terms of the collective agreements and labor contracts to local conditions. The decisions of the Tariff-Conflict Committees are final.

Questions concerning the very terms of the agreements or labor contracts, also questions where no decision could be reached in the Tariff-Conflict Committees, may be transferred by the conflicting parties to special Conciliation Chambers or Courts of Arbitration, composed of equal numbers of representatives from the workers and the administration. The decisions of those bodies are final. Their realization in practice is left to the conflicting parties in the case of Conciliation Chambers. The decisions of the Court of Arbitration are being enforced by the People's Courts as far as the employer is concerned, and by the labor unions as far as the workers are concerned. In cases involving criminal prosecution for the violation of labor laws or collective agreements, special sessions of the People's Courts are provided. The Court consists of one Presiding Judge, one representative of the Labor Commissariat, and one of the labor union. The Labor Commissariat has supreme control over the enforcement of the labor laws.

# Expulsions Please Clothing Bosses

By I. L. Davidson

**E**MPLOYERS in the clothing industry have been highly gratified by the attempted expulsion of the left-wing militants from the I. L. G. W. U. by Sigman, Perlstein, and their assistants. They see the terribly weakening effect that it has on the organization, and they are making ready to reduce wages and cancel other gains made in the past. Already they have registered this situation in Cleveland, where Perlstein signed an agreement in which the Union surrendered many things gained but a short time ago. The clothing workers are beginning to pay the price for the insane policies of the officials.

The "open shop" forces have long battled to destroy the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. But in spite of all their efforts and all the money spent upon their project, they could not stop the steady progress of the Union. Many times our organization went into battle with them and, despite leadership that was often stupid and reactionary and despite the resulting battle within the Union between "lefts" and "rights," the Union emerged from them stronger than ever. So long as the essential unity of all workers in the industry, without regard to political beliefs, was maintained as the basis of the Union, just so long the Union held its own or made progress against the bosses.

But the stupidly destructive tactics of Sigman & Co., in attempting to cut off bodily a large section of the Union, to disfranchise it, to take away its rights of free speech, press, and assemblage, these have done what the bosses could not do with all their money. Never in the past has the Union suffered in struggles with the bosses, as it is now suffering from the policies of its officials. The employers, if they spent twice as much money, could not have done us so much harm as have Sigman and his assistants in the past few months.

No, it is not the boss's money that is hurting us now. We are being forced to pay for our own injury. The official policy is being carried through by spending the \$4. assesment ordered by the last Convention for the purpose of raising a fund of \$400,000 to pay off the Union debts and start an organization campaign. A great demand was being raised from the rank and file for the organization of the unorganized, and the assesment was voted gladly, because everyone thought it meant organization work and payment of debts. But what a disillusionment have we been given! The assesment is collected, the

money is spent, the debts are unpaid, and the industry is less organized than ever. In fact, the industry is slipping out of the control of the Union, and is being taken over by the "co-operative" (or "social") shops.

Only a bluff at organization work has been made. Right after the Convention the Eastern campaign started with much publicity, and reports were made in *Justice* until recently that results were good. The conditions were ripe for organization work. That did not fit into the plans of those who were controlling our Union, however, and all the forces of the organization had been turned some months ago to expelling and disfranchising members instead of bringing in new ones. In the official organ today we read, instead of hundreds of new members and new locals organized, the story of disorganization, how they will break up Local 22 if other members are not expelled, how they will re-organize Local 9 if it does not pass the motions they dictate. All the while the money is being spent like water.

Philadelphia is another city that has called for organization work. The convention congratulated Local 15, in that city, for the wonderful fight they gave the dress manufacturers there. They have yet a Local which is ready at any time to renew the fight. Conditions were unbearable and finally the word was given for an organization campaign. The militants went to work full force. No longer than two months elapsed, however, when the whole campaign was destroyed by the expulsion orders.

The dress and cloak makers in Philadelphia, in spite of their bitter war with the manufacturers, had maintained an organization of considerable strength. The dress makers Local, although it lost some members in the struggle, still retained about 500 members. But Sigman & Co. insisted upon expulsions, and when the Local refused to throw out its most active members, they "reorganized" the Local with 50 members. Local 2 was reorganized in the same manner, with but a handful of members. Philadelphia is being shattered by the destructionists.

Cleveland is a city that has been controlled by large manufacturers. The Union spent great sums to establish an organization there. Due to the system installed there by Mr. Perlstein, the standard of production with efficiency experts, half of whose expense is paid by the Union, the treasury was kept empty, so they had to call upon the International to assist in the organization

drive. Sigman and the International officers came to Cleveland, and the members prepared to tell them how hundreds of workers are walking the streets while their work is being done in non-union shops, how others are getting only 18 weeks work although the agreement guarantees 41 weeks, and other problems of the trade.

Before they could state their problems, President Sigman declared that they could take up nothing of the sort. His purpose in coming to Cleveland was to see that his orders for the expulsion of certain members should be carried out. The local agents of the G. E. B. then proceeded with the disruption, with the result that in Cleveland the Union has no time for organization work. It is too busy carrying out the expulsions ordered by Sigman and Perlstein. Black and Co., Prince & Bidderman, and the other manufacturers, with all their money could not have purchased so good a job of union-wrecking.

The membership everywhere has been overwhelmingly opposed to the expulsions. Further evidence of this was seen in the Philadelphia meetings where, with Sigman and his assistants present, Local 2 voted 500 to 10 to reject the expulsion order. Local 15 followed with a similar action. The same results have occurred everywhere when the membership had a chance to vote.

Some time ago Perlstein, in an effort to bolster up the expulsion policy, interviewed the old veteran of the labor movement, Eugene V. Debs, and asked him for a statement on the proposition. Debs was just starting on a trip west, and gave a statement in which he said that he was not acquainted with the merits of the controversy but that he stood for solidarity. This was sent out by Perlstein all over the country with the statement that Debs had approved the expulsion campaign. Foster wrote to Debs, asking him if this was true. Debs repudiated the story and suggested that a conference should be arranged, in which he should be glad to take part, which could stop the disruptive expulsions. Foster immediately approved of the proposal and suggested that Debs should arrange such a meeting. Debs replied that he was in ill health and on the road, and suggested that Foster write direct to Sigman. This Foster did. His letter has been published in the weekly papers.

Debs was good enough for Perlstein to drag into the expulsion campaign, when the reactionaries thought they could use him for their own ends. But when Debs tries to stop the disruption, then they turn upon him. In *Justice*, November 9th, the officials of the I. L. G. W. U. say: "Both Debs and Foster are in error," "we would not deal in union matters with any self-styled outside impostors," Foster "tried to in-

volve our old Comrade Debs into this affair," and so on. Of a sudden Debs has become an "outsider" to them and, by proposing a conference on a subject into which they themselves dragged him, he has violated their "ethics." The whole Debs incident shows up Sigman & Co. in all their stupid arrogance.

The attempts to terrorize the membership into permitting the reactionary dictatorship to go on, by throwing those who protest out of the shops, instances of which were reported in *THE LABOR HERALD* last month, have continued. The latest case is that of Mrs. Cohen, who works for the New Style Dress Co., a shop which she herself organized. Because she refused to call a shop meeting in the morning while the girls were not all present and when a meeting was already scheduled for the same evening, she was assaulted and struck by one of Perlstein's business agents, Harry Roofer. When she complained to Perlstein, the latter advised her to go before the Joint Board, but when she did so that body refused to hear her. The next day Harry Roofer came to the shop and, in the name of the Union, ordered her removed from the shop. The members, reluctant to disobey even such an outrageous order as this, allowed her to leave the shop only because they all went with her to demonstrate their solidarity. As this is written the shop has been idle three days because of this shameful proceeding.

It is clear that the officials are trying to expel and disfranchise everyone who is opposed to them and their reactionary policies, before the coming Convention of the Union, in order that they may continue to control the organization. They seem to have not the slightest care as to whether the Union shall grow and become stronger, or whether it shall continue its present downward course. They seem to be determined to rule or ruin, and in the latter there is grave danger that they may be successful. It is up to the membership of the I. L. G. W. U. who can, if they will bestir themselves, put a stop to the present shameful course of events.

### **RUSSIA NEEDS SKILLED WORKERS FOR KUSBAS**

The Chicago Group Kusbas, which is organizing workers to fill this need, meets the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month, 3 P. M., at Labor Lyceum, 2733 Hirsch Blvd., Chicago.

All workers interested in this project are welcome. For information write **Kusbas, Room 307, 166 W. Washington Street, Chicago.**

# Who's Who In Prison; Eugene Barnett

By Ralph Chaplin

**T**HE hardest part of writing on "Who's Who in Prison," is to decide whom to write about.

There are so many clean-cut, upstanding rebels in American bastiles and the story of each is so full of color and interest that one is bewildered when asked to choose which one to write about. Each labor prisoner is not only a problem in liberty, as Senator Borah stated, but he is a living monument and a challenge to the injustice of our present social arrangements.

The big thing to keep in mind is that the class war prisoner is a human being, each with flesh and brain and nerves that are being tortured by the strong-arm men of capitalism. But while it is true that each man thus behind the bars today has his peculiar individual appeal to the hearts and the intelligence of mankind, still, the individual is always merged in the group. And while it may be more interesting to read about the personality of an individual prisoner, still it must not be forgotten that the group, usually indicated by colorless numbers, is the more important thing.

Harrison George, no doubt with the best intentions in the world, wrote a little story about me, for the "Who's Who in Prison," series, that has made me lots of enemies. In prison and out, Harrison George praised me; and many persons thought that he singled me out and neglected the large group of prisoners of which I was only a humble member. The impression prevailed that I doted on such praise and welcomed the "lime-light" that should have spread its illuminating splendor impartially over all of us in prison.

I would like to write of Eugene Barnett, but I do not wish to be so misunderstood as to put this brave young man and his valiant fellow workers in a false light. Barnett is fine and big and lovable. But the others of the Centralia group, each in his own way is equally interesting and equally important. Barnett is selected as the subject for this article because he is representative of the Centralia prisoners in particular and of the class war prisoners as a body.

Barnett was convicted in 1919, with the group of I. W. W. loggers in Centralia who defended their union hall from a murderous mob of "respectable" citizens and white guards of the capitalist class. He was sentenced, as were five others, to serve from 25 to 40 years in the Walla Walla, Washington, State penitentiary. Not one of the

mob that broke into and destroyed the lumber-workers' union hall and lynched one of its logger members, has ever been tried or punished. Such is the justice meted out to industrial workers, in the capitalist courts of America.

Eugene Barnett was not only born into the working class, but he was born a rebel. North Carolina is his birth-place. His parents are of old American stock. Barnett is not a "good American boy contaminated by foreign ideas," as the 100 per-centers claim. He is an American boy who learned of the class struggle from hard actual experience right here at home. If he is "contaminated" by any ideas at all, they are the ideas of independence, non-conformity and revolution, bequeathed to him by his pioneer forefathers.



EUGENE BARNETT

Barnett not only learned from life, he learned from books also. Going to work in the coal mines at the age of eight, he was impressed early in life with the meagerness and bitterness of the workers' existence under capitalism. Also he learned of the need for working-class organization. Afterwards he studied his way through, until he became an enlightened and class-conscious rebel. For a long time he belonged to the U. M. W. of A., but finally became an ardent believer in and member of the more militant I.W.W.

Eugene Barnett is fearless, in speech and in action. He is married, and has a splendid wife and a lovely little son. He is the only non-logger involved in the Centralia case. Together with his five logger companions, Barnett is now buried alive for 25 to 40 years in Walla Walla prison. Their crime was that they refused to permit their union hall to be destroyed and themselves helplessly murdered by a white-guard mob.

It is shameful to think that American working men will permit such valiant members of their class to remain in prison, without moving the heavens and the earth to get them out.

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*In THE LABOR HERALD for January, Sam Hammersmark will tell of his recent visit with Matthew Schmidt in San Quentin Prison, California. Schmidt is serving a life sentence as the result of his loyalty to Labor. He is one of the most interesting figures in America and you will appreciate Hammersmark's story.*

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### CAPITALISTS APPROVE ASSASSINATIONS

**M**AURICE CONRADI, a counter-revolutionary emigre from Russia and connected with the Fascisti, murdered in cold blood the Soviet Russian envoy to the Second Lausanne Conference, Vladimir Vorovsky, on May 10th. The assassination was in a public place before many witnesses, and the assassin admitted at his trial that he fired the shot. But in Lausanne, Switzerland, murder seems to be no crime providing that the victim is a communist, for dispatches on Nov. 16th announce that the courts have freed the murderer, Conradi.

Vorovsky's death was quite clearly the result of provocation from the Fascisti, supported and encouraged by British imperialism. It was a political stroke against the Workers' Government of Russia. Vorovsky, by his mere presence in Lausanne, had so strengthened the resistance to Allied imperialism among the peoples of the East and Near East, that the capitalist statesmen were thrown into a rage. Curzon launched the British ultimatums, Conradi fired bullets into the body of Vorovsky—both actions were part of the world-wide drive against Labor.

By the freeing of Conradi, the capitalists of the world have put the seal of their approval upon assassination as a part of their war against the Workers' Government. In contradiction to their hypocritical outcries against the "violence" of the Soviet Government, they have by this action announced to the world that they are the terrorists whenever it suits their ends. Murder is the weapon of capitalism, and is now accepted as such along with war, blockade, starvation, and slavery. That is the meaning of the acquittal of Conradi, the assassin of Vorovsky.

### HENRY FORD AND THE PRESIDENCY

**F**ORD, the biggest manufacturer and perhaps the richest man in America, wants to become the foremost politician. That he is striving for the Presidency is no longer a secret. It characterizes the present period of political instability that Ford is able to become a serious challenger in the race without committing himself to any party. He apparently is indifferent as to whether he runs on the Republican, Democratic or a new "third party" ticket. He represents the growing type of capitalist who impatiently brushes aside the ancient trappings of democracy to get more readily at the core of class rule. His advent on the political stage in America is a sign that this country is entering a new period in its history, reflecting in many important aspects the changes going on in Europe.

Henry Ford is becoming a rallying point for the growing Fascist groups as represented by the Ku Klux Klan as well as the more backward elements among the farmers and workers. He voices the familiar slogans of European Fascism, race-hatred, and narrow nationalism, with the inevitable opposition to labor unions. Personally, Ford is an ignoramus in everything outside the making of cars and profits, but as a representative of a definite historical tendency he is a classical figure. The strength of his following will be a measure of the length this country has gone on the road towards Fascism.

The workers should be interested in Ford's presidential ambitions as they relate to the formation of a broad Farmer-Labor movement in the next election. Ford's backers are making strenuous efforts to swing the Farmer-Labor elements behind his campaign. It is unthinkable that the conscious workers will allow this effort to succeed, but if it is not to become a danger the Ford "boomlet" among organized workers should be quickly squelched. Ford is the greatest immediate danger to the Labor Party movement.

### CO-OPERATING WITH CAPITALISM

**W**M. H. JOHNSTON, president of the Machinists Union and but recently classed as a "progressive," is out with a new panacea for the ills of the railroad shop unions. The cringing leadership typified in this man was pointed out and condemned in these columns last month, on the basis of his recent propaganda. Already his projects of collaboration with the railroad employers have crystallized in a definite institution for making of the labor unions an adjunct of the employers' organizations, designed to give the bosses more profits from the union members than can be wrung from the unorganized workers. The new Messiah has been greeted with joy by the capitalist press, and even muddle-headed labor editors are voicing shrill approval. In truth the proposal is a blow at the very vitals of unionism.

The new scheme is built upon strictly capitalistic lines. The shop-craft unions are to regard themselves as supply corporations, engaged in the business of selling "labor" to the railroads. Then, in the words of O. S. Beyer, Jr., the expert employed to install this lovely system, "Just as the large supply companies which now furnish our railroads with materials, such as air brakes and lubricating oils, send their experts out to help the managements in the efficient use of those supplies, so can the railroad labor organizations create their own service departments and send out experts to help the managements in the more efficient use of the human organization."

It is a plea in bankruptcy of the old leadership of the railroad unions which failed so miserably in the recent strike. Unable, because of its cringing spirit, to organize a real struggle that would make real gains for the workers and thus justify the existence of the union and win the loyalty of the workers, the bankrupts are trying to win the support of the capitalists to perpetuate their jobs as "leaders." To obtain support from the employers to replace that lost among the workers by their futile policies, they are willing to turn the union into an instrument for profit making and exploitation for the capitalists. The policy is, anything to keep the per capita tax coming in, anything to keep their nice positions. The employers will promptly take advantage of it so far as they can, despising these leaders meanwhile, and promptly kick them out the moment they beg for some concession for the workers. Labor unionism, the organized power of the workers to protect them against the exploiters, is destroyed by this deadly

poison. But Johnston and his kind will have their jobs, and as for the workers—give them a bit of life insurance, a Y. M. C. A., and a welfare worker. It is all the logical outcome of the policy of co-operation with the capitalist class.

### GOMPERS VERSUS DUNNE

THE American Federation of Labor News Service, the propaganda organ of Samuel Gompers, has long been a dry-as-dust and dead chronicle of uninteresting events related several weeks after they happened. The sheet has lately been developing another function; namely, to lie about the Communists and the left wing membership generally. A sample of the degradation of the publication is seen in the issue of Nov. 17, which, speaking of Wm. F. Dunne, says: "He openly professed his faith in Communism and his opposition to trade unionism." Brazen falsehood could go no farther than to say that Bill Dunne "openly professed his opposition to trade unionism."

Bill Dunne has a record of trade unionism that will compare favorably with any in this country. He held the banner of unionism aloft in Montana, defying the powers of the Anaconda Copper Trust, during years when it meant a continual battle for life. He kept the *Butte Bulletin* in the field when it had to be guarded night and day with rifles to protect it from the gunmen of the Trust. The trade union movement, not only of Montana but of the West generally, knows Bill Dunne and trusts him. Dunne's standing is too secure to be seriously injured by lies in the A. F. of L. News Service which is edited by Chester Wright, a renegade Socialist, who got cold feet during the war and joined the jingoes.

### THE SHOWDOWN NEAR IN GERMANY

STEADILY and inexorably the German revolution advances. Each week brings new developments which show beyond all question that the decisive hour is near at hand. One by one the various reactionary elements spend their powers in futile efforts. The Lüdendorf putsch follows closely on the heels of the separatist fiasco. The Streseman Government proves its complete inability to alleviate the growing misery of the people and to defend the interests of the nation as a whole from the aggression of the French imperialists. Chaos and disintegration are multiplied by every step it takes, no matter which way it turns.

The bourgeoisie of Germany has demonstrated clearly that it is no longer capable of fulfilling the functions of a ruling class. The moment of its bankruptcy, which Marx said would come when it could no longer "guarantee a living to the slave within his slavery" has long since arrived. More than that, it is unable to prevent the progressive impoverishment of the petty bourgeoisie, and it cannot maintain and defend the independence of the nation. It has already, by its surrender in the Ruhr, delivered a large section of the country over to the pillage and oppression of foreign capital. These facts seal its doom.

The working class is compelled, whether it wishes it or not, to take its destiny into its own hands, and also to become the leader of the whole country in the fight for National independence. All the conditions are maturing for the final struggle from which the proletariat will emerge as the ruling class. The Communist Party, the destined leader of the proletarian revolution,

is growing by leaps and bounds. It is winning over to its side the majority of the working class and organizing them for the struggle. At the same time, it is maintaining, in the face of the greatest provocations, a marvelous restraint and discipline which is not an avoidance of the fight, but a preparation for it. A part of the forces of reaction have already struck, and broken their swords; but the Communist Party has not made its great effort yet.

The last great barrier in the way of the proletarian victory—the counter-revolutionary influence of the Social Democratic Party—is rapidly being removed. The conviction has taken hold of the working masses that there is no salvation for them or for Germany save in revolution, and they are turning from the Social Democratic Party to the party of revolution, the communists. The final prerequisite for the revolution—the revolutionary will of the masses and their leadership by the Communist Party—is thus provided. Some delays are yet possible, but we can have every confidence of the final outcome.

The German revolution marks a turning point in the history of the human race. The victory of the German working class, and its alliance with Soviet Russia, will put the social revolution on the order of the day in every country in Europe. It opens up the prospect of an era which will release creative energies beyond the dreams of men.

The responsibility which rests upon the shoulders of the German working class must be shared by the workers of America. We are on our honor to prevent the sending of munitions or armed forces or the making of loans to be used against the German revolution. The German workers draw near to their crucial hour, and our fate and the fate of the world proletariat is bound up with theirs.

### NOVEMBER ELEVENTH, 1887

THE commemoration of the 11th of November that is of vital significance to the working class is not the "armistice day" collection of speeches by bankers and militarists. Long before there was a world war to prepare an armistice day, the class war had baptized November 11th with working-class blood, through the judicial murder in Chicago, 1887, of Parsons, Spies, Engels and Fischer, outstanding labor organizers, writers, and militants. These men were the pioneers of revolutionary unionism in America, and were of that group which placed the American labor movement in the forefront of the working class of the world. The mighty movement of labor that shook the world during the latter 80's found strong leaders in them for this country. It is of more than incidental interest that the Haymarket martyrs were hanged in Chicago in the same year that Alexander Ilyitch Oulianoff was hanged by the Czar in Russia. It is well for the labor movement today which is in such need of strong and fearless men, that their record is not forgotten, and that on November 11, 1923, meetings were held in Chicago and throughout the country in their honor.

### DAILY WORKER FUND NOW \$55,384.63

JOHN J. BALLAM, Manager, Daily Worker Campaign Committee announces that the total for the \$100,000 drive to establish the Daily Worker is now well past the \$50,000 mark and he urges all militants to put their shoulder to the wheel so that the militant daily paper can be established in Chicago by January first.

# THE INTERNATIONAL

**FRANCE** WITH the approach of the Bourges Congress of the C. G. T. U. the struggle of the various tendencies in the organization becomes more intense. The chief question at issue is that of international affiliation. Three distinct currents of opinion are manifesting themselves. One, organizing itself around the Revolutionary Syndicalist Committee, is a partisan of the Berlin International. It declares that the C. G. T. U. should remain outside of all Internationals until the holding of an International Unity Congress. Another current, organized around the Revolutionary Syndicalist Group, declares that the C. G. T. U. should remain affiliated with the Red International of Labor Unions "If the statutes of the latter are lived up to." In reality this is an abstentionist faction. The third current, representing the majority of the C. G. T. U., holds that the organization should unequivocally retain its affiliation with the R. I. L. U. In a statement the majority group categorically repudiates the idea of a break with the R. I. L. U. for the following reasons: "1. Because this idea is based upon a false conception of the international revolutionary movement and of the Russian revolution; 2. Because the Communist Party and the Russian unions constitute the very foundations of the Russian revolution, and that, far from being opposed to each other, they complement one another; 3. Because if the French movement, by its character and its originality, may differ somewhat from the general conditions in which the international revolutionary movement develops, it is incontestable that the latter, in its entirety, has the same character that the Communist Party and the Russian unions bear in relation to the Russian revolution; 4. Because we cannot pretend to subordinate the international movement to the conception of French Syndicalism; 5. Because the superiority of the latin movement in the ensemble of the international movement is far from being established."

Henri Barbusse has been arrested because of a speech he delivered in Berlin on Oct. 4th. The Poincare government, bearing in mind Barbusse's famous activities against war, intends to jail him if possible. Barbusse is accused of anti-militaristic propaganda. The offending statement, made at a meeting of ex-soldiers, which Barbusse promised to print and distribute among French soldiers, was as follows: "If they tell you to march against your German brothers, who carry in their hearts and hands the fate of the world proletariat, do not do it! Understand what side is your cause and your destiny before committing the crime of obeying your chiefs." Many organizations have rallied to the support of Barbusse. In a resolution adopted endorsing him, the French Communist Party repeats the statement of Barbusse and addresses it, on their own account, to the army of occupation on the Rhine.

**POLAND** THE recent explosion of the powder magazines in Warsaw has brought about a new era of terrorism in Poland. The Witos government has eagerly seized upon the excuse to persecute the left-wing elements. In Warsaw 147 revolutionaries have been arrested, and in Cracow 50, and in Leopold 65. All well known Communists, Syndicalists, and Anarchists are being persecuted. Many unions have been broken up by the advocates of the white terror. The bitterness of the class struggle has also been intensified by the great strikes in the metal, building, railroad, telegraph, postal and other industries. Originally these strikes were called by the red unions

in conjunction with those under conservative leadership. Now the whole movement has passed under Communist control.

**CZECHO-SLOVAKIA** THE elections in Czecho-Slovakia produced many new important developments. The first election held by the new government took place in 1920. There was another due in 1922, but the government, fearing the growth of radicalism among the people, postponed it for a year. Then they manouevred as though they would postpone it again but suddenly, to catch the opposition off its guard, set an election date close at hand. As the campaign developed and the elections took place, the government used every possible means of terrorism to break up the opposition, with the result that in only 9,000 out of 15,000 communes were there any opposition tickets. Notwithstanding this, however, the governmental forces suffered a severe defeat, retaining a majority by only a few seats. The Communist Party, newly formed, made an especially strong showing. The Social-Democratic Party, the leading party of the country just a couple of years ago, was badly beaten and in many districts completely shattered. The workers turned against it en masse. It is now one of the weakest parties in the country, while its new rival, the Communist Party, is one of the strongest.

**SPAIN** IN the face of the terrific opposition which the Spanish labor movement has had to confront since 1919, which has almost destroyed the union organizations, there has developed a strong tendency to make the whole trade union movement an underground organization. This took form recently in a decision of the local federation of the unions of the capital of Catalonia to henceforth operate clandestinely. This action brought forth a strong protest from the unions of Barcelona. Three of the biggest of them, including the metal workers, transport workers, and textile workers, of which the membership is respectively 20,000, 17,000, and 23,000, condemned all advocacy of an underground organization and insisted that the movement function in the open. They declared that to throw the unions upon an illegal basis will be to put them into the hands of Anarchist conspirators with a program of individual violence. They announced the principle that "the liberation of the working class must be the work of the entire working class." To the principle of heroic action on the part of a few militants acting alone, they opposed the program of coordinated and disciplined action by the masses.

**BULGARIA** THE failure of the Communist and peasant attempt to overthrow the Fascist-Socialist government of Tsankoff has been followed by a white terror of extreme degree. The Socialist minister Kasakoff, assisted by the remnants of Wrangel's army, the force that was used to beat back the revolution, is carrying on a wholesale campaign of executions. Up till October 3rd, according to the *Rote Fahne* of Vienna, over 15,000 workers and peasants had been executed. At Novo-Zagora, one of the centers of the insurrection, there were 600 executions; at Lompalanka, 1,000; and at Ferdinand, 200. Blagoieff, an old man, founder of the "narrow" Socialist Party, now become the Communist Party, was shot down and murdered much the same as were Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg.

**AUSTRIA** AT the recent convention of the Austrian National Trade Union Federation the question of the reorganizations of the trade unions on an industrial basis was discussed at length. A resolution was adopted declaring that large industrial unions, comprising both manual and non-manual workers, would seem to be the most suitable form for trade unions. An effort should be made to establish a single union for every undertaking. The condition preliminary to the formation of uniform industrial organizations of manual and non-manual workers, was the formation in individual undertakings of uniform organizations of wage earners on the one hand and salaried employees on the other. The trade union commission was instructed to determine the limits between the individual industrial groups and to submit proposals on the question at the earliest possible moment to a conference of the trade union committees.

**ENGLAND** THE decline in the membership of the British unions continues apace. In two years the total number of effectives, as reported to the Trade Union Congress, has fallen from 6,417,915 to 4,352,818. Not even the big "Back to the Union" organizing campaign has been able to prevent the slump. The workers are simply indifferent towards the unions. Many causes contribute to the falling away of the membership. Chief among these is the unprecedented unemployment which has prevailed for three years in England. This has greatly weakened the power of the unions, as well as the capacity of the workers to pay dues. Another factor is the disillusionment with trade union action that began after the loss of the Triple Alliance movement in 1921. The old conservative leaders of the unions are nonplussed by the situation. Without doubt a profound readjustment of policies and leadership will result in the near future from the crisis.

"Panel" doctors employed under the Insurance Acts in Great Britain are showing a militant spirit. At a conference in London recently they declared they would go on strike unless their demands are granted. There are 14,000 doctors involved. Over two-thirds of these have agreed to turn in their resignations if they are not given proper consideration. One doctor said there were four ways that the situation might be handled: submission, negotiation, arbitration, and conflict. The doctors present decided on conflict. The rebellious doctors claimed that practice expenses were at least 50% in excess of what they were in 1913-14 and that the 6% increase in rates offered them should be 57% to 70%. Over 15,000,000 people come under the Health Insurance Act and are directly influenced by the controversy.

**ITALY** THE first trial of the Communists arrested a couple of months ago and charged with revolutionary activities has resulted in an acquittal. It seems that the judges involved refuse to follow the terroristic lead of Mussolini. They declared that the activities alleged against the Executive of the Communist Party did not constitute a crime. The importance of this acquittal is considerable, because it constitutes a severe check to the government of Mussolini, who tries to create the impression that he has reduced the whole nation to his mercy and that everybody endorses his actions. The second trial of the Communist leaders, which will soon begin in Rome, will in all probability also terminate by an acquittal. Without doubt Mussolini will make every effort to prevent this by the use of his well known Fascist terrorism.

An interesting side-light on the Italian situation is the fact that the Italian Railway Syndicate, by a large majority, has decided to become affiliated to the General Confederation of Labor. Heretofore, the railwaymen's organization has stood aloof from the general labor movement, despite the most active efforts to secure its cooperation. What the intelligence of the workers, or rather the lack of it, failed to accomplish the terrorism of Mussolini has readily achieved.

## GOMPERS SHOWS SEATTLE WHERE TO HEAD IN

(Continued from page 7)

those responsible for it are by this time heartily ashamed. The whole thing was such an innovation in labor circles that men unused to financial methods may well have been too bewildered to analyze their action. Nevertheless the thing they did demoralized the spirit of our movement and tore it to pieces in factional strife in addition to the havoc wrought by the inevitable financial crash.

The radicals in the Council began an organized effort to clear the wildcatters out. They never had a better issue, and for a time it seemed that they would succeed. But, as frequently happens, they overreached themselves. For months the battle raged while the Council members who were neither wildcatters nor radicals tried to understand the truth of the matter. It was hard for this neutral group to choose between officials whom they had trusted for years and loud-talking radicals, some of whom were longer on talk than on constructive work. The radicals talked too loud and too long, and they showed little finesse. A reasonable victory would not satisfy them; they wanted to throw out all their opponents, bag and baggage, and the list was too long. And they made the mistake of confusing the general issue with special issues affecting the official newspaper, a paper which embodied the ideals of the progressives of both the city and state. In the end the radicals were beaten, and the labor movement, weakened by dissension, moved definitely to the right.

Throughout this whole chapter of events the paid officials of the Council, Secretary James A. Duncan and Business Agent Charles W. Doyle, to their credit kept their hands clean from unsavory financial schemes. The history of the Seattle Labor Council in its progressive days is closely identified with the work of Jimmy Duncan. Duncan and I were elected in 1915 as Secretary and President respectively on what was termed a progressive slate. Duncan was elected thereafter for eight years and made good in many ways his claim to be called progressive. In spite of the usual criticism from the Left, it is my opinion that Jimmy Duncan fought a good fight.

Naturally he made enemies. One of them was William Short, President of the State Federation of Labor. Short is a man of much energy and pugnacity. He is one of Gompers' trusted aids, and tries to rule the state labor movement as Gompers rules the Federation. His feud with Duncan is of several years' standing, increasing in bitterness until Short's desire to "get" his rival became his ruling passion. The principal controversy between them has been the political policy of organized labor. The move for a labor party started in Seattle and Short tried to head it off by organizing the Triple Alliance to enforce the traditional Gompers policy. He is a lobbyist of no mean ability, and he wanted the Al-

liance as a club to threaten recalcitrant legislators. It was a nasty dose he had to take when the Alliance went over to the Farmer-Labor Party so completely that he felt it necessary to move to make it unanimous.

As soon as possible Mr. Short set about the task of breaking the new party and restoring the political discipline ordained by Mr. Gompers, and during his endeavors Duncan continually got in his way. The Seattle Council backed up Duncan and the State Federation backed Short, and thus presented frequently the appearance of mutually hostile bodies. Short's anger grew until it embraced the whole Council and led him to a physical assault upon its president. The decline of the progressive element left Short with the whip hand. He decided that the time had come to make an example of the Council and reorganize it with his friends in control.

Out of a clear sky suddenly came a formidable communication from the A. F. of L. Executive Council stating that various charges had been filed against the Seattle Council and had been made the subject of a report by Organizer C. O. Young, who affirmed as follows:

"That Seattle Central Labor Union ignores communications from and defies the American Federation of Labor, its policies and its laws; that the Seattle Central body admits the full affiliation of delegates from local unions suspended by affiliated national or international unions or the A. F. of L., as well as delegates from independent unions; that the efforts of those who control and direct the policy of the Seattle Central Labor Union are directed along lines the object of which is to mould the Seattle labor movement to conform to the policies and principles enunciated by Soviet Russia; that the Seattle central body, in violation of the constitution of the American Federation of Labor, admits the full affiliation and representation of unaffiliated local unions; that the Seattle Central Labor Union is actively opposed to the Non-partisan Political program of the A. F. of L.; that the Seattle central body received with favor the report of H. M. Wells that the A. F. of L. should affiliate with the "Red Internationale," the report being printed in the Union Record, the controlling power of which is the Seattle Central Labor Union; that the Seattle Central Labor Union furnished credentials to a person to attend the Red Trade Union Internationale."

It was demanded that the Council make a refutation and pledge its conformity with the Federation laws and policies within a reasonable time. The Council made a strong and dignified reply which was printed in leaflet form. Most of the charges had not the slightest basis in fact and were indignantly denied. It was admitted that I had been given fraternal credentials to the R. I. L. U., that the Council favored the recognition of Soviet Russia and claimed the right to express such an opinion, and that the Lady Barbers' Union was chartered by the Council because they were excluded from the Federation on the ground of sex in violation of the Federation constitution. The Council once more requested a federal charter for these women, but promised to abide by the Executive Council's decision in the matter. The central body pointed to its record in opposing dual movements and declared itself "unswervingly loyal."

The reply of the Federation executive was an amazing one. It affected to believe that the Seattle body had virtually admitted the truth of all the charges, and voiced a stern reprimand, admonishing that its future conduct would be closely scrutinized. The Seattle Council reiterated their former assurances at greater length and asked for a day in court. This was given at the

Portland Convention. James A. Duncan was unanimously chosen as the Seattle delegate although he was no longer secretary of the Council, having refused to run for the office at the previous election.

The animus behind the prosecution became apparent at the hearing which began on September 29th before eight members of the Executive Council, Gompers, Morrison, Tobin, Duncan, Duffy, Ryan, Green, and Woll. It was evident that the officials, while they had no love for Jimmy Duncan, the Union Record, or the activities of the Seattle movement in general, were not disposed to try to throttle them. They felt it necessary to support Short to the extent of giving the Seattle Council a scolding, but they had no desire to go further. Gompers had indicated this when he said in his Seattle speech, "I am no man-hunter; if the Seattle delegates go to Portland in the right spirit an understanding can be reached."

The strongest point in the indictment proved to be the Seattle attitude on the political program, though Soviet Russia was, of course a good talking point. During the debate Vice-President Duncan remarked to Duncan of Seattle in a puzzled way, "Tell me, just what would we gain by revoking your charter? The new personnel and all would be about the same, wouldn't it?"

Said Samuel Gompers to William Short, "Now, if the Seattle Council means to go along with the Federation and observe its rules in future, that's all we want, isn't it?"

"No!" shouted Short, "They're liars. Revoke their charter."

But the charter was not revoked. Gompers is not sentimental about free speech, but neither is he indiscriminately tyrannical. Expediency demands a certain amount of local autonomy. If it were not so the dual unionists would make a better showing than they do. According to Jimmy Duncan himself, the Seattle affair was of much less importance in principle in the Portland Convention than the expulsion of Dunne.

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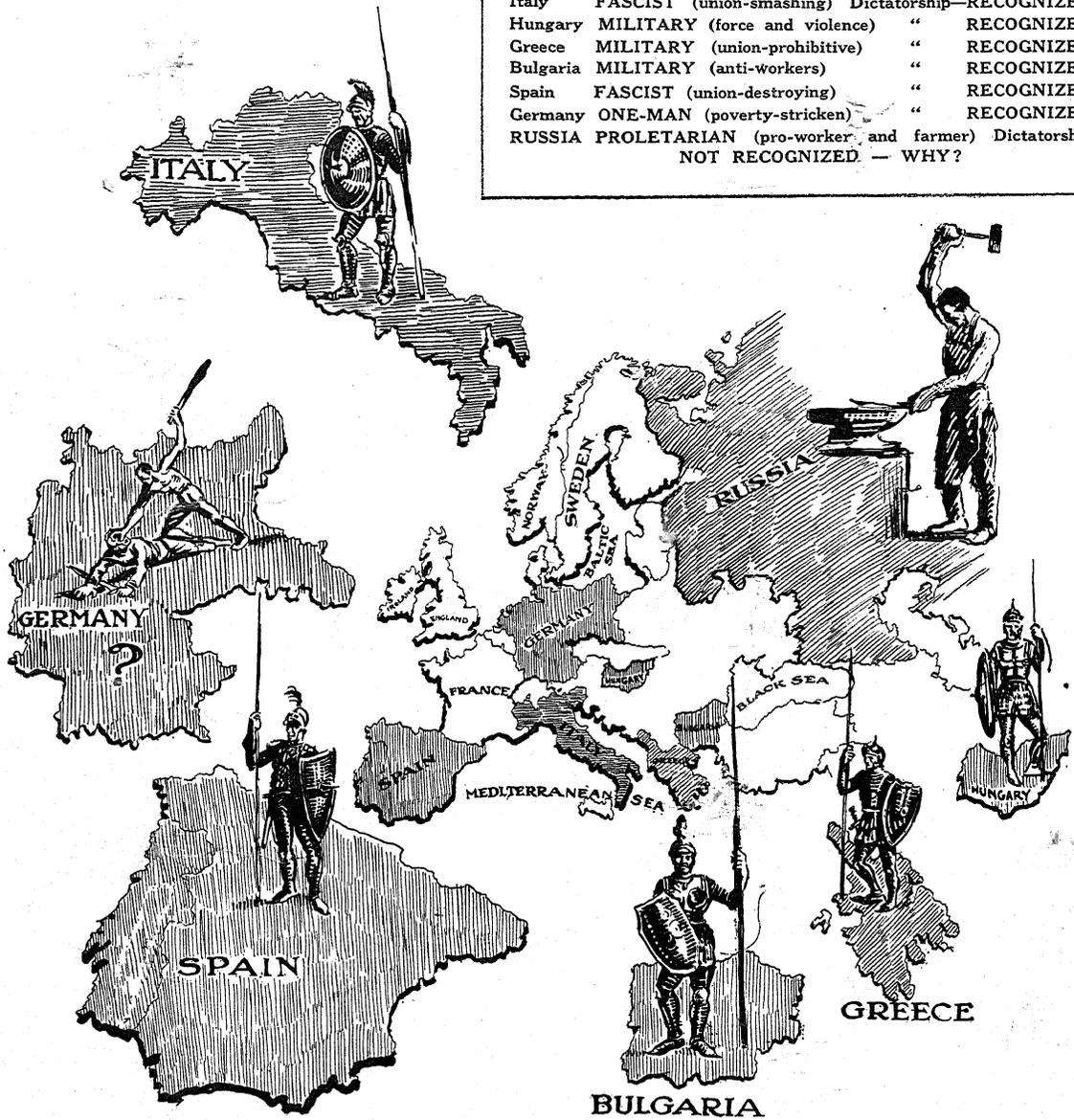
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