

Trade Union Unity Congress

BY I. AMTER

The Trade Union Unity Congress will be of supreme importance to the workers of the heavy industries. It is in these industries that the workers feel most the need of organization, for these industries are highly trusted and centralized and directly under the control of Wall Street bankers.

Only a short time ago, coal operators of Cleveland announced the formation of a \$2,000,000 coal trust, which will embrace coal properties of Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky. This trust will eliminate the small unproductive mines, introduce machinery of the latest types, and thus throw more tens of thousands of miners out of a job. Large aggregations of miners will labor for this trust—which unquestionably will be followed by the formation of further trusts in the coal industry.

The U. S. Steel Corporation, leader in the steel industry, is being met by the competition of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and the smaller concerns. But the merger of a Youngstown and a Warren steel concern, and the announcement that this merger will result in a consolidation with further concerns of Cleveland and other Ohio and Indiana steel companies, implicates the trend in the steel industry. This means the rule of J. P. Morgan extended still further in a basic industry.

The auto industry which has two prime movers—Ford and General Motors—is forcing the other smaller companies either to merge with one or the other of the above, or to form mergers of their own, or to go out of existence. This means the further control of Ford or Wall Street.

The rubber industry, today in the hands of few capitalists, is eliminating the small companies, for together with the auto industry, the rubber industry has become one of the basic industries. The chemical industry, one of the vital industries of war, is concentrating into fewer concerns, the power and utility concerns, the food industry—all basic for the promotion of economic life and for war—are being consolidated and put under the control of Wall Street bankers.

And finally the metal industry, essential for the building up of industry and for the production of munitions of war, although still spread over a large number of shops and concerns, is concentrating more and more.

What do these developments entail? They entail above all the investment of hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars of capital, which only the banks of Wall Street furnish, through stock selling. It involves transactions which reach on all industries, a correction of these industries and widely ramified manipulations of finance capital.

Ohio, a state of heavy industry—Cleveland the center of this state of heavy—or war—industry was correctly chosen as the center from which to launch the campaign to

Will Be of Special Importance to Workers in the Heavy Industries

organize 30,000,000 unorganized workers in the vital industries—the correct place to hold the trade union congress. Cleveland is the heart of the heavy industry of the country.

Wall Street—or financial capital—controls the economic and political life of the country. The concentration of control in the hands of 17 Wall Street banks, reaching out into the production, transportation and even consuming branches of economic life, indicates the power that finance capital has attained in this, the foremost capitalist country of the world. No longer do the workers work for their bosses! their bosses are bankers far away from the scene of production—men and women of the capitalist class who never see anything of and are not interested in the productive process, for their interest is confined to the profits that they derive.

Not so the 30,000,000 slaves who are toiling away their lives, subject to the most intense exploitation. Production per capita is continually increasing. New machinery, "labor saving" devices, instead of saving labor power for the benefit of the workers, is exploiting them more and more. New machinery involves bigger investment but less labor

power. It means higher production with fewer workers. 750,000 workers each year in the industries and on the land are being turned into the streets not to enjoy a vacation, but to starve for want of a job. These millions of unemployed workers enable the employers to cut and slash the wages of the workers, to lengthen their hours, to speed them up. The workers knowing what unemployment means, knowing nothing about organization, left to the whim and will of the straw bosses are unable to protect themselves, because against colossus of the trusts they cannot fight unorganized.

And behind these giants stands the capitalist state—the local, county, state and federal government—supporting the employer in every way with injunctions, police, militia, sheriffs, federal troops, jails, penitentiary and the electric chair. Witness New Orleans where a single stockholder in the street railway company is able to obtain an injunction against the strike activities of the carmen. Witness Gastonia, where the whole force of the government is behind the textile manufacturers, in the form of injunctions, police, deputies—and finally the governmental electric chair for the workers.

What is to be done in this situation? The American Federation of Labor accepts this situation, putting up a feeble, hypocritical protest, yet appealing to the very government handmen to protect the worker. The A. F. of L. officials back up governmental activities against the workers, even going to the extent of proposing a bill to outlaw strikes. The A. F. of L. officials join with the government in subjecting the workers of Latin America to the rule of Wall Street. The socialist party says amen to the attacks of the employers on the workers, turning its eyes to heaven in the hope that it may share in the exploitation.

The Muste group has been organized to deceive the workers who are turning to the left, and lead them back to the A. F. of L. It viciously fights against the Communists and the left wing.

The Trotskyites and the Lovestones, beginning from different angles, are attacking the plans of the Red International of Labor Unions and the Trade Union Unity Congress—both of them denying the leftward trend of the masses and avoiding militant action in the present situation.

The A. F. of L. does nothing to organize these hosts of workers. Its affiliated organizations cannot and will not organize them, for its craft form of organization cannot meet the demands of trustified industry. It continues the opposition of women workers, it will do nothing for the young workers, it discriminates against the colored workers—the categories of workers that are filling the industries.

Hence the task of the Trade Union Unity Congress. Already the Trade Union Educational League has established its roots in the mining, textile and needle industry, through the National Miners Union, the National Textile Workers Union and the Needle Workers Industrial Union. The movement now is into the heavy industries.

What is needed to meet trustified capitalism with its state protection is clear policy, industrial organization and militant leadership. The exploited millions in these industries look to Cleveland for the drive for organization. It will be a drive behind which is the dynamic force of all militants—Communists, left wingers, progressives, who have a clear vision of what the workers will face, and know that the determination of the workers must be organized—organized into revolutionary unions.

These revolutionary industrial unions must be linked up with like organizations over the world, to fight for the interests of the workers internationally. They find their international center in the Red International of Labor Unions.

War stares the workers in the face; the government is preparing the war to protect the interests of the capitalists. It is preparing for the war at home by crushing the

places is both present and active, because they are forgotten or have never come to light; most crimes are stifled in the memory. Only now and then, circumstances combine to set before us the living picture of some "exceptional fact." We cannot know everything, is our despairing cry, and our minds are maddeningly alive to the things we shall never know.

The ancients dedicated their works and deeds To the Unknown God—Deo Ignoto. I do not believe in God, but I believe alas! in the Unknown. This book I dedicate to the unknown afflicted, to that great multitude unknown in life and death, to the infinite affinity of the unknown, to those martyrs whose memory is utterly blotted out, who lie in destruction and oblivion underground, to that multitudinous host that eyes may see but have not seen.

This I do under the aegis of Justice, of that active and scientific law which embraces all here below. For soon or late, man's destiny upon earth must find its own adjustments, and at last we shall hear the sound as yet unheard, of marching feet that we sent on their way.

H. B.

PART I

THE WAR SONG OF A SOLDIER

"NO, I never had any luck," the poor soldier explained to the pretty girl.

One look at him told you as much. Long dealings with misfortune had made him shrink in upon himself, had thrust his eyes back in their sockets, clipped all his movements, like wings. His eyes—little points, dead black, dabbed in anyhow by a clumsy painter high up in the dismal oval of a swarthy face—his eyes gave the only touch of light in that dulled portrait. It was hard to say which had faded the most; the cloth of his great-coat, or the skin on his face. A sorry soldier! One would have said that a child's hands had built him, out of colorless and ill-assembled discs, and pyramids, and cubes.

"Some people are born to fail!" Those were the last words he had ever heard from his mother; they were all she could find to give him, as she lay on her deathbed, one eye already closed.

Nothing ever came to anything, when he put his hand to it. Day in, season out, he messed his work. He had lost the little that his parents had not lost before him. All his plans went awry, like the general plan of his body; they were crooked constructions, and soon toppled down. Remote he lived and shy, in a hard shell of silence. Women never noticed him; only one or two were charitable enough to laugh at his expense. As for men—they always looked through him at something else. It was as if the sun was going down upon him.

THIS stranger to human happiness had gone, of course, to the war—gone, likewise ingloriously. Not like the others, with the jovial alcoholic crowd; he had left his village alone, one night, just to fill up a gap, untrumpeted, undrummed, unreal as if he lived in the pages of some poor story.

In the slow column he marched unobserved, of all soldiers, the most obscure. Once, indeed, he had bravely rescued some comrades from death, but the exploit passed unnoticed like all that he did. Still, he had escaped hostile bullets and court martial, too.

And now he was back on leave from the land of human sacrifice, for six good days, anyhow.

It happened, during this little interval of time, that the face of things changed, and all through the choice of the gentle-hearted Clara. Oh! a mere turn in the wheels of chance, partly to be explained by a disappointment that had come to her, partly by the emptiness of a countryside stripped bare of young men, partly too—why not?—by sunshine, and youth. And so, down the green paths, she walked like some vision held in leash, chin pointed modestly down, by the side of this tall and dingy-hued soldier.

(To Be Continued.)

Imperialist Stunt Flights Come Frequent



Spanning the U. S. in 13 hours, Tex Rankin is shown above after his cross-country flight, one of those stunt flights Wall Street is carrying on to boost its aviation forces and thus trap youth into becoming cannon-fodder in the coming imperialist war.

workers, carrying on a struggle to break up their organizations, to hold them tight to the war machine. The Trade Union Unity Congress, speaking in the name of the 30,000,000 unorganized workers of the basic industries and the left wing of the existing unions—men, women, young workers, white and colored, will answer as follows:

In Cleveland, the heart of the heavy industry, we declare:

We will organize the 30,000,000 workers into fighting industrial unions!

We will build up a new militant leadership out of the rank and file!

We will fight against all traitors of the working class—the A. F. of L., the S. P., the Muste group, the Trotskyites and the Lovestonites!

We will link up with the revolutionary workers affiliated to the Red International of Labor Unions!

We will fight against imperialist war!

We will stand by the Soviet Union!

Forward to the Trade Union Unity Congress in Cleveland, August 31.