The convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, held in Decatur, Sept. 10-16, was one of the sharpest and bitterest clashes that have yet taken place between revolutionaries and the old guard in the American labor movement. The latter won heavily. They were well prepared for the fight. For months previous to the convention they had been drumming up their friends and reactionaries in the American labor movement. It was by far the largest convention ever held by any State Federation. Almost 700 delegates were in attendance, of which at least 300 were paid officials. The Milk Wagon Drivers of Chicago, for example, sent 43 delegates, their full quota, at $25.00 per day per man. The whole delegation of Chicago teamsters numbered 120, who voted as a unit against every progressive proposition. The reactionaries were determined to beat the revolutionaries at all costs.

The Labor Party Fight

The first big battle and the decisive one for the whole convention occurred on a resolution calling upon the American Federation of Labor to change its constitution so as to permit the organization of a labor party. This resolution, with small changes, had been earlier submitted to the Chicago Federation of Labor and passed unanimously by the delegates and a few week later, in diplomatic language, practically told the State Federation to keep its hands off such broad issues as amalgamation as they were outside its jurisdiction, a hint which the committee followed in recommending non-concurrence. Besides, Mr. Gompers sent the Crown Prince, Matthew Woll his wits to the utmost in assailing me. Character assassination was his method. He built up the worst elaborate frame-work of falsehoods about my activities that it has ever been my doubtful pleasure to listen to. I let him go ahead uninterruptedly. The night before John H. Walker had promised me, with much emotion, that he realized I was up against a hard fight and that he, as Chairman, would give me ample opportunity to reply to my accusers. So, foolishly, I believed he would keep his word and give me a chance to reply to Olander. But when the latter finished his mass of lies and I demanded my undisturbed right afterwards, Walker denied me that right and he took the floor himself. It was a good illustration of his sense of honor and fairness. Walker spoke for half an hour, combating amalgamation in principle. As he talked tears streamed down his face and his voice was broken. Though what he was crying about few could figure out, except it was that in this convention the pressure from the Gompers machine had forced him publicly to repudiate practically every principle he had ever stood for. When Walker finished his forty delegates rose to speak, but right in their teeth the amalgamation resolution rushed to a vote. It lost by 313 to 80. Great resentment was expressed by many delegates at these shameless steam-roller tactics.

Soviet Russia — American Legion

In several previous conventions the Illinois Federation of Labor endorsed the recognition of Soviet Russia. But this ultra reactionary convention resisted it. Victoria, the old guard, overwhelmed this proposal along with all others. The other hated "red" measures. And worse yet, many progressive delegates in the convention, firm and consistent C. J. Fitzpatrick and Edward Nockels of the Chicago Federation of Labor, who were supposed to have been against recognition, actually voted on the question, but after being given a hearty applause for their position, the resolution demanding the release of political prisoners was defeated by 313 to 80. Great resentment was expressed by many delegates at these shameless steam-roller tactics.

Part of the program of the A. F. of L. is to go along in alliance with the American Legion. John H. Walker, President of the Illinois Federation of Labor showed himself more than willing to co-operate in this anti-progressive work. In his annual report he devoted 12 closely printed pages to lauding the work of the Legion. He wound up by saying: "There is no question but that this convention go on record as recommending that our membership who are eligible to membership in this organization, join it and use it, in common with others to be able to maintain such a post that they apply for changes in the trade union posts.

To grease the skids for this reactionary proposition the Commander of the Illinois branch of the American Legion was invited to speak. As soon as he had finished a delegate hopped up and moved that the work of the Legion be endorsed.

This created a furor. Instantly a dozen delegates took the floor in opposition. Among them was a miner who declared that in his town at that very minute the American Legion was breaking a strike. Seeing the opposition, Walker asked that the whole matter be held in abeyance until the convention adjourned. This was done. But when in due time the committee reported about the Legion it ducked the issue by first praising the Legion and then advancing that trade union posts. This was done. But when in due time the committee reported about the Legion it ducked the issue by first praising the Legion and then advancing that trade union posts. This was done. But when in due time the committee reported about the Legion it ducked the issue by first praising the Legion and then advancing that trade union posts. This was done. But when in due time the committee reported about the Legion it ducked the issue by first praising the Legion and then advancing that trade union posts.

State Political Action

The question of independent working class political action in Illinois came up under two heads. The first was the form of a resolution demanding that the Illinois Federation of Labor work for the establishment of a state labor party under its jurisdiction. This had the backing of the Federated Farmer-Illinois Party. It was moved by Mr. J. Olander, Secretary of the Illinois Federation of Labor and was defeated at the delegates to the very instant that the resolutions committee was reporting on the amalgamation resolution. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gompers.

In their fight against amalgamation the reactionaries used the same general method, to stir up "red" sentiment. The merits of the proposition were lost sight of altogether. Matthew Woll made a bitter attack against me. I replied with a lengthy speech, which was well-received by the delegation. Then Victor Olander, Secretary of the State Federation, made a two hours' speech. By the clock he devoted a full hour and a half to a description of me. The rest was allowed to roll. Olander is a cunning politician and he utilized his wits to the utmost in assailing me. Character assassination was his method. He built up the worst elaborate frame-work of falsehoods about my activities that it has ever been my doubtful pleasure to listen to. I let him go ahead uninterruptedly. The night before John H. Walker had promised me, with much emotion, that he realized I was up against a hard fight and that he, as Chairman, would give me ample opportunity to reply to my accusers. So, foolishly, I believed he would keep his word and give me a chance to reply to Olander. But when the latter finished his mass of lies and I demanded my undisturbed right afterwards, Walker denied me that right and he took the floor himself. It was a good illustration of his sense of honor and fairness. Walker spoke for half an hour, combating amalgamation in principle. As he talked tears streamed down his face and his voice was broken. Though what he was crying about few could figure out, except it was that in this convention the pressure from the Gompers machine had forced him publicly to repudiate practically every principle he had ever stood for. When Walker finished his forty delegates rose to speak, but right in their teeth the amalgamation resolution rushed to a vote. It lost by 313 to 80. Great resentment was expressed by many delegates at these shameless steam-roller tactics.

Direct action was the form of the resolution which was defeated by 313 to 80. Great resentment was expressed by many delegates at these shameless steam-roller tactics.
herself to be driven into the camp of the reac-
tionaries. The nearly wrecked Walker’s project.
When the viva voce vote was taken, the volume of "noes" was so heavy that even the reactionary Chairman, who would have been glad to call the thing carried if he had dared, had to announce his resignation as a result. He called for a rising vote. When this was taken a remarkable illustration was given of the state of mental ter-
rorism that is so consistently exhibited. Only 51 of the delegates actually ventured to stand up to be counted, although at least 300 must have voted "no" in the vocal vote.

A Few of the Lessons

In many respects the convention was a wonder-
ful gathering. For one thing it was a striking illustration of the great fear in which the reac-
tionaries hold the Trade Union Educational League, which means the vital policies that our organization advocates. The tremendous prepara-
tions they made to fill up the convention, and the frantic efforts they made to terrorize the dele-
gates by stirring up "red" hysteria were eloquent proofs of that. Matthew Woll tipped off the hand of the reactionaries when he referred to the article recently appearing in the Labor Herald, entitled "Gompers Faces Triple Revolt" and point-
ing the mass character of the present movement for amalgamation, the labor party, and recognition of Soviet Russia. He admitted the validity of our claims that these are the three measures most threatening to Gompersism by demanding an over-
whelming defeat of them at the convention. The direct and terrible opposition of the reactionaries was a tremendous tribute to the power and influ-
ence of the Trade Union Educational League.

Another striking and instructive feature of the convention was the attitude of the so-called pro-
gressive elements, mostly affiliated with or sym-
pathetic to the Farmer-Labor Party. They were more bent, due to their own stupidity, their part was wrecked at the July conference. Hence they were determined to get even with the hated "reds" whom they blame for their discomfiture. So they plumped right into the arms of Gompers. This is not the only tool of his reactionary machine, as they did at Dee-
catur, they are not only rendering themselves ridiculous but are also betraying the most sacred interests of the working class.

Many reactionaries believe that they decisively beat the League militants at Decatur. This is nonsense. The Decatur convention was only one round in a long fight, and the labor movement is revolutionized. The workers in Illinois, particularly the 100,000 coal miners, are largely tinged with radicalism. They will not accept the verdict of Decatur. They will gird their loins for a fresh struggle next year against the reactionaries. Although the Decatur con-
vention was an historic one, that next year in Peoria will be even greater. The militants will assemble there in larger numbers and more determined than ever to put the Illinois labor movement upon a constructive and progres-
sive basis.

A most vital task in forwarding the T. U. E. L. program is to establish the League financially. This is the task that is being done through the sale of Sustaining Fund Cer-
tificates to members and sympathizers. Every group secretary and League cor-
respondent can do something in this work by making the Sustaining Fund a regular order of business. Certificates that have been sent out should be sold. New supplies can be obtained upon re-
quest. The League depends upon every member to do his part.

Molders' Union for Progress

By D. B. Roberts

The 26th Convention of the International Molders' Union, held in Cleveland the last October, marked the first step in October, marked a distinct break of this old or-
ganization with its conservative past, and set its feet on the road of progress. Feeling the de-
termination of the delegates represents the old, the officials yielded after a fight and, by allowing the measures presented by the revolutionists to pass, they managed to stave off an upheaval that would have cost them their jobs. Practically the entire program of the T. U. E. L. was endorsed by the actions of the Convention, including amal-
gamation, the Labor Party, the unionize the unorgani-
zation, recognition of Soviet Russia, and other measures relating to the Molders.

Amalgamation was attacked viciously by the reactionaries early in the Convention. They in-
troduced a resolution against amalgamation and it was voted down unanimously. So the officials, afraid to report out the amalgamation resolution presented from St. Louis, brought in one of their own which put the Convention on record favoring a more progressive movement towards amalgamation of all metal trades," and providing that other metal trades should equalize their dues with the Gomperites. The officials pointed out that this underhanded attempt to sabotage amalgamation by making "provisos" but the reactionaries, by yielding to the principle of amalgamation which was thus unanimously adopted, succeeded in get-
ting the "provisos" passed.

Fifty-six years ago the Molders stood for the Labor Party idea; since that time until the Cleve-
land Convention they have been solid against it. The resolution for a national Labor Party was discussed by the officials; with the officials' voting against it. The resolution for an "organized" was carried without opposition; the old guard seemed to feel that they could keep the office they could interpret the resolution to suit themselves. They will find, however, that these resolutions of this kind which are being adopted all through the labor movement, will force them into action before long.

Recognition of Soviet Russia was adopted by a strong vote, over the bitter opposition of John P. Frey. Again the old guard saw defeat staring them in the face, and bowed to the inevitable, trying to save their faces with an amendment. But the Convention had clearly registered its opinion on this vital matter. A resolution against Fascism was adopted unanimously.

Support of the Mooney-Billings Defense was voted unanimously. Tom Mooney had been elected a delegate to the Convention by his Local, San Francisco, by a vote of 555 out of a total of 601. The Convention, reversing the former re-
solutionary state of the Union, voted Mooney full confidence and $1,000 donation to the Mooney Defense. Then, to put their final seal of ap-
proval upon Mooney, they elected him their dele-
gate to the A. F. of L. Convention. It was a great demonstration of solidarity and revolution-
ary spirit, and will be a help in the fight for Mooney's release from San Quentin Prison.

The climax to the struggle between reaction-
aries and the militants fighting for the program of the Trade Union Educational League, came when a resolution was presented from the officials to amend the con-
stitution so that they could bring charges against any member and try him before the executi-
ors board. The purpose was to obtain the power to throw out the militants, as the Ladies' Garment Workers’ official put it, "as the best thing to do. But the Convention would have nothing of this disruptive design. They turned the proposition down, and by an overwhelming majority adopted the propo-
sition to create a Delegations Board, of St. Louis, placing the power of discipline over individual members entirely in the hands of the local unions. The rank and file must vigilantly defend this vic-
tory, and immediately stop any disruptive moves from the officials now that the Convention is over.

The tremendous progress of the past year among the rank and file, brought about by the militants and revolutionists working in harmony with the T. U. E. L., was thus registered in a great victory in the Molders’ Convention. But this is only a beginning. If it is not to be lost again, and the Union full once more into a slough of reaction, the militants must now work harder than ever. So long as the reactionaries control the administrative machinery of the Union, just so long is there a tangible pro-
gressive policies. Now is the time to prepare for the next Convention, where the Molders can be brought into the very forefront of the fight for trade union progress.