

GITLOW SPEAKS AT BROOKWOOD

Discusses Unemployment And Labor Program

On February 10, Ben Gitlow lectured before the student body of Brookwood Labor College on the unemployment situation and a program for labor. The students and faculty present showed a keen interest in the questions raised. Gitlow dealt with all the ramifications of the question, stressing especially the effects of rationalization in industry and agriculture upon the unemployment situation. Pointing out how the increased productivity of human labor, speed-up methods and new machines greatly augment the permanent army of the unemployed (a striking feature of present day capitalism), Gitlow also pointed out how the mergers and trustifications going on under capitalism, the development of chain stores, etc., were declassing thousands of middle men and reducing them to the status of workers thus further swelling the labor market.

Gitlow laid special emphasis upon the program of the capitalists to overcome the crisis by a drive against the workers living standards and by an intensification of imperialist expansion. He showed that the whole reactionary drive against the workers and the war preparations were an aftermath of this program. He showed that the effect of the capitalist program would be to produce great discontent in the ranks of the workers, that the reactionary bureaucracy would do everything in their power as agents of the bosses to stifle all militant working class actions, that the Socialist Party would on the economic field support the reactionary trade union officials and politically support a petty bourgeois reformed movement. He criticized the official Communist Party for its sectarian policy which makes it impotent to mobilize the masses of workers today. He showed the inadequacy of the C.P.L.A. movement because of its divergent elements and concluded that only thru a program of working class and trade union unity, thru a Labor Party on class lines and the building up of a rank and file left wing in the trade unions and the organization of the unorganized can an effective labor front against the capitalists be formed and the discontent of the workers turned into organized and conscious action.