

Anti-Labor Politics by the Miners' Union Officials

By GEORGE PAPCUN.

THE second issue of the "Coal Facts" is out. It is a paper issued in the name of the United Mine Workers of America of District 5 under the direct supervision of the officials of the district. It seems the paper was put out to help fight the 1917 scale in this district.

It would be a very good thing for the miners of District 5 if this paper, "Coal Facts," would be made a real fighting organ of the coal miners of this district, and if the miners themselves would be allowed to write for it on their conditions and struggles in the coal mines. But it seems that the officials have turned it into their own instrument, so that they will be able to use it in promoting their own personal political ambitions and aspirations. The miners must demand that it be made their organ, for the miners are the ones that support it with their own hard-earned money.

Let us take, for instance, the second issue on page 3. We find a whole page devoted to political advertisement which is headed by the following title: "The People's Choice." It goes on to say what a fine governor Pinchot is. It also tells the miners and workers in general what Pinchot did in the anthracite coal strike of 1923 and 1925. It tells about the good work that he has done.

Yes, the coal miners should look over Pinchot's record and find out how he helped John L. Lewis to betray the coal miners, especially in 1925, where he actually helped to put the anthra-

cite coal miners in slavery for five years by getting them signed to a five-year agreement which hardly allows the miners to move.

In spite of the fact that the battle against the 1917 scale means life and death to the United Mine Workers in this district, the wonderful document of endorsement of Pinchot which the district officials put out with the help of Philip Murray, international vice-president, does not say how Pinchot helped the miners in their battle against the 1917 scale which the Pittsburgh Coal company is trying to put into effect. Not how Pinchot served the mine workers against the operators, but how he served "the common interest of all the people"—which is a polite way of saying that Pinchot served the interests of the coal operators and is supposed to have served the mine workers at the same time. We know which side really got the "service."

After reading further on you come to the following quotation: "Under Pinchot the state police no longer serve as a strike-breaking agency." It seems that the officials of the union forgot that in this district the state police are being used today against the miners and that they were used to arrest and persecute workers, especially during the years of 1924-25. The state police have assisted the operators to break the strike of the coal miners, not only in District 5 but in District 2 also. During the anthracite strike the coal miners were intimidated merely because they wanted to stop some scabs from working and

taking their bread away from them. How ridiculous it sounds when the officials have the guts to come out with a statement that the state police are not used to break strikes, when on every hand you can point out concrete instances where they are doing it!

Then we come to a quotation where it says that "Under Pinchot coal and iron police must be licensed." Which is true. Now they have become licensed strike-breakers, authorized and legalized by the state of Pennsylvania to beat and slug strikers and workers. Is this something that the officials think that Pinchot should be proud of?

Then we come to the most contemptible lie of the whole advertisement. The following is how it reads: "Pinchot has been a life-long champion in the promotion of humanitarian legislation." It is impossible to find out under what heading the sedition law falls, whether it falls under humanitarian or some other kind of legislation. But when Pinchot was running for governorship one of the things that he promised labor was that the sedition law of this state would be repealed. The sedition law, as all workers know, is the most contemptible means of suppressing militant workers of this state who dare to raise their heads and fight against their exploiters. Not only did Pinchot fail to repeal the sedition law, but he did not even bring it up before the legislature in any form. He also stood by and saw militant workers being

persecuted and convicted under this law.

In view of the above facts, the rank and file of the United Mine Workers have only one way out of the betrayal and that is by categorically repudiating the endorsement of Pinchot and demanding that a labor party in this state be built, with working class candidates only. This must be done by immediate action thru the local unions.

The miners also must demand immediately that "Coal Facts" be turned into a militant fighting working-class paper in behalf of the coal miners in this district and all the coal miners in general and not as a political instrument for the officials who want to use it for their own personal ambitions and aspirations, but that it must be used to fight against the 1917 scale and against the other coal operators in this district. It must be used to arouse the workers of this state to help to maintain the wages and the union in this territory.

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