

JOHN L. LEWIS IGNORES PROBLEM ARISING FROM NEW MINE MACHINES

By GEORGE PAPCUN.

ACCORDING to the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Mines, there is a very rapid increase of the automatic machines which load coal, displacing hundreds of workers in the coal industry. In 1925, according to the report, 95 mines in 15 states had installed 340 machines which loaded 6,243,104 net tons of coal. Fourteen other mines had 42 machines but did not report the tonnage loaded by them.

Lewis Ignores Issue.

Tho the use of machine in loading coal in the United States is only in the experimental stage, but since 1923 it is reported that the increase of coal loaded by machines has been over 5,000,000 as yet John L. Lewis th epraident of the miners' union, has not taken it into consideration. No provisions in the contracts have been made for the miners who are being displaced daily by the use of the coal loading machine.

In 1925, it seemed that the coal operators had been trying to put this coal loading machine into operation especially in the non-union fields or where the operators are making strenuous attacks on the union, and where the union is somewhat weakened such as West Virginia, Virginia, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Illinois and Indiana and these are the states which the production of coal by the coal loading machine leads.

Union Needs Program.

A fight cannot be made in the progress of the machine in the coal industry for the loading of coal, but the union must have a program in

trying to solve the problem as to what is going to become of the thousands of miners who will be displaced by the machine, for eventually these miners will be used against the miners' union. The miners must force the leadership to immediately recognize the problem, which in the past year has made such headway, and which in a few more years will be a very big problem for the union and for the mine workers in general unless the miners recognize it, and try to find ways and means of solving the problem of what is going to become of the thousands of miners who are displaced by this automatic coal loading machine.

As yet, according to the report, no data has been received for the year of 1926, but the report states that there will be shown an increase in the coal loading machines in 1926, and according to the statements of different coal magazines, it is going to be a bigger increase than from 1923 to 1925.

The miners must recognize that the one way of solving this problem to a certain extent is the adoption and the carrying out of the program of the opposition candidates against the Lewis machine led by John Brophy as is explained in his larger program for the miners' union and also in the open letter which was sent to the membership of the U. M. W. A. by John Brophy and the opposition candidates; the organization of the unorganized miners; the nationalization of the coal mines, a Labor Party. This will to a certain extent solve the situation.