

in the workingclass movement, brought out in such crass form by the war, were simply its inherent tendencies to which Lenin had called attention more than once.

#### The Youth Remains True to the Proletariat.

Naturally, as was to be expected, the youth, largely untouched by the imperialist corruption, did not fall a prey to social patriotism. It was the Socialist Youth International that, in a vague and unclear way it is true, kept alive the spirit of true international socialism when "even" Kautsky had declared that internationalism simply meant the right of each socialist to defend his Fatherland. It was in the organs of the youth (especially in the Jugend-Internationale) that the first forms of anti-militarist agitation and the first analyses of the problems and tasks of the socialdemocracy during the war appeared. It was the youth that held forth some hope for after the war, some hope for rallying the forces of labor internationally, now so demoralized and scattered thru the treachery of the social-democrats.

#### Lenin Turns to the Youth During the War.

It was to the youth, therefore, that Lenin turned in the dark years of the war. In Switzerland, where he resided for a time, he was in closest contact with the circles of the "Freie Jugend" who were conducting, under his guidance, a struggle against the treachery of the social-democrats. As Lenin said in his farewell speech to the Swiss workers (April, 1917):

"We remember the brave youthful vanguard grouped around the Freie Jugend who struggle with revolutionary fervor against all the crimes which weaken and incapacitate for struggle the Swiss workers no less than any of the European social-democratic parties."

Thruout this trying period Lenin was in constant touch with the Executive of the Socialist Youth International and was in personal contact with Münzenberg in particular. In this way he gave his personal guidance and help in the organization of the Young Communist International.

Lenin was especially concerned with removing the errors and unclarity that marked the first efforts of the youth in their new role as leaders in the struggle for true international socialism. We have already seen how careful Lenin was not to antagonize the youth and yet how insistent in the matter of accuracy and clarity. His criticism touched mostly the question of militarism and war, the theory of the state, and the proper conception of the tendencies within the socialist and labor movement the world over.

"Once again: these mistakes must be refuted and explained," Lenin says, "at the same time that we try with all our powers to achieve contact with and approach to the youth organizations and help them in every way and by every means. But we must approach them with UNDERSTANDING."

#### The Russian Revolution and the Organization of the Russian League.

Finally in 1917, the chain of imperialism snapped at its weakest link—Russia. The imperialist war began to develop into civil war, the masses arose, the Czar was overthrown, and the process of the proletarian revolution began to unfold itself before the eyes of the astonished world. The profound and far-reaching upheaval within the toiling masses and extending to their most backward strata produced a deep ferment in every sort of proletarian organization. Labor unions sprang up like mushrooms; political parties increased their membership over and over again; and now circles of the revolutionary youth began to spring up on every side as expressions of the social strivings of the proletarian and student youth in the stirring days of revolution.

To this spontaneous, elemental movement Lenin gave his fullest support and direction. The question of the national unity and consolidation of these youth circles naturally arose very soon and reflected itself in the parallel question of the party's relations to such a national youth organization. Now again, under such widely different circumstances, Lenin waged the battle for the organizational independence of the youth. There were found tendencies in the Russian Party which demanded that the youth movement be confined simply to one department of the party, vrey much like Negro or women's work. This view Lenin, of course, held to be incorrect and the Young Communist League of Russia was organized as an independent organization under the political supervision of the R. C. P.

#### Lenin and the Russian Youth League.

To this newly formed organization of the proletarian youth Lenin gave the greatest thought and attention. He pointed out very clearly that the role and functions of the organization of the Communist youth under the proletarian dictatorship were only partially the same as those of the Young Communist Leagues of the lands still under the domination of imperialism. Like the Y. C. L.'s of the capitalist world, the Y. C. L. of Russia must throw all its powers into the struggle against all influences of capitalism, internal and external. But this class struggle is very evidently conducted on a very different plane and under very different forms in the Soviet Union than in Germany or America. Moreover, upon the Russian Communist Youth there falls a task which only the future holds forth for the proletariat of the rest of the world—to become the active agents in the work of socialist construction, economic, social and cultural. The Russian youth league must study these peculiar conditions under the proletarian dictatorship, Lenin pointed out, and adapt its work and activity to the tasks dictated by the situation. In a splendid address to III All-Russian Congress of the Russian Communist League of Youth (October, 1920), a

speech that every young proletarian especially should read and study with care, Lenin analyzed carefully what these conditions and the corresponding tasks were. Unfortunately, we cannot here examine this matter in any detail—the reader should by all means read the entire speech published in the pamphlet: "Lenin and the Youth"—but we cannot refrain from making some quotations almost equally applicable to the youth movement of the entire world.

"I must say that it appears to me that the first and, so to speak, the most natural answer to such a question ("What must the youth do to really deserve the name of Communist youth"—W. H.) is that the youth organization and in general the entire youth that wants to make the transition to Communism must learn communism.

"But this answer 'to learn communism' is somewhat too general. What must we do to learn communism? . . . A whole series of dangers threatens us. . . if we conceive of this task of learning communism in a false or in a one-sided way.

"Naturally the thought first comes to us that learning communism is equivalent to the mastery of the sum of knowledge contained in the communist texts, pamphlets, and works. But this sort of definition of learning communism is too primitive and unsatisfactory. . . . WITHOUT WORK, WITHOUT STRUGGLE, THE KNOWLEDGE DRAWN FROM COMMUNIST WRITINGS IS WORTHLESS!"

#### Lenin and the Youth.

Nowhere was the greatness of Lenin more evident, nowhere was his marvellous understanding of the inner nature of the historical movement of the exploited masses for emancipation more apparent, than in his profound appreciation of the role and tasks of the proletarian youth under capitalism nad after the seizure of power. For, as Zinoviev has carefully pointed out, the attitude towards the youth is no thing in and for itself; it is part and parcel of one's entire orientation towards the movement of the workingclass and towards the tendencies within it. Others—Liebknecht, for example—have espoused the cause of the revolutionary youth with consuming passion and energy. But it was Lenin, and others only thru Lenin, who saw clearly and laid bare the socio-economic situation of the proletarian youth under imperialism, their position in relation to the class alignments that are the product of imperialism, and their profound revolutionary potentialities in this period of capitalist development. To Lenin, basically, the youth movement owes its consciousness and understanding of its own role and destiny. In Leninism it sees its beacon and guide in the complex maze it must traverse within capitalism to the proletarian dictatorship and thence to the establishment of Communism—the Communist Society!

## The Left Wing at Two Conventions

### I. The I. L. G. W. U. Convention

By William F. Dunne

TWO conventions, those of the International Ladies' Garment Workers and the Fur Workers, the first held in Philadelphia, the second in Boston, in the closing months of 1925, showed the left wing in these unions supported by a majority of the membership.

At both these conventions the left wing wrestled with the question of taking control of the union—a question which finds a place on the order of business of the left wing as an immediate practical problem for the first time in the history of left wing struggles since it has appeared as a definite section of the American labor movement with a program of its own opposed at all points to the class peace and class surrender policy of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

#### The Advanced Position of the Needle Trade Unions.

It is not surprising that the problem of whether

to take power and the methods by which it was to be secured, should arise first for the left wing in the needle trades. The needle trades unions are the most advanced section of the American labor movement from the standpoint of political understanding. To prove this contention it is only necessary to cite the fact that even the needle trades bureaucracy mouths glibly the phrases of the social revolution, that in words it acknowledges the class struggle, that at all needle trades conventions the flag-waving 100 per cent Americanism which is the hallmark of the rest of the labor movement, is entirely absent. The rank and file, the most active elements with a large mass following at least, have had anarchist and socialist training. There are of course exceptions to the above but it is idle to compare the needle trades membership with even the most advanced sections of other A. F. of L. unions such as the International Association of Machinists. Such a comparison only serves to disclose that the difference between the needle trades and other unions is the difference between the American and European labor movements.

### The Great Importance of the I. L. G. W. U. Convention.

Of the two conventions that of the I. L. G. W. U. was by far the most important for several reasons:

#### 1. Size of the Union.

First, because of the size of the union—it exceeded in this respect, according to A. F. of L. figures for 1924, only by the United Mine Workers of America, the unions of Carpenters, Painters, Street Railwaymen, Railway Carmen and Electrical Workers. It paid per capita to the A. F. of L. in that year for 91,000 members. The figures for the Electrical Workers and Railway Carmen are padded for convention purposes so that the I. L. G. W. U. even with the decrease in membership caused by the Sigman policy, is actually one of the five largest unions in the A. F. of L.

The Fur Workers have approximately 10,000 members.

#### 2. Strength of the Left Wing.

Second, because of the numerical strength of the left wing and its defeat of the Sigman machine in the pre-convention struggle in New York—the largest center of the ladies' garment industry. In

the convention the left cast 110 votes representing two-thirds of the membership against 154 for the machine.

#### 3. Character of the I. L. G. W. U. Bureaucracy.

Third, because of the social-democratic character of the I. L. G. W. U. bureaucracy, its previous training in the class struggle school enabling it to fight and maneuver far more skilfully against the left wing than the cruder bureaucrats of the other A. F. of L. unions.

#### Sigman's Maneuvers in the Gitlow Case.

As an instance of this let us take the action of the Sigman bureaucracy in the case of Benjamin Gitlow.

On the first day of the convention a machine delegate moved that a protest against the imprisonment of Gitlow be sent to the authorities. The motion was carried unanimously. Then the "impartial chairman" of the governor's commission for regulating wages and working conditions in the ladies' garment industry in New York proceeded to Albany, where he conferred with Governor Smith. By long distance telephone he informed President Sigman that Gitlow's pardon had been obtained.

Sigman, who hates Gitlow and the Communist



LENIN AT WORK.

Party to which Gitlow belongs with an undying hatred, made the announcement of Gitlow's release to the convention.

Loud cheers from the left wing delegates.

Still louder cheers from the right wing delegates.

A motion to invite Gitlow to address the convention was passed unanimously. Gitlow spoke. A right wing delegate moved that his speech be made part of the minutes. This was passed without a dissenting vote.

The why of the above is as follows:

The demand for the release of Gitlow was a good left wing issue. The left wing was going to demand endorsement of his release from the convention. Gitlow is a needle trades worker and known to every needle trades worker as a fearless fighter. A Hutcheson, a Berry or a John L. Lewis could have, because of the lower level of class consciousness among their union membership, and would have, because it is their method, fought against Gitlow's release to the bitter end.

Gitlow's release was expected during the holidays so the Sigman machine very cleverly maneuvered to appear as the deus ex machina and thereby increase its prestige as against that of the left wing. Incidentally, the governor's "impartial" commission would profit also.

Actually, it was the mass pressure of the membership behind the left wing that forced Gitlow's release.

The Sigman machine made no fight on such issues as a labor party, amalgamation or recognition of Soviet Russia, altho true to its socialist training it dragged in the issue of "political prisoners" in Russia. It agreed to resolutions denouncing the Ku Klux Klan and the Fascisti. It accepted a resolution providing for a trade union delegation to the Soviet Union with the provision that a member of the executive board should accompany it. It agreed formally to abandon the expulsion policy which precipitated the crisis in the union following the Boston convention.

In other words the I. L. G. W. U. bureaucracy made concessions to the left wing which the left wings in other unions can visualize only in dreams of the distant future.

#### 4. Size of the Communist Fraction.

Fourth, the I. L. G. W. U. convention is important because of the size of the Communist convention fraction. The strength or weakness of the left wing in Philadelphia was the strength or weakness of the Communist fraction and therefore a test of the correctness of understanding of the policy and tactics of our party in this field.

#### The Strategy of the Sigman Machine.

The Sigman machine disclosed a carefully worked out two-sided strategy:

First, by concessions, liberal gestures and "unity" maneuvers, accompanied by a vituperative denunciation of the Communist Party, with the purpose of convicting it and its members as disrupters

of the union, to split the broad left wing from the Communists and demoralize it.

Second, failing in this, to provoke a split for which the left wing, and particularly the Communists, could be blamed.

#### The Strategy of the Left Wing.

The obvious strategy for the left wing in this situation was to expose the Sigman machine as the advocate of cooperation with the bosses, as the disorganizers of the union and show the convention and the membership at large that the left wing stood for unity on the basis of the class struggle, that by this program alone could the class interests of the membership be protected.

#### The Strategy of the Communists.

The Communist strategy was:

To firmly consolidate the left wing on the basis of their left wing program, to turn the convention discussion into an ideological campaign to convince the progressives and win them for that program.

#### The Deviations of the Left Wing and the Communist Fraction from Their Line of Strategy.

In actual practice both the left wing and the Communist fraction departed considerably from their strategic line and the net results of the convention are therefore less for the left wing than might have been obtained.

For this the Communist fraction must take the responsibility.

Its convention actions were a weird mixture of leftism and opportunism—leftism in that it followed an objectively splitting policy until the last day of the convention, opportunism in that this splitting policy was based on the naive belief that the Sigman machine was sincere enough in its unity maneuvers to make substantial concessions to the left wing in order to avoid a split in the union.

This complete misunderstanding of the role of the bureaucracy in the present period, that of disrupters of the unions and agents of the capitalists in the union, is responsible also for a desire, and even attempts, which manifested themselves from time to time during the convention to share control of the union with sections of the Sigman machine.

Not only was the objectively splitting policy and tactics based on lingering remains of confidence in the Sigmanites as "honest trade unionists." It had the additional and extremely dangerous defect of being based on a wrong estimation of the relationship of forces in the needle trades industry, to say nothing about its not taking into account at all the relationship of forces in the whole American labor movement.

Our party in its work in the trade unions does not "make a fetish of unity" but it has a right to insist that when an objectively secessionist policy is followed by a Communist fraction in a needle trades union affiliated with the A. F. of L. that some consideration be given to the fact that in the powerful Amalgamated Clothing Workers union the left wing is almost non-existent.

Our party also had to take into consideration the fact that the left wing in the I. L. G. W. U. had been built up largely as a result of the struggle against the expulsion policy of the machine and that what jurists call "a reasonable doubt" exists as to whether workers who fought for the right of militants to stay in the union would follow them out with the same loyalty into a secessionist movement.

There is in addition the one decisive fact that a left wing which appears in this period of the development of the American labor movement as the advocate of unity of the American labor movement and of the world trade union movement, and whose whole prestige is based on this fact, cannot carry out a secessionist policy in this stage of the struggle without bringing disaster on itself and on the entire left wing.

Neither can it afford, in the absence of a center group in the convention, to enter into election compromises with the bureaucrats.

Both of these dangers confronted the left wing in the I. L. G. W. U. convention. That these tendencies were overcome, that the left wing did not deal itself a blow from which it would not easily recover, is a tribute to its working class character, consciousness and militancy.

From the first day of the convention it was evident that the question of control of the union, partial or complete, was uppermost in the minds of the left wing—including the Communist fraction. Controlling New York, the largest center of the union, the left wing resented the manipulation which gave the machine a convention majority to which it was not entitled. Without any clear and open formulation of its purpose, the left wing really intended to club the machine into giving substantial concessions or else to secede. It did not at first see that the Sigman machine was ready and willing to provoke a split if the left wing could be made to carry the blame for it.

Sharp challenges amounting to ultimatums to the Sigmanites were made by left wing speakers right at the beginning of the convention. No objection could be made to these evidences of militancy had they been accompanied by clear explanations of the position of the left as the defenders and unifiers of the organization. But this was not done. In addition to this the early fight of the left was on the question of credentials and other organizational matters, dragged out for days, laying the left wing open to the charge of obstructing the work of the convention.

Then came the decision of the left wing to stay away from the official banquet—where Green or Lewis was to speak—not to extend the fight against the machine at the banquet itself but to hold an affair of its own. The excuse given by left wing leaders for this action was that they could not explain to the rank and file their reasons for attending the official banquet—proof in itself that the rank and file had not been sufficiently informed as to objectives and methods.

Communist observers at the convention interpreted this action correctly as the second open sign of an objectively splitting policy. They were correct and in a very short time their judgement was confirmed by the refusal of the left wing to serve on the convention committees. The reason given for this was that the appointments of left wingers had been handled by the machine so as to keep the most able off the most important committees—such as those on the report of the general executive board, organization, and appeals.

Subsequently the left wing formally agreed to appear before the committees but to the best of my knowledge this policy was not carried out. If it was it was in a very half-hearted manner.

The refusal to serve on the convention committees had been announced with the belief that the machine would yield to pressure and revise the committee appointments.

#### The Provocation Policy of the Machine.

Not only did it not do this but it began a policy of deliberate provocation obviously intended to enrage the left wing still further and provoke a further tendency towards secession. Continual insulting speeches by Sigman were used to increase the tension.

Only during the first part of the debate on the report of the general executive board which had been divided into three parts—industrial conditions and future policy, the New York situation and the morale of the organization—did this policy of provocation relax.

The reason for this was that the machine hoped to administer a moral and political defeat to the left wing by showing a superior knowledge of the industry and the history of the union. Much to the surprise of the bureaucracy and, I think, to some extent of the left wing itself, the left wing showed at least an equal knowledge of the special conditions of the industry and by its superior understanding of capitalist development in the United States, coupled with its fight for a program based on the class struggle, was able to defeat the machine in the debate on this question.

Needing a smashing victory over the left wing on the first part of the officers report in order to break even on the whole report—for it could make no plausible defense of its policies in the debate on the New York situation and on the morale of the union—the Sigmanites became desperate and abandoned all unity maneuvers. They renewed the provocation by such methods as the provocateur speech of Yanofsky—discredited and deposed editor of Justice, the union's official organ—by threats to use police to clear the hall of the rank and file members attending the convention and culminating in the driving from the convention hall of delegates and visitors by a squad of bluecoats.

When the bureaucracy believed that the left wing could stand no more, it brazenly refused to abide by the provisions of the "peace agreement"

concluded after the struggle in New York with the rank and file committee of action and which stipulated among other things that certain important questions be submitted to referendum and that the representation to joint boards be on a proportional basis.

#### The Walkout of the Left Wing.

The left wing delegation promptly left the convention without even making a statement.

The threatened split became an actual fact.

But the left wing leaders stubbornly insisted that they had no intention of seceding and no amount of argument seemed to convince them that one does not need to deliberately plan a split to have a policy which produces one.

In spite of the protestations of the left wing it is my belief that the leaders had no intention of returning to the convention unless the Sigman machine made certain concessions. If they did not intend to secede they have the difficult task of explaining why they staked everything on the possibility of the machine making concessions and prepared no way for a retreat with their forces intact.

As a matter of fact the machine did make some minor organizational concessions and the left wing returned to the convention. The concessions made seem to have confirmed some of the left wing in the belief that its dangerous maneuver, which for a few hours threatened the whole left wing in the American labor movement with disaster, was a very brilliant performance. The exact opposite is the case.

#### The Dangers of the Walkout Maneuver.

In the first place the walkout was based on the idea that the Sigmanites, in spite of their deliberate provocation of a split, would yield rather than see the union divided.

In the second place, had not concessions been made which allowed the left wing to save its face, the left would either have had to actually secede, having led the membership to this point, or to have gone back into the convention defeated and demoralized.

The fact that the machine yielded cannot be taken as evidence of the correctness of the left wing's action or the manner in which it was carried out. The truth is that the Sigman machine had been carried away by its hatred of the left wing and the Communists and had blindly chosen an issue on which to provoke a split for which it could not rally all of its own forces. Hence it made concessions. The effect of these concessions upon the future attitude of the left wing in the convention brings to mind the warning against Greeks bearing gifts.

The machine agreed to proportional representation for the New York joint board and to submit certain questions to referendum—"not earlier than six months and not later than one year from the adjournment of the convention."

#### The Left Wing Sways to the Other Extreme.

From a split position the day before, the left wing now swayed to the other extreme as a result of this new evidence of the desire for "unity" on the part of the bureaucracy. So overcome was it with what might be termed the "peace on earth, good will to men" feeling that it made no fight for proportional representation for joint boards in garment centers outside of New York—a failure which under slightly different circumstances might have created serious dissension in the left wing—allowed First Vice-President Ninfo to be elected without nominating a candidate against him, and in nominating its own candidates for other offices failed to take the opportunity to state that the left wing supported these candidates because they in turn stood on the left wing platform.

So much for the mistakes of the left wing—mistakes for which I repeat, the Communist fraction must stand responsible. This is obvious when we know that out of 110 left wing delegates 52 were Communists.

#### The Causes of the Mistakes of the Left Wing.

These mistakes were due to the inflated importance attached to the issue of union control and to a certain provincialism which fails to see the left wing struggle as a whole, over-estimating the importance of the needle trades in the American labor movement, and finally to a lack of ideological preparation for the masses of left wing followers.

#### The Essential Strength and Vitality of the Left Wing.

Such mistakes are not fatal if corrected and the fact that the left wing went thru three weeks of arduous convention struggle without losing a single delegate, that in New York the workers showed their intense interest in the convention and support of the left wing by huge mass meetings, that in Philadelphia, a thousand needle workers met, listened to and endorsed the left wing program during the convention, proves that the left wing is essentially sound with vitality enough to overcome any wrong tendencies.

#### The Problems facing the Left Wing in the I. L. G. W. U.

The left wing in the needle trades faces tremendous problems. It is now officially responsible for the interests of the union in the city of New York. It has the unscrupulous tactics and bitter enmity of the Sigman machine, the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, the bosses and the Hillman machine of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers to contend with.

The Sigman machine left the New York organization penniless and hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt.

A general strike will probably be necessary in the entire New York ladies' garment industry this spring. A half-million dollars are needed for this alone.

There is but one way of meeting and solving these difficulties. It is by firmly consolidating the forces now following the left wing and at the same time drawing more masses into their ranks by winning the thousands of Italian workers who are still deceived by Ninfo and Antonini, and who form now the chief strength of the Sigman machine.

In addition to this, the closest relations must be established and maintained between the I. L. G. W. U. left wing and the left wings in the Fur Workers and the Amalgamated. In the Amalgamated the left wing must be stimulated and broadened by systematic exposure of the Hillman machine and an energetic struggle against its class surrender policy. Relentless war on the bureaucrats is the only way to victory over the bosses.

The strength of the left wing lies not in offices but in the masses. With the loyal support of thousands of conscious workers, with the economic struggle fought militantly and efficiently, the question of power in the union solves itself.

The splendid left wing of serried thousands in the I. L. G. W. U., steeled now in a two-year struggle, is the most hopeful sign on the horizon of the American labor movement today.

## II. The Furriers' Convention

By William Weinstone

THE ousting of the bureaucratic socialist Kaufman machine took place at the seventh International Fur Workers' Convention, held in Boston, November 10th to 19th inclusive. This convention, regularly scheduled for May, 1926, was called as a special convention because the International officials, who dominated the union, could no longer continue in office. The revolt of the rank and file against the policy of terror and gangsterism which had ruled the organization for the past four years, and which was intensified after the reactionary convention held in Chicago in 1924, brought the Kaufman machine to its knees.

The New York Joint Board, representing 80 per cent of the membership of the entire International, had been won by the Left Wing and this victory broke the backbone of the Kaufman machine.

The administration refused to recognize the New York Joint Board but it was powerless in face of the tight grip of the Left Wing over the New York membership. The convention was ostensibly held in order to settle the issue of the New York Joint Board and the International, but in reality it was to decide the fate of the Kaufman machine, which already considered itself defeated before it entered the convention.

### The Attacks of the Kaufman Machine on the Left Wing.

The Kaufman machine had formerly controlled New York, but when the Left Wing was organized in 1922, the growing discontent of the rank and file with the Kaufman administration caused the latter to resort to a policy of gangsterism and suppression in order

to root out the Left Wing. The administration went so far as to attempt a murderous assault upon B. Gold, present manager of the New York Joint Board, in December 1923, in order to paralyze the Left Wing. It suspended M. Suroff, a vice-president of the organization, Fanny Warshawsky, and other leading Left Wingers and used the entire underworld in order to break up the meetings of the Left Wing. At the last convention, it established complete autocracy in the organization, ruled out the T. U. E. L. and empowered the G. E. B. to suspend or expel any member "who attempts or takes part in a protest meeting or unauthorized meeting against the union, or anyone who will slander or libel the union or the officialdom."

### The Work of the Left Wing in New York.

In July, 1925, through a united front of the Left Wing with a former section of the Kaufman machine which had agreed to a policy of cleaning out gangsterism in the organization, the New York Joint Board was won against the Kaufman opposition. With the Left Wing dominating the united front, gangsterism was cleaned out, the paralysis in the local organization overcome, the grievances of the workers adjusted, and a campaign for the organization of the workers resulted in 1,500 Greek workers (that had formerly been an obstacle to the progress of the union) being organized.

With the opening of the convention, the influence of the New York organization was dominant and the Kaufman machine demoralized and weakened in the other locals in the country.

### Relation of Forces at the Convention.

The relation of forces at the convention was as follows: The Kaufman machine controlled 34 votes, representing about 2,000 members, chiefly of the out-of-town locals; the opposition to the bureaucrats numbered 41 delegates, divided between 26 Left Wingers and 15 controlled by the Sorkin group, which made up the united front in the New York organization.

### The Attacks on the New York Joint Board.

The Left Wing opened up the convention by striking a militant note with the demand for the removal of scabbing taxicabs from in front of the American House, in which the convention was held. The machine hesitated, maneuvered to get rid of the issue, but was finally compelled to submit upon ultimatum from the Left Wing that they would not remain in the convention. The first fight arose over the proposal of the credentials committee, appointed by the G. E. B., to unseat B. Gold, who was the manager and delegate from the New York Joint Board. The machine raised objection because the New York Joint Board was not recognized by the International. Realizing the opposition forces against it and that it was outnumbered, the machine attempted to postpone the seating of Gold until after the whole case against the Joint Board was heard. In this way they wished to prejudice the convention against Gold and put the Left Wing under a disadvantage. But the opposition correctly argued

that the Joint Board had been properly recognized by the acceptance of tens of thousands of dollars in dues by the International office.

The machine, which had built up a Chinese wall of constitutional provisions during 13 years of existence, proceeded to the employment of every device, even to the walking out of the hall, when it realized it was defeated. The opposition was firm and Gold was seated, even against the votes of the Kaufman machine.

### The Struggle Over the "Supplementary Report."

The chief fight, which lasted three days, was devoted to the issue between the New York Joint Board and the International. The latter had cleverly drawn up its general report into two parts, one devoted to its activities outside New York, and the other a 32-page document, dealing with the New York situation, known as the "supplementary report." In this it adopted a policy which was later used by Sigman at the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union convention, of separating the Left Wing fight from the general issues of the union, so as to give the impression that the Left Wing fight was one of political issues and outside interference, and unconnected with the policy of class collaboration and the ruinous economic policy of the administration.

The machine at first maneuvered to prevent the fight and it brought pressure on the Sorkin group, proposing to them a compromise which would declare the fight at an end and clear the administration. The Sorkin group was at first ready to yield to these proposals, which came directly and indirectly from the administration, but it was dragged into the fight by the ultimatum of the Left Wing, who used the club of the New York membership over them to get them to join in the discussion. Gold of the Left Wing and Shachtman of the united front Sorkin group were the chief spokesmen for the opposition. In a speech lasting two hours, Gold related the story of the corruption and terrorization and the foul practices of the Kaufman machine, until the machine was stripped naked of every vestige of decency and of any pretense to its rights of leadership in the organization.

### The Betrayal of the Right Wing Sorkinites.

The Kaufman machine, realizing that it was defeated, again resorted to a maneuver of compromise proposals under the cover of "peace" in the organization withdrawing its resolution of condemnation of the New York Joint Board, and in this move it was successful through the betrayal of the right wing elements of the Sorkin group, led by Sorkin, Woll and Winnick. The latter entered into a deal with the Kaufman machine to accept the compromise in exchange for support by Kaufman to office in the organization, and for the defeat of the Left Wing in the elections to the G. E. B. Sorkin himself did not participate in the battle. He kept ominously silent. He had been involved in a sordid deal in the 1920 strike, with which the report cleverly began, in which he surrendered the strike to the bosses. The less he therefore said about the matter, the better.

Following the betrayal, the Left Wing rallied their forces and through pressure brought to bear upon the Left Wing of the Sorkin group, the fight was reopened the following day in an attempt to reconsider the question and to get a record of clear-cut condemnation of the activities of the International machine.

The Kaufman machine, sensing the situation, offered a further concession in the form of an interpretation of the compromise proposal adopted the day before, which promised not to reopen the fight in any way, and which offered support to the New York organization in the coming fight with the bosses.

### The Left Wing Triumphs.

This the Left Wing rejected, and in spite of all constitutional and parliamentary maneuvers, the machine was compelled to yield to the Left Wing, to a resolution which held the International office responsible for the violation of democratic principles of the organization, and for suspensions in the course of the fight. In spite of the weak formulation of the resolution, it was nevertheless a victory over the Kaufman machine.

### The Issue of the General Report.

In the fight on the general report of activities, the lefts did not measure up to the level of the fight which they had made on the supplementary report. They exposed the class collaboration policy of the machine which had gone as far as the use of injunctions against the bosses in Boston, against long-term agreements with lower standards and poorer wages in South Norwalk, against the wastefulness of the machine, its lack of any policy of organizing the unorganized and the pitiful results brought about in this field at an exorbitantly high payroll, but the Left Wing did not bring up the full strength of the opposition in this fight. Sorkin and his right wing of the united front were too ready to submit to the demagoguery and flimflam of class collaboration arguments made by Kaufman in his reply, and the latter was able to "get away with it" on this issue.

### Labor Party and Russian Recognition.

The Kaufman machine recognized that because of the instructions given by the New York membership to the delegation from their locals, the Kaufman machine could not win on the clear cut Left Wing issues, such as, for a Labor Party, recognition of the Soviet Union and amalgamation. They therefore, adopted tactics of uniting with the Sorkin group members on issues which they could call Communist. The resolution for a Labor Party, for the recognition of the Soviet Union, against class collaboration, for a delegation to Russia, for amalgamation, were all unanimously carried, the Kaufman machine making no opposition. However, on other issues, such as release of political prisoners in Russia, the endorsement of the Freiheit, national Left Wing in order to destroy the hold of the Kaufman machine on the out-of-town locals, which are now the centers of Kaufman strength. Within the G. E. B., the Left Wing must continue its policy of opposition, sharply drawing the line between its own policies and the practices of the Sorkin group. It must do everything to raise the ideological level of