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LABOR ACTION

For a workers' world — peace and plenty, justice and freedom.

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W. VIRGINIA MINERS HELD FOR MURDER

Four Framed on Charges Growing Out of Coal-burg Strike

UNION MORALE HIGH

By TOM TIPPETT

BULLETIN—The four miners were brought before the court this afternoon. All pleaded not guilty—all were indicted for murder. All were returned to jail, held on \$10,000 bail each. The trial is set for early in February.

CHARLESTON, W. VA.—The West Virginia Mine Workers' Union in southern West Virginia enters the new year with unabated enthusiasm for organization although the obstacles erected in its path increase as the depression sinks deeper into the Kanawha Valley to paralyze its life.

As this is being written four members of the union are in the Kanawha County jail in the capitol city of Charleston. They will be indicted for murder this week by the State of West Virginia. The men are coal diggers from Coalburg, a small camp fifteen miles up the Kanawha River from the new capitol building which raises its huge golden dome over Charleston.

There was a strike at Coalburg, called on November 16. It was scheduled to force the Coalburg-Kanawha Mining Company to grant regular pay days to its employees. The coal company pays in script, but refuses to pay even that kind of money to its workers should any of them have a bit coming after the regular company check-off has been imposed.

The state police appeared, when the strike was called, and suppressed picketing. In the course of the strike shots were exchanged on the mountain side. A non-union man was killed on November 28. The police force grew, a third degree was administered and the union miners hunted down like wild beasts. In the end the four strike leaders were accused of murder; they were tortured and beaten by the police and thrown into jail. The grand jury is now writing indictments. All of the men will be indicted for murder.

Meanwhile the strike continued at Coalburg. All the employees (except 7) joined the union; the mine closed. Then the coal company asked the courts for eviction papers. They were granted. The union was unable to post bonds to guarantee rent to the coal company. (Continued on Page 2)

Farmers Stop Sheriff Sale Near Hoover's Birthplace

LOGAN, IA., (FP)—Like wildfire the farmers' fight against sheriff sales is sweeping the corn belt. About 100 farmers gathered at Logan and succeeded in preventing the scheduled sale of the A. H. Clever farm. The group also postponed another sale in which Rep. Malcolm Baldrige (R., Neb.), was among the plaintiffs.

At Tipton, Ia., scene of the farmers' fight against the bovine tuberculosis test law in 1930, 20 farmers forced postponement of the sheriff sale of J. A. Halslett's farm near West Branch, birthplace of Pres. Hoover. A delinquent tax sale at Forest City, Ia., was also postponed when between 600 and 700 farmers gathered to prevent bids. All county officials suddenly agreed to give a 20 per cent salary cut to the poor fund after the demonstration.

Wisconsin, which has seen a farmer defending his farm by arms, also saw 300 farmers assemble at Appleton and force postponement until April 8 of the sale of a widow's farm on a mortgage foreclosure action.

The struggle of Bucks County, Pa., farmers, which resulted in the recent \$1.18 auction of John Henzel's farm, has been brought to court. Attorney for one of Henzel's creditors says he will fight the case "to the bitter end." The farmers who forced the \$1.18 sale say they'll fight to as bitter an end as the creditor wants.

About 30,000 acres of land put up for sale in Spottsylvania County, Va., for delinquent taxes went to the state when owners refused to bid. They may live on the land two years more.

MINERS THREATEN GENERAL STRIKE

Illinois Progressive Union Wires Warning to Gov. Horner

RELIEF CUT OFF

GILLESPIE, ILL.—(Special)—Threatening to call upon American workers to join them in a general strike unless the reign of terror in Christian county, Illinois, is stopped, the Progressive Miners of America wired Gov. Henry Horner that "You cannot help knowing the facts and unless constitutional rights of our people are immediately restored there is nothing left for us but our economic strength and to ask all miners to join us in a nation-wide strike and to call upon all workers throughout the United States to cease work and take whatever action necessary to restore constitutional rights of American workers."

National Guardsmen and Sheriff Welnecke have closed down relief stations in Kincaid and Tovey, homes have been destroyed by bombing, women and children dragged from homes and beaten, and soup kitchens for hungry children closed, the wire stated.

Relief trucks coming into Christian county will be turned back, is Sheriff Welnecke's threat. Miners receive no local relief. A sack of Red Cross flour every two weeks per family is the limit.

The reign of terror directed against the new union which last summer broke away from the U.M.W.A. is drawing the miners closer together. The P.M.A. has 20,000 members working who can be called out in protest.

Miners' rights have disappeared. "Whenever this happens the people are justified in taking whatever means necessary to protect their homes and lives," the Illinois governor was told.

HOBOKEN STRIKE LEADS TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST WAGE-CUTS

HOBOKEN, N. J.—A city-wide campaign against the wage-cutting policies of local manufacturers has been started here, as a result of the strike of furniture workers at the Ferguson Brothers Manufacturing Co. in this city.

Under the lead of Dr. Walter E. Peck, who interested himself in the strike, the New York and Hoboken groups of the CPLA and other organizations have begun a public fight against wage-cutting in this vicinity. Meetings in the open and in public halls, with picketing and other demonstrations, are being carried on.

Four hundred workers of the Ferguson Co. walked out on the Friday before New Year's Day because of the fourth wage cut in three years. This cut had reduced their maximum wages from 85 cents per hour in 1929 to 45 cents; their average wages from 65 cents per hour in 1929 to 35 cents; and the lowest wages from 60 cents in 1929 to 20 cents per hour now.

The local police were called upon to aid the manufacturer and responded in great force. Mounted police, uniformed men on foot and plainclothesmen guarded the plant for blocks. All workers who sought to pass the mill were diverted several blocks away until Louis F. Budenz and Dr. Peck won the right to mass picketing.

One woman, Mrs. Kate Kubich, participated in the strike, and she is among the most militant of the workers. On January 7, one strike sympathizer and three strikers were arrested on framed up charges of assaulting the superintendent, William Wegner, and several strikebreakers. These arrested were: Earl Ackerman, a molder of Jersey City; Frank Dolan, Alfred Gueriera, and James Napolello.

Bible State Slashes Wages

NASHVILLE, TENN.—(FP)—In one day Tennessee's State Senate unanimously adopted a resolution limiting the salaries of its employees to a \$6-a-day maximum ranging down to \$2 daily, saw a bill introduced to abolish four normal schools as well as the Tennessee Polytechnic Institute and the University of Tennessee junior college, prepared wage cuts, and prepared a bill to extend the time for taxes to become delinquent.

HUNGRY!



Mrs. Alice Scribner, 24, driven desperate by the cries of her three hungry children, attempted to hold up a bakery.

MORGAN UTILITIES MUST ANSWER LABOR CHARGES

NEW YORK, N. Y.—The Public Service Commission of the State of New York on December 23, 1932, directed the Morgan controlled Brooklyn Edison Company to reinstate 5,000 discharged employees or to answer charges in a petition of complaint filed by the Brotherhood of Edison Employees, signed by 30 electricity consumers and sponsored by the Public Committee on Power Utilities and Labor.

The Brotherhood of Edison Employees have long contended that public utility commissions should regulate labor policies of utility companies as well as their rates and services. A precedent has now been established by which the labor policies of public utilities are recognized to be matters for State control and regulation.

Brooklyn Edison labor policies are described in the complaint as "unreasonable, unjust and unlawful, incite violence and endanger the adequacy and continuity of electric service." Filing of the complaint was expedited by threat of an electric strike by the Brotherhood.

Among the facts upon which the complaints filed with the Public Service Commission is based are:

Dividends increased by \$2,000,000 and surplus by \$11,000,000, while wage payments decreased by \$5,000,000.

That \$25,000,000 were available for dividends and yet wages were cut \$5,000,000.

That the Brooklyn Edison discharged 5,000 employees for "lack of work" while 36 million feet of overhead wiring remains to be put under ground.

That the Brooklyn Edison has maintained a 30 year 8 per cent dividend rate and maintains the same rate schedule to the public while effecting a \$7,500,000 annual savings in wages.

Removal of J. C. Parker, president of the Brooklyn Edison as Chairman of the Emergency Unemployment Relief Commission in Brooklyn was demanded by the Brotherhood because of his policy of increasing unemployment by his continued policy of discharging employees.

Harvey D. Gibson, Chairman of New York Employment Relief Committee replied to William Beedie, Secretary of the Brotherhood that removal of Parker at this time "might jeopardize the campaign for relief funds." A committee, representing the Brotherhood will seek to interview Mr. Gibson to protest this decision, and to state that the workers and citizens are in no mood to tolerate longer the spectacle of heads of relief committees wantonly throwing thousands of men out of employment.

Intensifying a public campaign to educate electricity consumers to the vicious anti-labor and anti-social policies of the Morgan controlled utilities, the Brotherhood of Edison Employees are conducting two open-air meetings weekly.

NATION'S JOBLESS ORGANIZE TO FIGHT EVICTIONS, WAGE CUTS AND LONG HOURS

ORGANIZED GROUPS IN ALLENTOWN, PA., JOIN FOR ACTION

By Special Correspondent

ALLENTOWN, PA.—Delegates from the Unemployed Citizens' League, the Socialist Party, the Civil Liberties Union, the St. Francis Society, the Conference for Peace and the Painters' Union met on December 29 and organized the Citizens' Protective League of Lehigh County, a militant organization pledged to immediate action for unemployment relief and workers' rights on the governmental and industrial fields. This organization is the first of its type in Allentown to successfully combine isolated civic, fraternal and industrial bodies for unified action on problems as varied as Old Age Pensions, Reduced Power Rates and Extension of Municipal Ownership of important Public Utilities.

A Program for Action

A program embracing 40 separate articles for action was submitted to the League and adopted without amendment. Several of these articles are concerned with problems which the Unemployed League recognize as identical with their own. They include a flat demand that there shall be no evictions for any cause; that sub-contracting and contractor's profits in all forms of unemployment relief building projects are to be eliminated; that ample provision is to be made for the maintenance of medical and hygienic standards among the unemployed and that all unemployed organizations shall be included on relief dispensing bodies.

Already the League has opened fire on a very important issue defined in article 37 of the program which reads: "There shall be an investigation of local industries by some impartial body with a view to determining the prevalence of child-labor violations, hours for women, sanitary conditions, wages, etc." A petition, which outlined in no uncertain terms the evils prevailing among the greater number of local factories, called on the City Council to create an investigating committee and to cooperate with the Citizens' Protective League in the reformation or abolition of these sweatshops. The petition was received and filed by the Council and made the subject of a lengthy peroration by the Mayor who finally promised to aid the League in this particular aspect of its campaign.

A State of War
Predicting rapid expansion of the City
(Continued on Page 4)

National Campaign Against Labor Racket Announced by N. E. C. of CPLA

A. F. of L. Unions Doomed Unless Drastic Action Is Taken at Once, Declares Louis F. Budenz

NEW YORK, N. Y.—An instant national campaign against labor racketeering and kindred evils in the unions has just been announced by the National Executive Committee of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action.

A committee of prominent pro-labor publicists and professors will function as a National Committee against Labor Racketeering.

The campaign will not only center upon the abuses in the unions which are causing so much unrest and revolt among the membership at the present time, but will also be directed toward the framing of a "Charter of Labor Rights" and the setting up of machinery which will protect minority groups in the union organizations.

These steps to clean up the racketeering in the unions are the outgrowth of the national convention of the CPLA in September, at which such steps were decided upon. Since then, the organization has taken an active part in the effort to rid the labor movement of autocratic and racketeering leadership.

At the opening of the American Federation of Labor convention at Cincinnati, President William Green and the executive council were presented with "a general bill of particulars" on racketeering drawn up by the CPLA. The widespread extent of the evils was called to their attention, and specific examples were furnished.

In reply, President Green stated that the A. F. of L. was ridding itself of racketeering in a "constructive" manner and indicated that there was little of

Militant League in Smith Township Defies Injunction at Ohio Capital

Striking Pottery Workers Backed by Jobless Leagues

SEBRING, O.—A strike has broken out in the potteries of this city and vicinity. And the organized jobless have lined themselves up in defense of the strikers!

The Smith Township Unemployed League has decided to come to the support of the strike. President John Darlington, Charlie Dunbar and Bill Berry are interesting themselves particularly in this phase of the U. L.'s work. But the entire group of the unemployed have signified their intention of backing the walk-out of the employed workers to the limit.

Active members of the League here point to this action as evidence of the growing value of the organized jobless to the wider labor movement.

U. C. L. IDEA GROWS IN MELLON'S TOWN

By ELMER COPE

PITTSBURGH, PA.—The unemployed of Pittsburgh are on the march! During the past few weeks hundreds of workers thrown out of work during the depression by the huge steel, railroad and electrical corporations are banding together into Unemployed Leagues.

Already five active branches of the League are functioning and the membership is growing by great strides weekly. The three largest branches are located on the North Side, in Hazelwood and East Liberty. Two other locals are operating on the South Side and on Mt. Washington. The unemployed in Hazelwood have obtained permanent headquarters located in the heart of the steel and railroad industries.

The organizing work has been done in the main by members of the Pittsburgh branch of the CPLA. Other groups are now cooperating in the work. The Unemployed League idea has taken such hold upon the unemployed in the Pittsburgh area that organizers cannot be supplied to meet the increasing demands. Requests for organizing assistance are coming in daily from all sections of Allegheny County.

COLUMBUS, OHIO—Encouraged by the success of its injunction fight in Smith Township, the Ohio Unemployed League is pushing vigorously its plans for a state convention in this city the last week in February.

The convention will bring representatives of jobless organizations from all over the state to the capitol city. Two of the high spots in the program will be the further extensive organization of the unemployed and the presentation to the Legislature of the demands formulated at the previous state gathering in Niles, on November 6.

William R. Truax, chairman of the Ohio Unemployed League, and Arnold Johnson, representative of the CPLA, are in Columbus for convention arrangements, en route on a state-wide tour of Ohio. They have secured a \$12 Dodge car for their transportation.

In addition to places where the branches of the Ohio league are fully functioning, Truax and Johnson have already visited Youngstown, Zanesville, New Berton, Alliance, Carrollton, Crooksville, Salem, and other points.

The test on the injunction came on December 30, when the six members of the Smith Township Unemployed League who had been enjoined, accompanied Truax and Johnson to interview the county commissioners at Youngstown, and thereby defy the injunction. This court decree had been secured by the commissioners against active members of the Smith Township organization, V. C. Bauhoff, Anthony Dawson, Joe Campbell, R. F. Dinger, Dan Tuel and Earl Angle. The injunction prohibited these men from "interfering" with relief work being done for adequate relief.

A committee of 13 workers went to the commissioners and laid down their demands. Although this was in direct violation of the injunction, and had been announced as a "defiance" at a meeting of 500 members of the Smith Township group at Sebring on December 27, the commissioners took no action for contempt. Through this action, the injunction was shot to pieces.

Every man and woman of the 500 attending the December 27 meeting at the Sebring High School endorsed the defiance of the Court decree by a rising vote. They had all expressed themselves as willing to go to jail if necessary. The injunction has thus increased their fighting spirit.

The legal attack on the Smith Township organization was undoubtedly due to the effectiveness of that group, who have conducted successful strikes on public works, fought effectively for rotation of work and have put their former chairman, Bauhoff, in as township trustee.

One of the outstanding meetings addressed in the pre-convention campaign was that at Maximo, Washington Township, in Stark County. The unemployed there are anxious to enter upon a strike against a wage cut on road work, and formed a branch of the League. Similar sentiment was reported from other places, particularly by Chairman Bernard Clough of the Brown Township Unemployed League when Truax and Bauhoff addressed that organization at Malvern.

The Ohio Unemployed League owes its origin to a conference of jobless organizations, held at Niles, on October 9, which had been called by the Austin Township Unemployed Citizens League and the Youngstown branch of the CPLA. This conference decided upon the convention of November 6 which formed the state league and in turn decided to hold a larger convention in the state capital during the session of the Legislature.

SEATTLE LEAGUE CONTROLS RELIEF

By CARL BRANNIN

SEATTLE, WASH.—The Unemployed Citizens' League of Seattle knows that it must be ready to fight. It had not realized this fact it would have no strength today, and the Seattle unemployed would be in the same fix as the unemployed in many cities—individual objects of public or private charity.

The League begins a new chapter this year. Relations between the county relief authorities and the League, severed six months ago, have been mended, and we go into the new year with a signed (Continued on Page 4)

FOREIGN NEWS

By J. B. MATTHEWS

Repeat the War-Makers!

THE New Year opened with an unusual number of bootleg wars in progress. The major achievement of the Kellogg Pact to date has been to lead warring governments to dispense with the formality of official declarations of war.

Colombia and Peru are adding to the war atmosphere of South America in their struggle over the little town of Leticia. Peru, whose generals seized the Colombian town, has been posing as an arbitrator in the Bolivian-Paraguayan dispute.

Japan Conquers—The League Debates IN the Orient, the Japanese militarists are renewing their conquests on the mainland of Asia, the objective being Jehol Province this time.

The occupation of Panama and the occupation of Manchuria are very different propositions, however. The ruling class of Japan is in a precarious situation at home and abroad.

The refusal of the Japanese government to negotiate a pact of non-aggression with the Soviet Union is an ominous gesture which indicates the possibilities of far more serious conflict than has yet come out of the Manchurian affair.

British Free Political Prisoners IN India, the New Year was marked by the release of political prisoners numbering many thousands. This was a welcome step, but indicates no relaxation of the grip of British imperialism on the country.

The Pirates Confer THE General Disarmament Conference is about to reconvene and the World Economic Conference, following the pattern of the Conference of 1927, will assemble before the new year is old.

End of the Five Year Plan THAT phenomenal period of Socialist Construction known as the Five Year Plan has come to an end in the Soviet Union. It is not too early to pronounce it one of the most important periods of human history.

JOBLESS: A LONG TIME JOB

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

A LOT of "expert" voices are telling us today what any one can see if he looks about him. The "technocrats" proclaim that there will be 20,000,000 unemployed in America two years from now.

It is clear that the leaders of Business and Banking are doing their damdest to make the depression worse. They haven't much of a choice under the present set-up. That is, as long as they are intent on safeguarding interest, rent and profits.

Wage cuts, layoffs and the bringing in of new machinery is the only way out that they see for themselves. That means only one thing: more joblessness.

New York State's Labor Department reports a drop in jobs of 3.1 per cent for the November-December period. The normal seasonal job loss should be less than 1 per cent. So, unemployment is rising. The same thing is happening in every other state.

At the same time, Albert H. Wiggin, retiring head of the great Chase National Bank, sees "new hopes" for recovery. Charles E. Mitchell, head of the equally great National City Bank, says that everything is "essentially sound."

All that the bankers and business "leaders" can give the workers, employed and unemployed, is the same "hopes" that appeared on Hoover's billboards in 1929.

MEETING the problem of joblessness is a long-time job. There is no escape from it. As long as present industrial methods are carried on, unemployment will grow, or at least not be cut to any noticeable extent.

If so, what can be done about it? The "individualistic" answer is to dole out \$1 or \$2 a week for food to the starving workless. When that fails, then the "individualistic" unemployed man can go out and commit suicide.

Workers say that that is no answer. Every other force having failed them, it is up to the unemployed to organize and get things for themselves. The encouraging thing is, that they have begun to realize the need for such action.

It is up to you, fellow-worker, whether you are employed or unemployed, to help form these organizations. It is up to you to do this for your own welfare and that of those around you. Unless the unemployed are organized and become part of the labor movement, they will be a menace to the men and women still working.

In every community, a vigorous organization of the unemployed should be on the job, fighting for their own rights and cooperating with the employed.

HOW can such an organization be started? It is not so difficult, after all. A group of unemployed can be gotten together in a certain neighborhood. It is better to start with a small committee, which gets the right idea, and then expand the numbers. It is important to get in this group definite residents of the district and not floaters.

If the members are strong for self-help as a start, that sort of thing can be engaged in. But only as a cement, to get the organization under way. The big job is to get after the public officials for adequate relief, and to carry the fight from the local officials to the Governor.

As soon as possible, fights should be made on evictions and demonstrations should be arranged. These should grow out of the demands of the unemployed and not be foisted on them.

As to a meeting place, the unemployed are penniless and must proceed on that basis. A meeting place for the first meetings can probably be secured in a public library, a church building, settlement house or some other similar place. It is important, though, that the librarians, church board or settlement workers do not control the meetings but that they merely give the space for the unemployed to get together under worker auspices.

When the fight against evictions, relief abuses, etc., has gotten under way, meetings in the open and in public halls can be arranged. Delegations to the Governor, and to the Legislature are measures that should be taken as early as possible, both to get results of some kind and to widen the fight.

As soon as is practicable, the unemployed group should look around for other like groups in their county and in the State. Formation of compact county and state organizations is necessary, if the work is to get the best results. Because: all steps in the fight lead to the state capitol and then to Washington.

The jobless should sit down, in their organizations, and figure out a "lowest existence budget" and get publicity for it. This budget should be submitted to the Legislature to show that present relief standards are insulting and inadequate. There is no better way to do this than to show, in cold figures, how much it takes merely to exist.

Then, there is the big job of going after the industrial end of the unemployed problem: in opposing layoffs in certain big concerns. But—that will be taken up at a future time.

In a nutshell: the jobless are here. They will be here for a long time. Let us get them together, in order that they will meet their problems together—like men and not like doormats.

Conference Progressive Labor Action

What It Is and What It Stands For.

THE most important struggle in American history is going on today. The issue is clearly and sharply drawn: Either the bankers, bosses and politicians will control and American workers will become enslaved to an industrial and financial feudalism far more powerful than any which has gone before, or workers and farmers must fight them, take control in their own interest of the great resources of the country and build a world in which all men shall have plenty, leisure and freedom.

We agree with Abraham Lincoln that "This country with its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of existing government they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it or their revolutionary right to dismember and overthrow it."

The Conference for Progressive Labor Action is an organization of active, devoted, militant workers from factory, mine, farm, store and office. They constitute a kind of shock-troops in the labor conflict. Any great movement must depend upon a comparatively small number of people who are ready to give a lot of time, energy and enthusiasm in order to inspire the masses to action and to help them when they do act. In order to be effective these militants must know each other, train themselves to do real work, must plan and act together and not in haphazard fashion. Since we know of no other satisfactory vanguard organization for American labor, the CPLA was founded. The best way to get an idea of what the CPLA is and believes is to see what it does.

In Action

If you had happened to be in Charleston, W. Va. in June last year, you would have seen 500 men in a militant demonstration at the State Capitol, demanding that the governor provide adequate relief for them and their families. If you had gone back in the hills you would have found more miners marching down to the Capitol to join the demonstration. They were led by Walter Seacrist, miner, former mountain preacher, recent Brookwood graduate, CPLA organizer.

At the invitation of active workers in the United Mine Workers of America, the CPLA helped get under way an insurgent movement against John L. Lewis and for a clean-up in that union. That insurgent movement "went sour" in the spring of 1931, just when it had made a promising start at rebuilding the union among the miners in the Kanawha Valley of West Virginia. The CPLA stayed on the spot when the going became hard. Tom Tippet, a member of the N. E. C., stuck by Frank Keeney and his fellow-workers. The result was the establishment of the West Virginia Mine Workers' Union.

The union has led in the establishment of the Independent Labor Party of West Virginia. The West Virginia Mine Workers' Union is closely linked up with the Progressive Miners' Union of Illinois, in the founding of which CPLA members have also taken an active part.

Quietly and persistently CPLA organizers are forming small groups of steel workers in Pittsburgh, the Mahoning Valley in Ohio and elsewhere. These are the pick of the workers who can be absolutely trusted. They are organizing themselves into the Brotherhood of the Mills. Each group in this Brotherhood studies conditions in the industry, reports what is happening in the mills, wages, the temper of the workers, acquires knowledge of the general labor movement, gets training in public speaking and organization activities, cautiously distributes literature, lays secure foundations for an organization campaign one of these days in steel.

At the same time these CPLA organizers are working with a small group of

Police Chief Excited

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Police Commissioner Edward P. Mulrooney, (speaking to the Emergency Unemployment Relief Committee meeting, January 10): "If you go over to the old Heckscher flour mill on the East River about 10 o'clock at night and see that long line of homeless men silhouetted against the sky, waiting for food and shelter, you might allow your imagination to run riot for a few minutes and think what might happen were they motivated by a defiance of law and order. It is not a pleasant thought."

"Every one knows how quickly a mob is inflamed and how devastating the effects of a mob are, but that sort of thing will not happen while you men and other organizations continue to share and alleviate suffering."

A.F. of L. BEGINS NEW YEAR

Has It Really Become Progressive and Militant, or Are Its Leaders "Just Talking"?

By A. J. MUSTE

THE American Federation of Labor is still the largest body of organized workers in the United States though by no means the only spokesman for Labor as its leaders sometimes try to claim. What the A. F. of L. is likely to be and do in 1933 is therefore of importance for the workers and for all those who are interested in the labor movement.

From the standpoint of those who want to see a fighting, progressive union movement some positions the A. F. of L. is taking at the beginning of the new year are encouraging, others not so encouraging. Let us take first the encouraging signs.

Unemployment Insurance

1. The A. F. of L. is now fighting for the establishment of a system of compulsory unemployment insurance in all the states. That means saying to government and business: "After this when depression comes and men are thrown out of work, the jobless are not to be dependent upon haphazard charity as millions of self-respecting industrious American workers are today. In the future if a man does not get a pay envelope from the boss at the end of the week, he must get one from the state."

This is not the place to go into a detailed discussion of the feature of the bill or bills which the A. F. of L. is prepared to sponsor. We may remark on some good points in its proposals. It demands, for example, that workers are not to be made to pay into the unemployment insurance fund. The fund is to be a charge upon industry. No one is to be compelled to take a job below the prevailing rate of wages or forfeit his insurance benefits if he refuses. The unemployment insurance scheme is not to be used as a means to force workers to leave their unions.

The fact that this conservative organization of trade unions is on record for unemployment insurance, when only two years ago at its Boston convention a mere handful dared to vote for the proposal which had been viciously denounced as un-American and Bolshevik, suggests that the "world do move."

30-Hour Week

2. The A. F. of L. has come out strongly for the six hour day and the five day week and has called upon the workers to engage in an immediate and vigorous fight for this change. It is a very important step. In factories work that required 52 hours in 1919 could be done in 34 hours in 1929 as a result of all kinds of improvements in machinery, etc. But the actual working week during this period declined only from 52 to 50 hours. Inevitably thousands of workers were thrown out on the street. There is no way of putting the millions who are now jobless back to work unless a drastic change is made in the hours of labor.

This move for the 6 hour day and the 5 day week is important not only because of its object but because in the past great and effective organizing campaigns have centered around the movement for the shorter work week. Perhaps once again the slogan of drastically cutting down the hours of labor may prove a rallying cry bringing hundreds of thousands of workers in the basic industries into fighting, industrial unions.

For Force "of Some Kind"

3. As the new year opens there are indications that there may be more fighting spirit in the A. F. of L. than for some time past. Certainly there is more talk of fight. President Green caused a tremendous demonstration in the A. F. of L. convention in Cincinnati and precipitated a lot of talk outside the convention when in a debate on the 6 hour day and the 5 day week he roundly asserted: "We will not be denied the realization of this great reform. The world must know we must be given it in response to reason or we will secure it through force of some kind." At a hearing before a Senate Committee in Washington the other day he spoke of general strike and "class war" if, as he thought likely, the leaders of industry refused to listen to reason and to grant the shorter work week.

For a number of years the A. F. of L. had the idea that the best way to organize workers was to "sell" the idea of unionism to employers; make the bosses believe that it was to their advantage to have workers organized and they would induce their employees to come into the union. The fact that A. F. of L. leaders today openly admit that this policy has been a failure and that the labor movement today, as in the past, must build upon the fighting spirit of the workers and nothing else, is a welcome sign.

There are, however, some serious considerations of a less encouraging kind.

For more effective service in all branches of the labor movement; and bringing about the greatest possible measure of unity in the pursuit of these ends among all sincere elements in the labor movement.

Losing Membership

1. A labor movement that is going to do big things must be strong. The American labor movement confronting the most powerful combinations of capital in the world, needs to be especially strong. Unfortunately, however, the entire American movement, and especially the A. F. of L., is weak. Only about 10 per cent of all the gainfully occupied people in this country are organized in unions.

The A. F. of L. itself lost membership even during the boom time, the first time in the history of this country that union membership has declined during a period of prosperity. The Executive Council's report announced a drop of over 350,000 as compared to the previous year. What is more serious, we have practically no organization in this country in some of the great basic industries such as steel, automobiles, textiles, electrical equipment, soft coal, public utilities.

No Organizing Program

2. It appears therefore that some real organizing work will have to be done if the A. F. of L. is to be able to put up a fight against the forces massed against it, and the plans for such organizing work ought to form an important, if not the most important, part of Labor's program in the present crisis.

But almost nothing was said on this crucial point of organizing work either in the Executive Council's report or in the convention proceedings. No large-scale, concrete plan for organizing work has been developed by the A. F. of L. and placed before the workers. All the wisdom that the Executive Council had to offer on this point, it summed up in these two mighty sentences: "In the coming year we must depend upon personal appeal as our chief reliance in spreading the cause of unionism." And in the second place, "We urge unions in all localities to begin continuous efforts for organizing workers during this coming year."

Undoubtedly organizing work is difficult now. New methods will have to be devised. That is no excuse, however, for such utter evasion of the key problem as the A. F. of L. leaders are guilty of.

Unemployed Ignored

3. Furthermore, if the employed cannot easily be organized today, there are many indications that the unemployed can be. There is, in fact, a rapidly growing network of unemployed organizations throughout the land, some of which indeed are only "chiselling brigades" but many of which are carrying on collective bargaining activities and pressure activities of various kinds.

Surely, if a vigorous labor movement is to be built under the economic conditions which we now have, it is of the utmost importance that the unemployed leagues be linked up with the unions. There is no evidence that the A. F. of L. has given any serious consideration to this problem. This indicates an utter lack of organizational sense which certainly does not bode well for its future.

Racketeers Still In

4. If in some respects a period like the present is not favorable for extending organization, it is an excellent time to clean house and put existing unions on a sounder basis. The rank and file in the unions are less tolerant of abuses than they were in the heyday of prosperity.

President Green and the Executive Council some months ago professed themselves greatly stirred by racketeering, gangsterism, corruption, bureaucracy and allied evils in the unions. They stated they were going to take extreme measures to drive these evils out. President Green went so far as to threaten with expulsion from the A. F. of L. international unions which permitted their locals to tolerate such "leeches" as gangsters and racketeers.

Nothing serious has as yet been done about this evil, however. The result, as pointed out elsewhere in this issue of LABOR ACTION, is that a New York court recently threw a local union of the Motion Picture Operators into a receivership, appointing as one of the receivers John W. Davis. Davis is a Morgan attorney. That picture of a Morgan attorney as the business agent of a labor union suggests how low a part of the trade union movement has sunk and how certainly a movement which does not eradicate the cancer of racketeering must before long perish.

Doing Nothing About a Labor Party

5. The A. F. of L. is not yet taking any definite steps toward the formation of a labor or farmer-labor party. Its leadership thinks that the Democratic sweep in the recent election represents a victory for Labor and it looks for favors from the Roosevelt regime. But the party of Raskob-Owen Young-Dupont-Baruch and that crowd is not going to do any more for the workers and farmers than the party of Rockefeller and Morgan.

This question whether the A. F. of L. has turned genuinely progressive, even the question whether it can survive has not yet been answered.

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Under Direction of the National Executive Committee of CPLA.

Zero Issue

Saturday, January 21, 1933

LABOR ACTION

LABOR ACTION—the name of our paper—tells what it is going to be about. Labor and Action, we think, naturally belong together.

This is a workers' paper. It will talk about their lives, about the mines, farms, offices, stores and factories in which they work—work, that is, if and when they have jobs.

What is more important is that this paper will mostly be written by the workers, not by people who talk about the workers and the labor movement.

LABOR ACTION will tell week by week the story of the labor movement, of the struggle of the workers to organize. By labor movement we mean unemployed organizations, unions (in the A. F. of L. and outside), labor political organizations, cooperatives, workers' educational enterprises, workers' sports organizations, and all the rest.

This paper will deal with Action, rather than with Theory. We shall try to picture where the action is leading, what it means. But mostly we will tell about what is going on among the workers of the U. S. A. and who is doing it.

Furthermore, we think there isn't enough action today on the part of American workers and the American labor movement. And this paper is going to help to get action. Action of the workers, for the workers, by the workers! Action about wage cuts, long hours, unemployment, evictions, injunctions, yellow-dog contracts, fat dividends for shirkers while workers starve! Action to build a labor movement which will build a world in which those who do the work and not the bosses, bankers, and politicians rule!

WHO CARES AND WHY?

WE had the Big War, then the Big Boom, now the Big Bust-Up! The Big Boys who talked so Big about their super-human brains which had put a chicken in every pot and an auto in every back-yard (well, nearly every pot and back-yard, then) have done absolutely, nothing to stop the depression and nothing to prevent another one coming again soon, if we get over this one. Why?

That reminds us of a story we heard the other day about a farmer who bought a mule from a trader. When he got the mule in front of a plow in his cotton field, the mule stumbled and fell over every other furrow. The farmer went back to the trader and said, "This mule you sold me is blind; he stumbles over every furrow." Said the trader, "That mule ain't blind; he just don't give a damn!"

Whether our bankers and politicians are blind or don't give a damn, in any case they aren't fit to lead.

That maybe they don't care about the suffering of farmers and workers because they themselves still have it pretty soft is suggested by some figures recently set forth by Prof. Paul H. Douglas of the University of Chicago. They show that the workers of this country, even when the drop in prices is taken into account, get less than half as big wages as in 1929, but dividends paid amounted to eight and a half billion dollars in 1930, over eight billion in 1931, and will amount to seven billion for 1932. Why should the dividend-takers give a damn?

SOME JOBS FOR 1933

WE know now that we cannot get or keep anything except by organizing and fighting for it. There is going to be some tall organizing and fighting done this year by the American worker and farmer!

Here are some of the things to organize for:
Adequate relief—decently and fairly administered. And that means the unemployed themselves must be strongly represented on all relief agencies. This is supposed to be a democratic country. Democracy for the unemployed means they must have such representation.

Fight wage cuts. The purchasing power of the masses is too small now. To lower it further is crazy and criminal. You can't put out a fire by pouring gasoline on it.

Get unemployed insurance. That won't help today or the next day. But we must establish now the principle that in the future when a man doesn't get a pay-envelope from the boss, he gets one from the compulsory unemployment insurance, fund, and doesn't have to take a hand-out from the charity society. No more evictions.

A moratorium on interest and tax payments for farmers and small home owners.

The five-day week and the six-hour day with the same amount of pay. Machinery meant to lighten the burden of toil will be a deadly load on the workers' backs unless hours are drastically cut. But there must be no cut in weekly pay, or the workers will still lack purchasing power to set the wheels of industry turning.

Finally, no more war! The capitalists in their desperation may turn to war in order to get our attention off their rotten system and set us to fighting our fellow-workers from some other country. We do not want to be either machine-fodder or cannon fodder!

JOKER IN SCHLEICHER'S "LIBERAL ATTITUDE"

In the latest number of Kampfsignal, Socialist organ of the German Workers' Party, Max Seydewitz points out the joker in Chancellor von Schleicher's seemingly liberal attitude in the matter of lifting emergency decrees and permitting the press to operate more freely than during the von Papen regime. Seydewitz makes clear that while it is to Schleicher's advantage at present to differentiate his policies as much as possible from those of his predecessor, the Chancellor's liberal front covers a well-defined anti-radical program.

A recent, widely broadcast statement of the Chancellor's, announcing the change in policy, carried the warning that in case the "freest citizenry in the world" failed to show itself as orderly and law-abiding as was expected, the suppressive measures lay ready "in the desk drawer" in the interest (of course!) of "protecting the German people."

The substance of Schleicher's warning becomes plain in the following statement: "In so far as the seditious communistic movement is concerned, I do not intend to leave any doubts that the Reich's government will hesitate to take drastic exceptional action in case their eagerness for their goal leads to increased agitation among the population." This, Seydewitz indicates, shows clearly enough the tricky work of the crafty General.

Organized Groups in Allentown Join for Action

(Continued from Page 1)

zens' Protective League in the near future, Louis Breier, its secretary pro-tem says: "The time has come when most labor and civic organizations interested in fighting for justice and common decency in industry and government realize that a policy of isolation is, to say the least of it, the worst possible tactical error. In the past it may have been difficult to determine just who our enemies were, and who our friends. But in this depression each day demarcates with greater clarity the opposing forces—on the one side the workers of America battling for their very right to live—on the other side the vested interests of America fighting for the privilege of robbing and pillaging.

"It is organizations like the Citizens' Protective League we have need of, if we are to gain success. I do not say that the League will prove the last word in workers' organization. But as the first successful unification of separate workers' groups in this community it is a tremendous step forward and will lead to greater things."

Letters have been sent to every workers' organization in the city asking for representatives at the next meeting of the League, January 14, for which the County Court House has been procured.

LOOK AROUND YOU, MR. GREEN



News Item: President William Green, of the American Federation of Labor assures Cincinnati reporters that racketeers have practically disappeared from A. F. of L. unions. Mr. Green was attending the annual convention of the labor organization in this city.

OTHERS SAY

By PROLETARIAN

American workers and farmers have fought. The past is full of militancy. The story is told by Arthur W. Calhoun in the new labor newspaper - magazine, "Our America."

"And this spirit is not dead," writes Calhoun. "All that is necessary is to implant the realization that the days of personal resources are over, and the workers of America will flow together in unvanquishable number."

Technocracy!

A big pleasant word that fits the mouth like a penny jaw-breaker.

"Technocracy says we'd only work four hours a day if everything were right, if machinery wasn't run for profits. Technocracy says—

The word tastes good.

But what do the Technocrats say? Well, they say they offer no solution; that's something important.

They are a group of engineers who are doing good work in collecting facts and figures to add to those already in the possession of Marxists, demonstrating that the profit-system is falling to pieces, about done for. Only the engineers have not yet found the heart of the matter, that only the working class can develop the strength to unseat the capitalists and usher in the next stage, the non-profit system. So they can offer no solution.

"The Terrifying Onward March of the Machine" in the December "Lithographers' Journal" is a summary by Justus Ebert of the articles on Technocracy printed in the "New Outlook."

Workers in England read in the official journal of the Labor Movement there, the "Labor Magazine," December, that the American president-elect is better material than Hoover, but that "No one would

SEATTLE LEAGUE CONTROLS RELIEF

(Continued from Page 1)

agreement turning over the relief commissaries to the unemployed.

This period just ended has tested to the limit the pioneer organization of the unemployed in America. Weakened members fell away or joined the "company union" which the outgoing commissioners set up to chain the unemployed to their political chariots. The twenty-two locals in the city all withered the attack. Workers in Seattle and the Northwest have a background of class solidarity, an immense advantage.

The U. C. L. was set in motion in July, 1931, by a few members of the Seattle Labor College. It grew very rapidly.

Even the enemies of all working class organizations, the bankers, the big business element, were taken off guard. The only sort of unemployed organization they knew about at the time was Communist sponsored, and it made little impression. The League put forward the principle of "self-help" as the big item in its program. Naturally the business men were led to believe that the jobless would keep their minds occupied with the innocuous work of wood cutting, gathering food from farms, and so on.

Then the bankers and politicians thought that they could make a "company union" out of the League, after it had grown large. This would be a better method than fighting the League openly.

describe him as a bold and enterprising man, nor one gifted with any special vision." There may be a slight reduction of tariffs, recognition of Russia, modification of prohibition, some form of unemployment insurance and federal supervision of electric power, writes Harold J. Laski. But Roosevelt's election "gives no grounds for optimism in world affairs."

YOU MUST DECIDE—AND YOU WILL

You take a toothache and you jump from bed howling and run up and down the room making everybody miserable. Do you? No, you know there are remedies for an aching tooth; you try the remedies as fast as you can reach them and if they fail to kill the pain the tooth is yanked out.

But listen to this. A terrible plague sweeps the nation, enters your home—all security is gone: the prospects for your children in life, the prospects for an old age of comfort and security for yourself and your wife, all are suddenly crushed.

What do you do? Do you sit down and hold your tongue and kid yourself with the belief that nothing has happened, or that somewhere somebody is looking out for you? No, not if you are an awakened worker. You know that there is a remedy for this plague, this TB of capitalism, a remedy that only the workers as a class can ever apply.

You know, also, that until this remedy is applied, you, your family, our families, all of us who belong to the working class, will go on suffering in the future as we have in the past.

But what do you do about this sort of economic toothache? What can you do about it? There is in the thinking of workers and farmers in this country a frightful amount of muddledness and confusion, this is the trouble. Everywhere you find them looking desperately for the dentist, so to speak, without knowing where the dentist is or how to get there.

The dentist in this case is a strong labor movement. And Comrade, if you are interested as we are in building the labor movement and extracting the TB system from our lives—and we must proceed upon the assumption that you are—and that you do not kid yourself and your dependents with vague feelings that the bankers are losing sleep figuring out ways to make money for US and not for themselves—then let us tell you about this CPLA publication, LABOR ACTION.

Here are the facts, given anxiously, frankly, because whether you realize it this minute or not, you are sure to have a say in determining whether this paper lives or dies—whether it will be a weapon, a genuine force, in rousing and training the workers to organize and tackle their

problems sanely, or whether, like so many labor papers, it will die of non-support.

You are sure to have a say in deciding which it shall be.

This zero number of LABOR ACTION goes out to you with proletarian prayers in the name of a workers republic. Men and women have worked hard without pay, but gladly, to place it in your hands. They have tried their best to make this issue give you some idea of what LABOR ACTION hopes to be—the most stimulating, challenging, interesting workers' weekly in America.

And just now you may be pretty sure that these workers are waiting hopefully and anxiously for your reactions.

Subscriptions have got to come in, bundle orders must be received; the comrades who are aware of the impossibilities of publishing a workers' paper without support—quick support and plenty of it—from the workers, must pitch in now without putting it off and do everything they can to get friends and fellow workers to subscribe, send in names of workers who want the paper but have no money, buy bundle orders, sell them, send in news—Everything!

This is what you can do to make our work effective, for one without the other is almost meaningless.

Will you do it?

LABOR ACTION,
128 East 16th St.,
New York City.
I will do it. Put me down as a subscriber to LABOR ACTION. I enclose one dollar. LABOR ACTION looks good to me.
Name
Address
Labor Action \$1 a year. 3 mo. trial sub. 25c.

THE DEVIL YOU SAY

By TESS HUFF

The President's Research Committee on Social Trends Makes Its Report

At last your government has the facts, and here they are. After three years of study the President's Committee on Social Trends gives your government the facts and there's nothing left to do now but for your government to forget about them.

The following statements are taken from the report:

Our capacity to produce goods changes faster than our capacity to purchase; employment does not keep pace with improvement in the machinery of production.

Whether the recurrent episodes of widespread unemployment, huge financial losses and demoralization are an inescapable feature of the form of economic organization which the western world has evolved is a question which can be answered only by further study and experiment.

The basic feature of our present economic organization is that we get our livings by making and spending money incomes. This practice offers prizes to those who have skill at money making; it imposes penalties upon those who lack the ability or the character to render services for which others are willing to pay.

But even in good times it is clear that we do not make full use of our labor power, our industrial equipment, our natural resources and our technical skill. The reason why we do not produce a larger real income for ourselves is not that we are satisfied with what we have, for in the best of years millions of families are limited to a meager living. The effective limit upon production is the limit of what the markets will absorb at profitable prices, and this limit is set by the purchasing power at the disposal of would-be consumers.

Of necessity the business organizer's task is often the unwelcome one of keeping production down to a profitable level.

Output per worker has increased 50 per cent in the manufacturing industries since the beginning of the 20th century.

For the very near future the standard of living may decline because of the menace to wages caused by unemployment, the possible slowness of economic recovery from the depression and the weakness of collective action on the part of wage-earners.

Poverty is by no means vanished... The indications are that even in our late period of unexamined prosperity there was much poverty in certain industries and localities, in rural areas as well as in cities, which was not of temporary or accidental nature.

Insecurity of unemployment is characteristic of the economic process, and no doubt if control of rates of change were possible, unemployment could be greatly reduced.... Unless labor organizations show a more vigorous growth in the future other resources of society must be drawn upon to meet these problems.

Now this is good stuff and to the point. The report states elsewhere that there are no indications that the "rates of change" of social forces will be controlled in the near future, so let's not get excited—everybody keep his place in the breadline.

Plainly the Committee was stumped in its efforts to find a way out under capitalism, although it was three years on the job. But some of its statements, as you see, are pretty red. Indeed the report puts some emphasis upon the possibility of violent revolution "unless there can be a more impressive integration of social skills and fusing of social purposes than is revealed by recent trends."

At any rate your President now has the facts before him and you may be sure that he will do something with them, if he does no more than put them under his bed, and someone has suggested that this is how he disposes of the facts collected by his various committees.

Anyway, you can go out now and build a labor movement to cope with the problems in the land of idle machines and moving breadlines that this system cannot solve, and if the government sends in troops, or the chamber of commerce and the churches denounce you and the police look upon you as a menace—just send a wire to your President, and he will crawl under the bed and rake out these old facts which were to guide the nation, and wire you back that you are not only right and acting according to his Committee's instructions, but that you are solving the nation's problems.