

Labor Age

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AN EDITORIAL



LABOR AGE

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AN AMERICAN LABOR PLAY

"MILL SHADOWS," Tom Tippet's dramatization of the Marion Massacre has been presented twice recently by Brookwood students and faculty. The production is an outstanding event in labor dramatics from the point of view of play, acting and setting. The performances took place in an old Brookwood barn that students and faculty have miraculously converted into a real labor theatre. The play acts amazingly well and is amazingly well acted.

New Yorkers interested in labor dramatics and in the Southern textile situation will have two opportunities before long to see "Mill Shadows." On Saturday, February 27, it is to be produced for the benefit of Pioneer Youth at the New School for Social Research and some time around the middle of March C. P. L. A. is going to have its own benefit performance. Anita Block, playreader for the Theatre Guild, says "Mill Shadows' is probably the most authentic American labor play." It is, therefore, to be hoped that large and sympathetic audiences will turn out to avail themselves of this real inspiration that is being offered them.



DRESSMAKERS IN GENERAL STRIKE

BACKED and stimulated by the powerful banking interests of Wall Street, the three dress employers' associations in New York have decided to jump on the wage-cutting bandwagon. In connection with the agreement which has just lapsed, they demand a reduction in

wages, the right to discharge employees and reorganize personnel independent of union, overtime work with no extra pay, Saturday work, employment of apprentices, and no pay for legal holidays. This means in effect a return to the lowest sweat shop conditions. The workers have answered the challenge in an overflow mass meeting at Mecca Temple, with a ringing call for a general strike.

The dressmakers, who have so gallantly fought for unionism and for union conditions in the past, are now once again called upon to show their mettle. It is no easy task which they have set for themselves. The official leadership of the American Federation of Labor has been tried in this critical period and has been found utterly lacking in any ability to fight for the maintenance of conditions against the onslaught of the employers. While condemning wage cuts in flamboyant speeches, they have done nothing to strengthen the fighting power of the labor movement so that it may be able to effectively resist the present attacks. Wherever real resistance against wage cuts has been shown, it has been due to the direct initiative and fighting spirit of the workers themselves, in spite of the spinelessness of the official leadership of the A. F. of L. Brilliant examples have been set by the miners of West Virginia and Kentucky, by the textile workers of Lawrence and Paterson. We are confident that the New York dressmakers will profit by these examples and will write a shining page in the history of the American labor movement, that will mark the death knell of the sweat shop in the dress industry.

NOTICE

Conference for Progressive Labor Action
New York Branch

Meets every Second and Fourth Friday of each Month

Harlan Needs Relief

With the acquittal of William Barnett, there still remain 42 defendants indicted for murder by the coal barons of Harlan, Kentucky. Funds for defense should be forwarded at once to the Kentucky Miners' Defense and Relief Conference, P. O. Box 109, Station D, New York, N. Y.

· L A B O R · A G E ·

February, 1932

EDITORIALS

American warships, marines and troops are now rushing to China. At any moment a clash may occur which may be the spark that will plunge us into another bloody war. The League of Nations has proven itself ridiculously powerless to head off the Japanese military junta. The loss of an American life, the sinking of an American ship, injury to American property—in China or Manchuria—any of these occurrences may be the signal for our entry into a war, more terrible and more destructive than the last.

A Warning to Workers Of the United States

Should this take place, we will be told again that this is a war to end all wars, that it is a war for the defense of civilization, of the white race, against the "Yellow Peril." Countless stories of atrocities will be concocted to whip up a mad wave of war hysteria. We will be told that we are fighting against the rape of Manchuria and Shanghai just as in 1917 we were told that we were fighting against the rape of Belgium. Thousands upon thousands of our American boys will be torn from their loved ones, to be thrown into the cannon's mouth, to die in the far-off fields of Manchuria or China. Those who stay at home will become the cogs in a gigantic war machine, robbed of all rights to speak and think, taxed and driven at every turn, fed up on war bread and war propaganda. WHAT FOR?

War in China will be war for the protection of \$250,000,000 worth of property and investments of Wall Street bankers. War in China will have as its aim the establishment of the rule of the American bankers over the suffering Chinese people instead of the Japanese warlord. In fact the present misery of the Chinese people is in large due to the exploitation by American bankers. War in China cannot be of any help to the American people. On the contrary, it will inevitably mean the loss of countless lives, the wounding and maiming of our young men, and the deepening of the present widespread misery.

It will even be said that "War" is the way out of the present depression, that "War" is the way out of unemployment and breadlines. If this bloody path of suffering and death is the only means of affording temporary and partial relief from the present depression, then it is high time that this war-breeding, miserable profit system be scrapped and replaced by a system in which industry is run of, by and for the working people, a system under which starvation, breadlines and flophouses and wars for Wall Street profits will be unknown, a system under which mankind will live in lasting peace and plenty.

To realize this aim the workingclass must build up and strengthen its two most powerful weapons—honest, fighting, all-inclusive unions of the workers in each industry—an active, militant party of labor separate and distinct from the two corrupt, boss-controlled parties of capitalism.

Not an ounce of support to any imperialist schemes

against the Chinese people whether these schemes come from Wall Street or the military clique of Japan. Stand by the Chinese people in their fight against Japanese imperialist invasion. Stand by the Chinese people in their fight against their own militarists and imperialist tools headed by Chaing Kai-Shek. Support the fight of the Japanese people against the Japanese military clique. Not a man—not a dollar for Wall Street's designs against the Chinese people.

Workers of America—let us unite in working class solidarity with the workers of China and Japan against the imperialist robbers who seek to drown us once again in a bloody conflict!



TERRORISM—STARK, brutal, swaggering terrorism of mine operators and so-called officers of the law against the workers, prevails in the mining counties of Kentucky. W. B. Jones and Wm. Hightower, leaders among the miners, have been sentenced to life imprisonment for alleged participation in a shooting affair which occurred in connection with a desperation strike last summer. There is every indication that over forty other miners will be railroaded to jail in similar fashion. None of the deputies who took part in the affair have even been indicted.

Evidence that unspeakable poverty and the suppression of all civil rights obtain in these mining counties comes not from Reds but from a commission appointed by the governor of Kentucky himself. Nevertheless, no union meetings can be held and no union organizer or sympathizer from outside can come in, save at the risk of his life.

In India 350,000,000 human beings are involved in a tremendous economic and social revolution which is shaking the very foundations of the British Empire, yes of our whole industrial, capitalistic civilization. Yet there are hardly as many murders, hardly as much suppression of liberty in India as occur in Kentucky in a dispute involving not the life of the nation but the profits of a few coal operators under whose ownership and control a great industry has been brought to the edge of ruin.

Once again the myth that this is a free country has been shattered, as it was in the Sacco-Venzetti case, as it is being shattered anew in the Mooney case.

Is it possible that the workers and the liberals of America, if there are any left, are going to sit by and see these Kentucky miners shut up in a living grave? Are they going to permit this terrorism to go on without any protest except a polite verbal one?

We suggest that workers and liberals from all over the

country, but especially from the South and from Kentucky itself, make a pilgrimage to Harlan County and hold a gigantic conference on Civil Liberties and the Condition of the Coal Miners. That will focus the attention of the nation once more upon the situation. It would perhaps arouse public opinion in Kentucky so that pressure would be brought to bear on "the law" in the mining counties to amend its ways. Most important of all, it would be a demonstration of solidarity with the stricken miners themselves which is sorely needed and which would serve as an encouragement to workers everywhere in the desperate struggles which are ahead of them.



THE Socialist Party's recent decision not to take part in a conference of progressive trade union leaders, heads of farm organizations, and of third party movements now in the field, for the purpose of discussing strategy in the forthcoming presidential campaign seems to us mistaken and sectarian. The N.E.C. of the S.P., through Morris Hillquit, replied to a request from the League for Independent Political Action that they appoint a representative to sit in on a joint committee to organize such a national conference, that "We do not consider it advisable that the S.P. be represented at the conference which you propose to call. This decision must not be understood as a change or deviation from the Party's repeatedly expressed policy of readiness to cooperate with any bona fide labor party that may spring up in this country at any time in the future, but the members of our committee feel that there is at this time no indication or promise of such a party. . . . The best service that we can render at this time towards building up an effective opposition party. . . is to concentrate our undivided efforts on the work of the S.P. . . and we fear that Socialist participation in a conference such as you proposed to call under the existing circumstances might tend to divert the attention of our own members and followers from our immediate task."

There are a good many indications, and they come in increasing numbers as the weeks of depression follow one another, that the masses are thinking about a new political alignment. How much there is back of it all is hard to say of course, and only time will tell the whole story. Certainly we are not likely, however, to find out what the chances for a mass labor party movement really are unless those who are interested at least get together to compare notes and discuss their plans. Some coordination among existing groups in the field would in itself be desirable.

If the S.P. were completely convinced that the only way in which a labor party can be built in this country is by more and more individuals joining the S.P. and if it were on record, therefore, as being opposed to cooperation with any kind of labor party, they might consistently, though perhaps mistakenly, refuse to run the risk of dissipating their energies by such a conference as is proposed. Since the S.P. does seek cooperation with labor party groups and is on record as being in favor of the building of a labor party in the United States and under proper conditions participating in the activities of such a labor party, it seems inconsistent to take a negative attitude by saying to everybody else, "Go ahead and see what you can do and when

you are able to show that you have the goods we are willing to join hands with you, but not till then." It may be doubted whether we shall get a mass labor party built if those who are interested do not take a more positive attitude.

If the S. P. were an out and out militant, left wing organization, then also it might consistently, though perhaps mistakenly, refuse to help in building a mass party and say, "There is no hope except in an out-and-out revolutionary organization and it will be better to wait until the masses are ready to enter into that, rather than encourage them at any period in their development to join a party with a less uncompromising program." As it is, however, the S.P. tries to be both a general labor party which interests itself in immediate aims and accepts considerable compromises and at the same time a militant left wing Socialist organization. Under these circumstances, it seems sectarian for it to refuse to confer with other groups interested in a more widespread labor political movement.

This is not to suggest that the C.P.L.A. is unaware of the dangerous liberal tendencies which exist for example in the L.I.P.A. and which would have to be combatted by any genuine labor groups which might go into a conference which the L.I.P.A. sponsored or in which it took part. We are aware also of the very real danger that premature and thoughtless action might result in the building of a fake labor party. It seems to us, however, that the dangers and difficulties in the way of building a large scale workers' political organization must not deter us from constant efforts toward that goal.



ON November 17, 1931, a story, headed "Police Dicks Arrested," appeared in the clip sheets of the Federated Press. This story was taken from the *New York Times*, vouched for by the Marine Workers Industrial Union and checked by Boris Israel and the editor of the F. P. According to this story the three members of the Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union, Soderberg, Trajer and Bunker, who were arrested and savagely beaten by police on November 16, were police spies and the I. T. B. U., a racketeering organization. The story in the *Daily Worker* also attacked the men as spies and to date there has been no retraction.

However, the International Labor Defense is now interesting itself in the case to the extent of attempting by underhand means to secure the right to defend these men. It has attacked the Marine Workers Defense Committee which was organized to defend the men against the obvious frame-up of the O'Boyle Towing Company, and has called upon the workers to send funds to the I. L. D. for defense of the men. This, in spite of the fact that none of the men involved has authorized it to represent them.

It seems to us a pretty sorry thing for what claims to be a responsible labor organization to descend to calling arrested workers police spies in capitalist papers without any further proof than that these workers have been involved in factional fights with the Communist Party. This is an inexcusable crime. And it is the duty of those responsible for the above mentioned story, including the I. L. D., to immediately make an explanation and retract their false and slanderous charges.

Socialist Party and Labor Party

An Inexcusable Crime

Socialist Militants and the C. P. L. A.

The recent New York City convention of the S.P. took up a number of points on which the CPLA has criticized the S.P. such as the exclusive dependence on "democratic" methods for achieving a new economic order, the attitude toward Russia, and the trade union policy. The convention was especially important because it was held with a view to the forthcoming national convention of the S.P. and gives some indication of the line-up at that convention, although other groups in the Party such as the Philadelphia branch for example, are not in accord with the New York majority. From the New York City convention, Socialist militants and others who think or hope that the S.P. can be made into a genuine left wing militant party, cannot gather much encouragement. On all important points the conservatives polled two to three times as many votes as the militants.

Unfortunately, limitations of space prevent us from presenting a thorough analysis of the deliberations of the convention. Some of the outstanding points may be briefly noted. In connection with the problem of achieving a socialist order, one of the militants introduced the following resolution: "The methods by which the working class is to achieve Socialism are dependent entirely upon the specific circumstances in each country. Our chief concern is with the achievement of Socialism, and our methods must be chosen with that end in view only. The only question of principle involved is that we must never lose sight of the class character of the capitalist state and we must choose our methods with that end in view. We should make use of whatever vestiges of democracy the working class has been able to wrest from the dominant class. When, however, the pseudo-democratic institutions of the capitalist state are no longer available to us, or if we become convinced that the capitalist control of the instruments of propaganda is such as to preclude the possibility of our attaining control of the powers of government by constitutional means, we shall use whatever means are available to achieve our goal. In the transitional period from the Socialist revolution to the classless society, we should maintain democracy wherever possible, but we should not hesitate to resort to any methods that are necessary to maintain power and suppress the forces of the counter-revolution. Our aim is a classless society and our methods should be democratic so far as possible, but when democracy becomes inexpedient it must be sacrificed to the attainment of the only real and permanent democracy, the Socialist society."

This sound and moderate statement was decisively defeated and, in its stead, the Statement of Socialist Party First Principles, adopted at the convention, flatly states that the goal of the working class "cannot be attained by undemocratic means," a statement to which there might be no objection if terms were carefully defined and if the S.P. in practice evidenced a genuine militancy and a freedom from the fetish of having to be legal and respectable in a situation where the standards of legality and respectability are set and enforced by the enemies of the working class. When, however, the statement is taken in connection with the voting down of the Militant resolution which we have quoted, it reveals a tendency to depend upon the sham democracy which prevails under capitalism, which is of the utmost danger to the working class.

On Russia, the majority statement, among other things, says "While a divergence of opinion among American So-

cialists as to the nature and prospects of the Russian 'experiment' is entirely natural and legitimate, the question has little or no bearing upon the problems and policies of Socialism in this country and should not be permitted to divide our ranks or to stand in the way of unified and harmonious activities of all American Socialists along the lines of international social democracy." American capitalists know that Russia cannot be ignored, that what has happened in Russia is of the utmost importance for the whole world, but American Socialists do not know it.

The majority resolution on the attitude of the party toward the unions and activity in unions emphasizes repeatedly that the S.P. does not wish to dictate to the unions and insists that "What is desired is a friendly cooperation based upon mutual understanding, and this cannot be and never has been obtained by any form of coercion, or intrigue, or assertion of power by one over the other."

If this was meant simply to dissociate the S.P. from the methods of dictatorship and destruction often practiced by the Communists, there would be no serious objection. But an amendment indicating that Socialists do wish to "achieve a real measure of Socialist influence within the unions" was defeated, and there is not one vigorous word in the majority statement about the bureaucracy, graft, corruption and racketeering in many of the unions. The inference is left therefore, that there can be "friendly cooperation based on mutual understanding" with unions in their present condition. Surely, this is a cowardly position to take. It illustrates the constant failure of the S.P., despite idealistic phrases, to serve as an inspiration for the struggle against destructive tendencies in the trade unions.

The flabbiness characteristic of the S.P. in these matters has in a recent case affected even Norman Thomas, whose instincts in industrial matters are often sounder than those of other elements in the S.P. The case is significant enough to warrant quoting at length from the following editorial in the *World-Telegram* of January 28:

"Sam Kaplan is president of the Moving Picture Machine Operators' Union, Local 306, of this city. Sam Kaplan gets from the union a yearly salary of \$21,800—\$1,800 as president, \$20,000 as chief organizer. In addition to this the union voted him, in 1930, a gift of \$25,000.

"His power over the union is alleged to be absolute. Members who have opposed him have lost their jobs, been expelled from the union, in some cases, 'beaten up.' His chief strong-arm lieutenant, one Greenberg, is now serving a six months workhouse sentence for assault. Kaplan himself is under indictment for coercion and conspiracy—the complainants being members of the union who charge they were expelled, assaulted and intimidated, caused to lose their jobs.

"Last November, just before election, no less a friend of labor than Norman Thomas publicly denounced Kaplan, declaring that his union 'has in large part been degraded to the level of an ordinary racket.' By this Mr. Thomas doubtless meant, in particular, the permit system, maintained by Kaplan, under which some six hundred men, without union rights or voice, are permitted to work provided they pay 20 percent of their salaries into the union treasury!

"Since then two things have happened:—

"(1) Kaplan has been re-elected president of Local 306 by a vote of 841 to 314.

"(2) Norman Thomas, discovering his charges against

Kaplan were being quoted for the aid and comfort of certain company unions in the motion picture field, has ceased to drive home those charges, choosing rather to congratulate Kaplan on his re-election and to rest on the hope that the racketeer-president will see the error of his ways and become a good boy.

"Well, what are the present indications? Has Kaplan reinstated the expelled members? Has he given them jobs? Has he abolished the wholly indefensible permit system? Has he guaranteed free speech? Has he given any public pledge or promise that Local 306 will be run differently?"

"On the contrary, so far as we are informed, Kaplan has taken his re-election as a complete vindication of his methods and proposes to dictate his own terms to such of the opposition as he decides to restore to membership and jobs. Needless to say, withdrawal of complaints supporting the indictments pending against him is likely to be one of his major conditions. Kaplan's present attitude seems anything but that of a reformer.

"All this may be good enough for Mr. Thomas. But it is not good enough for the *World-Telegram*."

Doubtless many will join the *World-Telegram* in that sentiment.

We submit again that all these things constitute a challenge to the militants of the S.P.—a challenge arising not from the actions or temperaments of certain individuals but from the stern and inescapable facts of the situation in which we find ourselves.

An editorial in the November issue of *LABOR AGE* which contained the expression "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate" created a good deal of stir and possibly some misunderstanding. That editorial was saying to So-

cialist militants that they must separate, differentiate themselves definitely from the reactionaries in the S.P. Whether that means that they must get out of the S.P. depends to a very large extent surely, upon what is made of the S.P. The CPLA has not expelled persons who agree with its Statement of Purpose and who have remained in the S.P.; it has not advised its members to resign from the S.P. except in one case where a group of workers in a certain city believed that they would be expelled from the S.P. if they didn't resign and preferred to resign. In that one instance, the N.E.C. of the CPLA approved of their resignations. The initiative in the business of resignations and of threatened expulsions has come from the S.P. and principally, from some so-called militants of the Socialist Party.

Those who believe that the S.P. can be made into a genuinely militant left wing organization must certainly work within it to bring that about. Those who cannot believe in such a possibility cannot be expected in the meantime to sit on the side lines or be blamed if they seek to advance the cause by organized activities on their own part. The S.P. furthermore cannot indefinitely claim to be the militant left wing organization needed in the United States if it contains people who hold such diametrically opposite views on the fundamental issues referred to in this editorial as the reactionaries in the S.P. on the one hand, and the militants on the other. Militants outside the S.P. have a right to present to militants in the S.P. the challenge: *If you are militants then make the S.P. in its platform, policies and activities militant, and make it impossible for hostile elements to survive in the party. If failing that, you remain in it, you make yourselves a progressive window dressing for forces which are fundamentally hostile to the things for which you strive.*

On the Resignation of Matthew S. Sloan

(Official Statement of the Brotherhood of Brooklyn Edison Employees)

THE ousting of Sloan from all posts in the New York Edison System, which most papers announced as sudden, was no surprise to the Brotherhood. The July 29 issue of the *Live Wire* carried a story stating that Sloan's resignation was demanded by the board of directors. Similar information was reported in two succeeding issues.

There are several important reasons for Sloan's resignation. First and foremost is the struggle between the Nick Brady and J. P. Morgan groups of stockholders for the control of the electric light and power utilities. The rise of Sloan in 1928 from the presidency of the Brooklyn Edison Company to that of the entire New York Edison System was due to the influence of Nick Brady and to the reputation Sloan established for himself as head of the Brooklyn Edison Company since 1919, through the maintenance of a system of low wages, speed-up, and the introduction of a vicious system of labor spying. He introduced many other features which gave the Brooklyn Edison Company the character of a feudal barony. The last few years, with the sudden rise to importance of the Niagara Hudson Power Company, the fight between Sloan, the Brady man, and Floyd N. Carlisle, chairman of the Niagara Hudson Powe. Company, a J. P. Morgan man, grew very bitter.

The ousting of Sloan at this time means the passing of the control of the entire Consolidated Gas and Electric Light and Power System firmly into the hands of the House of J. P. Morgan & Company. Not only the Edison Companies and Consolidated Gas, but as the *New York Journal* put it: "Thus insuring domination of virtually the

entire Eastern power field by the J. P. Morgan Co. interests."

The question of differences on the policy of rates between Sloan and his opponents is a false issue, since Sloan, under instructions of his board of directors and with the generous cooperation of the chairman of the State Public Service Commission, has put over a big increase in electric rates on the people of New York under the clumsy disguise of a rate "reduction." Sloan was just as ready and willing to carry out instructions and policies of the House of J. P. Morgan and George F. Baker, as of Nicholas Brady, but the events of the past year made it impossible for him to remain in his position.

The power utility trust spends millions of dollars in propaganda to get the good will of the public so that they could more easily put over their oppressive rates, and Sloan, due to his stupid and brutal tactics of violence and lawlessness used in trying to prevent his "contented and loyal" workers from forming their organization for the sake of improving their hard lot, has torn the benevolent mask off the Edison Company and exposed its face to the people in all its ugliness and cruelty.

So Sloan must go, and a man more skilful in deceiving the public put in his place. The Brotherhood believes that the appointment of Smith and Parker is only temporary and that the search is on for some specialist soft soap artist. But whoever may finally be placed at the head of the Edison Company, there is absolutely no doubt that the House of J. P. Morgan will employ all the resources at its command to try and prevent organization among the men, by all means possible—fair or foul.

The Independent Labor Party of West Virginia

(Special to Labor Age)

As we walked into the vestibule of the Kanawha County Court Building in Charleston, West Virginia, Sunday afternoon, January 30, to attend the meeting at which the miners of that section formed themselves into an *Independent Labor Party*, we found the walls of that vestibule plastered with yards upon yards of what from a little distance looked like wide paper streamers. On closer inspection they proved to be constable's or sheriff's notices pasted together in long strings and announcing sale of properties for non-payment of taxes. The *Charleston Daily Mail* of that evening contained twenty-two and a half solid columns of such notices. Verily an appropriate time for the miners to make a clean break with the old parties and to set about forging their own political weapon, though there were not many miners directly affected by these legal documents, since they, for the most part, live in company houses and so far from ever having had property, seldom see any United States money at all. A number of the mining companies have actually given notice in recent weeks that they are not going to go through the formality of having pay-days and issuing pay-envelopes to the miners any more. This is a serious matter even though the pay-envelopes in 90 per cent of the cases indicated that the miners were in debt to the company instead of having any cash wages coming to them. The bookkeeping expense of issuing pay-envelopes will henceforth be saved. If there is work, miners will work; if there is any food left in the company store, they will eat a little; if not, "God only knows" as former President Taft said on an historic occasion.

About 150 delegates and sympathizers representing miners' union locals in the Kanawha Valley and a few Socialist locals from other parts of the state were in attendance at the convention. Harold W. Houston, attorney for the miners in many important cases, was temporary chairman, and C. Frank Keeney, president of the West Virginia Mine Workers' Union, permanent chairman. "Boots" Scherer, who is the secretary of the W. V. M. W. U. served as both temporary and permanent secretary of the

Labor Party Convention. Harold Houston was also chairman of the Committee on Statement of Principles, and Brant Scott, vice-president of the W. V. M. W. U. was chairman of the Resolutions Committee.

The convention was addressed by A. J. Muste, chairman of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, and director of Brookwood Labor College; Tom Tippet, Extension Director of Brookwood Labor College; Norman Thomas and Murray Barron of the Socialist Party, and by Mr. Houston. The most vigorous and spontaneous outbursts of applause came when Houston referred to the workers' republic in Russia, and when A. J. Muste, after referring to the terror practiced against the miners in Kentucky, expressed the hope that the Convention will send its greetings to the Kentucky miners and pledge support to the Defense Fund and to all efforts to break the terrorism in Kentucky and elsewhere against the miners and their fellow-workers.

The ringing Declaration of Principles adopted by the Convention and setting forth the definitely working-class basis of the Party together with some of the specific measures for which it is going to work is printed in full at the conclusion of this despatch.

For a National Labor Party Conference

On the important questions of organization and national affiliation, the Convention adopted the program for which the miners' leaders have stood since the organization of their union a year ago and which is in line with C.P.L.A. policy. The name of the Party is *The Independent Labor Party of West Virginia*. It has declared squarely against bargaining and in-

Charleston, West Va.

The West Virginia Mine Workers' Union is forming an Independent Labor Party. Convention here unanimously adopted declaration of principles indicating our position. Another delegate convention scheduled for March 26th to translate declaration into party platform, and to nominate candidates for office. Our declaration now being enthusiastically discussed in field campaign to clarify character and purpose of March convention. We hope time has come at last when American workers everywhere will build strong industrial and political organizations striving consciously to assume the direction of a world of plenty which their labor has created, and in which they are now starving and suffering as they have never suffered before.

C. Frank Keeney, President

triguing with the old parties. For the time being it will concentrate its energies upon building a solid organization from the bottom up in Kanawha, Boone, Fayette, Putnam and Raleigh Counties. The Convention did not affiliate with the Socialist Party, leaving the question of national affiliation for future determination. It was agreed that while individuals would not be barred from joining the Socialist Party if they wished, the I. L. P. would be opposed to the building of rival socialist locals in the five counties.

The I. L. P. will invite the socialist locals in West Virginia, trade unions and other working-class groups interested in the promotion of independent political action along the lines of its Declaration of Principles to confer on the possibility of "harmonious" action together with the state ticket. The Convention also instructed its Continuation Committee to make every effort to bring about a national conference of all political, trade union, fraternal and other organizations interested in national action along similar lines.

The miners of West Virginia want to see a mass labor party built up in the United States. They believe that the action they have taken is most likely to further that end. Their decision not to affiliate with the S. P., at least for the present, does not indicate any lack of militancy on their part, but rather the reverse, as a read-

ing of the Declaration of Principles suggests. Many of their leaders want to be more sure than they now are of the sound, working-class character of the S. P. and its militancy both on the political and industrial field, before they would think of joining, though they make it clear always that they deeply appreciate the assistance in the form of strike relief and in other ways which has been given them on the industrial field by S. P. organizations and individuals.

Resolutions were adopted favoring compulsory unemployment insurance covering all workers and with no contributions from the workers themselves; endorsing the LaFollette-Costigan bill for direct federal relief for the unemployed and demanding that the initial appropriation should be not less than five hundred million dollars, the sum recently appropriated by Congress for the relief of bankers and industrialists in connection with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; for the nationalization and democratic control of the mines; demanding that the Red Cross furnish relief to miners and other workers; protesting against the terrorism in Kentucky, pledging support to the Kentucky Miners' Defense and to efforts to break the anti-labor terrorism in Kentucky and elsewhere.

The Convention agreed to meet again on March 26 to nominate candidates, adopt a full platform and take such other steps as may then be in-

dicated. The Committee which issued the call for the Convention will continue to serve as a Continuation Committee until the March 26 convention and will carry on an active campaign to arouse labor party sentiment throughout the five counties. This recent Convention of the Independent Labor Party of West Virginia may well prove epoch-making. The miners, their families and adherents in the five counties number not less than fifty thousand voters. In the present state of affairs in the U. S. that is not a small addition to the independent working-class vote.



Frank Keeney, President of the West Va. Mine Workers

Declaration of Principles Adopted by the Independent Labor Party of West Virginia at Charleston, W. Va.

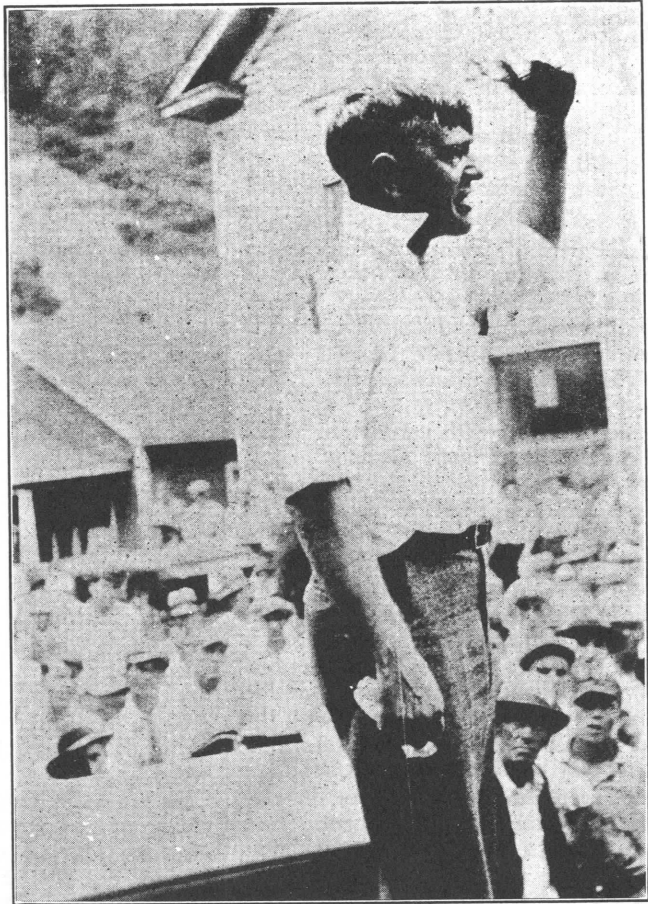
January 30, 1932

WHEREAS WE, members of the working class of Southern West Virginia, have learned by bitter experience that both the Republican and Democratic parties represent solely the interests of the propertied and employing classes; that having control of the powers of government, they have, with rare exceptions, used those powers, legislative, executive and judicial, in behalf of the employers and against the workers; that they have organized and used the police powers, especially the powers of the so-called Department of Public Safety, to defeat the workers in their just right to organize unions and carry on their lawful activities; that members of the old parties, elevated to judicial office, and notably to the Supreme Court of Appeals, have given judicial sanction to the notorious and infamous "yellow dog" contract, a contract savoring of the tyranny of

England's darkest industrial period; that the courts, obedient to the voice of the industrial overlords, have granted injunctions depriving the workers of the elementary civil rights to peaceably assemble and to use argument and persuasion to induce their fellow workers to join unions of laborers; that the courts, by judicial interpretation, have construed the laws of this State so as to deprive the workers of the right of trial by jury and to permit the eviction of them and their families without process of law where it can be done without violence or breach of the peace; that the courts have solemnly, in defiance of every principle of American law, elevated the military powers over the civil government where the rights of the workers are concerned, thus permitting them to be tried and

convicted by kangaroo military courts; in short, that the government of West Virginia, in the hands of the old parties, has become merely an instrument for the protection and preservation of property rights as against human rights, and,

WHEREAS, the present chaotic condition of the coal industry, not alone in Southern West Virginia but in all of the coal fields of the country conclusively shows that their private owners are wholly incapable of organizing planned and scientific production; that under private ownership and control the priceless natural resources of this State are being ruthlessly destroyed and dissipated and the workers in the mines and their families reduced to idleness, want and starvation, carrying into the homes of the miners all the horrors of under-nutrition and disease, and,



Frank Keeney, President of the West Va. Mine Workers

WHEREAS, The government of West Virginia, under the rule of both Republican and Democratic politicians and political gangsters, has wantonly wasted the public revenue and placed a crushing burden of taxation upon the people of the State, resulting in the virtual confiscation of small land holdings and the progressive impoverishment of those who are dependent upon their labor for support,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we, workers and representatives of the working class in convention assembled, form an independent political party, committed to the great fundamental principle that to the worker belongs the full social product of his toil; that labor, applied to the products and forces of nature, is the sole basis of wealth; that the vast creation of labor saving machinery and the consequent socialization of the instruments of production must inevitably lead to social ownership and control; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in our struggles for recognition of the fundamental rights of the working class we proclaim the following meas-

ures as a part of our program of political, industrial and economic reform:

1. The complete nationalization of all of the coal mines in the United States and its possessions.
2. The adoption, by all of the states and the nation, in all lines of industry, of a six hour day and a five day week, to the end that the workers may benefit by labor-saving machinery and affect a more equitable distribution of employment and leisure.
3. The adoption, both by the state and the nation, of unemployment insurance, old age pensions and free medical services for the workers, thus insuring the workers and their families against want during periods of depression, and preserving the aged workers from destitution and humiliation after their years of usefulness are past.
4. The re-organization of the Workmen's Compensation Department of West Virginia to the end that it may be administered in the interest of the workers, and not as a department of cheap insurance for the employers.
5. That anti-injunction laws be enacted to halt the tyrannical use and abuse

of judicial power during the efforts of the workers to organize and carry on their lawful activities.

6. That the so-called Department of Public Safety of West Virginia be abolished, to the end that it may cease to be an instrument of the employers for the breaking of strikes and suppressing the lawful activities of labor.

7. That the so-called "yellow dog" contract be outlawed by legislative enactment.

8. That a law be enacted forbidding to employers the right to evict employees during periods of industrial controversy.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a delegate convention of the workers of Kanawha, Putnam, Boone, Fayette and Raleigh Counties be called to meet in the city of Charleston on the 26th day of March, 1932, for the purpose of nominating candidates for public office; for drafting a platform setting forth the principles, aims and purposes of the party, and for doing such other things as may be found advisable in advancing the political interests of the workers.

The Mooney Pardon Conference in Washington

(Special Correspondent)

SWEEPING forward in its nation-wide progress the movement for the pardon of Tom Mooney stormed the nation's capitol on Sunday, January 24. In the evening, the Quaker Meeting House, where President and Mrs. Herbert Hoover worship, rang with the demand for Mooney's release. This demand was voiced before an overflow crowd by a group of the most prominent speakers ever assembled on this issue, including Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana; Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota; Congressman Fiorella H. LaGuardia, Minority Leader of the House; Rev. Worth M. Tippy, executive secretary of the Social Service Commission of the Federal Council of Churches; Father John A. Ryan, director of the National Catholic Federal Welfare Conference; Rabbi Edward L. Israels, chairman of the Central Council of American Rabbis; Edward L. Nockels, secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor; and Edward Keating, editor of "Labor," official organ of the Standard Railroad Labor Organizations, who acted as the chairman of the meeting.

Senator Nye declared that if Tom Mooney would recant his challenge to

the greed and selfishness of the present social order, he would be freed at once. "We need more Tom Mooneys," he said.

Telegrams of greetings were read from Tom Mooney, Mrs. Mooney (his mother), Senator Costigan of Colorado, Senator Schall of Minnesota, Senator Cutting of New Mexico, Rupert Hughes, Fannie Hurst, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the Workmen's Circles, the International Fur Workers Union and many other individuals and organizations sent strong messages of support.

The meeting followed a conference at the Hotel Hamilton, consisting of 100 delegates from organizations representing various cities including Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Jersey, New York, Chicago and St. Louis. Abraham Lefkowitz, vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers, presided at the conference, which was addressed by Edward Nockels for the American Federation of Labor, A. J. Muste for the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, and Byrd Kelso who brought a personal greeting from Tom Mooney.

The conference and mass meeting brought to the fore most emphatically the demand for the publication and circulation of the suppressed Wickersham report. Resolutions were adopted calling upon President Hoover "to follow the precedent set by . . . Woodrow Wilson, and to submit to Governor James Rolph, Jr. of California, a complete copy of the Wickersham Commission report, and in your name . . . urge him to relieve America and the great state of California of their continuing world-wide shame, by pardoning Tom Mooney unconditionally." A similar request was sent direct to Governor Rolph himself. It was decided to designate February 24, the 15th anniversary of the pronouncement of the death sentence upon Tom Mooney, as Mooney Day, and the international workingclass was appealed to, to lend its aid in the effort to secure his release.

Plans were made to extend the work of the conference and to establish conferences in other cities. Delegates returned on the midnight train on Sunday, with the satisfaction that another important step had been taken in the campaign for the release of Labor's most noted martyr.

Strike *and* Organizing Strategy

(A Discussion)

By A. J. MUSTE

IN our December issue there appeared an article on the recent Lawrence strike written by Sam Bakely, who as a representative of the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, helped to lead the picket lines and gave other valuable service in that struggle. Bakely criticized the strategy of the United Textile Workers in the strike. It came to our attention that both Horace A. Riviere, national organizer of the U. T. W., and Robert J. Watt, Secretary-Treasurer and legislative agent of the Massachusetts State Federation of Labor, who is a Lawrence man and who was very active in connection with the strike, had raised objections to Bakely's criticisms as inaccurate and unfair.

We immediately wrote to these men, stating that it was the policy of the C.P.L.A. to criticize trade union activities and policies where this seemed necessary, believing that in this way broader service is rendered to the movement than by glossing over its mistakes; but that it was also our policy to be responsible and strictly accurate in our statements and fair in our conclusions. We urged them to write us their objections to Bakely's article, promising to give adequate space in *LABOR AGE* to their reply. Both brothers responded, covering substantially the same ground in their replies. We shall presently quote practically in full Brother Watt's letter. We believe that this will give our readers a fair idea of their position.

Bakely's chief criticisms of the U. T. W. in the Lawrence strike were, first, that the U. T. W. and the A. F. of L. made big promises of support to the strikers which they did not fulfill, relief being utterly inadequate and coming mainly from liberals and Socialists rather than from strictly A. F. of L. sources; secondly, that particularly in the matter of relief there was not the wholehearted co-operation with the American Textile Workers Union, an important independent union with membership chiefly in the Pacific Mills, that there should have been; thirdly, that there was lack of militancy on the part of the U. T. W. and A. F. of L. leaders,

and that at the close the workers were not frankly and clearly told by their leaders what the situation was and advised to return to work, but that the strike was permitted to end in a disorderly stampede back to work.

It is perhaps worth while to note that in a covering letter accompanying his reply to Bakely's article, written to the author of the present article, Brother Watt says: "Everyone of us realizes and appreciates all you have done and are doing for bettering conditions of the workers . . . I want you to know that I shall always appreciate your criticism of our activities and policies and shall attach great weight to them." If there were the same spirit of readiness to listen to ideas of fellow-workers from whom we may differ on the part of the majority of our labor leaders, the American labor movement would be a much stronger and healthier movement than it is today!

Watt's reply to Bakely reads as follows:

"Sam Bakely's article on the Lawrence strike seems to those of us who were in the strike from the very beginning to contain several glaring omissions and serious misinterpretations.

"Far from showing lack of real leadership, as Bakely maintains, the United Textile Workers, together with local Central Labor Union leaders, worked day and night, first, to avoid the strike, then, when that was impossible, to bring about an honorable, equitable settlement. To list such effort as a handicap is a serious error, as is the inference that the United Textile Workers' group is not still a strong influence among the Lawrence textile workers.

"Neither the National Textile Workers' group nor their influence was big enough to be classed as a handicap to the workers, except for one occasion in the very beginning when their leaders, by their action at the Wood and Ayer Mills, acted as the match which suddenly set fire to the latent resentment of all workers

and precipitated the strike. Their presence during the first few weeks undoubtedly reacted in favor of the rank and file of the strikers and for a time made the police appreciate the orderly behavior of the United Textile Workers' pickets. After the removal of Edith Berkman, this group did little except occasionally break up picket lines.

"Bakely makes only slight mention of the United Textile Workers' activities before the strike. Leaders of the Lawrence Central Labor Union, realizing that the settlement of the spring strike at the American Woolen left bitter grievances and just suspicion of local civic groups, believed that sooner or later there would be another textile strike and, in order to have the workers' rights protected as far as possible, wrote to President McMahon of the United Textile Workers urging him to send an organizer. Mr. McMahon immediately came to Lawrence. With him were Vice-President Gorman and Organizer Riviere. After conferences with local labor groups, a joint committee met with the Citizens' Committee and presented their plans as well as their arguments that unionization of the workers by a reputable union was advisable for the sake of the city as much as the workers themselves. The Committee promised every co-operation and appointed a sub-committee to take the matter up with the mill owners. Organizer Riviere from then on made Lawrence his headquarters, spending as much time there as possible.

"Rumor of the impending 10 per cent cut reached local labor leaders about two or three weeks before the public announcement. Again the United Textile Workers' officials immediately came from New York and, together with the President of the Lawrence Central Labor Union, went to the Citizens' Committee and pleaded with them to confer with the mill men, present the workers' case and ask for a conference. Although the Citizens' Committee appointed a sub-committee to meet with mill officials and to ar-

range for such a joint conference, none was ever held.

"After the public announcement of the cut, the United Textile Workers, through Horace Riviere, made a superhuman effort to unionize the workers so that through organization they could better present their arguments. Parallel with this, every effort was made to obtain a joint employee-employer conference for frank discussion of both points of view. If this failed, we planned a vote on the acceptance or rejection of the cut, such vote to take place just before the wage cut took effect. We all felt that the time was anything but opportune, that public sympathy, unless we could somehow get all the facts to the press, would not bring us the financial support we would need to carry on a strike.

"Meantime we started to get definite information as to the textile wage scale in Lawrence and elsewhere. Our group, the United Textile Workers and the Lawrence Central Labor Union, was the only labor group which tried to get at facts such as actual and comparative wages and of reasons for the cut. Friends of organized labor co-operated and we were able to present overwhelming evidence that the wage cut was unjustified. Thanks to John P. O'Connell of Salem and to Sheeting Local Union No. 33, of the United Textile Workers who paid a large sum for a scientific, detailed analysis of the financial standing of two of the largest mills involved, we had a study which substantiated our belief that the financial analysis did not justify the wage cuts. This material, plus the testimony of workers as to their present wages and of piece workers as to the insidious wage cutting practiced for the last six years, served as basis for our appeal to the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration and to the Governor. It was also presented to group meetings in Lawrence and to liberal groups in Boston, and attempts were made to get these facts into print. If logic, facts and days and nights of planning and of conferences could have won the strike, a gigantic victory would have been the result.

"One of the very real handicaps was the fact that the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration and the Commissioner of Labor and Industries were thoroughly ineffective. Our carefully prepared briefs and detailed testimony fell on deaf ears. Since then Associate Commissioner Samuel Ross has been replaced by John Campos, and the Commissioner of Labor and Industries, E. LeRoy Sweetser, has been

supplanted by Edwin S. Smith. If these two men had been in office in September, perhaps the story of the strike would have been different.

"It was entirely the initiative of the United Textile Workers, the Lawrence Central Labor Union and the State Federation of Labor which arranged for presentation of the facts of the case to the Governor and the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration. At our request the American Textile Workers' group was included in all these conferences and was included in all conferences of policy, Bakely's statements to the contrary. In all of this, the initiative at no time came from the American Textile Workers. We also asked two other separate organizations, one of mule spinners and the other of loom fixers, to send representatives to the groups which went to the Governor and the State Board.

"Bakely is seriously wrong in his data about relief. The Lawrence Central Labor Union which co-operated in the strike in every conceivable way, felt that a country-wide appeal could be made to A. F. of L. groups more effectively if made by A. F. of L. people and if funds were distributed by them. Its relief machinery had been planned before the United Action Relief Plan went into effect. That Plan was to include Communists, and from one bitter experience with them, I personally had long before determined never to have anything to do with any group or plan associated with them! (It is only fair to record that Horace Riviere was more liberal toward them than I.) I still believe we were right in continuing to follow our original plans. The raising of money is a great responsibility. We put on our committee tried and true labor men in whose judgment and integrity we had and have every confidence. We knew they would spend each dollar to the best possible advantage. These men and women gave unstintingly of their time and energy and performed great service.

"Just why Bakely infers that the United Textile Workers never made an appeal for funds, I don't know. Surely he saw them sending out appeals by the hundred to A. F. of L. groups throughout the country and to names on lists given us by Boston liberals. I know of no time in which the United Textile Workers interfered with other groups in raising relief. It did feel that it had the first call on affiliated labor groups whose strikes local organized labor had often generously contributed to.

"I do not know where Bakely thinks

relief money came from if it didn't come from A. F. of L. and affiliated groups. The Socialist Party did not contribute three-quarters of the relief, as he says. As a matter of record, 74 per cent of it came from A. F. of L. groups, and the remainder came from many other liberal organizations, including the Socialist Party. I speak, of course, of the funds which came to our headquarters and were distributed by us. I know nothing of what went to the American Textile Workers group.

"I agree with Mr. Bakely that Alfred Baker Lewis and ministers and students were of great assistance. Lewis' own talks on the Common were fine—so were Glen Trimble's—Don Smith's and Professor Kreuger's. But I cannot understand why Bakely insists on stressing the Socialists out of proportion to their help. Ministers not associated with the Socialist Party aided us even before the strike started, and they came through loyal liberal friends in Boston who were helping us from first to last. . . .

"Vice President Gorman was in Lawrence whenever he could be there. With President McMahon in Vancouver he was frequently called to help in other wage disputes. The Lawrence wage cut was not the only one! From early spring up till now, I have seen no evidence of Gorman's running away from a tough spot. He was with us 100 per cent and many of the days he spent in other states were spent in collecting wage data necessary to us in our efforts to combat the paid advertising of the American Woolen.

"Bakely fails to realize that without funds, with union treasuries depleted by relief given to their own unemployed, with other union funds tied up in closed banks, with the press reluctant to print the truth about Lawrence, with many believing that in a great depression men and women should work at a pittance a week if necessary, a strike was hard to finance. Surely from personal experience and observation he and his friends ought to know that the United Textile Workers and the Central Labor Union men dug down into their own meager pockets and gave unstintingly of money as well as of time.

"I know of no promise made by United Textile Workers or A. F. of L. which was not made in perfectly good faith.

"Bakely garbles the advice given to strikers and quotes as advice to them the reply the United Textile Workers made on the question of a strike vote which was first urged, then withdrawn, by civic groups. When the strike was

really lost and hunger and chicanery had its way, Riviere and all of us urged the strikers back.

"As for Bakely's sublime faith in the perfect set up and future of the American Textile Workers, only time will tell. Personally, I'm betting on Horace Riviere and the United Textile Workers.

"Bakely was modest about himself. He is a tireless picket leader and fine young fellow. What he does not realize is the need for obtaining all the facts if he is to give a true picture. He forgets the work all of us did in Boston with the Governor, trying to get our facts and our offers through to the autocrats of the mills. And I want him to know that at every such conference Frank Gorman was present and forcefully arguing our case. The mill men, knowing they had civic leaders tied up, knowing our slender resources and realizing that our men and women couldn't let their children go hungry, were deaf to all our logic, to all our appeals and offers. But surely that can't be called lack of leadership of the United Textile Workers!

"In time I think this will be seen as a strike which did more to win justice for workers than any other. Dave Niles' arrest alone did more to open the eyes of the conservatives to the injustices of the police toward the workers than anything else. Senator Wheeler's appearance caused the court to do a complete turn about which was almost comic opera.

"Mrs. Evans' fine speech to us, her good wishes, her financial assistance, her protest as an Arlington stockholder against the arrogance of mill officials will, we hope, have a tendency to make stockholders think of their responsibilities in outrages such as the Lawrence wage cut, and the Lawrence mill officials' refusal to confer or arbitrate.

"By virtue of our having compiled facts about the strike, liberal groups are being given data which is really convincing and spreading the true facts everywhere, the present Congress and present State Legislature will undoubtedly hear of Lawrence and will be influenced by it. . . ."

Still, Bakely Is Correct

After carefully reading the letters of Riviere and Watt, we again went over our information on the Lawrence situation, and checked up with Bakely and with certain other Lawrence comrades who have an intimate knowledge of the situation there. At a number of points, as the reader will have noted, there is no important difference between Bakely's presentation

and that of the A. F. of L. representatives, though they write perhaps from a somewhat different angle. Where there are differences, our conclusion is that Bakely's main positions have not been seriously weakened.

Watt and Riviere do not deny that relief was inadequate. Directly or indirectly they explain this by the difficulty of raising money in these days. No one will deny that. On the other hand, the A. F. of L. utterly lacks effective machinery for raising relief, and the few thousands which were contributed to the Lawrence strike amount to tragically little, even in these days, for a labor movement with several million members, many of whose leaders are still drawing salaries out of all proportion to the income of the bitterly exploited workers whom they represent.

Bakely and our other informants do not dispute Watt and Riviere's figures as to the percentage of relief coming from A. F. of L. unions. They point out that Bakely in his article included United Hebrew Trades' Unions which, of course, belong to the A. F. of L., with Workmen's Circle branches, Socialist organizations, etc., as the chief sources of relief funds, and contend that it was progressive and Socialist influence rather than A. F. of L. that accounts for contributions from these unions.

As to co-operation with the American Textile Workers' Union, especially in the matter of relief, Bakely and other Lawrence comrades contend that though the C. L. U.'s plan to collect and administer relief for the U. T. W. may have been formulated, it certainly had not been put into execution at the time when the United Action Relief Plan was proposed, and that the inspiration which the Lawrence workers would have derived from the sight of united action on this field, would have been ample justification for putting aside any plans that might have been considered to have separate relief organizations for the U. T. W. and the A. T. W. (On the difficulty of co-operating with Communists in such matters under present conditions, we agree with Brother Watt. The Workers Co-operative Union, which proposed the United Action Relief Plan, had no expectations that the Communists would accept the suggestion, but believed that other militant forces would have been greatly strengthened by unity.) Our informants insist also that U. T. W. and A. F. of L. people interfered with efforts of the A. T. W. to have tag days in adjoining cities. Brother Watt points to instances where the U. T. W. did take the A.

T. W. into consultation, (instances which Bakely did not deny in his article), and evidently regards this co-operation as creditable to the U. T. W. It seems to us that it would have been a distinct advantage if they could have seen their way clear to full cooperation also in this matter of relief.

As to the way in which the strike was brought to an end, a Lawrence worker in whose judgment and knowledge of the situation we have the fullest confidence, writes: "The Monday before the strike ended, the U. T. W. and C. L. U. leaders failed to put in an appearance at the Lawrence Common, where a mass of workers numbering well over 15,000 thronged about the bandstand awaiting a word of encouragement. In this instance, if they realized that the strike was lost, and speaking would have been futile, at least they could have sent the people back to work and eliminated some of the discrimination which they have to contend with today. This day when the strike was lost there was a greater number of people out on strike than there was at any time during the 1929 strike." The reference is to a day when some of the weaker workers had broken ranks, and when clear leadership was desperately needed.

A good many times in recent years in Elizabethton, Marion, Danville, the U. T. W. has made "settlements" or brought strikes to an end in a manner that was not straightforward, and which left the workers in confusion. There is no clear evidence that this mistake was avoided in Lawrence, and it is a serious one.

On the all-important question of militancy and vigor in the conduct of the organization campaign and the strike, it seems to us that Brother Watt's article is itself the most convincing evidence of a serious shortcoming in A. F. of L. strategy, to which we have repeatedly called attention. He sets out to argue that the U. T. W. and the A. F. of L. gave vigorous, effective leadership. What proof does he furnish? The U. T. W., he relates, came to Lawrence some months before the outbreak of the strike, at the request of leaders of the Lawrence Central Labor Union. They went, according to Watt, not primarily to the workers in the mills, but to the Citizens' Committee, and presented arguments, "that unionization of the workers by a reputable union was advisable for the sake of the city as much as the workers themselves." When the rumors of the impending 10 per cent wage cut reached local labor leaders,

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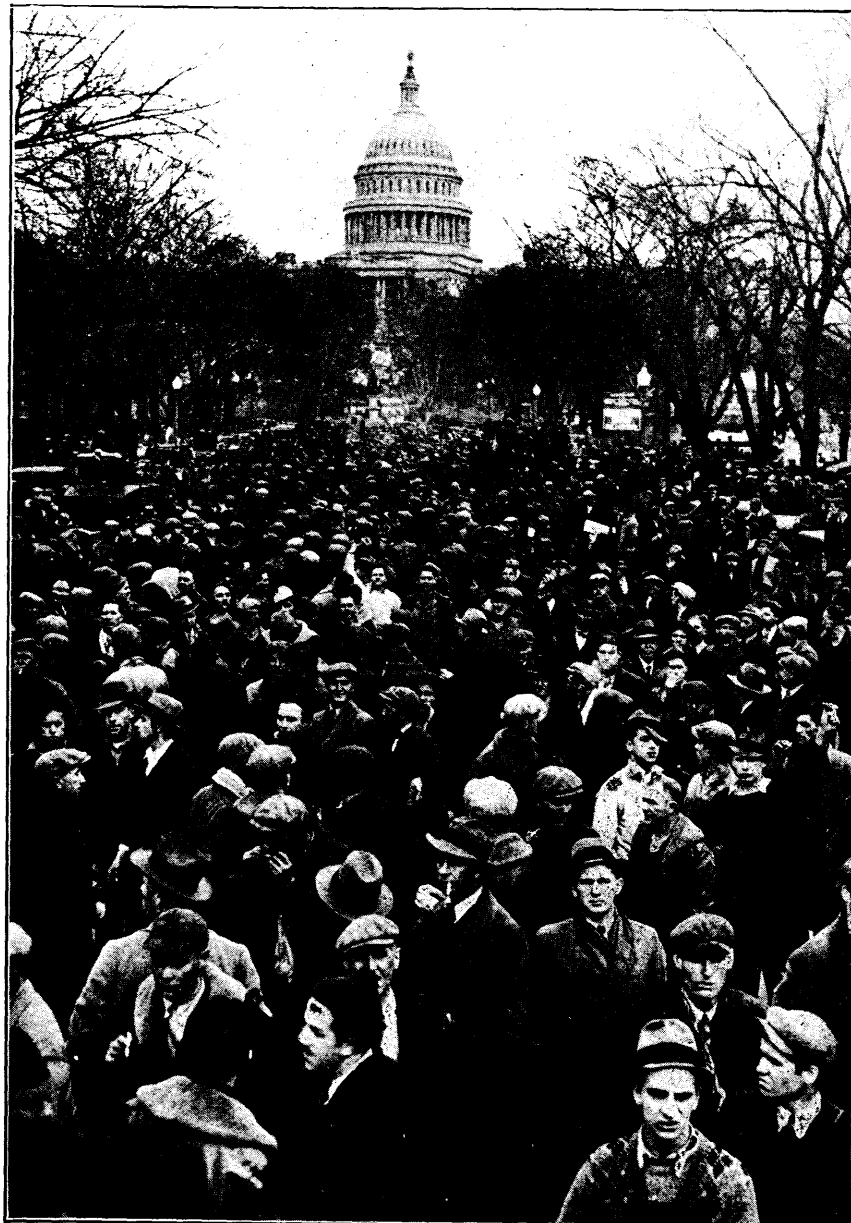
Father COX'S Hunger Marchers

By FRED DONALDSON

FATHER COX'S hunger march and subsequent stadium meeting may not be technically called a labor movement but without a doubt this Catholic parish priest has stimulated thousands of laborers into motion. In some ways the Cox movement is an answer to the many students of labor who have been interested either in finding the magic phrase or appeal which would stir the masses of poverty-ridden unemployed workers into action, or in analyzing the cause of their passivity during such depressing times.

The fact that 12,000 workers, most of them jobless and many penniless, journeyed to Washington to present their demands for immediate relief of some kind is certainly significant here in America. Then within ten days after the "march" on Washington 55,000 men and women jammed the huge Pitt Stadium in Pittsburgh to cheer Father Cox and his army and to register their hatred for the Mellons, Rockefellers and all capitalists in general. This mass meeting was turned into a mammoth political rally where the unemployed joined the speakers in denouncing the two old political parties and urging that a "jobless workers'" party be formed.

The conservative labor leaders have repeatedly advanced the contention that workers will not respond to leadership during periods of depression. At the extreme left the Communists have made countless attempts to stir the masses into action. The Communist-led hunger march to Washington included scarcely 1500 men. Certainly it cannot be said that preparation and determination were lacking in their efforts and accounted for the poor response they received in answer to a na-

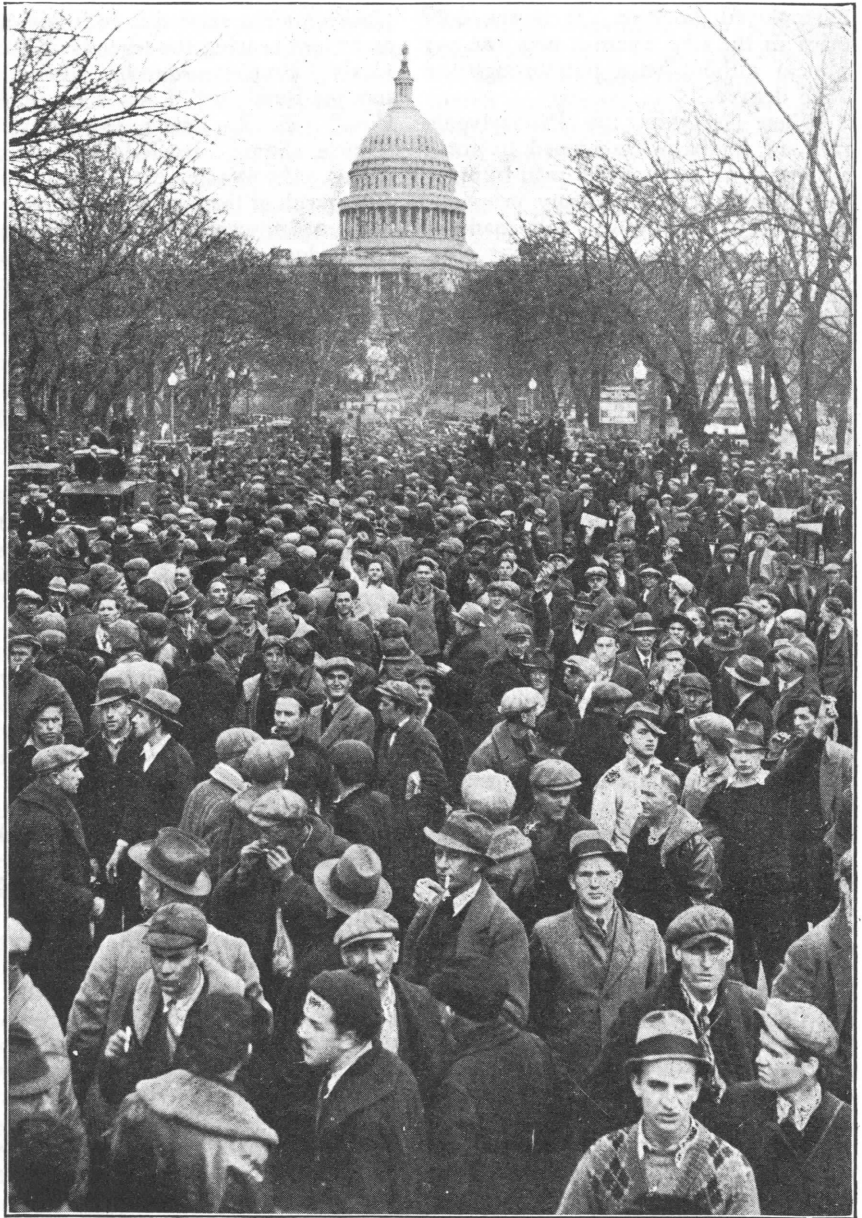


Father Cox's Hunger Marchers in Washington

tion-wide appeal. The success of Father Cox's movement is due primarily to the fact that its appeal was so sharply in contrast to that of the Communists. The only reason Father Cox did not have fifty thousand at Washington was because he was unable to provide transportation for them. He had expected no more than 2500 men; he and his lieutenants were stunned when between 30 and 35 thousand turned out fighting to make the trip.

It is around the personality of Father Cox that this movement has sprung. For the past eight years Cox has been pastor of Old St. Patrick's Catholic Church of Pittsburgh. Long ago he gained fame in Pittsburgh because of his identification with the

worker's cause. He is a member of the Pennsylvania Civil Liberties Committee and was very active in the Committee's campaign to abolish the Pennsylvania coal and iron police. In 1930, when the taxi drivers went on strike against the powerful Parmalee system, Father Cox sided with the strikers and aided them in their attempts at organization. It was in the basement of his church that they held their strike meetings. Many of the most active leaders of his present movement are former taxi drivers. On a number of occasions labor organizations throughout the Pittsburgh district have called upon him to address their membership. Since the depression, he has been serving noon-day meals to approximately 2200



Father Cox's Hunger Marchers in Washington

unemployed workers. It is the only place in the city where a man can get a meal without being put through the third degree.

When last year the Pennsylvania railroad company threatened to force a number of unemployed men to move their shacks from company property, Father Cox intervened and made it possible for them to stay on. Now nearly 250 men make their homes in this community called "Shanty Town." Cox was elected Mayor by these inhabitants. He was an army chaplain during the war and for a number of years after the Armistice. He has been an ardent fighter for the soldier's bonus. Although it is quite evident that the Catholic Father likes to be in the "public-eye" and seldom turns down an opportunity to speak before a crowd, one would hardly question his sincerity, though at times it is not too evident that he knows where is he "going" or how he means to get there.

Father Cox got the idea of leading a hunger march to Washington while reading an account of the Communist invasion of that city in December. He explains how it happened in his own words: "Some weeks ago I read of the invasion of Washington by a Communist group of marchers waving the red flag, singing the Internationale and demanding all sorts of fantastic things. This is repugnant to me, and I so stated casually over the radio. (He speaks weekly over station WJAS under the sponsorship of the Allegheny County Retail Merchants Association). I remarked that, while I condemned these demonstrations, I believed a body of real American citizens should go to Washington and protest against unemployment conditions which exist in the United States today." (These remarks are typical and show Father Cox's lack of class-consciousness and his failure to understand the real causes of unemployment).

He offered to lead such a demonstration and asked for the opinion of his unseen audience. He called a meeting of the unemployed men interested in making such a pilgrimage. The response was so encouraging that January 5 was set as the day when the "marchers" would leave Old St. Patrick's Church for the Nation's Capital.

At no time has Father Cox held that he did anything which smacks of radicalism by leading the hunger marchers. From the very beginning he did everything within his power to make it "respectable." Three rules were laid down for the members of the army to follow: "No alcohol—no weapons of any kind—and no grouches." No banners or

placards were carried save a few here and there bearing the legends: "Father Cox's Hunger March," "Washington or Bust" or "Long Live Father Cox." E. R. Franc, impersonating "Uncle Sam," headed the hunger march. At Washington, and again in Pittsburgh at the stadium meeting, patriotic songs were sung and the marchers pledged allegiance to the American flag and the nation.

On The "March"

For days before the date set for the start of the army of the unemployed toward the Nation's Capital, Father Cox and his lieutenants were busily occupied in getting transportation for the 2500 men they expected. The Retail merchants had offered to help finance the demonstration. When, in response to the call to mobilize, more than 25,000 turned out the leaders were dismayed. Every effort was made to draft more cars and trucks into the army. But in the end only about 12,000 men were provided with transportation.

It was a great sight to see this milling mob of workers clamoring to do their bit. Many of them had camped all night on vacant lots paralleling the railroad tracks so that they might be on hand at the break of dawn on the day the trek was to start.

It was a motley crowd. They ranged from the ages of 16 to 60, a greater part of them coming between the 20 and 40 limits. Some were unshaven and dirty while others appeared to have just emerged from a nearby tonsorial parlor. They had been instructed to bring blankets and food to last for six days. Although many took this seriously it later turned out that after the first day most of them were entirely dependent on hand-outs along the way.

In spite of the shortage of cars and trucks thousands started on foot while hundreds boarded freight trains. All along the road of march huge crowds of townfolk collected to cheer the workers. It seemed that the people of Blairsville and Johnstown turned out *en masse* to greet the "marchers" and cheer them on. At every village and town new groups joined to swell the ranks.

When the army reached Johnstown, Mayor Eddie McCloskey opened the doors of the town to them. Sandwiches, soap and coffee were served, the cars were re-fueled and the unemployed headed for the state capitol at Harrisburg. Hundreds of Johnstown-ers fell into line.

It was little short of a miracle that many of the old model T Fords and

worn-out trucks succeeded in scaling the mountain roads between Johnstown and Huntingdon. All through the night and the next day it rained "pitchforks." One truck skidded into a ditch. Two lads, riding the bumpers of a car, fell to the road because of numb fingers.

Late the first day it was a weary army that invaded the small town of Huntingdon searching for food and shelter. The march was most of the time disorganized; no plans had been made in advance for caring for the men at meal times and at the end of a day's journey. The town of Huntingdon, however, was thrown open to the "marchers." Many of the trucks parked at the fair-grounds where the passengers tried in vain to stave off the cold and rain so they could sleep. Downtown, hundreds were lined up on the floors of the courthouse and city hall trying to snatch a few winks of sleep. Others packed themselves into the parked cars for a little "rest." In the morning church members prepared breakfast, mostly coffee, for the men.

A number of times the army held up traffic for hours while their 1500 cars were being refueled at a small filling station where Father Cox had arranged with the management who accepted his I.O.U. for gas and oil.

And then came Harrisburg. It still poured. The governor turned over the Capitol restaurant to the hungry invaders and established a soup kitchen at the rear of the building where the unemployed were given food. It was a pretty sight to see these ragged, dirty, jobless men take charge of the State's magnificent buildings.

Evidently the governor had reconsidered his earlier decision that he would not receive the unemployed—12,000 *would* command more consideration than the 2500 he had at first expected. Pinchot met Father Cox half-way down the stairs. They paused, and Father Cox placing one arm about the Governor cried, "Boys, here's one good man." Then three cheers were given Pinchot. Pinchot responded by saying, "And here's the leader of America." More cheers.

At a mass meeting held on a parking lot at the rear of the State Capitol a little drama was staged for the unemployed "visitors." The cast of characters included Governor Pinchot, Mayor McCloskey of Johnstown, Matthew A. Dunn, state representative from Pittsburgh, John Phillips of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, and Father Cox.

Pinchot encouraged the men to go on to Washington and present their

petition to the Federal Government. This, despite the fact that his own attorney general was doing everything to have declared unconstitutional a bill recently passed by the Pennsylvania Legislature appropriating ten million dollars to poor districts, and in face of the fact that he vetoed resolutions of the General Assembly which would have given the legislature power to pass relief bills over the constitutional restrictions.

Mayor McCloskey urged that the unemployed, "ask Father Cox to organize this same group of men and take them to the political conventions in Chicago." If he does, he thundered, "who will be in control of the presidential nomination, will we or the big bankers and money powers? The man we would nominate for president would be a man who had the interests of the working people as his goal. The nearest that we could come to finding a man like that would be in nominating Governor Pinchot. He is the man who approaches nearest the ideal of that great American, Teddy Roosevelt." Cheers.

President Phillips of the State Federation of Labor denounced the recent special session of the State Legislature for failing to give the workers adequate relief, and he urged that the men "go back to their homes and see that 'good' men, whether they be Republican or Democratic, are elected to the Assembly and Senate."

The whole show looked very much like a boom for Pinchot. But as will be pointed out later, Father Cox spiked this at the stadium meeting.

Twice during their trek, at Clarks' Ferry and in Harrisburg, the marchers were forced to cross the Susquehanna river. On both occasions the men refused to pay the customary tolls. Instead they swept by the gate-keeper with the cry, "Get out of our way; we're going to Washington!"

All through the second night and early the third day cars and trucks loaded with men streamed into Washington. Senator Davis had promised food and shelter for them, but he had not expected them so soon. Some of the men were sheltered by the Salvation Army but large numbers were forced to walk the streets or sleep in their cars. However, breakfast and dinner were served by soldiers from Fort Myer who had set up eight emergency kitchens along Maryland Avenue. It cost the District of Columbia a minimum of \$2,200 to entertain the 12,000 uninvited guests. One wonders how many of the unemployed of Washington will have to go hungry because of this.

When the main body of "marchers" arrived in Washington, they were greeted by other unemployed brothers who had come in on freight trains. One group of about 600 reported an especially interesting time. Most of them had started on foot ahead of the main unit hoping to be picked up by trucks. They got to Blairsville without a lift. Seeing that it was hopeless to expect trucks to carry them they went to the Pennsylvania railroad yards and boarded an Eastbound freight train. They were met at Altoona by railroad detectives who attempted to persuade them to stay over for the night in that city. But the men were bent on getting to Washington for the big demonstration. Through a tip, fully 600 of them crowded into four box cars in which they rode into Washington. They told of how they were fed along the way by railroad employees. At Harrisburg they reported that upon their arrival 60 section hands cheered them and produced enough sandwiches and coffee for the entire gang. They were also fed by railroad workers in Baltimore.

Thirty-three members of the "army" were jailed in Maryland for hopping rides on freight trains. Twenty-six were placed in the Baltimore jails for riding the cars of the Pennsylvania railroad without permission. Seven were held in Hagerstown for trespass on the Western Maryland Railway.

In Washington the army marched around the Capitol building and stood at attention on the plaza while Father Cox presented his petition to Senator James J. Davis and Representative Clyde Kelly. The men sang "Keep the Home Fires Burning," "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag" and "America." It was a very patriotic and respectable affair. After the presentation, the marchers, standing before the movietone cameras and microphones, pledged their allegiance to the American flag and the nation. Later in the day Father Cox led them to the tomb of the Unknown Soldier upon which he placed a wreath.

Through the efforts of Senator Davis, Father Cox and 13 of his followers interviewed the President and presented their demands for jobs and relief. The President expressed his sympathy for the unemployed and reminded them that he was doing his best to return them to their old jobs. He did not promise them food and shelter sufficient to meet their immediate needs but pointed to the Reconstruction Bill, then being debated in the Senate, as his solution to their problems. Father Cox and his men left the White House

thoroughly convinced they could not expect much help from those quarters.

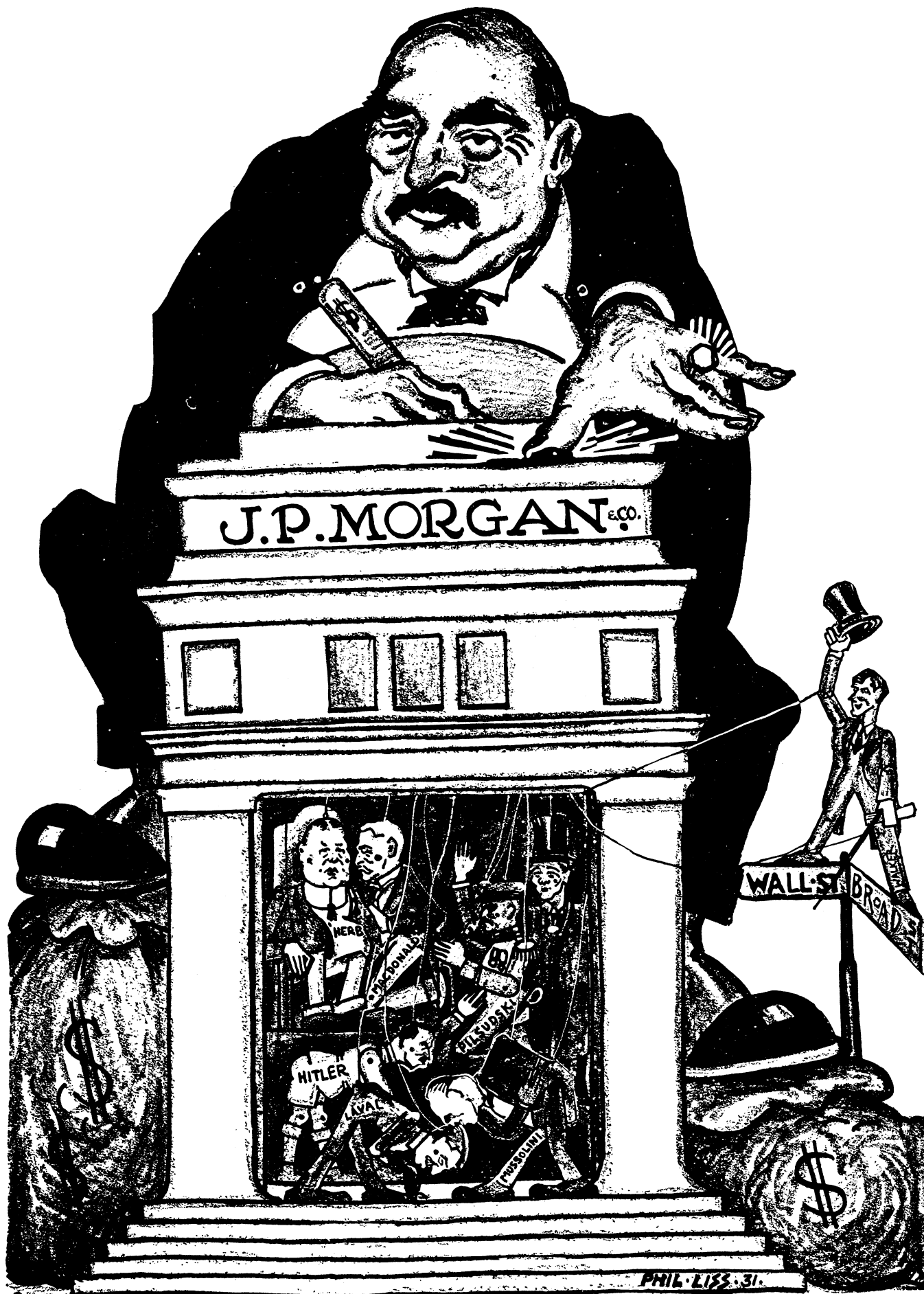
Two weeks after the now historic march on Washington, 55,000 people from all sections of Western Pennsylvania migrated to the University of Pittsburgh stadium to re-enforce the demands made by Cox and his followers. Here too the "promoters" were surprised at the response. The meeting was called originally as a money making affair by means of which Father Cox hoped to cover the \$18,000 deficit contracted during the march for gasoline and oil. It turned out to be a huge political rally at which the Rockefellers, Mellons and all capitalists in general were denounced. Governor Pinchot did not attend but sent John Phillips of the State Federation of Labor as his personal representative and spokesman.

It is extremely difficult to determine the philosophy of this movement. Begun on a small scale and without any greater objective than that of registering a protest to the Federal Government in behalf of the Pittsburgh unemployed, the movement has taken on greater portent.

For several months Father Cox has been lecturing over a small radio station in Pittsburgh for the small retail merchants in the county. The burden of his speeches has been an attack upon chain stores and monopolies. His analysis of the cause of the problems which face our nation is best presented in his own words as follows: "Monopoly has gained such a hold in the United States and is so powerful that there is no way out of the present depression, as far as the wisest minds can see, because the loosening of the chains of monopoly means the revamping and the remaking of business and American politics. We hope this can be accomplished without bloodshed. There is plenty of money in the United States, there is just as much money today as the day before the market crash in 1929, but the money is centered in the hands of a few. There is plenty of money, but try and get it."

He has an almost childish faith in the power of his program to remedy the ills found in our present economic system. His program is simply that the Federal Government appropriate five billion dollars for public works. This is, of course, exactly the program of Senator LaFollette. However, Father Cox thinks most of the money should be spent in developing good roads in the rural communities. He would also have Congress appropriate money for immediate relief.

(Continued on Page 25)



The Puppet Show

The Cancer of the Labor Racket

This is the first of a series of articles by Louis Budenz, dealing with racketeering in the labor movement, which will be published in LABOR AGE during the year.—EDITOR.

By LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ

GO TO a small town in Eastern Pennsylvania. The secretary of the central labor body is a man discriminated against in the shopmen's strike. He lives by the dole handed out to him by the Republican county machine, for ward heeling and election day work. The "non-partisan" action of the central body, at his suggestion, confines itself to a free meal donated by the politicians to the representatives of local labor the meeting night before election. The movement is looked upon with contempt, industrially and politically.

Go to any large industrial city. The big industries are unorganized. The movement is dominated entirely by the local political machine. The business agents of the skilled crafts are as much engaged in "big business" ventures as in labor activities. Many of them own and direct large companies which prey on the industries in which their men are organized. These businesses prosper remarkably well, the threat of strike action for the private benefit of the business-agent business men being ever present. Many of them become millionaires or near-millionaires, as the extent of unionism grows increasingly less.

From the smallest hamlet where unionism still exists to the largest community, the labor movement of the present hour is infested with racketeers. In one case it may be cheap and petty, in another, giant-like in proportions.

The favored ring among the membership get the jobs, particularly the "soft" ones. Opposition to favoritism or corruption leads to trial and expulsion, with permanent unemployment as a stark possibility. Or it may lead to "a trip to the hospital," frequent remedy for revolt of any kind in labor unions of the present day. The racketeering business agents have their chauffeurs, their bodyguards and their

strong-arm squads, and make free and full use of them.

Rise as a member of any such local, to oppose an increase of salary for an officer, or to contest the extension of the business agent's office for 10 or 25 years. You will find yourself on the floor, beaten up, kicked and maltreated in other ways—if not in the meeting hall, then immediately upon adjournment. Even officers of large bodies of men, fighting against bigger racketeers in the movement, have not been safe. They have had their bones broken and their teeth knocked out, for the sake of the racket, with as much finality as has the humble rank-and-filer.

Much fuss has been made in New York recently about the methods of Sam Kaplan, wealthy business agent of the motion picture operators and stage hands of the Greater City. Frantic appeals have been made to President William Green of the A. F. of L. to throw Kaplan out of the union or out of control. Such appeals naively did not take into account that the American Federation of Labor unions are covered with the slime of like practices to those of Kaplan's. Look into the motion picture operators' unions in Chicago, St. Louis or other large cities. Kaplan is dittoed all over, in every one of them. Malloy in Chicago, Nick in St. Louis and this or that man in any other place are profiting off abuse of the movement and the sidelines which grow out of threat of strike action.

The exact amount of money paid over to labor leaders for "just consideration of employers in labor matters" will always remain impossible of computation. But it has run into the millions in some communities, and I have ample evidence of that fact at hand to back up that charge. How can the American Federation of Labor act, when one of its leading vice-presidents, in odd moments when he is not fighting booze and Communism, sits as chairman of a dinner to one of the

most notorious racketeers in the movement?

The labor racket—the use of the movement for private benefit, through intimidation, sideline business enterprises, shake-downs of employers, and other methods—arises naturally from the theory on which the A. F. of L. functions. The non-partisan political policy and the union-management co-operation hocus lead almost inevitably to racketeering. The non-partisan policy does not mean "rewarding our friends" but being rewarded by our friends. Labor "chiefs" all over the country get on the public payroll through favor of one or the other of the ancient capitalist parties. They become henchmen of the political group. It is only a short time until they are soft-peddling on any real policy for the workers' welfare and are using the name "Labor," with a great roll of the tongue, for purely self-advancement purposes.

In organizing the workers, particularly when strikes are involved, the representative of a union finds himself confronted by the politicians dominating that community. He may be of the not uncommon A. F. of L. type: lethargic, afraid to fight, looking upon arrest on picket lines as a great disgrace. Or if naturally belligerent, he may not think it wise to try to outwit these "authorities." In either case, he follows the easiest line, and throws in his lot with the politicians who control the police or the courts. If proper contacts are made, he becomes an enthusiastic supporter of the machine. He attempts to swing all labor in that direction, politically. His reward is, that police and courts lose their wonted sting. He becomes a man immune, just as are big business men and the employing class in general.

Immune to prosecution in labor activities, it is only a short time until he conceives the possibility of his being immune in other endeavors, in which he himself and not his fellow-workers will be advanced. Thus Kap-

lan has Governor Roosevelt and Sheriff Farley as his powerful allies, potential protectors in his extra-labor activities. When driven into a corner for the time being, Kaplan even expressed sympathy for the Socialist cause, as a "peace offering" to short circuit any criticism Socialists might make of him. Before that, he had put active Socialists on his payroll as speakers at \$10 to \$15 a night, in the Bronx strike.

Close allegiance to Tammany in New York, to Hague in New Jersey, to Thompson and Cermak in Chicago, to the Republican machine in St. Louis are essential to racketeering success. From the shorter view of benefit to a small ring of men in the "skilled" trades, such allegiance is necessary for labor union success, likewise, under the non-partisan policy.

The union-management cooperation theory breeds the racketeering spirit. The idea of the interests of capital and labor being one produces an interlocking of capital and labor, until one cannot tell where the one begins and the other ends. There are some unions which have carried the cooperation theory to some lengths in which crude graft does not prevail. But in general the "union-management cooperation" slogan has been used effectively by labor racketeers, and in some instances has led to the formation of employer combines to pay over money to labor leadership.

Racketeering in unionism is a widespread cancer which is eating out the vitals of such labor movement as there is in this country. It is paralyzing militancy. Violence for class conscious purposes in the class war is becoming confused with violence through hired gangsters for corrupt ends. Without a revolutionary philosophy or alliance with a revolutionary movement, the more aggressive and shrewd men in the "skilled craft" unions turn cynically to self-aggrandizement. The professional gangster, the secret deal with the employer for cash, the building up of "businesses" which levy tribute off the industry through fear of labor action—all of these things are the necessary accessories to the self-aggrandizement game.

The mass of the factory and "heavy" industry workers are left in an unorganized, neglected state. It is difficult to make them profitable for the "representative of labor" who hopes to become a millionaire. It is much more of a cinch to concentrate on the dyers and cleaners, barbers, teamsters, truck owners, petty business men and the like. And, of course, the

building trades, with their perennial jurisdictional disputes and other advantages for the racketeer are a chosen field for action.

The head of a union, whose name I cannot use, said to me: "A thorough study of racketeering will be of the greatest value, for it will bring out the biggest sensations. It will be a gift to the workers, but it will drive you from the labor movement. It goes so deep that, if you tell the truth, you cannot function in the unions any more."

A veteran in the labor movement added: "Budenz, the racketeering evil is much greater than even you imagine,

as well versed as you are in practical knowledge of the unions. It is almost everywhere. It is part of the system which the leaders acknowledge. It is their social system. It is rotten and wherever you touch it, you will find it brittle."

Evidently, an intense examination of the labor racket and its ramifications is sorely needed. Its socio-economic background should be analyzed. The results should be published and made available to the workers. And out of such steps, aggressive attacks should be launched upon the evil, its representatives in the labor world and the root causes for its existence.

The Future of Radicalism

Tested by the present severe economic crisis, capitalism has been found wanting. Capitalism is indeed on trial. Its champions are on the defensive. Everywhere the question is asked, "Can capitalism survive?" And, "If capitalism falls by the wayside is radicalism to be its successor?"

On the horizon there are signs of a revival of radicalism in the United States. The radicals in the urban as well as rural areas are bestirring themselves. The responsiveness to their appeals is increasing in intensity. Just as the champions of capitalism are on the defensive so are the conservatives within the labor and farmer movements at their wits' end, being equally apologetic and at a loss as to what to do in order to cope with the tragic situation.

These signs of the times have led thoughtful people to raise the question: "Whither the American labor movement?" And since it is inconceivable that radicalism can make appreciable and lasting headway without being grounded in the labor movement, the additional question has been propounded: "What are the prospects of American labor becoming radical?"

"The Future of Radicalism," by David J. Saposs, foremost authority on the American labor movement, attempts, on the basis of the history of the American labor movement and economic and social developments, to analyze the situation, and to indicate possible future developments.

The book will be published in February and may be ordered now from The Labor Bookshop, 128 East 16th Street, New York City.

The Railroad Brotherhoods

By CARL SHANK

THE established railroad train and engine service brotherhoods pulled through the last big depression, that of 1893, bruised but not fatally wounded. They recovered lost ground and improved their working conditions. Other departments of steam transportation saw the birth and growth of labor unions. With the unification of great railroad systems and the development of federal regulation the unions began to develop a technique of political pressure upon congress that brought considerable success.

The principle casualty of the 1893 depression in the railroad world was Eugene V. Debs and his American Railway Union. Debs, a popular and powerful official of the firemen's brotherhood, left that organization to make common cause with railroad workers hit by the wage cutting and speeding up of the Pullman and other companies when those corporations tried the customary American plan of making labor bear the depression losses.

The imprisonment of Debs for defying a federal injunction and the smash-up of his union were a severe loss to the railroad workers, but it was a net gain to labor in general by the conversion of Debs to a radical socialist program which aimed at the elimination of all stockholders, bondholders, and other racketeers of ownership not only on the railroads but throughout industry and commerce. The alleged partnership between capital and labor, between masters and men, between owners and workers, such as has become hallowed in the Baltimore & Ohio cooperative plan, had no appeal for Debs after he completed his economic education in Woodstock jail.

The influence of Debs, the old time railroader, on his former fellow workers was apparent in the enthusiasm with which the Plumb plan of government ownership of the roads, elaborated just after the imperialist war, was embraced by most of the railroad unions. Its subsequent abandonment by the rail labor leadership is only one of many factors responsible for the present ominous position of the unions.

Will the brotherhoods and the rest of the twenty-one recognized standard

rail labor organizations survive the present depression?

That is the question members are asking each other quite as often as they wonder about the impending wage cuts and threats to working conditions.

The probable answer is that the stronger of them will, just as they have survived previous depressions.

But which are the stronger ones today? The once impregnable locomotive engineers have had their financial structure gutted by the late Warren S. Sone, who seems to have been extremely able in building up a labor and fraternal organization only to squander its resources in the wildest and most insensate speculations. Just a month ago the made-over remnant of their once proud banking chain closed its doors. Yet the engineers today are still a factor to be reckoned with as a labor organization. If their average age were a quarter of a century lower, if they could escape the unjust obligations their false financial friends and their own inexperienced officialdom fastened upon them and if they would combine all their interests with those of the locomotive firemen in a strong economic and political fight for government ownership, together with the other rail unions, their prospects would be relatively bright.

The firemen, who took the lead in rail labor policy since the death of Stone and the eclipse of the engineers, have recently aired their own internal financial troubles to the surprise of outsiders and to the satisfaction of the engineers. The average age of the firemen is well over fifty years, though normally they ought to comprise the youngsters in the engine cabs, to be promoted after due length of service to the engineer's side. They are an old man's club, with corresponding danger to their pension and insurance funds. In fact a drastic check on the pension department is already in effect. The political leadership of their president, instead of driving toward government ownership and removal of the railroads from the manipulation of stock swindlers and financial pirates, has pandered to the Hoover administration though this administration has been not only the most anti-social but also the most inefficient of

all that have been called upon to meet national emergencies.

An element in the failure of the engineers and firemen to act effectively as labor organizations in a time of crisis has been the capitalist atmosphere in which the leadership moves. Salaries are on a scale that put the leaders in the upper tenth of the population, classified by income. Living standards correspond to the salaries. Office environments and social contacts are in keeping. It has been argued that when a union sends its negotiators to face \$50,000 and \$75,000 a year railroad executives there must be some equality of ground to stand on. It is also argued that the union leaders could easily find jobs that paid as well or perhaps better on the other side of the capital-labor fence.

On the other hand, high salaries breed the high hat attitude of leaders toward their toiling followers, and it may also be said that in some cases it would have been a very definite advantage to the brotherhoods to have had officials take a job on the other side. In many cases men in union office would find it pretty slim picking on the capitalist side with no personal machine to push them up.

An illustration of the capitalist psychology among rail union officials was given by the former railroad trainmen official who is now appropriately enough the Hoover secretary of labor. Brother Doak was arguing with some show of heat before a wage board in Chicago some years ago in a case vital to his organization and to the conductors. After his onslaught on the rail managements a recess was declared and he soon was in friendly joking conversation with the very men he had so fiercely denounced. The Federated Press correspondent showed a little surprise at the situation but Doak, with a contemptuous glance at the rank and file of trainmen gathered in the room, said laughingly: "You see, we gotta put on a show for those fellows!" In his ignorance he thought the Federated Press was a capitalist news service.

The shop crafts, the maintenance men, the clerks and the telegraphers, being more easily attacked and less completely organized, have not developed capitalist attitudes in their

leadership to so great a degree as the engine and train service brotherhoods. They were unable to pay them such high salaries or provide them with such magnificent suites.

It is probably safe to say that all the leaders want to avoid a strike and that all of them hope that the inevitable wage cut will be accepted peaceably by the men. The railroads demanded fifteen per cent but will take ten.

But why should there be a cut at all? Railroad wages are not high enough, on the average, to provide a decent living in the United States and several hundred railroad workers get wages that are under the poverty line. The railroads in 1931 made an average of 2 per cent, on their own figures of investment. That 2 per cent amounts to over half a billion dollars. Spread among all rail workers it would permit a sizeable wage increase. Instead it goes to absentee stockholders, to bondholders and other racketeers of ownership.

Railroad stocks are now down to bargain figures. If Congress, supported by the rail labor unions, would offer to buy the stocks at present quotations the financial transition to government ownership would be easily

made. Bloated stockholders like Arthur Curtis James would be attended to by surtax rates on the income tax. If the stockholders refused to sell, Congress should refuse to extend any assistance of any kind and let the roads slide into bankruptcy, one after the other, subsequently buying them in at receivers' sales.

This sounds like Alfalfa Bill economics and it is. But Alfalfa Bill's economics are much sounder than those of Hunger Hoover so far as the general welfare is concerned. In the past year Baltimore & Ohio common stock was deflated over three quarters of the value it still had after the first fourteen months of depression. Chicago & Northwestern stock had over four-fifths of the water squeezed out in the same period. New York Central condensed about three quarters, Pennsylvania over two-thirds, the Frisco twelve thirteenths, the Southern about seven-eighths and the Southern Pacific well over two-thirds, while the Nickel Plate, wonder road of the Van Sweringens, collapsed just about twenty-two-twenty-thirds of its stock value.

Government ownership would eliminate these senseless stock fluctuations. It would eliminate the rakeoff to absentee security owners. It would base

wages on the scale first successfully attempted during the wartime government administration of the roads. It would not resort to extravagant expenditures to compete with rival transportation methods in fields where the rivals can do the job better.

The principal obstacle to government ownership seems to be not so much the present ownership as the present manipulators. The control of transportation in banking hands makes it possible to break almost any industrialist who does not bow to the dictatorship of finance. This was done on a spectacular scale in the case of the Nonpartisan League in North Dakota a decade ago when the railroads, under eastern direction, found it "impossible" to furnish cars for transporting grain and livestock though many an empty car was seen on railroad sidings at the time. It is done on a smaller and quieter scale every week in the ordinary business year.

It is probably idle to speculate on might-have-beens but it is tempting nevertheless to contrast the possible outcome had the policies of Warren Stone and Bill Lee been wrecked and those of Eugene Debs and Glenn Plumb been consistently followed instead.

THE HARBOR BOATMAN

By JOHN G. SODERBERG



THAT branch of the marine industry known as the Harbor Boatmen is one of the most strategic branches in this important and basic industry. These men control all movements of cargoes in the harbor and river. In case of a strike of these men, not only would a large percentage of the foreign cargoes from the transatlantic ships be held up, but also most of the coal used in New York City. Eighty per cent of all coal used in the city is brought here on the coal-barges and loaded on the trucks at the coalyards and sent out to the various places of destination. This does not apply to coal used for domestic purposes only but also to coal used by concerns such as the B. M. T. and the I. R. T. Both of these companies are chartering a large fleet of the coal boats transporting coal.

I speak of coal, because this is the commodity that is being carried mostly at this time of the year. However, other commodities are also being handled by these barges, and many thousands of tons of cargo are being

transferred annually from the large transatlantic ships on the barges and there carried up the river where the large ships cannot go because of their size. Thus it can be seen that quite a commotion would be caused were these men to declare a strike in the harbor. I shall come back to this later in my article.

What are the conditions under which these men work? The barges vary in size from 500 tons upward to 2000 tons. Each boat is taken care of by one man, commonly referred to as the captain. He is chief officer, able seaman, deck boy, pilot, and navigator, all in one, with the pay of a deck boy and the living conditions of a pig, or worse. He has no regular hours. The boat is loading usually in the daytime when he must be constantly on watch to see to it that the boat is not loaded in such a way that it will sink later. At night he usually tows up the river or wherever he is going and must then be on the look-

out that his boat does not slip the tow and drift off somewhere and get run down by other shipping. His boat upon arrival at its destination is usually unloaded next day, and the following night he tows again to pick up the next cargo. He sleeps when he can; he eats when he can; and he works most of the time.

Some of these boats leak badly and need constant pumping to be kept afloat. It is nothing unusual for a "captain" to have to get up twice during the night (if he is lucky to get a night in) and pump his boat in order to keep her afloat. Sometimes he must forget that he is a seaman and become a carpenter and ship builder. He is expected to repair any leaks, but, if he has to buy any tools and materials to repair his boat, he is not expected to present the bill to the owners. If he does, he usually loses his job under some pretext or other.

The wages vary from \$100. per month down to as low as \$70. or less. O'Boyle pays \$70. The companies that are unionized pay the one scale of wages whether the boat is empty

or loaded. Others, however, including O'Boyle, pay a dollar a day when the boat is empty, and there are times when O'Boyle and others of the anti-union variety have been known to put one man in charge of five or six boats, tied up side by side, fully loaded and waiting for consignment. When boats are loaded the owners receive so much per day according to its tonnage and, yet, these owners I have referred to, pay one man one dollar a day to take care of six boats. Under present union conditions such an owner would be compelled to pay six men three dollars per day or a total of \$18 per day instead of one dollar. O'Boyle and Hanrahan are the two champions in this respect. Incidentally, O'Boyle is the complainant in our case.

The conditions under which these captains live pass all imagination. A dark, smelly, foul and dirty hole called the cabin serves as the dining room, bedroom bathroom, kitchen and pantry. Sanitary conditions, there are none. The cabin is over-ridden with roaches and bed-bugs. A smoking coal stove supplies the heat and a ditto kerosene lamp, the light. One of the prisoners (Trajer) in this case came aboard one of these boats and found in the cabin one stove, one table, and one soap-box to be used as a chair to sit down on. Nothing else. No bed, no lamp, not the most elementary little thing necessary. My cell here in Tombs prison is luxurious compared to some of the cabins I have seen on these boats.

Yet on most of these boats, captains bring up their children. These children, of course, are unable to attend school due to the fact that the boat keeps moving from place to place and on \$100. a month or less, a captain cannot afford to rent a place ashore for wife and children. What the outlook and possibilities for the future hold for these children, anyone can imagine.

It was conditions such as these that made the men organize. The Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union has had its ups and downs as all other unions. There was a time when this union controlled most of the harbor, and its members at that time were able to wrest a few concessions even

from O'Boyle. However, the union, for various reasons, lost some of its former strength a little over a year ago and at once the bosses took advantage. Down came the wages and, in many instances, off came the union men to be replaced by non-union men. The union declined in membership from over 2000 to less than 200. The wages came down accordingly and conditions became worse. Some boat owners even had men taking care of their boats for the privilege of liv-

found that he was several months behind in dues. His name was William Hoyle. He stated to me that he was unemployed, having lost his job on a Trap Rock Co. boat (he was fired for drunkenness). A few days later he came in and paid up three months dues (bear in mind that he was unemployed and had no money), and some time later he came in and paid up the remainder of his arrears.

Every day he seemed more and more anxious to get into conversation with me. Finally, one day he openly came out with a proposition to me that certainly would have landed me where I am today, in prison. I threw him out of the office bodily and two days later called the executive board together and proposed that this Hoyle be expelled from the union, stating that my grounds for this was his obvious provocateurish tactics. The president of the union advised me to wait a little longer and investigate. That waiting and investigation brought my two comrades and myself here. I wish to add here, that minutes of the above meeting and min-



From Left to Right: A police dick; Bunker; Trajer; Soderberg; The Rat, Hoyle and another dick.

utes of the subsequent membership meeting and motions on the subject duly recorded and signed and sealed are in the hands of the police who arrested us, and we certainly cannot be charged with having "doctored" these minutes as they have been in the custody of the police since our arrest.

Due to the fact that our trial is still pending it would not be a good policy for me to describe the frame-up in detail, but this much I can say: We shall prove at the trial, that O'Boyle knew he faced a strike in January. That O'Boyle, realized this strike would mean that he would be compelled to come into line with other companies and recognize the union and pay the scale. That this Hoyle was the only one that could have gotten the dynamite. That the dynamite was deliberately placed by Hoyle to frame the union officials. That the two boats alleged to have been damaged by dynamite were the only two boats of the whole O'Boyle fleet carrying insurance. That Hoyle was paid for his dirty work by Hickey of the O'Boyle Company. And finally, that Hickey offered \$50. to have a certain part of Hoyle's first statement changed.

ing on the boats and no pay when no cargo could be found. A small group of men, some old time members and others, including the writer, recently having joined the union, got together and an effort was made to turn the tide. Gradually the tide was turned and the union again started to grow. Old timers came back. A couple of companies decided it was best to come to terms with the union. They saw the handwriting on the wall. Captains, employed by O'Boyle, came back into the union, although that notorious strike breaker and union hater refused to recognize the union. As usual, the cry of "communists" and "radicals" was raised, especially against the secretary and executive board of the union. The union, however, continued to grow and it took up the question of preparing a strike in the month of January on all boats belonging to O'Boyle and Hanrahan.

At the time the decision became known, there appeared in the hall and around the office, a character who carried a card in the union. As secretary of the union I had occasion to check up on his card one day, and I



**From Left to Right: A police dick; Bunker; Trajer; Soderberg;
The Rat, Hoyle and another dick.**

Harlan County

By JOE CAWOOD

REPORTS sent out to the newspapers about terror in Harlan county do not tell half the story. The coal operators are in absolute power and they are spending thousands of dollars on gun thugs to keep their starving workers cowed and helpless. Anyone who even shows sympathy for the miners is hounded out of the county, and, should he publicly say anything against the operators, he takes his life in his hands.

The miners are desperate, their suffering almost unbelievable to people unacquainted with the coal mining industry in the south. Men, women and children are actually starving and, should the weather get cold, many of them will freeze. For years now these miners, even when they worked full time, have been able to earn barely enough to live. It does not take much imagination to picture their condition today when hardly any of them are working full time and hundreds are not able to find work at all. In addition their wages have been cut to almost the vanishing point.

Forty-nine miners are being tried for the killings growing out of the Evarts battle last May. But not one thug or company spy is being tried, although a dozen miners have been killed. W. B. Jones, organizer for the United Mine Workers of America, and William Hightower have already been given life sentences. Everyone, including the operators, knows that these men had nothing to do with the killings. They are being sent to the penitentiary for life because they dared to attempt to organize the miners against the slavery and brutality of the operators.

At the time of the Evarts battle the UMWA was the only union in Harlan county. But even after its organizers were jailed and scores of union members beaten up and blacklisted it did not seem interested. I was in jail for three months with these men and the UMWA sent legal aid only after the General Defence got busy.

After the Evarts battle soldiers were sent into Harlan county on condition that outside laborers were not to be transported into the county as strike breakers. They were sent in with the approval of the district officials of the UMWA.

Joe Cawood, now in New York speaking in behalf of the 49 miners on trial for their lives, is of old Kentucky stock and is the most trusted spokesman for the miners. Since the Evarts battle last May he has been indicted a number of times by Harlan County grand juries selected by Judge (Baby) Jones and the operators and is now out under bonds amounting to more than \$50,000. There is perhaps no other man in Harlan County whom the operators fear so much as Cawood, and nobody who knows the miners better. The story herewith printed is taken from a report of a conversation with him.—EDITOR.

But, as honest labor leaders would have known, the soldiers came in to break the strike and to destroy the union. Shortly after they came, truck loads of families moved into Harlan from other counties and other states. Lynch, the biggest coal mine in the world, owned by the United States Coal and Coke Company, discharged 600 Negroes a few days after hundreds of miners in the Harlan field had walked out refusing to work under guards. These Negroes were given blue slips of paper and directed to go to the Black Mountain Corporation in Harlan county. They all went to this company and were given jobs. Which is another way the operators have of breaking strikes.

Recently, former Adjutant General Jones has been indicted at Frankfort. He is charged with having received and cashed a thousand dollar check from the Peabody-Insull Company, owners of the Black Mountain mines. Jones had charge of the troops when they were in Harlan breaking the strike.

William Turnblazer, president of District 19, UMWA, was indicted a few months ago on a charge of conspiracy to murder. The indictment was based on a letter he had written to W. B. Jones at Evarts congratulating him on the fine work he was doing. It was just a pep letter. Nobody trusts the UMWA and the miners cannot yet figure out why he has been indicted.

It is possible that the operators thought that by indicting him they would cause the miners to rally to the UMWA, to regain confidence in it, and thus give it a hold so that it could win them away from the fighting unions.

There is no strike in Harlan county at present. For the time being the gun thugs have won. Not even a mass meeting can be held in the county today. One was announced a few weeks ago and the highways were lined with a thousand thugs and nobody showed up.

But if a union organization had the money to finance a strike, the miners in Harlan county would make the operators come to terms. If the miners had half a chance they would organize solid.

The outlook for doing anything through politics is black. But what the miners in West Virginia are doing on the political field, I believe, would work well in Harlan and Bell counties. The chief trouble is that the law wouldn't give you any election officers. The two old parties have them all. And if you haven't got officers in the voting precincts the Republican officers will steal the election by stuffing the ballot boxes. The only chance you have of beating them is to have a solid man in each of the 72 precincts to keep stealing from going on.

When I ran for Sheriff last election I got 8700 votes; I won by a majority of 600 votes. The whole damned wealth of the county and its political machine was against me but I beat them. However, they lawed me out—claimed that I had bought votes. But if I had got the votes of all the people who wanted to vote for me I'd have got 2000 more. They didn't give the voters enough ballots. In some precincts the ballots were exhausted by noon.

ENDING THE DEPRESSION

A new C. P. L. A. pamphlet, *Ending The Depression*, written by J. C. Kennedy, instructor in economics at Brookwood Labor College, has just been published. This, we believe, is the best analysis of what is happening to capitalist civilization today that has yet been written. The price is 10 cents. Order from the Labor Bookshop, 128 East 16th Street, New York.

Recent Developments Among the Miners

By
MINER CORRESPONDENTS

THE coal industry is still in turmoil, and the same thing is true of the labor movement among the coal miners.

The rank and file organization of the Illinois district of the United Mine Workers, which got such a promising start at the Belleville convention last July, has given up trying to function as a union organization. It had expected to sweep the Southern Illinois locals and was confident that if that field were under its control, the whole district practically would leave the Walker organization and swing into line with the rank and file movement. The clean sweep in Southern Illinois was prevented, however, by the combined efforts of John L. Lewis and the international machine of the U. M. W., John H. Walker and the "regular" district machine, the Communists, the coal operators, and the forces of local, state and federal governments. Some, at least, of the leaders of the rank and file movement were not sufficiently grounded in the fundamentals and the larger aspects of the labor movement, to be prepared to face such disappointment and still fight on.

Ray Edmundson, who was the dominant personality in the Belleville convention, and became the president of the rank and file organization, has been re-elected president of the Franklin County sub-district with practically no opposition. He is regarded as unquestionably "the most popular in Southern Illinois." Unfortunately he has also been persuaded to become a candidate for state senator on the Republican ticket in that section of the state! Edmundson has some of the important qualities of leadership. He will not, however, develop into an outstanding and really dependable leader of the miners in the terrific struggles ahead of him, by becoming entangled in Republican politics.

Other leaders of the rank and file

movement are back at work in the mines and can be depended upon to work for progressive and militant policies through whatever channel may be available to them.

In October, many, though not all, of the locals which had been in the rank and file organization, attended the regular district convention called by John Walker. The holding of this convention was in itself a triumph for the rank and file elements. It was the first district convention since Walker made his notorious compromise with Lewis and put the reorganized U. M. W. of A. out of business in March, 1931, without making even a pretense of consulting the rank and file of the membership on the subject. No one doubts that some excuse would have been found for postponing this convention still longer if it had not been for the scare thrown into the district machine by the initial success of the rank and file movement, and the big showing at the Belleville convention last July. The chief force that brought a good many elements, by no means too friendly with each other, together in a regular district convention in October, was the common desire to keep the Lewis machine from getting control in the Illinois district. The convention adopted certain amendments to the district constitution, cutting down the number of paid officials, and in general tending to weaken the control of the officialdom over the locals.

Illinois delegates went to the international convention of the U. M. W., which is being held at Indianapolis as we go to press, determined to get autonomy for the districts written into the constitution, or otherwise to keep the injunction granted them by the courts, which forbids Lewis to interfere with the affairs of the Illinois district. Latest reports from Indianapolis indicate that district autonomy will not be granted by that convention. The whole tendency of the Lewis machine in recent years has indeed been in the very opposite direction, tightening its hold upon the districts and upon the locals. It is generally expected that the Illinois miners, as well as miners from other states, are likely to be disappointed at the results of the Indianapolis convention and that this will give some further impetus to insurgency among them. So far as Illinois is concerned, however, it is hardly

likely that this insurgency will find expression at the present moment. The contract with the operators in that district expires at the end of March and there is a general feeling that all differences must be forgotten and that the ranks must be united when the negotiations with the operators begin. The future depends upon the outcome of those negotiations. If wages are not cut and the contract in other respects is not too much worse than the present one, the Walker machine may have a fairly strong hold on the situation. If, as is not at all unlikely, the operators insist upon a reduction in wages and other setbacks, unquestionably insurgency will demand expression. The only question will be whether there will be just a wild gesture of revolt or an intelligently led movement toward the building of a nation-wide clean, progressive and militant miners' union.

In Kentucky the Communists announced a strike for the first of January. Reports on the situation have been unusually meager. It is sufficiently clear, however, that the strike has amounted to very little. Meanwhile Jones and Hightower have been sentenced to life imprisonment in connection with the strike of last year, and a brutal reign of terrorism prevails throughout the Kentucky mine fields.

Wages are being cut in the Hocking Valley in Ohio and there is a possibility that strikes will develop there.

In western Pennsylvania the Communists have withdrawn their organizers and have also practically abandoned all relief work. Such relief work as is being done is being carried on by the Pittsburgh group of the Socialist Party. They are holding together a number of mining camps, and in this way may be laying the foundation for a sounder miners' union in that section of the state.

The news from the Kanawha Valley of West Virginia is in the main encouraging. Frank Keeney and his colleagues in the West Virginia Mine Workers' Union have brought the membership back practically to where it was at the peak before the strike broke out last July. Meetings are excellently attended. The spirit among the men is fine. The confidence in the union is complete. As set forth in another section of this issue of LABOR AGE, definite steps have been taken by the union for the establishment of an independent labor party in West Virginia. There is definite hope that the West Virginia Mine Workers

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SLING SHOTS



By Hal

A GOOD YEAR FOR HEADACHES

Emerson's Bromo-Seltzer, Inc., declared an unusually large dividend recently and it is reported that the company is confidently looking forward to bigger business for the coming year.

IN AGAIN OUT AGAIN

In fact a retrospect over the last 50 years certainly gives ample reason to believe that life under the present capitalist system is just one prolonged headache. Says Senator Brookhart, "In the last 50 years there were eight major depressions, and seven little ones thrown in for good measure. During the 50 years we spent about half of our time going into and getting out of depressions."

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

Even that hard-boiled bunch in Congress is getting the creeps. "What's the matter with Congress?" an old door-keeper said to Anne O'Hare McCormick the other day, "I was anticipatin' all kinds of high jinks from the boys this session, but they all go round on their tip-toes, whisperin', as if there was a death in the family."

OTTO KAHN EXPLAINS

But we will leave it to the debonaire Otto Kahn to explain the sudden overproduction of gooseflesh. "In 1929," says he, "greed sat in the driver's seat, and now fear sits in the driver's seat." Is it perchance the fear of the penalty the starving millions of "prosperous" America will one day demand from the dapper Banker Kahn and his fellow exploiters for the suffering they now endure?

PROSPERITY CHORUS CHANGES ITS TUNE

Evidently the soothing soothsayers of the prosperity which we were told is "Hoovering" just around the corner, have been forced to sing a totally different song. And it is none other than Ogden Mills, financial wizard and right hand man of Andy Mellon, who declares, that, "By the middle of 1929 . . . our whole economic set-up had reached a point where a sweeping decline was as inevitable as the downward course of the noonday sun toward the horizon." Would that Oggie had spoken those timely words in the days when Herbert Depression Hoover was issuing promissory

notes of 30 days, 60 days and 90 days for the return of prosperity, notes which have all been flung back in our faces marked "N. G." The whole pack of "bed time story tellers of the administration" seem to be scared stiff about the situation, and we are left pondering over the prophecy of Leonard P. Ayres, who is mentioned as the "most hopeful of the speakers" at a joint luncheon of the American Statistical Association and the American Farm Economic Association, and who assures us, that the depression



From The New Yorker
Just Around the Corner

"is not yet half through. . . . It seems probable that the return to normal levels of business will take more than two years after it gets under way and we do not know when that will be." So dig in boys. You're a long way from Tipperary!

SCISSORBILLS FINDS A WAY OUT

But we can rely fully upon that variety of Babbitt known in the west as scissorbills, which America produces in such abundance, to supply the solution. A special week of prayer for the jobless to invoke divine aid has been instituted in Winslow Township, N. J. Special precautions have been taken against wearing out trousers at the knee during the week of prayer, because it was felt that this would make the depression worse. In the city of Hammond, Ind. Eddie Groth, an ambitious young bank teller, who was thrown out of a job by the closing of his bank, has set himself

up as a money changer. We submit that there must be something fundamentally wrong with the unemployed, if they don't get wise to this scheme pretty quick. This ought to be a real money maker in the Kentucky and West Virginia coal fields where the miners are paid a starvation wage in company scrip. Who said America is no longer the land of opportunity? You gotta know how, that's all. And now comes Cincinnati, the model city, with the Plan of Plans. The Cincinnati Club of business men has determined to clean up "Old Man Depression." Here's how. Everybody is to wear a button bearing the inscription: "I'm sold on America. I won't talk depression." The minister of New Thought Temple has thundered from the pulpit a holy mandate against thinking, seeing or recognizing "Old Man Depression" or any of his relations. And so the old guy and his family are simply snubbed out of town.

BORROWED FROM A FELLOW COLUMNIST

Jorge in the Daily Worker of January 20 publishes the following from a worker correspondent who describes a recent Daily Worker Anniversary celebration. "For three and a half hours, the endless sequel of speakers kept on, shouting until hoarse, while the restless audience refused to listen any longer and engaged in private conversations, denouncing the committee in charge and in many cases clearly expressing their determination never again to attend such a meeting." Whether or not the audience was hauled before the Control Commission to be disciplined is not explained.

A THOUGHT ON PRETZELS

It is said that times like these stimulate thought even among our ruling class. This is said in defiance of the late Julius Rosenwald who issued the following solemn warning in his philosophy of life: "Don't ever confuse wealth with brains." To prove that Mr. Rosenwald was unjust to his fellow classmates, we quote the brilliant thought of a pretzel manufacturer of Wisconsin who, determined to build up the entangled fortunes of the pretzel business, announced that the pretzel symbolizes "a maiden with her arms folded across her breast in the

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LETTERS

THE NEW YORK "DYNAMITE PLOT"

Dear Editor:

Because they dared organize the low-paid, highly-exploited harbor boatmen, three members of the Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union are now in the Tombs Prison, New York, awaiting trial on a framed-up charge of dynamiting barges in New York harbor. They are John G. Soderberg, secretary of the union and two of its most active members. Thomas J. Bunker and William Trajer. Conviction carries with it sentence ranging from 25 to 40 years.

That the three marine workers are the victims of the frame-up, used so many times in the past to prevent union organization, is the firm belief of many working class bodies that have come to their assistance. The Marine Workers' Defense Committee has been organized with representatives of all shades of the labor movement.

The committee is headed by Carter Hudson, a member of the executive of the union, who is chairman, by Carlo Tresca of Il Martello, who functions as secretary and by A. J. Muste, who is treasurer. Organizations represented on the defense committee include the Independent Tidewater Boatmen's Union, the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, Communist League (Opposition), Industrial Workers of the World, Communist Party (Majority Group), Young Peoples Socialist League, the Il Martello, the General Defense Committee and the Students Council of the League for Industrial Democracy. The American Civil Liberties Union is cooperating with the committee and is preparing to bring action based upon the inhuman third degree torture given Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer when they were arrested.

Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer were arrested in the middle of November, when police swooped down on the union headquarters and arrested Soderberg. Bunker and Trajer were taken into custody later in the day when the police raided a barge on the Brooklyn waterfront on which Trajer was working. Two others were arrested the same time. One, Joseph Reilly, is being held as a material witness, while the other, William Hoyle, has been branded as an agent-provocateur and spy for the police.

The arrests were timed to prevent a huge organizing campaign being planned by the union. The harbor boatmen, becoming restless and dissatisfied with their working conditions and low pay

were in a mood for strike. Among the workers that were ready for strike action were those of the O'Boyle Towing Company. Many of the men employed by the O'Boyle Company were signing up in the union. It meant that O'Boyle either had to meet the union demands or face a strike.

Of course, there was a third way out. That was to jail the leading members of the union and thus cripple the organization. That is what happened. Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer were arrested and charged with bombing the O'Boyle barges. And the curious point is this: while practically none of the barges in New York harbor are insured (they are very old, most of them having been built 50 to 60 years ago) those of the O'Boyle company are insured. Which means that O'Boyle is collecting heavy insurance on the old, worthless boats which are the basis of the charges against the three arrested marine workers!

When taken to police headquarters, the three prisoners were subjected to a brutal third degree in an effort to force a "confession." All of the fine arts of torture were used, including the beating of testicles with blackjacks. In spite of this hell to which they were made to suffer, they stood firm and refused to admit guilt to something of which they were innocent.

The New York workers have already come to the assistance of these victims of capitalist brutality. The workers throughout the rest of the country must do likewise. A mass meeting attended by over 500 workers was held on January 7. A broad united front conference of working class organizations is being arranged and will be held soon.

The men must be given the best sort of a defense. To do so, a great deal of money is needed, and needed now. By the time this appears in print, the trial might have begun. The district attorney is trying to rush the men to prison. Only labor solidarity will save them for the working class movement. All contributions should be sent to A. J. Muste, Treasurer, Marine Workers' Defense Committee, 82 East 10th Street, New York City.

SYLVAN A. POLLACK

A U. M. W. of A. Meeting

Dear Editor:

On Friday, January 8, I attended a meeting of the General Mine Board. Since I took down everything in short-

hand I can give you everything that went on in the proceedings of the meeting. Some of the district officials that were present are: District President Brennan, Secretary Davis, Board Member J. Dolphin, and some of Dolphin's henchmen. However, this meeting did not last more than a half hour because of a fist fight which took place soon after the report of the committee.

The riot started when Brother Truck, representing William Pern, was granted the floor.

Said Brother Truck: "I would like to ask President Brennan whether it is true that the clerks get a ten percent discount for the collection of dues at the colliery, and if so, I would like to know why it is not in the agreement."

Before Brother Truck was finished speaking, Secretary Davis jumped up, asking for a point of order.

Chairman: "What is your point of order?"

Davis: "Brother Truck is not eligible to speak here."

Chairman: "Why not?"

Davis: "Brother Truck is a representative of local 1398 which has not sent in their per capita tax since November, 1930."

The District President then asked for the floor, which was granted.

Brennan: "What Secretary Davis just said is true and we have the books here to prove what we are speaking about."

Brother Kendrick: "Do you know that we sent in our per capita tax in November?"

Davis: "No, I do not know that."

Kendrick: "Then what do you know? What are we paying you for?"

Brother Truck again asked for the floor, and just as he was about to speak, one of Dolphin's henchmen pushed him down and told him to shut up or "I'll shut you up." Truck, a cripple, who is recuperating from a broken back, could not defend himself and after being hit two or three times, fell down under the blows. Hansberry ran to his aid but was struck down by the bully. Then a free for all fist fight started. Some of the officers fled from the meeting when the battle started. Dolphin had brought his men up in order to break up the meeting, and he succeeded in doing so.

My opinion of the whole situation, is that the district officials claim that the Wm. Penn local has not paid its per capita tax in order to keep its delegates from coming to the convention at Indianapolis this month. However, William

Penn local has elected delegates to the convention, and boy, they are going to talk when they get there.

A MINER.

FOR UNITY

Dear Editor:

This is a plea for greater friendliness and co-operation between C.P.L.A.'ers and the Militants of the Socialist Party. It is addressed to both groups equally but it can appear only in *Labor Age* because the Militants do not have an organ of their own.

The fact is that on practically all points C.P.L.A.'ers and Militants agree—the difference lies in their judgment of the possibility of making the Socialist Party into a militant, left-wing organization. The events of the last few months have shown that, for the present at least, each group will follow its own road towards the common objective.

Need that mean conflict? Must two groups with almost identical views now regard each other with a touch of disdain, with suspicion or actual hostility? After all, if the Militants and the C. P. L. A. both succeed, they will presumably unite forces. If one fails and the other succeeds, then, likewise, the two groups, or many of the individuals in them, are likely to unite. Each group should indeed hail with enthusiasm any progress the other makes and look upon its efforts with a friendly eye. Surely the American labor desert is big enough for both!

It will be especially unfortunate if continued co-operation between the two groups on the industrial field proves impossible. The C.P.L.A. can supply leadership in industrial struggles but it needs the support that the Militants can give in numbers. For the Militants, the same need exists as when they first joined the C.P.L.A., for an organization through which they can participate in industrial struggles. Not without great changes in the Socialist Party will it take the lead in efforts to build industrial unions and to organize the unorganized—which the Militants, like the C.P.L.A., consider prerequisites for effective political action.

One reason for a certain rivalry between the two groups is that in many cases individuals or organizations that have sympathies or connections with both feel that they must choose between them. Is it not wise in such cases to bear in mind that eventually, perhaps in the not far distant future, the two groups will probably once more join forces? The primary task now is to build militant mass organizations of the workers. If in one place the active spirits decide such organizations can best be built by following the lead of the C.P.L.A., and if in another they con-

sider it more expedient to work in the Socialist Party, need that cause hard feeling? Neither the Socialist Party nor the C.P.L.A., as a matter of fact, has enough resources in men and money to participate in all the situations that call for its assistance.

I talked recently with a Socialist Party and union member who is one of the leading labor men in a medium-sized industrial town. He is faced with the tremendous task of building a strong union and at the same time rallying the workers in a political organization. He wishes to follow the C.P.L.A. program on the industrial field, but, since there are a lively group of Yipsels and a Socialist Party already functioning, he thinks it most practical to work on the political field with the Socialist Party rather than split the movement. Would it be wise in such a situation for either the C.P.L.A. or the Socialist Party to try to force a choice?

There are many situations, particularly in small towns, where militant radicals are so few in number that they must co-operate if they are to accomplish anything. Any ill-will fostered by differences in affiliation is a distinct handicap in tackling the immediate, daily tasks, and efforts from either of the organizations to press the issue may seriously impede the work of drawing the workers into the militant radical movement. If individuals, for any good reason, wish for the present to remain members of both the Socialist Party and the C.P.L.A., why not let them do so? When radicals are so few, some must do double work!

By the time this letter appears the convention will have met in West Virginia, that is to decide whether the labor party the West Virginia Mine Workers union is sponsoring should affiliate with the Socialist Party. Militants naturally hope for such affiliation and for the impulse it would give to the Militant movement, while Tom Tippet, A. J. Muste and other C.P.L.A.'ers think it wise to try the experiment, favored by the C.P.L.A. from its creation in 1929, of building a labor party in which such groups as the Socialist Party and the C.P.L.A. may play a part similar to that of the Independent Labor Party in the British Labor Party.

It is to be hoped that any disappointment occasioned by the decision about affiliation in West Virginia will not result in any lessening of support for the West Virginia Mine Workers—a union which is all too rare an example of the kind Militants and the C.P.L.A. are longing for. That union surely deserves as much support as ever in its courageous fight to rally the coal diggers for effective action.

If the decision is against affiliation with the Socialist Party, there are certain facts that Socialists should know when they judge the matter. I present these facts, even at the risk of seeming to inject irritating matter into my plea for peace, because I think they are necessary to remove certain misunderstandings that have already arisen.

It is important in the first place to realize that it was Tom Tippet, as Extension Director of Brookwood Labor College, who last March agreed to assist the West Virginia organizing campaign, financially and in other ways, "at a moment when unionism was in despair and the future seemed filled with gloom"—to quote a message of greetings and appreciation sent on May 13, 1931, to Brookwood by the officers and executive board of the West Virginia Mine Workers. The message likewise says of Brookwood that "without its assistance there would now be no miners' union here." The Socialist Party at that time was entirely dead in West Virginia and had been dead for years.

While during the recent campaign and strike certain branches of the Socialist Party rallied splendidly to the support of the union, the L. I. D. ran a Chautauqua, and roughly two-fifths of the money came through the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, Norman Thomas himself declares that such support does not give grounds for considering West Virginia a Socialist Party preserve. A labor party independent of the Socialist Party was, as I have already indicated, part of the program planned by Tom Tippet last March when he undertook the responsibility of advising as well as financing the miners' movement. It was in December, 1931, that Socialist organizers went down to revive Socialist sentiment and present the case for the Socialist Party. While, then, Militants would naturally regret non-affiliation of the West Virginia labor party, it would be a mistake to take the attitude that the C.P.L.A. had thereby "stolen a march" on the Socialist Party.

There are probably some Militants and C.P.L.A.'ers who will not agree with the desirability or possibility of greater friendliness and co-operation. But perhaps enough members of each group will take an attitude of friendliness to prevent slurs and needless friction and to create constructive co-operation in our task of reaching the workers. Under different circumstances both groups of militant radicals would be united in one organization. Though at present we are divided, let us remember that we are striving for a common goal!

KATHERINE H. POLLAK.

The Millinery Worker

Dear Editor:

The millinery workers have been hoping and still are hoping that the millinery season will soon begin. Meanwhile the women workers, the trimmers and hand workers, wander about the Sixth Avenue district. In the early morning they rush from the subways or elevated trains with newspapers in their hands and in their faces, hope. All day they tramp the streets in the millinery district, looking with eager eyes for "help-wanted" signs.

Thus, when one of these workers "strike" a job, is it surprising that she is willing to accept a low price, unsanitary conditions and overtime? Or is she to be condemned?

The average weekly wage which a millinery worker earns is \$10 to \$15 and she must work very hard to earn that.

Do the American millinery women feel the need of struggle and fight for better condition? No! We are still in darkness about our condition. We need education. We need to be able to realize and understand what is happening to us and to know how to fight against our bosses who are exploiting us.

Then we will see the unsanitary conditions in the millinery shops and realize the insecurity of our jobs. We will know then that through all these years we have been wanderers, seeking one job after another and never finding a good one—for there are no good ones.

MARY APPLEBAUM.

Miners' Defense

Comrades:

The following is a resolution unanimously passed at our Special Meeting held on Jan. 15, 1932, at Aristocrat Hall, 69 St. Marks Place, at which our Delegates reported about the Conference for the Defense of the Kentucky Miners called by the General Defense Committee, held on Jan. 6, at the Labor Temple, 14th St. and Second Ave., New York, N. Y.:

"We endorse the stand taken by our delegates to invite all other Labor organizations, regardless of their political beliefs, to join in the defense of the Kentucky Miners as well as of all political prisoners. We believe—as our delegates—that in order to make the struggle really effective, labor must unite its forces in the struggle against the oppression by the ruling class.

"We express our hope that the Conference for the Kentucky Miners Defense will make an honest attempt in that direction."

Fraternally yours,

Bielotzerkover Br. 417, Workmen's Circle."

Father Cox's Hunger Marchers

(Continued from Page 13)

It is by breaking large monopolies and business concerns that Father Cox would change the present system and give justice to the farmer and wage worker. This he thinks can be done by the use of the ballot. If the old parties will not do it then a new party should be formed with this job as its purpose.

However, it must be kept in mind that Father Cox's movement at its inception had as its sole purpose: Jobs for the unemployed. It was not and is not now a revolutionary movement in the sense that its leaders would have the present economic and political system changed from the top to the very bottom. It is quite apparent to the observer who is close to the leaders of this movement that the good priest and his most intimate lieutenants do not realize the significance of many of their revolutionary statements.

When interviewed, Father Cox denounced monopolies in no uncertain terms. When he was asked if he would have them collectivized, his answer was, no. He would have them broken up into small units such as they were a half century ago. In other words, he wants the chain stores put out of business so that the small independent grocer and business man might thrive. However, in the case of public utilities Father Cox believes that the government should take these over and operate them for the people. This is but one illustration which indicates that the priest and his advisers have a long way to go in their thinking before they come to a sound position regarding the changes which must be made before they will find the justice for the workers which they seek.

Since it is by the ballot that Father Cox would have his followers get jobs, it is to political action that they have turned. At Harrisburg, as has been mentioned above, it looked very much like the whole march had been staged in order to give Pinchot a send off in his campaign for president. However, since the marchers have returned to Pittsburgh the tide has turned. At the

Pitt Stadium meeting Father Cox threw a bomb shell into the audience by announcing that he would run for president on a jobless workers ticket if the old parties fail to meet the demands of the unemployed. This was the answer he gave to his critics who contend that his movement was sponsored by a group of disgruntled Republicans who were after Hoover's scalp. He set Labor Day as the time when his Jobless Party would meet in St. Louis to formulate their platform and nominate candidates.

It is no secret around Pittsburgh that this announcement threw a terrible scare into the minds of some of Father Cox's close friends and advisers. They do not want him to have anything to do with this presidential business but would rather have him remain simply the "chaplain of the unemployed." For they do not see any prospects of electing a Catholic priest president of the United States, at least not in 1932. But they do think that if Father Cox sticks to his slogan of "Jobs for the Unemployed" there is a chance that his movement will gain sufficient strength between now and June to dictate who will be nominated for president at the Republican or Democratic convention.

These friends and advisers of Father Cox, so it is rumored, have pleaded with him to make a public declaration that he would not be a candidate for president regardless of what happens. So far this statement has not been made. When the writer interviewed Father Cox in the last week of January, he was quite emphatic in his assertion that he would be a candidate for president. For, says he, "Although I respect Pinchot, after all he is a politician. I will not trust any politician with the leadership of the Jobless Party. If it comes to the necessity of putting up candidates, it is I who will head the ticket, for the simple reason that I would trust no other."

It remains to be seen whether Father Cox will be able to control some of the petty politicians who have attached themselves to his movement. Such popular movements as this have always been more or less easy prey for the young and often older political go-getters.

The Hunger March has proved that workers will respond to leadership. We also learn from it the kind of leadership they will at present follow. A leadership which gives evidence of sincerity and militancy, even though it may be confused and not fully class conscious.

**TOM MOONEY IS STILL
IN JAIL!**



"Say It With Books"



The Workers of Capitalistic France

The Labor Movement of Post-War France (Vol. IV of "Social and Economic Studies of Post-War France"), by David J. Saposs. Columbia University Press, New York. 508 pages. \$6.00.

FRANCE'S Third Republic occupies a unique position in current world affairs. With the possible exception of the United States, she is the most capitalistic nation on the face of the globe. With the United States, she is at present the banker of the world. In American and French vaults lies a large proportion of the world's gold supply. The foreign policies of the Third Republic, rather naturally out of such an economic background, are narrowly nationalistic and reactionary.

What are the condition and attitude of the French workers and their labor movements, in confronting this reaction at the top? The answer, of exceedingly great interest to the workers of other lands, is given in this thorough study by David J. Saposs. The mere mention of the author's name assures that the work is impartial and complete, and a reading of the book confirms that assurance.

The French saying: "*Il est la guerre!*" applies to the labor movement of that country as well as to many other things. The Great War—with the accompanying Russian Revolution—provoked profound changes in the political and industrial organizations professing to represent the French working class.

For one thing, prior to the war upheaval, Syndicalism dominated the platforms and public utterances of the "Confederation Generale du Travail," the French A. F. of L. "Direct action" and hatred for "the covetousness of politicians" went hand in hand. The Socialist Party, admitting others than members of the working class to its ranks, was looked upon with scorn. The General Strike was much talked of as the chief instrument of revolution, although but little was done to put it into practice. By the Charter of Amiens, in 1906, the C. G. T. had definitely put itself on record in favor of revolutionary syndicalism.

Of course, this devotion of the French

workers to such a philosophy was more superficial than real. At the outbreak of the Great War, the C. G. T. had only one-seventh of the working class of France in its affiliated organizations, and unity of thought was far from perfect within its own ranks. The Socialist Party had grown with a pace equal to that of the unions, and controlled the officers of a number of large industrial and cooperative organizations.

But in the course of the war, the C. G. T. *officially* abandoned its syndicalist philosophy (in 1916), in the same decision which pledged it to "the work of National Defense." It is not so much toward the Socialists, however, as toward the Radical Party (the Herriott French "Progressives") that the C. G. T. has leaned in the post-war period.

The ferocious anti-militarism of the C. G. T. went into the discard with its revolutionary syndicalism. Through the efforts of Jouhaux, "Gompersism" became the policy of the general office, and nationalistic opportunism more and more prevailed.

Splits developed in all directions. Today, in place of the one central federation, there exist the following union groupings: the C. G. T. with 750,000 members; the Communist C. G. T. U., with 400,000; the Catholic C. F. T. C., with 100,000, and the Anarchist C. G. T. S. R., with 10,000.

There are several independent unions, the largest of which has a membership of close to 200,000. The big privately owned industries are almost totally unorganized. The Communists alone seem to have designs upon them, but the author thinks that their chances of success in that field are remote.

In the political arena division has also been marked since the war. In the conflict between the "lefts" and "rights" and "centrists" that developed with the Bolshevik Revolution in every industrial country, the Socialists of France found themselves in a peculiar position. At the Congress of Tours in 1920, the Communists captured the Socialist official machinery. The Unified Socialist Party thereby became the Communist Party of

France. The rejected leaders set up the Socialist Party, which has gone far to the right although still rejecting cooperation in "bourgeois" cabinets.

In the last report before the break (1920), the Unified Socialist Party had over 179,000 members and at the election just before the schism (1919) it had received 1,615,466 votes. Today the Communist Party has a membership of approximately 56,000, while the reorganized Socialist Party membership is 98,000. The Communist vote in 1928 was 1,063,943; that of the Socialists in the same year was 1,698,084. Thus the "revolutionary working class vote" has grown considerably in the post-war decade, and with unemployment now being felt in France it bids fair to mount even higher.

This trend upward toward political revolt can be partly deceptive. It would undoubtedly be more healthful for the possibility of a radical overturn of things in France were the unions showing more signs of advance. As it is, they are lagging back of both the political parties and the consumers cooperatives, which have made decided progress in the post-war time. The French remain after all "a nation of patriots" and Socialist leadership there has shown a startling uniformity in "going over" to Reaction. Clemenceau, Briand, Millerand, Viviani, Painleve, Laval—to mention a few—have come out of early Socialist or Communist activities to "national leadership." Only the other day Paul Boncour deserted the Socialist Party, probably to train himself for M. Laval's abandoned post.

The Communist Party has had a disappointing experience in "bolshhevizing" itself; attempting to put its units on an industrial rather than a geographical basis. Despite the mechanical pressure from Moscow, little progress in the building of the new party structure has been made.

What the advent of depression in France will bring about remains to be seen. As it stands today, the "reformist" C. G. T. has perhaps profited enough in securing certain immediate demands—the eight-hour day, social insurance and things of that sort—to desire a continu-

ation of its friendship with the Radical Party.

Probably what the French workers will have to look forward to, for a real advance, is a political unit somewhat similar to the new Socialist Labor Party of Germany, understanding both the language of Socialists and Communists—and industrially conscious enough to be able to push forward organization work and a revolutionary orientation among the unions.

For the growing number of young labor "actives", who understand that they must have a knowledge of the workers' movements in other lands, Comrade Saposs' book is of the greatest value. The reader might desire a more detailed index at the end of the work, but that is an infinitesimal "unfulfilled need" in this scholarly presentation of the conditions and achievements of the French working class.

LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ.

THE MENACE

The Challenge of the East. Sherwood Eddy. Farrar & Rhinehart.

THE Challenge of the East . . . Sounds good; is there any reason for giving the book such a title other than the sound? Here is how Eddy defines the challenge: "In every awakened land of Asia, men are demanding and will inevitably demand basic economic justice to provide decent living conditions for all, which shall make possible liberty for spiritual self-realization, both personal and national." But what is the course of action (always implied in a challenge) which the West finds itself being "dared" to pursue? Just as in the definition, so throughout the whole book, Eddy manages to keep a wide berth of the crux of the whole "challenge".

But at the very beginning of our review it might be well to examine the mental equipment with which Eddy goes forth to study this challenging East. Of most significance is his conviction that Communism and Marxism are a "menace"; then comes the conviction that religion (and especially Christianity) is an end-ideal for humanity; then the conservatism of uncertainty in all matters which do not directly concern these convictions, evidenced by his way of reaching conclusions: namely, to strike a mathematical mean between the opposing claims. Finally, of interest if not of importance, is his belief in the existence of "national characteristics" which, however, he fortunately does not apply consistently.

In 265 pages he deals with seven coun-

tries, trying to give a historical, geographic, and economic background to what he considers the fundamental problem of nationalism vs. imperialism. In a way, it is well that he thus limits himself, since he might find it hard to write fully and plausibly on each country. The fact is that there is little new in the book for an assiduous reader of the Times and the Literary Digest, except in the definite stand which he does take for the independence of the Philippines, for which he should be given credit. Not that this book does not have its place: for a college freshman who wanted to find out what patriotism, war and depressions, are all about, this book, followed and clarified by a study of socialism, would be useful.

For the book does this at least: it shows that all is not well in the East, that the "white man's burden," by a wonderful "sympathetic" process, is crushing the brown and yellow brothers deeper and deeper into a slavish poverty which is inconceivable to all of us in America, with the exception of our black brethren in the South. It shows India's millions living permanently on less than the minimum of income to buy the food necessary to sustain life, so that half the children die before attaining maturity. It shows the same conditions in China, aggravated by the famines to the degree where peasants are left no choice between death by starvation and banditry. It shows Japanese workers living in conditions which may be exemplified by the following paragraph:

"We visited the slums of Tokyo and Kobe. In the former, 34 per cent of the people are living and often working in one small room which affords each family of five less than eight square feet of space, or about that occupied by a double bed. The other 66 per cent in the slums have an average of less than eight square feet per family. The inhabitants are underfed and overcrowded until they have to sleep side by side, men, women and children crowded together. From such families eighty per cent of the prostitutes have been forced into their present lives by poverty, the impoverished parents frequently renting out the girls for a period of years . . . Of girl recruits secured for the factories, 84 per cent return to the farms as soon as they have worked out the advance made to their parents. These girls are kept in the factory dormitories and not allowed to leave the grounds without permission." In Korea, conditions are even worse.

Yet the author can wax enthusiastic over the increasing concentration of wealth, as indicated by multiplication of imports and exports, factories, etc., all of which more than compensate for the ac-

celerating degradation of the huge majorities. Thus, at the beginning of the chapter on Korea: "The few Koreans we saw (at the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the annexation of Korea) seemed to be sad and silent observers of Japan's material triumph over them. Silent, because they had little part in the material progress which seemed to them to be at their expense, and because they were not allowed publicly to state their case, either in speech or writing, without paying the heavy penalty for 'sedition' against an alien rule." Yet, in the final summary at the end of the chapter: "However inevitably unpopular an alien rule may be, the Koreans now have the best modern government that their country has ever known. While some become impoverished and perish in the process of transition, a new Korea is being gradually built up under the powerful forces of patriotism, religion, education, law and order . . ."

In view of the present situation, it is interesting to see what Eddy has to say about China. After having disposed of the "menace of Communism" he urges practical co-operation by other nations, which he says "have had painful lessons in the results of intervention in China, Russia and elsewhere. Japan is still suffering from the effects of her twenty-one demands made upon China during the war."

Now it is clear that in all this he has entirely missed the point. The problem of imperialism is not a problem of a whole nation seeking to enslave another, any more than it is the problem of one nation seeking to "enlighten" others. Yet these are the two alternatives between which Eddy has found himself bewilderingly entrapped in his rejection of the very simple materialistic explanation: Capitalism, extorting as large as possible a surplus of profit from its workers, finds the workers unable to buy their goods, and proceeds to unload these goods on other countries. Such goods must be paid for with goods from the other countries. The most profitable exchange can be made when these latter goods do not compete with their own, and are cheap; that is, raw materials, produced by labor working at as low wages as profitably possible. Unfortunately, while this solution settles the immediate problem, that of making a profit, it engenders new problems, much more difficult than the original one, in that the miserable workers of the exploited countries are not blinded by any fictitious patriotic unity with their oppressors.

That is why we may look for the next workers' republic in China; that is the menace of Communism.

CHARLES BERLINRUT.

POISON PROPAGANDA

The Public Pays. A Study of Power Propaganda by Ernest Gruening. 260 pages. Vanguard Press. New York. \$2.50.

THE power issue will figure prominently in the coming Presidential campaign. Already the orators are flexing their tongues for the fray. The Federal Trade Commission is grinding out data for them, and there is soon to be a Congressional investigation of holding companies.

Ex-Governor Smith remarked in an interview last spring that in New York power was the one thing he had put his hand to that he could not arouse the people over. Power is too intricate, and few understand what it is all about.

Ernest Gruening's volume on power propaganda then is timely. Statistics and facts are presented in a clear-cut manner, interesting and simple for the layman to comprehend. The author exposes the manipulations, the costs which the Power Trust has been obliged to meet in order to carry on its national and world-wide propaganda; the money expended to influence the favor of officials all the way from the top of the government down to the very bottom. He gets his facts from the reports of Senate investigation committees.

Hundreds of millions of dollars spent. Millions upon millions of pieces of literature sent out. Daily, weekly, and monthly press, radio, and film talks, all to deceive the people of the United States. College professors, clergymen, politicians and newspapers bought to stifle criticism of public utility policies.

"Don't be afraid of the expense. The public pays the expense," declares W. H. Aylesworth, managing director of the National Electric Light Association. And R. R. McGregor, assistant director of the Illinois Committee on Public Utility Information, discussing arguments to be used against the candidates running for the United States Senate, whose speeches indicated a leaning towards public ownership, advises: "Do not try logic or reason, but try to pin the bolshevik idea on your opponent."

The book abounds with material taken "out of the mouths" of the proponents of private ownership of public utility. The sinister figure of Matthew S. Sloan, former president of the New York Edison Company, and brutal opponent of the right of the employees to organize, stalks through the pages of "The Public Pays." As chairman of the Public Relations section of the National Electric Light Association in 1926, he reports propaganda efforts among the children by printing

books in color, telling the story of the electrical service, "as the young people will be the customers, the voters and the law makers of the future."

"Give us the child at seven years old, and we care not who educates him thereafter, he will be ours," quotes J. B. Sheridan in his address to the American Gas Association in 1925. "Public Utility executives and their lieutenants should become boy scout executives and scout masters, as it offers a splendid field for utility work."

No home is too humble or too lowly to escape the levies of the power trust. It is the most gigantic, far-reaching and comprehensive monopoly which has ever been devised by the mind of man, and Ernest Gruening succeeds in exposing the labyrinth of alibis, getaways and hiding places that cloak the nefarious practices of the power utilities.

"The Public Pays" is invaluable to the student who seeks to delve into how the utilities preserve their monopolies. It is indispensable to labor organizers and public ownership propagandists. It is a gold mine of facts and ammunition for the impending fight Private vs. Public Ownership.

WM. BEEDIE

UNIONISM IN THE SOUTH

Textile Unionism and the South. By George Sinclair Mitchell. The University of North Carolina Press. \$1.00.

WILL the Southern textile workers ever be organized? This question has been asked many times in the last few years. Those interested in the attempts, fights and failures of the South should read this book.

With the first section of the book which gives a brief history of Northern unions, we have one criticism. "Undoubtedly," says the author, "the root cause of the weakness of the Northern section of the industry is the fact that it had drawn its labor mainly from immigration since the Civil War, when the native American labor finally withdrew from the large New England mills." It seems to us that the New England immigrants have a better trade union background than workers native born, but that the American movements have failed to supply leaders who understood these people.

The section dealing with southern unions, although brief, gives a good account of early activities, which was in four periods separated by years when nothing was done.

"By 1927," Dr. Mitchell points out, "the United Textile Workers had adapted a settled policy of union assistance to management in matters of mill operation, and,

as a concomitant, it was emphasizing the use of strikes only as a 'last resort.'" As a matter of fact these doctrines had been implicit all along in the union's conservative tendency, but by 1929 they had been given definite form and could be relied upon to appear in any new expansion of the organization. But despite the fact that the union tried to reduce "militancy," the South had many strikes, which the author brings out.

In his conclusion the author discusses some of the reasons for failure in the South. "Some of the organizers whom the unions have sent to the South," he claims, "have found themselves more at home in the bootleg fringe of the village than with the better class of people."

LARRY HOGAN.

Recent Developments Among the Miners

(Continued from Page 21)

Union may be able to invade Logan and Mingo Counties this spring with a union organizing campaign. If this happens it will be the most important event in the history of organization among the miners in many years.

The most desperate need is that the clean, active elements in various mine fields should be brought into contact with each other. As things now stand, there is danger that the history of the past year will be repeated. Misery will compel strikes but there will be no plan. A strike will occur in one state in one month, and when that has been crushed there will be an outbreak in another state, and so on. Lack of funds and other serious obstacles make it difficult to establish more effective co-ordination. The miners of Illinois, who are financially better fixed than any others, still have an insufficient sense of how completely their own fate depends on what happens in other states. Despite all the difficulties, however, the aim of militant progressives everywhere must be to work for greater unity and co-ordination of effort among all the clean elements in the miners' union.

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Strike and Organizing Strategy

(Continued from Page 10)

again the U. T. W. officials immediately came from New York, and "together with the president of the Lawrence C. L. U. went to the Citizens' Committee and pleaded with them to confer with the mill men." Then "after the public announcement of the cut, the U. T. W. through Horace Riviere made a super-human effort to unionize the workers so that through organization they could better present their arguments." A good deal of time and energy were expended, Watt continues, in an investigation of the wage scale, the profits of the companies, etc., to prove that the proposed wage cut was unjustified. "This material, plus the testimony of workers as to their present wages and of piece-workers as to the insidious wage-cutting practiced for the last six years, served as a basis for our appeal to the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration and to the governor." The material was also presented to group meetings in Lawrence, liberal groups in Boston, and attempts made to get the facts into print. "If logic, facts, and days and nights of planning and conferences could have won the strike, a gigantic victory would have been the result!"

When will our labor leaders learn that gigantic labor victories are not won by logic or in conferences with citizens' committees, boards of arbitration and conciliation, capitalistic politicians, etc., but by organization, labor solidarity, mass enthusiasm, effective picketing?

Brother Watt attaches a good deal of importance to the fact—"one of the very real handicaps" he calls it—that there were some bad members on the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration, and that the Commissioner of Labor and Industries was ineffective. Contrary-wise, he attaches great importance to the fact that two new men have been appointed to these offices and feels that "if these two men had been in office in September, perhaps the strike would have been different."

In conclusion he stresses, not plans for organization activity among the workers in Lawrence, but plans for placing data about the textile industry before liberal groups and before the state legislature and Congress, feeling confident that these will be influenced "to put into law provision against the continued power of absentee, un-Christian and heartless mill officials."

There is hardly a word in this long

letter about going to the workers, rallying the workers, putting fighting spirit into them, leading them on the picket lines and teaching them that they were engaged in a class struggle and not in a debate. The actual conduct of the U. T. W. in these matters was better than might be inferred from Watt's letter, as Bakely in his article indicated. It shows, however, the fatal flaw in A. F. of L. policy and approach today, that these things are put in the background, if they appear at all, and that logic, arguments, conferences, appeals to politicians, who are essentially anti-labor, are in the foreground. Some of these things at least have their place in organizing and strike activities, but it should certainly be a secondary one. Working-class power and organization without intelligence and a certain amount of diplomacy are not enough, but logic and arguments without working-class power and organization are nothing at all.

All this is not to imply that organization work in these days is easy, or that it is not desperately hard to win strikes under present conditions, as Brothers Riviere and Watts have clearly indicated. Temporary defeat may be our lot, whatever methods are used, in such times. It makes a vast difference, however, whether the primary appeal has been to the strength, courage and solidarity of the workers, or to citizens' committees, conciliation boards and politicians. In the former case the workers may lose a battle, yet be better equipped for the war. In the latter case they are left confused and discouraged and if they have learned anything at all, it is to place reliance on forces which are thoroughly unreliable and can never be counted on in a pinch to stand with the workers.

Sling Shots

(Continued from Page 22)

attitude of prayer." Now put that in your stein and drink it!

ASHURST RECOMMENDS AN EMBLEM

As an alternative for the republican elephant, Senator Ashurst proposed the donkey as a political emblem for the American people in this hour of trial and suffering. He claims that the long-eared animal is the most suitable symbol on the ground that it is a "braying compendium of stately dignity, staunch endurance, fortitude and patience." So that's what you think of us, Senator. Better watch out. You might get a rude shock one of these days!

SHADES OF KARL MARX

In a recent debate with A. J. Muste, Louis Waldman, Socialist banner bearer, explained why Hamilton Fish and George Wickersham had endorsed Norman Thomas' candidacy, by a quotation from Marx' Communist Manifesto, which states that "A small part of the ruling class breaks away to make common cause with the revolutionary class." Such Marxism must have made Karl Marx turn in his grave in anguish and disgust.

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ENGLISH FOR WORKERS

Instructors LUCILE KOHN and IDA MILGRAM

This course will cover 15 weeks, two sessions of two hours each, every week, beginning Monday, December 7th at 8 P. M. Instruction will include training in public speaking, writing and drill in accent, designed to make foreign-born workers more effective in the labor movement of the United States. All subject matter will be drawn from the labor field. Miss Kohn is a highly trained teacher with much experience in workers' schools and classes. As there are special tutors to assist individuals, nobody need hesitate to enroll for the course. Fee for the entire course \$2.00.

Special Terms on Both Courses for the Unemployed

Many Workers Are Asking:

"Why aren't there enough jobs for all of us?"

"Can't the bosses pay us better wages?"

"What shall we do about it?"

YOUR JOB AND YOUR PAY has been written to give workers an answer to such questions. Its authors are Katherine H. Pollak and Tom Tippet. It contains 348 pages. And sells regularly for \$1.00.

For a short time **LABOR AGE** is offering **YOUR JOB AND YOUR PAY** with a year's subscription for \$2.00.

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