Labor Age

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The Workers Enemy In the White House
ROBERT S. ALLEN

Post-Strike Paterson
LOUIS F. BUDENZ

Your Electric Bills JOHN BAUER

"Somebody's Got To Farm"
ELEANOR KELLOGG

Rumblings In Southern Textiles LAWRENCE HOGAN

Action! Electrical Workers
JOHN ROGERS

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·LABOR·AGE·

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LAST month over 100 A. F. of L. union heads, including William Green, himself, marched on the White House to demand that Herbert Hoover's administration should support bills in Congress aiming to provide direct federal aid for the unemployed. That was more of an exhibition of militancy and determination to dramatize the cause of labor than most of these union leaders have shown for a long time. We welcome this omen. We urge the rank and file in the various organizations to get busy, organize oppositions against corruption and autocracy where they exist, push their leaders forward to more militant action, and push them out if they refuse to yield to such pressure. Conditions are such that more success is likely to attend rank and file efforts of this kind now than for sometime past.

The March of the Labor Leaders

While welcoming this March of the Labor Leaders, we think it is important to call attention to certain facts and issues. In the first place, the workers might not be in nearly so bitter a mess as they find themselves, if in 1929, at the beginning of this depression, the same labor leaders had not fatuously listened to the promise of Herbert Hoover, the bankers and the business men, not to cut wages. The "peaceful" attitude then adopted by these leaders gave big business the chance to cut the wages of American workers in half between 1929 and 1931—34 billion dollars having been the wage bill in 1929 and 17 billion in 1931.

In the second place, if clearer leadership had been given both in the past and today, the A. F. of L. would not have been insulted anew by the Hoover administration, as it was by the failure of that administration to support any of the bills in Congress for giving federal governmental aid to starving workers and their families. The LaFollette-Costigan bills and others have for the present been licked. Let's hurry up and have more marches, both of labor leaders and rank and file workers, to demand that new bills be introduced and passed.

Thirdly, it is a matter for rejoicing that at the insistence of Dan Tobin, head of the Teamsters' Union, and even of John L. Lewis, whose organization has just recently gone on record for unemployment insurance, the strike statement that "American workers won't stand for the dole" was stricken out of the pronouncement which A. F. of L. leaders carried to the White House. It is high time that this attempt of Matthew Woll and his anti-union friends to injure the cause of unemployment insurance, by calling it a dole, be spiked.

Finally, when the A. F. of L. demands such a small humane thing as food for American workers and their families who are dying of hunger, and gets turned down by the administration, and bills seeking to provide such aid are defeated by a coalition of so-called Republicans and so-called Democrats, isn't it high time to begin to talk again about a political party of the workers, for the workers, by the workers? With such a mass party of farmers and workers, we could put an end to begging favors from our enemies. We could take what is our due. How about starting agitation for a labor party in your union now?

FOR a long time the Hoover administration couldn't see that there was any necessity for government action to check the deepening depression. Appeals of workers for unemployment insurance or other kinds of relief fell on deaf ears. But when 2,290 banks failed during the year 1931, having total deposits of $1,759,000,000, and the financial world began to cry for help, that was another matter. It was then, and then only, that the famous Hoover Reconstruction Program was launched. The last measure in this program is the Glass-Steagall bill, which we are told will "save the situation."

Saving The Bankers

Let us examine what the Hoover measures are intended to accomplish. First of all, they want to stop the bank failures from spreading to the point where the big New York banks begin to crash. Secondly, they want to enable the American financial system to withstand the heavy assaults that are being made by certain foreign financiers, especially the French. And thirdly, they hope, by making credit easier, to stimulate business recovery.

Although there were 334 bank failures in January 1932, it is probable that temporarily at least, the number of failures will decline. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, launched by the Federal government, announced that in the ten days ending February 24 it had loaned $24,640,303 more to banks. If this heavy lending of government finances is continued, it ought to bolster up the banks for a while at least. The Glass-Steagall bill will make it possible for the Federal Reserve banks to lend money to the member banks of the Federal Reserve System on security that previously could not be accepted. This means that while the Federal Reserve System may be weakened, since it is lending money on poorer security, some of the borrowing banks may be saved temporarily at least. So all in all, the Hoover program undoubtedly is good for the bankers. Whether it will lead in the end to a gigantic crash of the whole financial system depends upon the duration of the depression.

When we come to the part of the program which is supposed to bring about business recovery by easing credit, the outcome is much more doubtful. In the first place, the fundamental reason the depression came was not a shortage of credit but a shortage of purchasing power in the hands of the mass of the workers and farmers. Nothing is being done by the Hoover administration to increase their purchasing power. On the contrary, it has been due primarily to the influence of Hoover who, of course, is merely speaking for big business, that every measure designed directly to provide work, or through unemployment insurance benefits to put money into the hands of the workers, has been defeated. Hence the Hoover program does not remove the real cause of the depression. And it is difficult to see how any policy of inflation or expansion of credit will give more than temporary relief at most. We have seen, for example, that the program of inflation in Great Britain has proven to be a flat failure. Unemployment increased greatly during the month of January.

The events of the past six months, and especially the

legislative program of Hoover, once more serve to demonstrate that the capitalists will resort to almost any measure to save the banks and the corporations. But when it comes to genuine relief for the workers, absolutely nothing will be done. They have yet to learn, however, that any program which does not increase the real purchasing power of labor will not go far towards stabilizing capitalism. Which means of course, that capitalism will not be stabilized.

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War in the Far East

THAT you cannot abolish war under capitalism is the outstanding lesson of the situation in Manchuria and around Shanghai. If ever a nation openly took violent measures to gain its ends in violation of treaties, such as the Kellogg pact, Japan did. In such a case the other capitalist nations were under obligation to apply a boycott against Japan. They did not do so, because each had its own imperialistic interests to consider and so could not come into court against Japan with clean hands or a willing heart.

The American State Department has apparently taken a firmer tone with Japan than any other nation. American bankers are not anxious to have Japanese competition in the Far East strengthened! Japan may be stopped presently, because she needs loans and will not be able to get them from Wall Street. If she does get the money to go on much longer it will be because France is willing to support Japanese ambitions as against Great Britain and the United States and because French-supported munitions makers in various European countries will not be denied a chance to make money even if it be at the risk of driving the world to hell.

According to the New York Times of March 1, "The Atlantic will be practically swept clear of American combatant ships under orders issued by the Navy Department transferring the units of the training and special service squadrons to the San Pedro-San Diego area of the Pacific." This means, according to the Times, an increase in naval strength to 202 ships in the Pacific. The significance of such an array of armed strength cannot escape anyone.

Meanwhile, trustworthy reports indicate that workers and peasants governments are being established over ever larger areas in China, that by summer they may embrace a hundred million Chinese. Let the Chinese keep that up. Let the Japanese workers take their courage in their hands and overthrow their own feudal, capitalistic and militaristic overlords. There is no other sure way to peace.

American workers have no interest in either Japanese or Chinese capitalists. They must support as they can any movement of revolt against them by the workers of the Orient. Most of all they must utterly and absolutely refuse to support any war measure of the American government. Their business is to struggle against American capitalists and imperialists, not to shoot down fellow-workers of any nation.

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If the Revolution Comes

A WRITER in the March issue of *Harper's Magazine* in an article entitled "And if the Revolution Comes" seems to be asking for a C.P.L.A., though we have never been in touch with him and he probably knows nothing about us. The author, Mr. George R. Leighton, assumes that our present economic system is breaking down and that the job of putting something more intelligent and stable in its place must soon be tackled. He has been looking around at various groups to see whether they seem able to handle a crisis if it comes. In the conservatives, the general run of financial, business and political leaders, he has little hope. "Most of the vocal gentlemen on the right are scarcely ready to take command, for they are wedded to the present system, and if the system go they will be prepared for the role of chief mourner and little else."

Nor does he see much hope in Socialists or Communists. As for the former, he represents the inquiring citizen as saying: "How about the Socialists?—at least Debs had nerve. He investigates but here again finds little to repay him. The moths have been busy with Mr. Deb's organization and the citizens finds only a little group left, quietly and inoffensively led by a wealthy lawyer and a former clergyman. The Socialists are liberals, too, the citizen discovers; they are earnest in wanting to patch things up, but of coherent plan or program with which to face a vast economic upheaval there is no sign."

The citizen goes to the Communists and asks what practical plans for achieving the revolution and establishing a new economic order they have. But "to all these questions there comes to the citizens but one cry: Mass! Demonstrate! Protest! Words, mass meetings, hunger marches, more masses, more protests, more demonstrations."

Mr. Leighton concludes: "The gentlemen on the left are so blind in their adoration of Russia that when they pause in their forensics they find it impossible to think of change in specific American terms."

Of one thing the author of this article feels pretty certain. "It is reasonable to maintain that a revolution, if it comes, will carry an American stamp, have an American flavor, and be a truly native product. It would be hard to imagine it otherwise." With that sentiment we heartily agree. The work which the C.P.L.A. has so well begun in a number of centers such as Paterson, West Virginia, steel towns, North Carolina; the work of facing American workers where they are; helping them in their day-to-day struggles; educating them in the larger significance of those struggles; preparing them to build a movement rooted in the American soil, through which American workers may do their part toward building a new world order for workers everywhere, must go on.

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A Rotten Appointment

RECENTLY Ira M. Ornburn, president of the Cigarmakers' Union, was appointed to the United States Tariff Commission. This is not to be taken as evidence that the labor movement is gaining real prestige and power. The appointment is a "political" one of the worst kind. The C.P.L.A. wrote to a number of progressive senators protesting the appointment. For the first time in several years the Senate went into secret session to hear charges before the appointment was confirmed. However, confirmation was forthcoming. Our protest still stands!

In the first place, no evidence whatever has been produced that Mr. Ornburn has any technical training or equipment for this particular job. In the second place, the appointment was made by Hoover to please the Connecticut high tariff interests. Ornburn, although a Democrat, has been the secretary of Matthew Woll's American Wage Earners Protective League, which had a considerable share in putting over the iniquitous Smoot-Hawley tariff bill, from which the United States and the whole world is suffering at the present time. We have had accordingly the spectacle of Hiram Bingham, Connecticut

reactionary and anti-labor senator, defending the "labor" record of Mr. Ornburn on the floor of the Senate, while such men as Costigan, LaFollette and Norris attacked it. The appointment is part of an attempt to whip labor support into line for Hoover in the presidential election.

In the third place, people of high standing and of careful judgment sent to some of the progressive senators charges that Mr. Ornburn has been engaged in violation of the liquor laws, which have netted him and certain other political figures in Connecticut large sums of money. It seems to us that some of the money which is so often lavishly thrown around by governmental agencies might have been used to make a real investigation into these charges. Mr. Ornburn's defense against the various charges brought against him are—of course you've guessed—that these accusations were all made by Communists or near-Communists!

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Billions for the Banks For the Jobless, Nothing

TWO billion dollars, in indecent haste, voted for the benefit of the railroads, banks and insurance companies. But not even $375,000,000 for the relief of the starving workers of this country.

Such is the record of the presnt Congress, as represented in the passage of the Federal "reconstruction" measure on the one hand and the defeat of the LaFolette-Costigan bill on the other.

Representatives of the millions of unemployed had come to the doors of the Congress by the thousands. The cry of despair from city and countryside had reached a pitch that could be heard even in Washington. And yet, "in the third winter of the most serious economic crisis which has ever confronted this country," as Senator LaFollette emphasized, the sleek alleged representatives of the people said to the workers: "Starve!"

The vote in the Senate against the LaFollette-Costigan proposal was 48 to 35. There were some, even of the old guard Senatorial family, who could not escape the need for some action. Senator LaFollette had marshalled from all over the country—in letters from Mayors, testimony of union officials, charity organization representatives and others—evidences of the death-like paralysis that lies over the homes of the working class.

Along came William Hodson, executive director of the Welfare Council of New York—former opponent of the "dole"—and says:

"The situation which has now arisen is that the specter of starvation faces millions of people who never before have known what it was to be out of a job for any considerable period of time and who certainly have never known what it was to be absolutely up against it." So went the refrain, in page after page of the *Congressional Record*.

The brutal Hooverian program of killing off the surplus working population through starvation had to go through, however. It was that exploiter of Chinese coolies, who now sits in the White House, who put the drive back of the gift in alleged "credit" to the insurance companies, railroads and banks. It was he and his colleagues who directed the fight against the LaFollette-Costigan measure. Herbert Hoover continues to be Criminal Stupidity personified.

The United States Congress could appropriate $800,000 to relieve the victims of an Italian earthquake. It could (in 1889) send $200,000 for the destitute of Cuba. It could appropriate $200,000 (in 1902) for the earthquake sufferers in the French West Indies. Homeless, cold and hungry Americans can get no help. Aid to these Americans will not push forward the imperialist designs of Wall Street and its prostitute, the U. S. Government.

Efforts to pass the La Follette-Costigan proposal will, of course, be renewed. If it is ever passed, it will be as usual too late for effective help. The bill is by far too modest, as it is. Billions are needed from the Federal treasury for relief, not a mere fraction of a billion.

But it is clear that the workers will not get even the most trivial aid from their "representatives" as long as they persist in begging for it. La Follette warned against the possibilities of revolution. These possibilities may as yet be remote. But the path of revolution is the only way that the workers should look forward to, for real action in their behalf. It is the voice of Organized Force alone that will bring them out of the present twilight of Capitalism.

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Naked Capitalism

HARLAN COUNTY, Kentucky, is capitalism stripped of all its pretty masks and phrases. It is not a unique situation, as some good liberals would have us believe, but it is a natural situation, entirely consistent with the ruling philosophy of capitalist civilization and illustrates the lengths to which our rulers can be expected to go when their profits are seriously threatened. Perhaps the tactics employed by the coal barons are a little more brutal, less sophisticated, than the tactics used by our bosses living in more developed communities, but they are essentially the same in so far as purpose and results are concerned. Our more sophisticated bosses in northern industrial centers do not usually have such complete power in their communities and for that reason are restrained by the opinions of a public which still has embarrassing illusions about "law and order."

If there are any who doubt this estimate of capitalists let them consider the action of our rulers and their tools, the politicians, in regard to the millions of starving men, women and children in America today. Could there be a more brutal disregard of the sufferings of the workers of this country than the vetoing by Congress of the Costigan-Lafollette bill to create a fund of $375,000,000 for relief of the unemployed? Considering the great need, this is an insignificant sum. Yet President Hoover and his lackeys opposed giving it while at the same time giving $2,000,000,000,000 to the bankers.

Self-styled radicals, who continue to advocate the peaceful overthrow of capitalism, have only to observe the actions of our rulers today to be convinced—if such a thing is possible—of the ridiculousness of their position. One may wish for peaceful revolution but one cannot believe in it if he honestly faces the facts. Those who have the power are not going to abdicate without a struggle no matter how much the beauties of peace are preached to them. Profit making has destroyed all their humaneness. They have, and they intend to keep. They will become "humane" only when the workers have become strong enough to take their power from them.

Labor's Enemy in the White House

By Robert S. Allen

NO President in years has so deliberately and callously flaunted the interests of the toiling masses as Herbert Hoover.

Wilson, Harding, Coolidge were certainly anything but "friends of labor," but their records, reactionary as they are, have not that cold-blooded venomousness and ruthlessness about them that characterizes Hoover's attitude toward the workers in the three years he has been in the White House.

His policy towards labor is an unrelieved record of bitter hostility. He chose for his Secretary of Labor a notorious old-line labor organization shyster and time-server who throughout his career has associated with the most reactionary and standpat interests and since his incumbency in the cabinet has outdone himself in supporting and defending the President's anti-labor course.

The President signed the Smoot-Hawley tariff bill—the enactment of which he could have at any time prevented by a vigorous declaration—which has extorted hundreds of millions in increased prices from the workers and is a major contributing cause to the precipitation and continuance of the depression.

He has countenanced a vicious anti-trade union policy on the part of his Postmaster General against the postal workers, and has covertly supported a program of wholesale wage slashing among government employes.

He fought and defeated, with the enthusiastic assistance of his Secretary of Labor, the Wagner employment exchange bill which would have established a system of free government-operated labor bureaus. Previous to his election he had three times publicly endorsed such a proposal. When it was offered and pressed by Senator Wagner in the last Congress he first secretly and then openly opposed it, and when that proved unavailing and it was adopted by Congress he vetoed it.

Later, to still widespread resentment against his act he had his conniving Secretary of Labor, who like him had reversed himself on the issue, go through the motions of "reorganizing" the antiquated and ineffectual existing Federal employment service. The bureau was enlarged, a number of local "labor skates" and politicians being put on the government payroll. An executive of the Labor Department, resigning in disgust, issued a statement publicly charging that the "new" employment service had actually placed only six men in jobs and that the so-called "superintendents" were doing hard work that had previously been done by $15-a-week clerks. He declared that in some instances mail opening machines had been discarded to give these new and highly paid appointees something to do.

The President's appointees to the federal bench have been from the ranks of the most notorious labor haters. Two of these appointments now awaiting confirmation in the Senate are characteristic examples of the kind of men he has unvaryingly chosen for these life jobs.

The first of these is Federal Judge James H. Wilkerson, of Chicago, whom he proposes to elevate to the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. Wilkerson is the federal judge before whom Harry M. Daugherty went when he was Attorney General in the Harding cabinet and without a hearing obtained an injunction against striking railroad workers, which was so sweeping in its restrictions that one authority described it as prohibiting the workers "from breathing."

Wilkerson is a Daugherty appointee. Vicious as was his railroad injunction it was but one of other similar mandates he handed down against protesting workers. One injunction he handed down in a musicians' strike in Chicago even eclipsed in ferocity the railroad injunction. Donald R. Richberg, general counsel for the Railway Labor Executives' Association, in appearing before the Senate Judiciary subcommittee which has been investigating Wilkerson's record had this to say of the President's judicial nominee:

"In the Daugherty injunction case in 1922 Wilkerson attempted to enjoin legitimate activities of labor unions in carrying on a lawful strike and he violated the express prohibitions of the Clayton act. He set aside the constitutional guaranties of liberty of contract and free speech. He attempted to extend the authority of a single District Court throughout the United States. He permitted his court to be used to prevent the settlement of the shopmen's strike. He wrote bitterly partisan opinions in this case, branding as criminal conspirators labor leaders of unblemished reputation, although the government admitted that it had been unable . . . to produce any evidence connecting a single of these leaders with an unlawful act."

This judge, the creature and tool of the crooked and mercenary "Ohio gang," President Hoover now proposes to elevate to a still higher court.

His second nominee is Judge Kenneth Mackintosh, of Seattle, who was overwhelmingly defeated as a candidate for the United States Senate in 1930. Running as a Hoover candidate, with the added kudos of having been a boyhood chum of the President, Mackintosh was defeated by Senator Dill, a Democrat, by a large majority. Hoover now proposes to put him on the federal bench for life.

Mackintosh's labor record is as black as Wilkerson's. As a member of the Supreme Court of the State of Washington he handed down the following opinion on picketing: "This court has declared all picketing unlawful, announcing that the term sometimes used of "peaceful picketing" is self-contradictory and meaningless, that picketing in and of itself, is coercive and that is its purpose and effect."

This decision was completely at variance with the United States Supreme Court ruling, rendered by Chief Justice Taft in the American Founderies vs. Tri-Cities Council case, holding picketing lawful.

Mackintosh further displayed his disregard of the law by his hearty letter of approval of the Centralia atrocities. In a letter to a local participant in the mob action he lauded the lynching and the lynchers.

The "Great Humanitarian"

But of all Hoover's acts against labor none compare with the cold-blooded inhumanity of his attitude toward the millions of unemployed needy. While literally millions of women and children are living in stark hunger and want the President has tenaciously and undeviatingly refused to countenance the expenditure of one cent of federal funds for their relief.

This man who built up his political reputation as the Great Humanitarian, who "fed the Belgians," who did not hesitate in 1921 to ask Congress for $100,000,000 to feed starving Europeans has grimly resisted every effort and demand that the starving unem-

ployed be aided. He has talked "rugged individualism" while millions go in need. He has argued and ranted about the necessity of preserving "the American system of local initiative" while the vitality and strength of a whole generation of workers' children is being sapped by lack of food.

The story of the President's indifference to the welfare of the workers throughout the entire depression is shocking in its callousness. For months after the crash in October, 1929, he indignantly denied that employment was mounting. At his orders what few federal statistics were available were either suppressed or juggled to hide the facts.

Despite the fact that local, state and private relief agencies reported insupportable demands for aid from ever mounting numbers of unemployed he and his administration persisted in denying that any hardship was abroad in the land. But as the depression deepened and broadened and neither denials nor distortion of facts would avail any longer he took up the refrain that local and state measures were "adequately" meeting demands for aid.

To this basic contention he has adhered, despite the publicly admitted inability of hundreds of communities and charitable agencies to cope with the situation, even on a scale that allows workers' families $3 a week to subsist on. By every device of distortion of fact he has labored to sustain his contention that starvation is not abroad in the land.

Last fall, as the clamor against his cruel inactivity reached even into the reactionary daily press, he suddenly burgeoned forth one day with a long "report" by the Surgeon General of the United States to the effect that health conditions among the people of the country were better than ever before. This deliberately false and faked "report" was in direct contradiction of the first-hand testimony of scores of doctors, clinics, hospitals, social workers and investigators, that never before had they been so overwhelmed and their resources strained by ailing workers and their families, most of them suffering from sicknesses directly attributable to the lack of food.

One could go on and on citing other examples of the President's inhuman course, his constricting government work and opposing a great public works program while issuing almost monthly falsified figures professing to show the amount of public construction he has projected, his covert sabo-

Phil Liss

The Relief Engineer

tage of the effort of Senator Wagner to lay before the present session of Congress an unemployment insurance bill, his desperate—and so far successful—work in defeating attempts by the Senate Progressives to force through a federal unemployment relief appropriation, while at the same time he has sponsored and put into effect bank, railroad and industrial relief measures running up into the billions of dollars.

At the very time that he was directing the congressional fight against the La Follette-Costigan $375,000,000 unemployment relief grant he put through the two billion dollar Reconstruction Finance Commission scheme that makes this vast sum available to businessmen and employers. At the very time he was obstructing efforts to enact a five billion dollar public works program he was exerting every resource to jam through Congress with the ready connivance of the Democratic leaders — the Glass-Steagall credit expansion bill which will enable the big banks to get out from under on billions of dollars of frozen assets.

The present session of Congress is three months old. He has sent up numerous messages and sponsered many measures, but not one statement, or one bill related to or affecting labor. Every declaration and every act was in the interest solely of the employer and business.

In the two and a half years of the greatest economic disaster in the history of the country the only thing Herbert Hoover has done for the worker has been to set up two fake unemployment "relief" commissions, whose sole mission has been to drum up public sentiment for odd jobs "about the house" and to make the country "relief" conscious, as Walter S. Gifford,

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Your Electric Bills

By John Bauer

This is the third of a series of articles dealing with the so-called public utilities prepared for LABOR AGE *by well known authorities. The series was begun last summer after the brutal tactics used by the Brooklyn Edison Company against the organizing activities of the Brotherhood of Brooklyn Edison Employes had brought to the attention of the public the conditions under which the Edison employes are compelled to work.*

The purpose of the articles is to supplement the organizing activities of the Brotherhood by educating the public in the anti-social policies of the power utilities.—EDITORS.

TO THE great majority of people, the monthly electric bills have always been important. They have, however, become of special significance during this period of depression and unemployment. If they are excessive for the small and ordinary users, the facts must be faced.

We are presenting, herewith, a comparison and analysis to enable residential consumers to judge whether their electric bills are too high, and particularly whether they are in form so as to furnish not only the necessary service to lighten the burden and drudgery, but to expand the conveniences and attractions in the homes.

We have subdivided the monthly bills conveniently into five typical groups. First, there are the smaller users, represented by 25 kwh per month per customer, limiting consumption practically to lighting alone. The second group takes up to 50 kwh per month, and provides for miscellaneous appliances besides lighting. The third covers 100 kwh, and allows for the larger appliances, including an electric refrigerator. The fourth group adds an electric range for cooking. The fifth and final group is 500 kwh, which allows for an electric water heater.

In the comparisons given herewith we have taken the two leading private electric systems in the New York metropolitan district, and three well known municipal plants, together with an Ontario city.

The New York Edison System serves practically all of New York City, and the Public Service of New Jersey supplies electricity in the densely populated northern part of the state. These two systems are taken as typical of the bigger and better managed companies. The electric bills can be taken as representative for private companies in the larger cities of the country.

As to the municipal plants, Los Angeles and Seattle are the two largest in the country, but they are both on the Pacific Coast. We have, therefore, selected also Jamestown, New York, which is a city of about 50,000 populatioon. The three plants together can be taken as typical for the better class of municipal operation. We have added also Hamilton, Ontario, with a population of about 130,000 to show what is being accomplished by our Canadian neighbors.

In large cities, many, if not most, consumers come in the first group. Poorer people, who must economize in all living costs, seldom go beyond 25 kwh per month under present conditions. In this group, the customers of the two private systems pay much higher bills than those of the municipal plants. The highest bill is $2.20 a month for Public Service of New Jersey, and is two and one half times as great as in Jamestown, while the New York City bill is about twice that of Jamestown. The Los Angeles and Seattle bills are intermediate, but the Hamilton bill is only 75c, and is less than in any of the American cities.

In the second group, the bills under the private companies range from about 30 percent to 240 percent higher than in the municipal plants. Hamilton stands distinctly below the American systems.

Beyond 50 kwh per month, we come to the greater conveniences which relieve the homes of drudgery and add to the attractiveness of living. In each of the three subsequent groups, the private bills are much higher than the municipal. The New York City bills are particularly forbidding to the more extensive use of electricity both for electric cooking and water heating. The three municipal plants are close together in the two intermediate groups of 100 and 250 kwh per month, while the Canadian city bills for similar quantities are about one half of the charges by our municipalities.

In the final group, Seattle has far the lowest American rates, and is practically the only one of the municipal plants which makes electric water heating easily attainable in the homes. But Hamilton again scores the lowest rate of all.

COMPARATIVE MONTHLY BILLS TO RESIDENTIAL USERS

Private Systems	Number of kilowatt hours per month				
	25	50	100	250	500
New York City-Edison System	$1.80	$3.05	$5.55	$13.05	$25.55
Newark and Vicinity—Pub. Serv. of N. J.	2.20	4.10	5.60	10.10	17.60
Public Systems					
Jamestown, N. Y.	.88	1.75	3.25	6.63	12.25
Los Angeles, Cal.	1.20	2.06	3.31	6.68	11.68
Seattle, Washington	1.38	2.40	3.40	6.30	8.80
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada	.75	1.20	1.74	3.09	5.93

Promotional Rates

We have heard during the past few years a great deal about promotional rates. The term has been used by the companies largely as sugar coating for the bitter bills. Neither of the two private systems, and very few companies throughout the country, have really promotional rates for domestic purposes. A genuinely promotional schedule is designed not only to provide reasonable bills for every group of consumers, but to fix the charges in such order for the various or successive uses, as to stimulate the maximum economical consumption. The

rates of the two private systems fail to conform to that standard, while those of the municipal plants represent much more directly the promotional objective.

The two private systems impose high rates upon the small and moderate users. When monthly bills reach $1.80 or $2.20 for small, and $3.05 or $4.10 for moderate users, they stand in the way of further promotional use for most people. After those amounts, there is rigorous economy, even if the rates for additional consumption are in themselves attractive. Here is the initial difficulty of the private schedules from the standpoint of promotional development.

The municipal bills for the small and moderate users are much lower, and therefore permit greater leeway for additional consumption for the conveniences of living. The Jamestown bill of $1.75 per month for 50 kwh invites further consumption, even though the rates beyond may not be particularly well calculated for direct promotional purposes. The Seattle bill, $2.40, is the highest of the three municipal plants for the moderate user, but it is coupled with lower subsequent rates and furnishes excellent inducement for the expansion of consumption.

If the bills for the small and moderate users are reasonable, the subsequent development of consumption depends upon special inducement rates, which become increasingly competitive with other fuels such as gas, coal and oil, as the extent of utilization advances. For the larger appliances including refrigerators, the New York City 5c rate cannot be regarded as promotional, but the Public Service rate of 3c beyond 50 kwh is really promotional except for the excessive prior bills up to 50 kwh. All the municipal rates for the larger appliances are distinctly promotional.

In the fourth group, which reaches 250 kwh per month, we strike especially promotional possibilities in large cities, but they are dependent upon low rates. The additional consumption for this group is taken at 150 kwh, and applies particularly to cooking. For this purpose, a rate not higher than 2c per kwh is necessary. The New York City rate of 5c is completely prohibitive, while the 3c rate of the Public Service is too high. For Los Angeles, one half of this consumption comes at 2.5c and the other half at 2c, in Jamestown, 2.25c, and Seattle mostly 2c, and partly 1c per kwh. For Hamilton, it comes at 1c per kwh.

Promotional Possibilities

For electric cooking, there is the possibility of enormous expansion for the ordinary city homes, if only a suitable rate schedule is established. If the initial rates are reasonable, and if the further rate available for cooking is put at 2c or less per kwh, the mass of the people in apartment houses and smaller homes would be able to use electricity, and do away altogether with other fuels. This would not only be a great convenience, but a further economy through the elimination of overlapping services.

There is no reason why in any large city the electric rates should not be so fixed as to permit the installation of electric ranges. If this were done, the mass of present small users would become large ones, with little additional expense to the companies except the mere generation of electricity. The larger consumption would be attained under extremely economical conditions, and would add enormously to the attractiveness of living among the masses of city people. It would be particularly a boon to poor people.

The experience of Seattle is instructive as to what may be accomplished in the promotion of electric use in the homes. The present schedule was put into effect in 1923 when the average residential consumption per customer amounted to 30 kwh per month. This average has risen to 90 kwh per month for 1930—a three fold increase. During the same time the average charge per kwh has decreased from 4.7c to 2.8c. The number of electric ranges has mounted from 3,000 to 23,000, and nearly 8,000 electric heaters have been installed.

Similarly, we find that for the twenty-three Ontario cities of 10,000 population and over, the average domestic consumption was 137 kwh a month in 1929, more than three times the average in the United States today.

There is no reason why the same experience should not be realized in every American city. This is particularly true in the large centers, where apartment houses and multiple family dwellings predominate. Honest-to-goodness promotional rates would put electricity in the service of the people and would transform completely the work in the homes.

Why the Difference?

There is no other valid conclusion but that the private companies have not performed as good a job for the homes as the leading municipal plants. We have often met the explanation that the municipalities pay no taxes, which have been mounting higher and higher for the companies. This difference, of course, does exist, and must be taken into account in any valid comparison. The taxes, however, seldom amount to more than 10 percent of the revenues, and are far from sufficient to account for the glaring disparity in rates.

As against the taxes, there is the fact that the municipalities provide not only higher depreciation charges than the companies, but they make provision also for the amortization or payment of bonded indebtedness out of earnings, besides further surplus investment in plant expansion. Such provisions are usually not made by the companies, particularly not for amortization. These factors more than counterbalance the taxes that are placed upon the private companies.

The real difference between the private companies and the municipal plants appears in the ramification of overheads and in the excessive returns obtained from the properties. So far as fundamental operating costs are concerned, i.e., basic labor and materials—the companies might even show better economy than the municipal plants. But as to general office salaries, legal expenses, engineering and financial services, and all similar items, the outlays by the companies far exceed the expenditure by municipalities. The basic economy in labor and materials is overwhelmed by the extravagance in overheads.

As to the factor of excessive returns the municipalities are compelled to pay only the actual interest and amortization required by the issuance of bonds for construction. These, however, are definite costs and are systematically provided for under statutory provisions.

On the part of the companies there are no such specific provisions and limitations. The companies are entitled to a "fair return" on the "fair value" of the properties, without regard to actual and necessary costs. In the fixing of rates, therefore, the amount is not determined by actual cost which can be taken from the accounts, but requires a valuation of the properties. Under the court decisions, the companies have been generally contending for a return of 8 percent upon the reproduction cost of the properties, with little or no deduction for depreciation, but with large addi-

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Rumblings in Southern Textiles

By Lawrence Hogan

A LOCAL mill owner, D. F. James, who just returned from a business trip to New York, made a statement to the newspapers in which he said: "Business looks the best it has for three years. I have orders to run me until July. Of course goods are cheap but the manufacturers can adjust that at the plant."

That is just what they have been doing for the last few months. Wages in the Southern cotton mills have been reduced from 15 to 50 per cent or an average of 30 per cent. And while the manufacturers were reducing wages, prices at their stores remained the same despite the fact that groceries are much cheaper at the independent stores. House rent, insurance, coal and all the other things the worker must purchase from the company are the same as they were in so-called good times. Thus if the cost of groceries, etc., are taken into consideration with the wage reductions, the worker's dollar has been reduced not less than 50 per cent. Today the workers earn only enough to keep them in debt to the company and to thus force them to trade with the company store. The Clinchfield Manufacturing Company, Marion, N. C., has just notified its workers that unless they trade with the company they can look for work elsewhere.

Why the companies are so much concerned that their workers trade at their stores can be learned from the fact that flour, for instance, for which the company charges $1.00, can be bought at an independent store for $.54. And lard, which the independent stores sell for $.59, the company charges its workers $1.00 for.

In addition to wage cuts and company store extortion, the mills have now instituted a second stretch-out. The Caroleen Manufacturing Company, which in 1929 stretched spinners from 9 to 14 sides, now have them doing 20.

Workers' Reaction

The employers today seem to think that the workers have lost all desire to strike. They take the attitude that because Bill Green has taken to his hole and pulled all his management-cooperation speeches in behind him, that all labor troubles are over. I believe they are going to have a sad surprise one of these days, for, while on the surface everything seems to be peaceful, underneath the whole Southern textile situation is boiling like a volcano ready to erupt.

Unorganized strikes are beginning to break out in all the textile fields. The workers are almost past the point of endurance. On January 25, 500 unorganized workers of the Bladenboro Manufacturing Company came out on strike against a 10 per cent wage reduction. As usual the sheriff and his flock of hired gunmen were called upon by the management to settle the strike, to scare the peaceful strikers back into the mill. They arrested one of the strikers whom they thought was the leader. That night the sheriff and two of his thugs were sprinkled pretty heavy with buckshot. Two more of the strikers were then arrested and have been sentenced to eight months on the chain gang. The other hasn't been tried yet. The strike was "settled" when the company reduced house rent 5 cents per room per week and cut the company store prices 10 per cent.

Last week 400 workers of the York Cotton Mill, York, S. C., struck against wage reductions. Getting a few concessions they soon returned. A few days ago the workers of the Blue Bell Overall Co., Greensboro ,N. C., went on strike protesting against the stretch-out. Twelve hundred in one plant and 200 in the other. They are also unorganized.

The print, cloth and sheeting mills have announced that they will start running short time the first of March. What will happen remains to be seen. From my observations, gained from contact with hundreds of workers, I am led to believe that the uprisings of 1929 will be repeated—and on a much larger scale.

The Southern Industrial League

The strikes of 1929 were more like rebellions than strikes. That is, the workers knew very little about trade unions or labor organizations. When so many uprisings occurred the American Federation of Labor was forced on the scene. But finding that it could not sell its management-cooperation scheme either to the workers or the bosses, it soon beat an ignominious retreat having done nothing towards building up any organizations. However, the workers know more today than they did back in 1929.

It is my opinion that the South will have to be organized into industrial unions and that a program of workers education leading towards this end is the great need now. The official labor movement has no machinery for doing this job.

To fill this need a group of militants connected with the Conference for Progressive Labor Action and Brookwood Labor College, last year, went about setting-up an organization whose job it would be to educate the Southern workers in militant and revolutionary trade unionism. The name of this organization is the Southern Industrial League. It is affiliated with the C. P. L. A. The League is conducting classes among the workers, picking out the key people in each mill, training them in trade union tactics, giving them courses in labor history, and teaching them their class position in capitalist society. Thus, when the time arrives the workers in these mills will have leaders who have an understanding of the labor movement. These leaders will not be imported from outside but will be from the ranks of the workers themselves.

The League is making good progress with its program despite the fact that all meetings and classes are on the Q. T. and often have to be held several miles from the mill village. The workers are so hungry for the information and training which the League has to offer them that it is not unusual for them to walk eight and ten miles to a meeting after working twelve hours in the mill.

Farmers Being Organized

Much has been said by the Southern Chambers of Commerce, Kiwanis clubs and other civic organizations regarding the wonderful docile labor supply available in the hills of the Carolinas.

It is true that these people from the hills, knowing little about labor disputes, the value of a dollar, the conditions under which the mill workers have to work, were sometimes persuaded to come down and take the jobs of the strikers. For this reason the educational program of the Southern Industrial League has included the education of the small landowner and the tenant farmer. They are being organized into the Progressive Farmers

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Southern "Chivalry"

By Beulah Carter

"MY eyes! Why, I can hardly see. I'll never learn to do this kind of work. That man that walks around here looking at us just told me this work must be perfect. These hose must be looped on the loop line. One of these needles must go between every two threads. Why, I can't even see the line or the threads. We'll both be blind if we stay here long. If all factory work is like this, I'll soon be going back to the farm. Anyway, we can make out here until we can find a better job." These are the words my sister said to me after we had been two hours on our first job.

We had never seen a factory before that day. We had never seen a factory boss. To us this was a strange place where queer looking people moved about their machines faster than I ever thought people could move. The noise of the machinery sounded like an earthquake. My head roared—I got the earache. Even after we left the mill, too tired to eat supper, we were still deaf. Our arms, legs, and heads ached. We were discouraged.

All our lives we had lived on a quiet southern farm. There was always plenty of work on the farm, but we could take our time there. We milked the cows, fed the chickens, planted flowers and then watched them grow. There were no time clocks on the farm. At night we could sit up as late as we wanted and listen to the owls hooting and watch the moon come up behind the trees.

We were innocent in those days. We knew little of what was going on in the world. The world, we thought, was made up of good men and women. The rich, we had been told, had won their riches because they were honest and ambitious. They worked harder than the poor and so they had plenty of everything. But this first job in the mill made me wonder.

We received $7 a week to begin with. "The company can't afford to pay more," the superintendent said. I believed this. I had been brought up to believe what people told me.

As the months went by I saw men with walking canes strutting through the mill. They held their heads high. Never once did they seem to see me. They wore diamonds. At noon time I saw fine cars waiting at the gate for them. These men, I was told, received from $35,000 to $50,000 a year. I wondered why the company couldn't pay me more than $7 a week.

I began talking with the men and women who worked in the mill. Many of them had been with this company 30 years. They were all native born. Anglo Saxon whites, 100 per cent Americans, voters, and religious. Lots of the women cooked for a family of six or seven in addition to their 10 hours' work in the mill. There were young people in this factory, too—boys and girls just out of grammar school. They were interested mostly in the movies and petting parties. The girls aimed to work for a year or two and then leave the mill to get married.

"That's what I though when I was young," said many of the older women. "I married. But after the babies came we couldn't live on my husband's wages so I left the children to keep house and came back to work."

One day a man came to work looking very tired, as if he had had no sleep for weeks. He was underfed, like everybody else. He was working, but tears kept coming into his eyes. He said the boss had just told him he wouldn't be needed any longer there. "My wife is not expected to live but a few days longer," he said. "My three kids are starving. All winter we have lived on $3 a week."

I argued with the boss about this man for over an hour. Finally he said, "Well, I'll try him for a few days longer." I discovered that the man's eyes were bad and he couldn't see how to do the work. I took up a collection among the workers and bought him some glasses and sent food to his wife and children.

Several days later I went to see his wife. As I entered the door, a tiny three-year-old boy met me. His clothes were dirty and threadbare. He was pale and thin. He ran up to me and held up his little hand, offering me 15 cents.

"I found some money out in the yard," he said. "I buyed me some milk and a nickle's worth of cookies 'cause I was hungry. You can have the rest to get you some milk. I didn't get the money from Miss Smith's room. I found it."

Half an hour later the child's mother died. That night when he began getting sleepy he went into the room where she lay, patted her face, and said, "I want to get in bed, Mother." He looked at her, so still and cold, and burst out crying. "Mother's mad at me. She never done me this way before." I told him his mother was dead.

I thought of this child and of the thousands of other children who are made motherless by the textile mills. From my machine I could see the strained faces of mothers watching their looms and worrying over the babies they had left at home.

I learned a lot from that first job in a factory. I learned why the death rate among southern children is so high; why women "neglect" their families for night work at the mills; I learned why pellegra and other nutritional diseases are so common in the South. I learned, too, why mill workers want a labor movement and are willing to fight for it—and die for it.

BARTER IN TENNESSEE

Which would you rather have—half a dozen new-laid eggs or a 5-cent writing tablet? That's the choice that confronts farm families in Tennessee, according to a reader of LABOR AGE who writes that farmers in that region have been reduced to a system of barter. "My little sister counted out six eggs to take to the store to exchange for a school tablet and was overjoyed at getting a penny back," she says. "My brother wanted some smoking tobacco and carried off half a dozen more. He was surprised to get two sacks, eggs having gone up a fraction of a cent overnight.

"The tobacco market was awful this year. My father and brother made $13 off their whole crop. They were lucky, for some people didn't get enough to pay the warehouse cost.

"The only thing that will save us will be a new hard-surface road going through the best part of our garden. We will be cornered off under a 9-foot embankment like pigs in a pen. But we are so relieved to get any kind of financial help that we didn't put up much of an argument against the road going through. It wouldn't have done much good anyhow."

Somebody's Got to Farm!

By Eleanor Kellog

EVEN when cotton is 6 cents a pound and sweet potatoes are 75 cents a bushel, even when the land lies under heavy mortgages and the farm workers are scarcely able to keep themselves and their mules alive—"somebody's got to farm!"

Yet this vitally necessary labor is very poorly rewarded, whether the worker owns, rents, "share-crops," or hires out by the day or hour.

For plowing and hoeing all day from sun-up to sun-down a man gets only 50 to 60 cents. However, when he furnishes a team and feeds his mules he might get as much as $1.25 a day. For picking 100 pounds of cotton last fall some workers received 35 cents and others 25 cents. It takes an expert to pick 300 pounds a day and you "got to grab from sun to sun" to get 500 pounds.

Neither does a man fare much better than a day-laborer when he owns the land he works. If he has a large family of grown boys and girls he may, with their help and two mules, cultivate 50 acres. But if he has to do all the work himself and has only one mule, 15 to 25 acres, or a "one-horse farm," is all he can successfully cultivate.

It takes the corn grown on 5 acres to feed one mule and to provide the meal for the family corn bread for one year. If a farmer manages to sell all the cotton, peanuts, sweet potatoes, sorghum and watermelons raised on the rest of his fifteen acres, he could hardly receive more than $300 today with prices like these:

Cotton—$25 to $30 a bale. (It's got to be mighty good land to make a bale an acre. Half a bale an acre is the average on poor land.)

Sweet potatoes—75c a bu. (1 acre yields 50 to 75 bu.)

Sorghum syrup—40c a gal. (1 acre yields 50-100 gal.)

Ribbon Cane—60c a gal. (1 acre yields about 200 gal. This is perhaps the most profitable crop for which there is usually a market.)

Peanuts—$1.00 a bu. (1 acre yields 25-30 bu. Hard to sell).

When the cost of seed and fertilizer and the taxes are deducted from $300 only about $200 is left, if that much. One can scarcely believe that a man and his family—sometimes a family of six or eight children—can possibly live on an average of $17.00 a month.

If such is the plight of the man who owns the land he tills, how much worse is that of the man who rents. Fifteen acres of sandy red-clay land rented last year for $45. The same amount of the more productive prairie land rented for $60 to $75. There is an especially distressing case of a man who made three bales of cotton, the sale of the three bales brought him only $75. He had $100 rent to pay.

The Alabama farmers always expect to pay rent out of the cotton because it is the "money crop" for which there is a sure market. But now it is estimated that it costs 8 cents to raise one pound of cotton and one pound today sells for only 6 cents. In many cases when the tenants are not able to pay rent or debts, the landowner will keep on crediting them hoping to get something back the next year. But in most cases he pushes them off the land. Acres and acres of land in the South are owned by men who never put their hands to the plow.

Some tenants prefer to pay one-fourth the crop as rent rather than any stated sum. Others "share crop."

The "Share Cropper"

About one-third of the farmers in Alabama belong to this latter class. The landowner agrees to furnish the rent, plows, mules, half the seed, half the fertilizer, a house for the workers to live in and "rations" five months of the year. The share cropper furnishes the other half the seed and fertilizer, and his wife and children "old enough to work." At harvest time each gets one-half the crop, but the rations are subtracted from the "share cropper's" half—also any discount he may owe the landowner.

Rations are from $8 to $10 a month or the equivalent in salt-meat, bushels of meal or other groceries. Many of the large landowners run commissaries on their farms from which they dole out to the "croppers" their salt-meat and meal.

The first Saturday in the month is "Furnish Day" or "Draw Day." On these days the "croppers" can be seen coming to town for their rations in wagons or second-hand Fords. Their clothes are old, faded, ragged and patched; their shoes run over at the heels, and almost worn out. But they throng the streets, laughing and joking with their friends. Large numbers are Negroes whose power to be carefree at times has helped them to survive. Said one old colored man to the writer, "I always wore the world as a loose garment. I never worried." His kind, however, is fast decreasing.

When twilight falls on a southern Alabama town, sacks of meal, buckets of lard, jugs of molasses, and pounds of salt-meat are loaded on the wagons or in the cars and homeward the "croppers" rattle their weary way.

Home!

What is home for a cropper or a renter or a small farm owner in the red clay hills and valleys in southern Alabama? A "common house" of four rooms, unpainted and unscreened, is considered a very good house. In a great many cases "home" is only a miserable unceiled shack in which the cracks are large and numerous. "You can see the stars through the roof, the chickens through the floors and the live-stock through the walls." Sometimes to keep out the cold winter wind there is "writing on the wall"—that is, old newspapers are pasted over the cracks. The floor is usually bare, with maybe rags sticking in the cracks of it. Very often there are no glass windows, only a board opening out on hinges. There are no screens in most four room houses. Mosquitoes buzz and bite; malaria makes its ravages on human energy. Flies swarm and the "writing on the wall" gets fly-specked.

For a light at night coal-oil lamps are used; for heat in winter a fireplace of crumbling bricks or a rusty stove. The well or a pump, often a mile away from the house, is the source of water for the family's washing and cooking. The entire family drinks out of the same dipper left in the water bucket.

As stated above there are some four-room houses but the vast majority have only two or three rooms into which are crowded families of six or eight or more. In one such house which I know of there are fifteen. Naturally diseases such as tuberculosis are quite common. The undertaker in Marion says he buries three people in the country to one in town.

The Burial Society

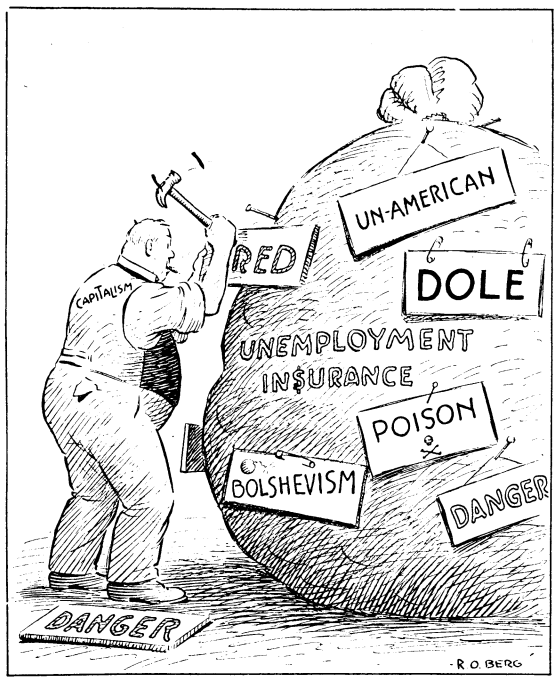
One of the most common organizations of the Negro workers, with the exception of the church, is the Burial Society. The members of this society either pay about 10 cents a week in dues or pay a certain sum when any member dies. For instance, in one such society, each member pays 25 cents when a baby dies and 50 cents when a grown person "leaves them."

A "Friendly Brotherhood" was organized recently in Marion to care for the sick. Every member in this Brotherhood pays $1.00 when any member is sick enough to go to the hospital. Sometimes a burial society cares for the sick as well as the dead.

When one considers the living and working conditions of these farmers the prevalence of the above named societies no longer surprises one. At four o'clock, or "just about light good," the farm worker goes to the field and there he stays until sundown, except for an hour ro two at noon when he eats dinner, "cools off" and feeds and waters the mules. Usually his wife and children work all day in the field with him. If a man doesn't have to chop wood or plow prairie lands he may have four or five months of the year "out of work."

The Children

The children work! The "general run" of landowners are unwilling to let the share-cropper's boys and girls leave the place until the cotton in the fields is all picked. The rural school term for the Negro children is four months, which means that it takes a child two years to make one grade. Seldom does the rural school go beyond the sixth grade. The school house is little better than the shack. The children sit on long straight benches without backs. Often there are no black boards and few books. Fifty or more children may be crowded into one room with one teacher. A "little learning" is not a dangerous but an almost impossible thing under such circumstances.



Patriotism

Vast multitudes of southern sharecroppers are Negro descendants of the slaves. They are always called by their first names, or "worse names," and bossed. Some southern lanowners are good natured, and as slow and lazy as their southern drawl—but at best they are patronizing and never respectful to the "niggers" on their place. More often these landowners are tyrannical or hire "overseers," who treat the "croppers" as slaves. All the planning and thinking connected with farm work is done for these slaves—"theirs but to do" and sweat. For talking back they get the reputation of being bad "niggers" and are usually kicked off the place. This year many are being unmercifully pushed off without any excuse because the landowners, groaning under Federal Loan mortgages and low prices, cannot furnish them another year.

The constant oppressors of agricultural labor in Alabama, themselves oppressed—oppressors on top of oppressors—are all standing on the backs of the farm workers. "Somebody's got to farm!" But nobody should have to farm with the weight of the world crushing him to the earth.

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WORKERS' EDUCATION CONFERENCE

By Helen G. Norton

Workers' education is looking up in spite of—or perhaps because of—the depression. This was very evident at the ninth annual conference of teachers in workers' education at Brookwood, February 21-22. Reports from 21 local projects (many of them new) as widely separated as Boston, Tacoma and Denver, from nine full-time or summer schools, and from six national organizations were given before 71 labor educators—the largest gathering in the history of the teachers' conferences which Brookwood Local 189 of the American Federation of Teachers sponsors.

More students, more activity, more demands for classes, were reported from all sections of the country. Just as universal but less pleasant were reports of financial difficulties which had in some cases curtailed the work planned.

The discussion of labor chautauquas, labor plays and songs, workers' sports groups, libraries, literature, art, youth movements and cooperative ventures made it evident that workers' education is not being confined to classes in economics and public speaking, but is catering to all phases of workers' lives.

The move started last year through continuation committees to compile annotated lists of teaching materials, syllabi, labor plays, etc., available for use by workers' study groups was broadened at this conference to include the listing of teachers for workers' classes, the compilation of a directory of schools and classes throughout the country, and of a general mailing list to which information about new publications could be sent. More cooperation among field representatives was urged to avoid duplication of effort and to make recruiting of students more effective.

The Dress Strike

By Anna Kula

COMPLETE chaos reigned in the dress industry prior to the present strike. Union conditions were not enforced. Very few dressmakers received the union scale of wages. The manufacturers were in a position to cut wages and worsen conditions at their own sweet will. To a large extent this was due to the failure on the part of the International to defend vigorously the conditions of the workers against the onslaughts of the manufacturers. Unionism became a meaningless word in the industry. Conditions became so bad that a revolt was inevitable.

During the past year dissatisfaction within the International Ladies Garment Workers Union had crystallized chiefly in three important local unions, namely, Locals 1, 9 and 22. A group of progressives, consisting largely of Anarchists, managed to make deep inroads in the administration of these three locals. It was the aim of this group to re-establish union conditions in the industry through more militant struggle than had characterized the present administration of the International. It was this progressive group in Dressmakers Local 22 which carried the chief burden of the Jimmie Higgins work during the present strike and which was its driving force.

The struggle was opened with a rousing mass meeting at Mecca Temple on Thursday, February 4, in which 12,000 dressmakers packed the hall to the rafters. This meeting gave its unanimous endorsement to the strike call, in the spirit of a determined war to wipe out the sweat shop and sweat shop conditions. The strike call was issued by the International on Monday, February 15, and on Tuesday morning at 10 A.M. dressmakers swept in a huge mass from the shops. It is estimated that from 15,000 to 20,000 responded to the strike call within a few days. Not in years has there been such eagerness for the struggle among the needleworkers. The registration clerks were swamped by the rush of the workers to join the International. In spite of the wholesale arrests and ruthless brutality of the police, the picket demonstrations reached such proportions that the garment district was tied up for hours at a time. When a shop came down, it brought down a host of other workers in sympathy. The workers showed a splendid spirit of self-sacrifice and militancy.

Meanwhile conference after conference with the employers was broken up. The employers demanded 10 per cent reorganization, additional wage cuts, no payment for holidays, Saturday work, no extra pay for overtime; demands which would have meant the complete surrender of union conditions in the industry. The militancy and sweep of the struggle forced the manufacturers to enter into negotiations almost immediately in order to arrive at a settlement. Here it must be said that the International officials, by too early talk of a settlement, tended to weaken the militancy of the strike and the picket lines before the strike had been consolidated to its maximum strength. It is conservatively estimated that another 10,000 could have been brought out on strike if the earlier momentum had been maintained. In fact, after the first big demonstration, estimated as including from 10,000 to 15,000 workers, the officials of the International did not encourage further demonstrations of this character, and seemed inclined to discourage such displays of militancy.

On Friday, February 25, the Affiliated Dress Manufacturers settled with the International, and the agreement was later approved at the meeting of shop chairmen and the membership. According to this agreement, the demand for 10 per cent reorganization was partially rejected. At the end of the season, should employers seek to reduce their number of employees, and should permission be granted by the Joint Board, then workers will be permitted to draw lots as to who should remain, which is an acceptance of the principle of reorganization.

Although the agreement is said to include a guarantee of $1.10 minimum an hour, the enforcement of this rate will depend largely upon the future activity, alertness and determination of the union officials in protecting the workers' wage scales.

The waiting period for setting prices on garments is cut down from five days to two days, which is a definite gain.

The union reserves the right to protest against Saturday work, but if the impartial chairman agrees to allow it, extra compensation is to be paid.

No mention is made of overtime.

In general, the gains involved in this agreement are highly problematical, depending largely upon the union's ability to enforce its demands through effective action after the agreement is signed. The fact that the union has gained enormously in members might help in this direction, if the workers are not too greatly disappointed at the failure to make more substantial gains and a more watertight settlement. A settlement with the contractors and the jobbers is expected momentarily.

With the spectacular showing made at times in the strike, with its ability to exploit left elements for this purpose, including the Anarchists, the progressives and the Communists (Majority Group), the conservative International officialdom may have rehabilated itself somewhat in the eyes of the membership and, what is more important for them, raised the income of the union through the increase in dues payments from the membership. To what extent the standing of these officials will remain, depends largely upon what will happen in the shops after the agreement is signed, to what extent the union will show itself able to withstand the post-strike attack of the manufacturers upon the standards of the workers, and to what extent they are able to hold and educate the new, young militant elements to the principles of honest, fighting unionism.

The Communists (Majority Group) have succeeded in taking the lead in criticizing the attitude and policies of the conservative officialdom, and, thereby, have won a certain support from the workers. This is partly due also to the hanging back of the progressives and the Anarchists who perhaps from motives of fear or passivity have displayed little initiative in this direction.

This is a most unfortunate development. The so-called Majority Group is still carrying on active negotiations toward unity with the official Communist Party, and the attitude of this group toward the I. L. G. W. U. and the Industrial Union, towards which it still casts frequent and friendly glances, makes them an unreliable and uncertain factor. What is needed is the crystallization of a genuine militant progressive trade union group within the International and with no tendencies toward or relationships with the so-called "Industrial Union."

As far as the Communist Indus-

(Continued on Page 29)

The Electrical Workers Union

By John Rogers

A FEW years ago the national office of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers desired to gain control of the big N. Y. local No. 3, which has jurisdiction over all electrical work in Greater New York and the whole of Long Island. They sent in a young international vice-president, H. H. Broach, who came riding out of the west like a young Lochinvar.

Broach charged that the officials then in charge of Local 3 were grafters and inefficient, and that they were not making a real effort to organize all electrical workers. He announced that the International office was determined to clean up New York and began a big attack on our local officers. After a terrific fight in the union and in the courts Broach won out and men who were ready to go along with him were put in charge of our local.

Not long after this the International President, James Noonan, died and at a hastily called meeting of the Executive Board, convened at Noonan's funeral, to the surprise of many, young Broach was made International President.

A Union Mussolini?

Broach, who in the opinion of some of us had acted a good deal like a Mussolini in New York, though at first this did not change our confidence in him, now took a step which showed that he was really more of a Mussolini than a democratic trade union leader. He said unions were inefficient and ought to be run on a business basis, that a lot of rank and filers were ignorant fools, and could not be trusted to run a big modern union. So he proposed that a committee of eleven persons should be named by him as President to rewrite the International's constitution, and that if his proposition was accepted, any constitution these men might write should go into effect without the membership being consulted any further. The proposition was accepted by a referendum vote. In that referendum all the members of local 3 were recorded as for the proposition, though not more than half of them, I believe, voted on it. Maybe that gives an idea as to how this thing was carried in other locals too.

This new constitution gives Broach, the International president, the right "to suspend the card and membership of any member who, in his judgment, is working against the welfare of the I.B.E.W. (since a man cannot work at the trade unless he has a union card, this puts a man's living at Broach's mercy); to either suspend or revoke the charter of any local union—to take charge of the affairs of any local union—to remove or suspend any local union officer" and to "fill any such office or position by appointment of others." There is more of this kind of thing in our new constitution, but this is enough to show that we live under a dictatorship.

The way this dictatorship has worked out in local 3 has been stated recently in some circular letters issued by the Electrical Workers New Deal Group of Local 3, I.B.E.W., which seem to me to tell the case pretty well.

Where Does the Money Go?

We members want to know, for one thing, where all the money goes. Before Broach came to New York we were paying dues at the rate of $40 to $50 per year and he said that was too much. Now our dues are $108 per year. As we have about 8,000 members, that's a lot of money.

In the Spring of 1929, our officers told us we were going to be attacked by the employers, etc., and so they put across a $50 tax on every member. We figure that they collected around $350,000 in this way. We have never had an accounting of a single cent.

If we suspect that under the Broach regime there is some grafting in connection with these large sums of money, we can hardly be blamed. For example, Wm. Hogan, who was convicted and served a term in Sing Sing as a result of the Lockwood investigation into graft in the building trades, was made Financial Secretary and an important cog in our union "machine" by Broach.

Another thing, many of us believe that the local's unemployment relief measures are not fairly and squarely carried out. The union is supposed to give out jobs to members impartially, but we have cases where "yes" men get long time jobs, while any one who has shown any opposition to the administration gets sent to a job that is good for only a few days. Then, sometimes for weeks no unemployment relief is paid out, and men who do not stand in with the machine are deprived of their relief by some technical point.

We charge that all the big electrical jobs in New York go to four big contractors. We believe these firms agree on prices to charge for jobs and so have a monopoly. The union favors these big contractors and puts heavy burdens on the small contractors. We want to know if union officials get any graft out of that.

We hold that our union is not at present making any vigorous effort to organize all electrical workers, and in particular it is not trying to organize the workers for big public utilities like the Edison Co. Is there an understanding with the Edison Co. which keeps our union from doing its duty by these fellow-workers?

Terrorism

An iron hand rests on the members of our union today. Strong-arm men stand at the door at local meetings. If you are not liked by the administration, they kick you downstairs. You cannot attend union meetings. A man got up at one of our meetings and made a motion that an election be held, which we haven't had for several years. Not only was he put out, but a member who offered to go with him to the station-house as a witness was beaten, arrested on a charge of inciting riot and suspended from membership. Sometime ago a group of members went into court and asked for an order to put our local into the hands of a receiver. On the advice of their lawyer they called a meeting of members to explain the reason for their action. Some of those who had the nerve to attend have been fined $300 and suspended from membership (deprived of a chance to work, therefore) for a year! Our members must decide whether we are to be a union or a racket, but how they are going to get a chance to make their wishes known and put them into effect under present conditions, is a mystery.

DON'T HOARD!

Phil Liss

Post-Strike Paterson Awake

By Louis Francis Budenz

A DECEMBER rain beats down miserably into the darkening streets. It conjures up a fog, through which the mill lights flicker dimly and the few passing shadows of working folk flitter like wraiths.

We are watching the door of a shop, Bill Hulihan and I. There is pitch-blackness around the door, where the workers come out. But, up above, the shop lights go on burning, faintly.

The rain strikes us in the face and beats about our legs. We seek refuge in a mill doorway across the narrow street. For a great distance, lost in the fog, big buildings loom up frowning like tombs of Paterson's past manufacturing greatness.

The door to our rear opens. A man's face, disturbed and suspicious, looks out at us.

"What do you want here?" he asks, harshly. ("Silk thieves," he probably thinks, without uttering it.)

"We are watching the shop across the street. What hours do they work?"

"They are working ten hours now," he says abruptly, and as abruptly slams shut the door.

We curse beneath our breaths. "Another shop on ten hours. We will have to pull them down."

A month hence scores of shops are working ten hours, and longer. A month before the workers had shown magnificent resistance. A little more than two months later, in a fine mass meeting they will call for the speedy formation of the National Federation of Silk Workers, and a carefully-planned nation-wide general strike.

Back of this Faustian struggle between resistance and surrender among the Paterson silk workers has gone another drama. It concerns the policy of the American Federation of Labor amalgamated unions in that community—the now-merged United Textile Workers and Associated Silk Workers.

When in late October, the small executive committee of the General Strike Committee met for the last time, the executive secretary (myself) presented a 9-page typewritten report for their consideration. It included a review of the campaign, the outcome of the strike, and a suggested program for the future.

We could point to a good many real achievements in the strike: The re-establishment of the 8-hour day, despite the depression; the gain of a large new membership to the union; the conduct of a militant strike, in which hundreds were arrested, without one fine being levied on the strikers, and a number of other good things.

The future was of more concern. It had ever been the practice in Paterson to cease all activities after each general strike. Thus either gradually or quickly, conditions were broken down still more and the workers temporarily dispirited. The recommendations in the report had this in mind. They urged immediate continuance of activity: the speedy formation of the National Silk Workers Federation (promised in the amalgamation agreement), the holding of inspirational mass meetings, the encouragement of resistance on the part of the workers, the establishment of permanent strike machinery and strike relief, the creation of an apparatus to take care of unemployment relief (so that the out-of-work members would feel that the union was as sympathetic with him in his straits as when he paid his dues), particular attention to the women and auxiliary workers, the beginnings of the dye-house campaign. There were a number of other important and detailed recommendations, 12 in all.

The report was received in silence. There was no counter set of suggestions offered. It was evident that the executive committee of the General Strike Committee wanted to end this strike as all others had been ended. The idea of "constant warfare," asserted in the report as a necessity, did not appeal to them.

Only Group With a Program

As the C.P.L.A. had taken the lead in creating unity in the general strike, so now it was the only group which had a program. The tendency toward "no program" and "no action" had already shown itself in the board of managers of the Associated Silk Workers. This small board had been created at the time of the resignation of Secretary Con Post, who had opposed unity before the general strike. It had been dominated by Louis Cohn, an ultra-Forward Socialist and an ex-boss, extremely unpopular among the workers.

Despite protests of the strikers, Cohn had insisted as chairman of the speakers committee that he act as chairman of the general strike meetings, although his manner of speaking tended toward lassitude rather than fire. He sought to rule off the platform any but Socialist speakers, although local Socialists on the whole were keeping far from the picket lines. Over his protest, I insisted that Jay Lovestone of the Communist Majority Group and President Arthur Quinn of the State Federation of Labor be permitted to speak, "as this is a united front in reality as well as name." From the same standpoint, I insisted later that Norman Thomas be asked to lead the picket line before the John Hand Mill, over Gitlow's half-hearted objection.

The leadership of the A. S. W., as represented by the board of managers, were sophisticated in failure. They knew every possible way in which the workers' cause could be defeated. They looked gloomily on any attempt at victory. The reason for that was thoroughly understandable. These men had seen theory after theory, and wave after wave of revolt, stir the Paterson silk workers, and then die down. They could not bring enthusiasm to the building of a union, for their enthusiasm had long ago been spent. One of them, Joseph Matthews, was a natural born fighter, who had clung tenaciously to the union, struck time after time at the bosses, and grown old in the cause. He had come to distrust the whole scene.

The policy of inaction had set in sometime prior to the meeting at which the recommendations were offered. Cohn, sitting in the office, had kept shop meetings from my knowledge. He had tried to fix them up himself, and had utterly failed. The Commercial shop (hitherto non-union) was out for sometime before I learned of it. The Ming Toy difficulties were "adjusted" when I was first informed that they had any.

But we won one small compromise, of all the points in our program. It was decided to have one final mass meeting. There the C.P.L.A. program was presented, and received the applause of the workers. It was again the only program submitted.

Then, a movement started in the broad silk department—which had been on strike—not only to defeat the board of managers but to select me as organizer for that department. With the latter suggestion I was in complete disagreement. It seemed

to me that there would be a great deal of readjusting to do in the union, and that "lame duck action" which always exists in organized bodies would sabotage any militant efforts from within. The big work was to be done from the outside, by stimulating the union to action, while affecting inside changes.

The workers, however, overwhelmingly called upon me to accept, at the first broad silk membership meeting. Under such pressure, I yielded, but not until after waiting ten days, to see if any vital part of the program would be set in motion by the union. My determination was not to be an organizer while the work was being sabotaged.

In the election for the broad silk executive committee, the members of the board of managers were all defeated, Cohn receiving the lowest vote in the poll. The new committee began slowly to put some points of the program into effect. Thereupon, I accepted the organizership "for a short period," and sought to get the imperative need for the carrying out of the full program before the membership. Joseph Brooks, who knew the silk workers from A to Z, and who had been constant on the picket lines, saw clearly (on his own account) the necessity of the steps suggested, and led the fight among the members for it.

The board of managers, through the hocus-pocus of union machinery, had held on, however, as I had foreseen that they would. The excuse was, that the ribbon department's executive committee had not yet got into action. Controlling the office, the board had not sent out for four successive membership meetings any notices to the new members acquired during the strike.

"Necessities" for the Program

In order to carry through the program, it was essential: 1. That strike relief machinery be re-established; 2. That unemployment relief be set up. The latter was done immediately, through cooperation with the city relief office. Numbers of silk workers were saved from eviction and from starvation during the "slack period." To secure the former, a loan of $1,000 was needed from the union's general fund until relief appeals could be made effective. Pickets to pull down shops, and shops pulled out, had to be saved from absolute want. Militants we had, who had fought day after day on the picket lines, and been discriminated against therefor. They would form the nucleus of the continuing lines, if they had something to eat three times a day.

Against such a step, the board of managers group formed two alliances: one with the conservative element among the ribbon weavers, who had not been on strike; the other, with the three professional representatives of the Communist Majority group. At the general membership meeting, the ribbon weavers came in good numbers, to defeat the loan. But Cohn made the mistake of making a "below the belt" attack on me, which so aroused the membership to heated testimony of my fighting qualities, arrests on the picket lines and unceasing activities, that the loan proposal went through almost unanimously.

It was soon learned that there was another piece of "check and balance" machinery to overcome. The Board of Trustees had to sign the check and it was discovered that they would probably not do so until ordered by another general membership meeting some distance hence. In other words, the work was to be tied up for another period of time. The whole business had become by now close on to child's play. My health had been in bad shape since the latter part of the general strike, and I had been ordered to rest up a while. Therefore, I resigned as organizer of the broad silk department in mid-December, stating that "I can serve the union and silk workers better in an unofficial than an official capacity."*

C.P.L.A. Leads New Fight

Upon my resignation, the union promptly went to sleep. Even the attack by the manufacturers in a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce upon "outside agitators" and "picketing" did not arouse the official family. It was then that the silk workers' branch of the C.P.L.A. got into action. In a first page news story in the local newspapers, it answered the manufacturers. This was followed a short time later by a demand for action for the restoration of the 8-hour day. The Mayor's conciliation committee was called upon to do something effective within forty-eight hours. Strike was threatened.

The union officials then began to bestir themselves. They made statements in line with our own. The Mayor's committee threatened arrests of manufacturers and demanded that the State Department of Labor do its duty or they would. The manufacturers got into the fray, each time weakening on various statements made, as the C.P.L.A. pelted back at them with the harsh facts. The discussion of silk workers' problems became the livest item of news in Paterson. When Joseph Brooks went to Washington to testify before the House Committee on Labor, the manufacturers again attempted to answer, becoming weaker than before. The C.P.L.A. branch retaliated by demanding a Congressional investigation of Paterson.

In a word, the C.P.L.A. stimulated the union to action by doing what the union should have done. The fight against the evil conditions, rapidly closing in on the silk workers, was led by the local branch in the public press and in discussion in the union.

Then the C.P.L.A. branch boldly stated that a mass meeting on strike action would be called. The union officials, after some hesitation, responded by calling one in the name of the Associated Silk Workers. The speakers were A. J. Muste, President Emil Rieve of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers and myself. The C.P.L.A. again was the lone force having a program. Faced with the conditions which the C.P.L.A. had foretold would follow inaction, we suggested: 1. Immediate setting-up of "strike preparedness" machinery, through secret committees in the shops; 2. Speedy formation of the National Federation of Silk Workers, with a view to calling a carefully-planned nation-wide strike; 3. A vigorous campaign for further unemployment relief. This three-pointed program was adopted by an enthusiastic meeting of silk workers. News of it went out over the A.P. wires, to other silk centers. With more pain than should have been the case,

*One other point that is important: We had overcome the attempts of the National Textile Workers during the strike to break up our meetings, in an easy simple way. We had been more militant than they, and had told the workers that they could take their own choice between the two strike efforts, according to which they thought most effective. The workers had answered by overwhelmingly going with the amalgamated groups. Now that the danger of breaking up meetings was over with, I insisted on cooperation with the N. T. W. in the few split shops. Breaking down of workers' conditions through disunity was not to be tolerated. In the Brown (split) shop, when the N. T. W. had accepted a wage cut, over the vigorous effort of Muste and myself to prevent such a surrender, I had been arrested on the picket lines opposing such action. Later on, when the N. T. W. showed signs of joining in on resistance in that shop, I was for working with them. The Communist Majority representatives and the "old guard" were both disturbed by this viewpoint.

the C.P.L.A. program of five months before was getting on its way.

The amalgamated unions thereupon announced, at the mass meeting, that the first conference on the National Federation of Silk Workers would be held in Easton, Pa. or Paterson, the first week in March. In anticipation of that conference, the C.P.L.A. silk workers have drawn up an outline of what this new industrial, autonomous union (affiliated with the rest of the textile workers through the U.T.W.) should approximate, to do the job that should be done.

The C.P.L.A. is also driving for further mass meetings of the workers, since the first proved such a success. The Paterson branch has drawn up a rought copy of an ordinance licensing manufacturing establishments in silk, and has put it up to the Mayor to come out in support of such a measure. It would strike, at one blow, at the filthy conditions in the "cockroach" shops. Whether it is passed or not, the discussion centering around it will inflame the workers to see that these shops must be destroyed at all costs. As worker after worker says: "There was nothing like this agitation in post-strike times before. Paterson has never seen anything to approach the discussion and commotion on our conditions."

A Nation-Wide Strike

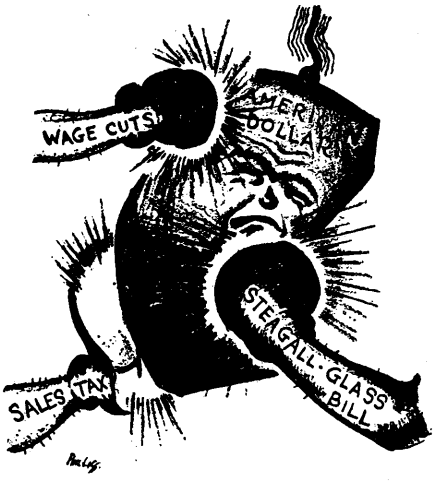
The C.P.L.A. has fanned that discussion into flame. It must also convert it into action. The National Federation must be a vigorous organization. It must work rapidly toward the goal of a nation-wide silk strike, set for the time that production will be paralyzed most effectively. In 1931, the silk workers approached very closely to that objective. There were walk-outs in New England, under the N.T.W. There was the big strike in Allentown, the first in 59 years, under the U.T.W. There was the Paterson amalgamated strike. But these efforts were not co-ordinated, nor were they simultaneous. The important thing to observe is, that these walk-outs did take place, all in the same year. To paralysis in these centers must be added stoppage of the great chains, which run through Pennsylvania in particular. They are shrewdly scattered in small towns, with their units divided.

In the Paterson experience we see how the C.P.L.A. can function to the greatest advantage of the workers, and its revolutionary aim. The industrial field is peculiarly our own. No other group has a clear-cut program that reaches the most militant workers and holds their confidence. The C.P.L.A. branches should grow largely out of the industrial struggle. They should function vigorously on their own account, independently, in every instance where a union has not adopted the C.P.L.A. program in detail. They should take the lead in the fight against the manufacturers, before the workers as a whole. Simultaneously, they should work hard within the unions for the carrying out of the program which they are hammering at in a public way on their own account.

They should not make any cheap political alliances within the unions for a temporary advantage, but should stand for unity based on a program. It is the program that should be uppermost, and *action* should be the test of whether it is sound.

The Paterson silk workers' branch has followed this policy. It is composed of militant workers, who were the foremost on the picket lines. In its ranks are the bulk of those active spirits who were discriminated against for their intense picketing. Its membership which is in the mills has always shown fight in the past, and determination to advance the union. By raising the C.P.L.A. banner independently against the bosses, while at the same time working within the union, it has done an excellent bit of post-strike work.

It is all-important that this spirit and purpose carry on into other centers, with militant, vigilant parallels everywhere for the unions which we plan to stimulate to fighting efficiency. Paterson can say that it has made an auspicious beginning.



Rumbling in Southern Textiles

(Continued from Page 8)

League, which is affiliated with the Southern Industrial League. Its purpose is to bring a better understanding and a closer cooperation between the hill farmer and the mill worker. It is also training the farmers in cooperative farming and marketing of their produce. It is working to have the farmer sell his produce direct to the consumer, which is the worker, thereby cutting out the profiteer and enabling the worker to get his grains and vegetables at a lower price, also enabling the farmer to get more for his work. Another part of its program is to bring the mill worker and the farmer together into a labor party which will nominate workers and small farmers for local offices.

The conditions of the small Carolina farmers are as bad as those of the mill workers. These farmers raise vegetables for a "money crop" which are sold on the local markets. The company stores, to whom they must sell most of their produce, pay them 10 cents for a 12 pound peck of corn meal and sell it to the worker for 25 cents after having taken 2 pounds out. They pay the farmer 10 cents per dozen for his eggs and sell them to the workers at 35 cents; 40 cents per bushel for potatoes and sell them for $1.00.

The League is now conducting debates all over the country on subjects familiar to the people, thus giving the workers an opportunity to learn about their conditions and about ways of bettering them. The workers are for the first time learning that the farmers can be of great help to them in their industrial disputes.

The Progressive Farmers League is creating great interest among the farmers and we are having requests for speakers every week. At present we have about all the work we can take care of until we can get some of the people trained who will be able to go out and hold meetings.

Everything is shaping fine for a farmer-labor party. Perhaps if we have time to get this underway when the next strike comes, our people can go on the picket line without as great danger of being murdered in cold blood as the Marion strikers were.

Orizaba, the Stronghold of the Crom

By Fanny Simon

ORIZABA is situated midway between the tropical region of Mexico and the temperate. It contains the vegetation characteristic of both. As the train leaves Mexico City behind, tall, gigantic mountains begin to appear in the distance, which loom larger and larger as the train descends lower and lower. On a clear day the snow peaks can be seen gleaming in the sun, seeming to guard the region.

For whom do these mountains guard the land? "For the foreign capitalist," would say many of the natives. To some extent this is less true than it was 15 years ago. The important industries, however, are still in the hands of foreign owners. How much of the capital is native is very difficult to say, as only estimates and no real studies exist.

As the train proceeds, the mountains hug the region closer, and the clouds in the heavens become thicker the greyer. In the summer-time they invariably bring torrential rains; in the winter, although rain is not so frequent, yet the clouds will leave sufficient moisture to make the region ideal for the textile industry.

Until recently, Orizaba was the important textile center of Mexico, but economic changes have decreased its importance. In other parts of the Republic, textile mills, using more modern machines, have sprung up, making competition with the mills of Orizaba fiercer and the cotton mills here, as everywhere in the world, are suffering from the crisis. As a result, most of the mills in the region are on the verge of shutting down.

The closing of the mills in Orizaba will bring suffering not only to the textile workers and their families but to the entire region, since practically no other industries exist.

Orizaba's History

This region has witnessed many struggles for the right to organize. At present that right is not in question, and the workers here are doubtless the best disciplined, from the labor point of view, of any workers in Mexico. All workers, textile and others, are members of the Mexican Federation of Labor, commonly referred to as the CROM. No other organization can gain a foothold. The textile unions being the tower of the CROM's strength, Orizaba is therefore a CROM stronghold. Thus, the destruction of the textile unions would not only signify the destruction of Orizaba as a union center, but would be a great blow to the CROM.

Such an outcome was not impossible a few weeks ago when the Compania Industrial de Orizaba threatened to liquidate if not allowed a temporary shut down and an adjustment in personnel and certain other changes which were obviously against the interest of the workers.

Orizaba is proud of its labor history. Even today in the conventions of the Mexican Federation of Labor homage is paid to the martyrs of Rio Blanco. Here, one of the first strikes took place and here, the government of Diaz betrayed the workers and then proceeded to shoot them. Today there stands a monument, next to the factory, to the memory of those who died in 1907.

At present, due mainly to the passage of the new labor law, the workers are again fighting. As a result of this law the employers were given the chance to ask for changes in the collective agreements. Naturally they have requested downward revisions, giving the present economic crisis as the reason, and there is much talk of strikes—or actual strikes.

But it is with the union organizations that this article is primarily concerned. And whatever we may think about the CROM officials, we shall have to admit that there exist in Orizaba splendid fighting organizations imbued with a spirit of cooperation. I shall attempt to describe these unions and the reader may compare them with those in the United States.

Character of Orizaba Unions

Each shop is organized on an industrial basis, all workers, whether they work as carpenters for the company or as weavers, belong to the union. Each shop constitutes a local, making seven textile locals. They in turn belong to the Camara de Trabajo, which is the central organization for the region, as well as to the Textile Federation. Each union has representatives on the executive committee of the Camara de Trabajo.* The government of the local unions is also in the hands of an executive committee, chosen for six months. None of the members on this committee is a paid official; the union, however, pays any member who has to lose time from work on union business.

The workers here, most of whom have either been born in the region or have lived and worked here a long time, have no hope of rising out of their class, with the result that they look upon their organizations as part of their social life. They have come to think in cooperative terms, because only in this way can they feel themselves human beings. Consequently, these organizations have developed a cooperative spirit that is certainly admirable. Not only have they established cooperative stores, but there exist in Rio Blanco a cooperative bakery and cooperative printing shop as well. Here the monthly organ of the union is published, and the shop does outside work also. Practically all of the locals run cooperative baths, since very few of the workers' houses contain bathing facilities.

The houses leave much to be desired, but they are probably no worse than the houses in many a mill village in the United States. Here, at least, the workers' organizations have housing programs which they hope to put into effect as soon as economic conditions permit. As a rule, the houses, especially in the villages, belong to the company and consist of two rooms. For these houses the workers pay four pesos** a month rent. They have to pay, also, a peso a month for each electric bulb they use. Each local is particularly interested in education and spends large sums annually both for the education of its members and their children. The locals pay part of the salaries of the teachers and the state pays the other part.

*The Camara de Trabajo may be considered as equivalent to our central trades and labor councils except that the Camara is a more centralized body, having a determining influence upon the policies of the locals which compose it. Unlike our central trades and labor councils it is a fighting organization and if necessary could make a general strike in the region effective.

**The peso at par is worth 50 cents. At present it is less than 40 cents.

Credit Associations

The two largest locals, situated at Santa Rosa and Rio Blanco, have well developed savings banks and credit associations. The bank at Rio Blanco was established with a capital of 20,000 pesos contributed by the union and is for members only.

Workers are often forced to borrow for illness or to cover funeral expenses of a member of the family. For loans made to its members the credit associtaion charges 2 per cent a month interest. (That sounds very high to us, but all interest rates are very much higher in Mexico. The usual rate for business men is 1 per cent a month.) The interest is used to meet the expenses and the rest will eventually help put over their contemplated housing program.

Moreover, the funds must be able to take care of a period such as is facing them at present when all the members are out of jobs because the factory has been permitted to shut down. The bank at Rio Blanco loans annually about 80,000 pesos. Naturally the bank has no losses, as the community knows every member, nor is there much moving or shifting of the population. Occasionally a worker is not very prompt in the payment of his loan, but he pays eventually.

The institution at Santa Rosa was started later than at Rio Blanco. Here, too, the union provided the initial capital. Each worker who receives a loan must deposit one-tenth of the amount loaned. The bank pays 12 per cent a year on deposits and asks 4 per cent a month on loans. The bank's deposits at present are about 5,700,000 pesos; the loans average around 6,485 pesos a month and range from ten to fifty pesos; loans of 100 or 200 pesos are rare.

All cooperative activities are run by members to whom the same wage is paid as they used to make when working in the shop. There had been previous attempts at cooperative stores but, due to lack of experience, they failed. Originally, all the cooperative stores were branches of the main store in Orizaba, but the plan did not work. Consequently, each store at present is entirely independent and is controlled by the local which owns it.

The store does a considerable yearly business. It sells to members and nonmembers alike and sells at a profit. However, the prices are somewhat lower than in the other stores, the cooperative often forcing the other stores to reduce their prices. In addition to the manager of the store, there are two boards, one administrative and the other may be called the vigilance board. Its chief function is to see that there is a check up on the activities of the manager. To this board any member who has any complaint against the management may turn.

Educational Work

The most interesting part of the unions' program, however, is their educational work. Here there is a conscious attempt to inculcate cooperative principles and ideals. The workers hope to train experts who will some day be able to manage the factories. The union at Santa Rosa is building a school which when completed will have cost them over a million pesos. In this school not only the children are taught, but also the grownups; the entire life of the community centers around it. Nor is the school merely concerned with book learning. (It is true that every effort is being made to stamp out illiterary, with the result that there are now few workers in this region who cannot read and write.

The education tries to have definitely proletarian ideology. With this in view, the unions equip the schools with materials for the development of all sorts of industries, which they hope to start and run cooperatively. The boys, the sons of the workers, are taking care of the chickens which the union purchased for the school and are thus getting practical lessons in poultry raising. Already the school sells the eggs, giving, of course, preference in the sale of them to union members. The school will soon have over 500 chickens; it then will sell chickens to its members, also.

The principal of the school is a splendid woman with a splendid social vision. She has practically a 12-hour day, since school does not end when the children go home. At night and in the afternoon, there are classes in dressmaking and cooking for the wives and daughters of the workers; classes in tailoring, ironwork and carpentry for the men and their sons.

The classes in carpentry make almost all the equipment in the way of benches, etc., that the school needs. The teacher is a union member and has an active interest in the progress of his pupils and the development of the community. In addition, there is instruction in small industries, such as curing and dressing skins. Through these means they hope not only to develop new industries in the region, making it possible for the children of the workers to find employment, but they hope that with the help of the unions the industries will be cooperatively developed.

Nor have the unions forgotten the need for recreation and physical development. Each local has its band or orchestra which plays at fiestas. Occasionally, the union gives plays and the members are the actors. They maintain libraries and athletic teams. In order to foster the physical well-being of the workers, teams are allowed to practice during working hours, and the union pays them for the lost time.

Union Dues

For all these activities, each worker contributes approximately 6 per cent of his weekly wage. The 6 per cent is distributed in the following way in Santa Rosa. Practically all the locals distribute their funds in the same way and have about the same contributions. One-half per cent of the contributions goes to pay teachers' salaries, and another one-half per cent for the construction of the new school; 1 per cent for death benefits to members' families; 2 per cent for union administration and expenses. In this is included the amount they pay to the Camara de Trabajo and the CROM. In addition, they contribute 2 per cent to workers in regions where the factories have been shut down. How many locals in the United States would give up 2 per cent of the weekly wages of their members in order to help their fellow workers? It was impossible to raise enough money from the best paid workers in the world to run a successful organizing campaign in the South, when to some extent the entire labor movement in the United States might have been strengthened thereby.

Unfortunately, much of this excellent cooperative work will have to be given up. Most of the companies have already shut down or are on the verge of closing up shop for as long as three months. Permission to shut down their plants has been granted to the Compania Industrial de Orizaba and to the Compania Veracruzana, the two largest in the region. That means the closing of 5 out of the 7 factories in the region. The other two employ relatively few workers, probably not more than 600. The Compania Industrial de Orizaba will stop its factories for three months and the other company for a month and a half. After they reopen they will not operate on a full 6 day week until their accumulated stock has been materially reduced. The workers would have probably fought the shut down were it not for the fact that General Calles forced them to accept it. In some ways, these workers are better able to stand the shut down than workers in other regions, because of their splendid cooperative organiza-

A Miner Blinded by the Light

United Mine Workers Convention

By Miner Correspondents

During February the international convention of the United Mine Workers of America met at Indianapolis. It was in the main an old-time John L. Lewis convention. Economic conditions, however, forced the organization to put itself on record for certain progressive measures. Whether they will prosecute these measures with any real vigor is another question.

The convention was just as shamefully packed as all U.M.W. conventions have been under the Lewis regime. Thus, out of the 1155 delegates, just about half, or 533 to be exact, came from districts with a total membership of only 6,484, (even according to Lewis's own figures) while the remaining 150,000 members of the organization had to be content with about the same number of votes as this handful from the "Blue Sky" districts. As a matter of fact, 353 out of the above named 533 delegates did not have a single tax-paying member in the local unions they represented! On the other hand, anthracite district No. 11, Pennsylvania, had only 131 delegates to represent 45,643 tax-paying members. Little wonder that one of our correspondents exclaims: "Some of the simon-pure 'loyal unionists' suffered under the illusion that through so-called democratic channels of the organization you can clean the union out and get rid of Lewis if a majority so desires. This is an argument that cannot stand before the facts as above mentioned. Elections! The miners learned better a long time ago!"

More time was taken up by the convention in discussing the controversy between the Illinois district and the international union than with any other subject. Our readers will recall that a couple of years ago the Illinois district, when the reorganized U.M.W. of A. movement was under way, got out an injunction restraining Lewis and the other international officials from interfering in any way with the affairs of the district organization and the locals in Illinois. In the recent convention the Illinois delegates, under the lead of John H. Walker, offered to have this injunction withdrawn, provided that assurance was given that the constitution of the International union would be amended so as to make the districts autonomous and free from arbitrary control by the international officials.

In combatting this move Lewis was clever enough to lay great stress upon the evil of injunctions as used against labor, and to urge that any district using such a weapon against its own international union, was departing from the fundamental principles of the labor movement. The Illinois district did not succeed in getting the constitution amended in the direction of further democracy and consequently they are still maintaining the injunction against Lewis.

A Waiting Peace

However, for the time being, union revolt in Illinois against the International is stilled. The contract between the Illinois miners and the coal operators expires on March 31 and there is a tendency for all the elements in the state, whatever their point of view on the internal politics of the organization, to feel that there must be quiet in the organization now and the presentation of a united front to the operators. One of our correspondents informs us that a number of local unions, which have not paid dues to either the district or the national organization for several years, have again begun to do so. In this connection, he comments upon the present stir among the miners as follows:

"Bribes and intimidation played the major part in bringing about the return of the locals to affiliation with the district and the International. It cannot be said that the miners here have more confidence now in the U. M. W. of A. leaders than before. Still, the impending struggle and a faint hope that these leaders will reform have also something to do with this artificial unity. On the other hand, among the more radically inclined miners, you see a feeling of futility. What's the use of fighting the crooked officials? They are allied with the coal operators and consequently cannot be beaten. You might lose your job and be called a fool on top of that. So, hope on the one side and hopelessness on the other, constitute the foundation of the present apparent unity in District 12. The idea that the organization is all right as it is, is entirely absent."

This same correspondent makes the following comment upon the struggle between the district and the international —John H. Walker on the one hand and John L. Lewis on the other—which represents pretty accurately our own feeling about it!

"The battle between Lewis and Walker is still going on merrily. The position the miners take in this is like that of the man who starts drinking—not because he likes booze but simply because he is against prohibition. One bunch swallows Lewis because they don't like Walker; the other bunch goes with Walker because Lewis is no good. This fight is gradually becoming purely geographical. To the average miner it is not a conflict of ideas as much as it is Illinois against Indianapolis."

In spite of the fact that the International convention was under the iron control of the Lewis machine, progressive elements in the convention, on the one hand, and economic conditions, on the other, forced a stand for certain progressive measures, particularly unemployment insurance, old age pensions, a six hour day and five day week, and a demand for the repeal of criminal syndicalism legislation.

A Hopeful Sign

One of the most encouraging reports which has come to us in regard to the convention is that among the delegates, particularly from the anthracite and from Illinois, were a comparatively large number of young coal miners. The statement was made in the convention that "never before had so large a number of youthful delegates attended a U.M.W. convention." Lewis, incidentally, along with other members of the official family, time after time made excuses for these young miners who attacked the administration by saying that they were still

(Continued on Page 29)

A Miner Blinded by the Light

Spanish Vistas

A Retrospective Glance

The author of the article herewith presented is now residing in France. He has been active in the labor movement for many years and is especially well informed about the Spanish movement. This is the first of a series dealing with the history of the Spanish movement which he is writing for Labor Age. The editors assume no responsibility for the opinions expressed in these articles.

EDITORS.

Ten months have elapsed since the Spanish Republic was proclaimed, and since the last of the Alfonsos was asked humanely, all-too humanely, to leave the country, the people of which he had continued, as a true son of his ancestors, to trample mercilessly underfoot.

It might be worth while to consider the progress—if at all extant—gained during this period, and the direction in which such progress may be developing.

Republics did not, so far, greatly recommend themselves to the great masses of the toilers, and although the number of such institutions had considerably increased since the war, the effects of the change are still being eagerly searched by the working class.

Nonetheless, the event connected with the proclamation of a Republic is a welcome one. It may be considered as a stepping-stone. It is an indication that there is nothing immutable in this world; that monarchy is an obsolete principle to be definitely scrapped. And most of all, and above all, it is an indication that, whatever the change, it cannot take place unless the people at large, the workers in the factories and on the land want that change, and unless they actually give the first fillip.

The proclamation of the Spanish Republic was a great event indeed, although it was known for some time that Primo de Rivera's dictatorship could not end otherwise than by dragging in its fall monarchy as well.

The time may not be so far off when this law of gravitation may again be forcibly demonstrated across the Mediterranean.

Even under the monarchist regime, and in spite of all the persecution, the labor movement in Spain was a powerful force, to be reckoned with by State and government. Its destruction was but a temporary victory—of the pyrrhic kind—of dictatorship, so much so, that on the very morrow of Primo de Rivera's downfall, trade unions sprang up like mushrooms all over the country.

And the proclamation of the Republic on April 14, 1931—willed and prepared by the entire population of Spain—gave, at last, the possibility the workers needed to widen and strengthen their class organizations.

Spaniards are people with traditions, ethnologically as well as sociologically.

People consider Russia as an "Eurasian" civilization — astride across Europe and Asia.

Spain should be considered as an "Eurafrican" civilization—astride across Europe and Africa; so much is Africa felt within the boundaries of this European country, Spain. And the traditions of the Moorish civilization, of its habits and customs, are still deeply ingrained into the lives of the Spanish people.

But the Spanish possess yet another tradition, of more modern times. They are all *federalists*, enemies of centralized government.

About 75 years ago most of the works of Proudhon were translated and published in Spain. They had a great influence in shaping the minds of Spanish liberalism, and the first success of Republican ideas, during the short-lived Republic, contemporary with the Franco-Prussian War, was no doubt greatly due to such publications.

On the other hand, the *International Working Men's Association*, founded in London in 1864, soon had its national section in Spain. But whereas the first half-a-dozen years' activities of this International, insofar especially as its Germanic sections and its Executive were conce' ed, were under the influence of Kai Marx's theories; the Latin sections, the Spanish one foremost, were definitely won over to the federalist and anti-governmental theories of the Bakunist wing of the First International. Thus, e.g., the first Labor Congress of the Spanish section of the International Working Men's Association, held in Barcelona in June, 1870, had already laid down the fundamental principles of its federalist, anti-centralist and anti-State conceptions to which the workers of Spain have remained true ever since.

The libertarian traditions that had, thus, developed, within the ranks of the Spanish working class, did not, at first, find a clear and class-conscious outlet for their conceptions.

It must be remembered that Spain is mainly an agricultural country, with a very slight sprinkling of industrial proletaria. The latter, even today, does not exceed 15 per cent of the entire population. It was, of course, still less fifty years ago.

Being a peasant country, it was clear that the percentage of illiteracy was more considerable than in countries with a greater industrial development. And the Jesuits and Priests have been doing all in their power to nip in the bud every possible attempt to raise the exceedingly low level of culture of the Spanish people.

It was, therefore, no surprise that the activities of the workers' organizations centered especially round the fight against this obscurantist policy of Monarchy and Church, linked together against the people. It was more learning that the masses needed, more knowledge. There were no schools, whether for adults or for children, except those owned and controlled by the Jesuits. The cry of "lay schools" arose, therefore, quite naturally and became a fighting motto. In 1901, the first Modern School was founded in Barcelona by *Francisco Ferrer* who, eight years later, was to be condemned to death and shot in the Fortress of Montjuich, for having dared to open the eyes of the ignorant masses to knowledge and to the fact that a better life must be fought for, there and then, instead of hoping for a paradise in after-life.

The industrial and commercial upheaval in Spain of that period (1900-1910) had necessarily brought about, simultaneously with the educational struggle already on the march, a growth of the workers' class consciousness on the industrial field. The problem of strengthening their labor organizations with a view to whipping-up their economic struggle was now becoming the burning question of the day.

Strike followed upon strike. The general strike weapon was being repeatedly used not only to uphold direct economic demands, but frequently for the purpose of drawing the attention of the great masses to a crying injustice, to the necessity for wide labor solidarity, or as a means of stemming the reactionary measures of a government.

The Spanish proletariat, and especially that of Catolonia, was seething with dis-

International News

THE BRITISH I. L. P.

Prior to the decision of the Independent Labor Party annual conference at Easter, three of its M.P.'s, James Maxton, George Buchanan and John McGovern have decided (so the Daily Herald alleges) to break from the Labor Party. Meanwhile, David Kirkwood, the fourth member of the Clyde group, who is officially endorsed and supported by the Machinists Union, is likely to retain his membership in the Labor Party.

Judging at some distance and with limited knowledge of the facts, it is difficult to approve of the policy of withdrawal at this juncture. It seems to us here that the Labor Party, although its leadership and policies are open to the severest criticisms, still constitutes the rallying center of the British workers on the political field, through their trade unions. In spite of all differences, and in spite of all attempts of the conservative leadership to stifle dissident opinion, left forces should remain inside at all costs in order to reach the workers whom the movement embodies. To leave the Labor Party because of these difficulties would mean to form an ineffectual sect. In view of the decisions by the majority of the I.L.P. divisional conferences against disaffiliation, Maxton would have to found a new and additional sect unles he does penance in sackcloth and ashes and is admitted into the Communist Party. It might ultimately further reconciliation with Macdonald and his coming back into the field, or at least the revival of MacDonaldism in spirit if not in the label. The desertion of the revolutionary elements may drive the organization far to the right.

Bitter attacks will soon again be launched against unemployment benefits as well as against present wage scales and conditions of employment; the tariffs will increase prices and thus cut real wages. The Labor Party can at this time be made an effective weapon against these attacks, provided the ablest fighters hold their posts and give the necessary leadership. If the Labor Party does not fight on these issues, then will be the time to break rather than on the present issue of obedience to Standing Orders which to the workers appears to mean that the I.L.P. wishes to have it both ways, i.e., to have a say in deciding the policy of the Parliamentary Group and then to vote against it if the I.L.P. members do not like that policy.

We earnestly hope that the Easter conference will decide in favor of remaining with the I.L.P. for the purpose of building there a militant left wing with powerful mass influence among the workers.

THE NEW IRISH GOVERNMENT

Eamon de Valera of the Fianna Fall Party, leader and anti-British republican, now holds the reins of government in the Irish Free State as a result of the election of 68 Fianna Fall members of the Dail, against 53 supporting William T. Cosgrave of the Governmental party, with seven Labor and two Independent Labor seats probably supporting de Valera.

The foremost issue confronting de Valera is the repeal of the iniquitous Coercion Bill, enacted last September by the Cosgrave administration. Under this bill, trial by jury no longer exists. A military tribunal is established with power to exercise all powers vested in judge and jury, with power to impose even the death sentence and no right of appeal from this tribunal.

The newspapers in Ireland cannot enunciate any of the principles of Irish nationalism that have been preached by all great Irish patriots from Tone to Emmet. Police are given power to arrest merely on suspicion, without warrant, and to hold suspects without charge for 70 hours. Homes are entered at any hour of the night. Prisoners are considered guilty until they prove themselves innocent.

The main reason for the Cosgrave regime of terror was the promulgation of the advanced social program of Saor Eire, which stands for determined opposition to British imperialism and for the establishment of a new society in behalf of the industrial and agricultural workers.

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content, and the spirit of revolt burnt high in the hearts and minds of the exploited.

The world war was the cold douche which stilled everything, and although Spain kept out of it, the formidable wave of unbridled nationalism, of wholesale slaughter, of trampling under foot of the most fundamental rights of human dignity, had its effect on the Spanish labor movement. There, too, a lull in the storm intervened, to be re-awakened by the Russian Revolution and the end of the war.

As in most other countries, the working class of Spain, in its struggle for emancipation, had its forces split into two main sections. One of these was organizing the working class on the lines of social reform and parliamentary affiliation, with the ultimate aim of capturing Parliament and Political Power, the working class organizations becoming, as it were, the means to an end, and playing second fiddle. The other section, revolutionary in its tactics and imbued with the Anarchist spirit of opposition to the State as such, whatever its name may be, and whatever form it may take, was organizing its trade unions with a view to their becoming, after the abolition of both State and Capitalism, and together with the free Communes, the organizers of a new social system in which no political party would be able to impose its discipline or its regime.

At the moment when the war broke out, the first of these tendencies was already sufficiently spread in all countries to call forth the necessity for creating an international link that would unite them all and that would strengthen and widen a struggle which, already at that time, was bearing symptoms of becoming as international as the war itself was.

The second tendency, inspired by Anarchist conceptions and strengthened by the successes of Revolutionary Syndicalism in France, was yet searching for its bearings.

We shall now see how the Spanish labor movement, split into these same two fractions, fared on the eve of the proclamation of the Republic on April 14, 1931, and immediately afterwards.

A. S.

Sling Shots

By Hal

Hoover The Great

Every age has its heroes whose praises are sung in song and story. Our age has Herbert Hoover. While celebrating the birthdays of Lincoln and Washington, the country has been rent asunder in heated debates as to just which of the two Herbie most closely resembles. The concensus of opinion seems to be that we never have had quite such a sorry specimen before.

Hoover Is My Shepherd

But it remained for the Federation News to add that religious touch necessary for just the right degree of worship. Taking a cue from the 43rd Psalm, they solemnly chant:

"Hoover is my shepherd. I am in want. He maketh me to lie down on park benches; He leadeth me beside the still factories; He disturbeth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of destruction for his party's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of depression, I anticipate no recovery, for thou are with me."

When Hoover Made a Soup Houn' Out of Me

Nevertheless Oklahoma has burst into song running in part like this:

He took the long green from our purse, the clothes from off our back,
He moved us from our mansions fair and put us in a shack,
Our milk cows to the markets go, my land, its miseree,
I'm against the guy who made a soup houn' outa me.

Hoover The Humanitarian

Elected as the Great Humanitarian, who brought the milk of human kindness to the starving Belgians and Russians, it now develops according to Walter Liggett's most recent book, "The Rise of Herbert Hoover," that Hoover's close friends and business associates profited mightily through favoritism in the purchase of supplies and through the formation of business alliances in Belgium built up during the relief campaign. In Russia, on the other hand, Hoover's Relief Administration carried out alternate promises of relief and threats of withdrawal in return for certain concessions demanded by the Russo-Asiatic Consolidated , Ltd., in which the self-same Hoover was at that time deeply interested.

More Capitalist Planning

The War Department has collected and classified data on 12,000 industrial plants that could be used to make munitions in an emergency, says Frederick H. Payne, Assistant Secretary of War. He claims that planning in this way would save much in lives and money in any future war.

The Disarmament Conference Opens
—Detroit News

Free Graves and Springboards

A Los Angeles real estate dealer has just offered to do his bit to fight the depression by offering free graves to the community. Aloysius Meyers, candidate for Mayor of Seattle, has offered to put a springboard on the new bridge for the benefit of suicides, if elected. Who said capitalists are hard-hearted?

Those Striking Dressmakers

"Strike while the iron is hot" is the motto of 25,000 dressmakers who have tied up the industry just before the Spring season in their war on the sweat shop. Say we, "Striking also makes the iron hot." We hope that one of the greatest gains of the strike will be a powerful militant union which the bosses will find too hot to monkey with.

The Bloated Dollar

As far as we can see all the air is going into the worker's dollar. Commenting upon the proposal of the F. W. Woolworth Co. to change from a 10 cent to a 20 cent policy, Mr. H. C. Branner, merchandise manager of Jas. McCreery & Co., declares:

"We are going to see a bloated dollar, one that will have 20 per cent less purchasing power in a year, and sooner or later 20 cents will only buy what 10 cents used to. . . Inflated money is surely coming because currency that is backed up by only 40 cents in gold . . . invites such a condition."

Stop Hoarding

With inflation sapping the worker's dollar, with wage cuts depleting the number of dollars, and with the coming sales tax to increase the cost of living, it is hard to understand where Hoover, although a great mining engineer, gets the confounded brass to ask us to stop hoarding. If we wanted to be funny about it, we might inquire in the words of F. P. A., "How You Goin' to Hoard That Coin, Baby, When You Ain't Got No Coin To Hoard?"

He Sees Nothing, Hears Nothing, Knows Nothing

Walter S. Gifford, the Master Mind who was to wipe out the unemployment problem, brings great enlightenment to the question in his recent testimony before the Senate Committee on Manufactures.

Senator Costigan: "Did you, from any other source, acquire information which would enable you specifically to advise us how many people in the United States at this hour are on the verge of starvation?"

Mr. Gifford: "I have no such information."

It's just as we thought—a lot of radicals have been spreading false rumors.

Sour Milk

The milk of human kindness which was so scarce in Washington that the Costigan-LaFolette Bill providing for a minimum of direct federal relief for the ten million unemployed in the United

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WORKERS' CORRESPONDENCE

Anthracite Notes

A situation has arisen here which is becoming of great interest to every miner. At Silver Creek Colliery, near Pottsville, the company succeeded in getting the Colliery Grievance committee to sign a special individual agreement. The General Mine Board got active and now there are rumors that at least five collieries have been asked to sign separate agreements with the company. Some of these collieries did not work during the whole of 1931, but are promised to have operations resumed if the agreement is signed. Others have worked quite steady. Their grievance committees were told to sign the separate agreement or their collieries would shut down.

Strange as it seems, these people come to the G. M. B. for protection and advice. On February 14, the G. M. B. called a special meeting, inviting the district family and the officers of the collieries affected. The district officers did not appear. A motion was made and carried at this meeting inviting the district and international executive boards to be present at the next meeting (special) on Feb. 21, 1932. The district executive board came to a man but a letter from Kennedy stated that he had work at Washington and could not be present. However, the international board member, John Mates, came.

The hall was jammed with about 3,000 men. And oh, what a meeting. A mob! Damning all the officers and calling for a strike for equalization of working time, the crowd would not listen to M. Brennan, district president, or to John Mates.

Finally, after three and a half hours of debating, slandering and malingering two motions were passed. First, that the district G. M. B. go on record for equalization of working time. Second, that this board go on record asking for a special district convention and urge all the delegates present to go back to their respective locals and ask them to send in resolutions to the district office stating that they are on record for a special district convention for the purpose of equalizing the working time, and that the district call a special convention within 10 days as stipulated by article 12, section 1 and 2 of the district constitution.

The meeting was in an uproar, but something has been started in the line of equalizing working time.

Mt. Carmel, Pa.

D. M. G.

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Three mines of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company—the Seneca, Heidelberg, and Broadwell collieries—will suspend operations indefinitely next Thursday, the officers of the company, one of the largest anthracite producing, announced recently.

This is the fifth of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company's 16 mines to shut down. More than 1,300 men are normally employed at the three collieries which will close Thursday. The mines are located in the Pittston area.

More and more miners are beginning to dread the announcement, "take your tools out," which usually means prolonged unemployment. It is the opinion of many miners that the operators are getting ready for wage cuts. Already the vice-president of the Hudson Coal Company announced that miners' wages here are too high, compared with those of workers in other industrial sections. Receivers for the bankrupt Temple Coal Company declare that "operating costs" must be reduced if the mines of that company are to re-open.

The companies, as an economy measure (?) are openly transferring orders from high cost mines to those where coal may be produced cheaper.

Luzerne, Pa. F. G.D.

A Scab Haven

In regard to the Blue Bird Silk Mfg. Co. of Paterson, N. J., moving to York, Pa., and taking over the old Monarch Silk Mill here, I am keeping my eyes and ears open and am spreading the news around wherever I can of it being a Jacquard firm, and only moving here because it found York to be a scab haven and has come here to exploit the worker.

Comrade Jackson can give you all the information you need about the silk industry, names, etc. I suggest that you write to him.

This town is becoming a real Scab Haven and conditions are getting to be terrible, what with wage cuts, laying off of aged workers, making them give to the Local Welfare Drive by threat of losing their jobs and making them pay fines of two dollars for smoking inside of the factories whether it's working hours or not. They sure are a great bunch of working men here. No unions to amount to anything. The only thing they got is 84 churches to hold them together which has got them by the neck.

York, Pa. B. A. WILSON.

Unemployment Relief

My brief investigations for the Unemployment Relief Committee were to find out what "made-work" projects were in operation, were planned, or had been tried for the white collar unemployed, so that suggestions for this work could be circulated around the country. Practically all my reports were negative—towns were all having a hard time to find funds for meager direct relief and had little time to differentiate between white collars or no collars.

There is quite a tendency to give up "made-work" because of the expense—except in those towns like Grand Rapids, Mich., or Hamilton, Ohio, where payment for work in parks, on the streets, etc., is made in scrip or groceries and is very low pay anyway. Last year Philadelphia gave $12 a week on "made-work." This year that is far too expensive and families on relief receive an average of $4.40 a week. I certainly found that visiting social agencies is very, very depressing. And so far I haven't run into any faint sign of hope.

The Delco plant of General Motors has just put in a 10 per cent wage cut—10 per cent on the base rate which means a proportional decrease on the bonus rate. They have the group bonus system there, as they seem to have in all G. M. plants. The Delco plant makes refrigerator motors—a line that has strangely enough been very prosperous this past year. Now "competition is forcing the cut"—but Delco is still turning out 3,000 motors a day and not for stock either (they keep only about 50,000 motors ahead). It is surprising to me how long-suffering, patient, and hopeless most all the workers I have visited, seem. They won't vote for Hoover, I'm sure—they will probably vote for whatever Democrat is running, unless those I talk to are afraid to really express themselves. I've mostly been visiting those who are working (in our study of "technological changes"), and they are without exception fearful of losing their jobs and do not speak freely.

REBA SCHULTZ.

Has Lost Its Nerve

How does the labor situation look these days? In this locality, labor has completely lost its "nerve" and will "stand for" anything. So that a job is obtained, almost anything in the way of working conditions, hours or wages will be accepted. It is right to say that or-

ganized labor in this town is dead. There are, even nominally, only two manufacturing unions—the pattern makers and the molders—and these have little real existence. The building trades are organized but have given up trying to have a genuine influence.

An A. F. of L. federal union of the unemployed was formed, embracing men who came from many lines of work. I was asked to address it and I recited the advantages of Industrial Unionism and suggested that steps be taken to organize on an industrial union basis the two big industries of this town—auto parts and fruit jars. Only a half dozen of the men showed any enthusiasm and the president "called me down" because, he said, the federal union existed to keep "our" work from going to imported workers!

M. GRAVES.

Indiana.

Labor News Needed

I left Butte about July 26, 1929, after the mines began shutting down and came to California. I worked ten months at the Walker mine, then I came here. Both camps are isolated in the hills and I have been cut off from the labor movement except by mail. This is why I have not been active in the unions of late.

Most of the workers in this camp have not seen a labor paper for years and are indifferent, though there is a definite drift away from the old parties. The few radicals are divided, but I think could be united on the idea of a Federated Labor Party. Education is greatly needed to get any results. Suspicion from the old partisan battles will have to be overcome. None of them have any clear ideas of tactics and principles.

I feel that a general labor news distributing system or agency must be established in the West before any solid mass movement of left wing tendencies can be established. There is much unrest but it looks to liberals for leadership. The radicals have fought each other and the trade unions so bitterly that the workers are disgusted and indifferent.

The mass must be moulded by gradual education, not by any control of leadership suddenly. Of course, the C. P. L. A. is facing an eastern situation and I feel that there is a great difference in industry, psychology and land space. Had this panic not been so severe, I could have been able to do a great deal of work.

C. W.

Alleghany, Calif.

Without a Home

This rainy day gives me the courage to write you for advice. I have been out of a home ever since the strike at Marion. I have been trying to get work to support my little boy and myself but I have failed. To go from one place to another just to get a place to stay is awful. No home to go to and just work for what I eat and to be always in someone's way. They think I could get work but I can't. Even the county won't have me. I have tried to get jobs from cooking to storekeeping, but I can't. I don't know what I am to do if I can't get me a place to stay. I'm not able to pay board and that is what the people want.

If I only could get me a shelter for mine and me and a few chickens, I believe I could make a living, but I don't know what I'll do if I can't.

THELMA SICK,

Vein Mountain, N. C.

Why Are the Workers Servile?

I agree that the leadership of the A. F. of L. has much to do with the apathy of American labor and that the power of "big business" has also had much to do with it. It seems to me proper to say that those two factors have had much influence in creating an attitude of servility.

But it would be strange if servility were an innate tendency in American labor, for Americans in general are the descendants of persons who have been sufficiently adventurous to leave their native land for a new land. Even when they "left by request," it was generally because they had not conformed to existing law. The A. F. of L. and "big business" to a considerable extent explain labor servility in America and show that the servility is not inherent, although it is but too obvious that the servility is there. Where a mental trait is not inherent, however, there is reason to hope that it can in time be eradicated. The A. F. of L. and "big business" are, so far as their influence on labor is concerned, simply obstacles to be overcome.

For labor to be ultra-materialistic is, in my mind, for it to court disintegration because its able leaders either openly enter the service of corporations as managers or, if they remain with labor, they exploit it. America as a whole is ultra-materialistic. So far as capitalists are concerned, this makes for solidarity; so far as labor is concerned, it makes for disintegration. For labor to be disintegrated is for it to be mentally servile because only in that way can the individual worker survive.

I regard the C.P.L.A. as the most important thing in the labor world in America today, although I have questioned some of the C.P.L.A. policies, especially its apparent hope that the A. F. of L. could be made to come to life.

L. M. C.

Muncie, Ind.

TOM MOONEY IS STILL IN JAIL!

Mortuary Unionism

Enclosed find C.P.L.A dues for 1932. I received your communication in the latter part of 1931 but the struggle for existence kept me busy so I never wrote you. Most of the literature you sent me last year I gave away at the union meetings and city employment office and, as far as the union is concerned, the results were nil.

All through 1931 the building trade here was dead, so most of the members of No. 15 of the bricklayers union, to which I belong, were out of work or did something else if they could get it. Now do not think that any initiative was taken by this local to do anything to relieve the situation of unemployment. They went as far as to give a loan on our dues book and, of course, that depleted the treasury as most of the membership took a loan. While the treasury was going down, the talk on any meeting night was about how to guard their mortuary benefits. It seems to me that most of the members and especially those above fifty years are in the union for a death benefit and nothing else.

This week at the meeting r brought up the question of affiliation with the Pasadena Building Trades Council but it was defeated because of petty differences which occurred years ago.

I shall be glad to have some advice from you as to how to go about the unemployment relief problem in our trade unions here.

I enclose one dollar bill for which send me five or six copies of Labor Age which I will try to sell to the workers.

C. GOODMAN.

Pasadena, Calif.

"Say It With Books"

Unionism In the "New South"

When Southern Labor Stirs, by Tom Tippett. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, Inc. $2.00.

Strike Injunctions in the New South, by Duane McCracken, Ph. D. The University of North Carolina Press. $3.00.

IN Paterson, among our active C.P.L.A. silk workers, I noticed a book going about, from hand to hand, more than any other. One week, one worker had it; the next week, another. It led to much comment. It was a red-covered book, Tom Tippett's little saga of Southern textile workers' revolt.

The militant textile worker of the North is always looking toward the South. No matter how badly organized his own section, it is about the South that he is forever talking. If it could be organized, he feels somehow that things would go much better for him. And in a large way, he is right. Driven from his last Northern outpost, the manufacturer will invariably turn to the "cheap and contented" native labor below the Mason and Dixon line. Just as once he relied on wave after wave of European immigration.

In 1929, and early 1930, the psalm-singing "poor white trash" of the Southern textile mills gave the manufacturers a bad spell of it. Elizabethton, Marion, Gastonia and Danville are names which mark historic battles in American labor history. There was unrest beyond these particular places. South Carolina was ablaze. North Carolina had many other points of abortive uprisings.

Tom Tippett was close at hand, in all these rebellions, and has made a thorough study of what took place and why each one failed. His is the most helpful book on the labor struggle in the South available today.

Throughout each fight, there runs the story of the indifference of the American Federation of Labor to the urgent financial requirements of the union involved and the strikers. In Elizabethton, the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief collected thousands of dollars to assist the union; other individuals and groups cooperated and the United Textile Workers itself spent large sums out of its treasury. "But organized labor as a whole did not come to the financial assistance of this new and significant revolt."

As to the conclusions of the various struggles: In Elizabethton, the United Textile Workers entered into a stupid arrangement, whereby E. T. Wilson was installed as personnel man for the Prussian concern there, and became the "impartial person" to pass upon all questions at issue. Result: Strike and union were completely crushed. Mr. Wilson had come from Passaic, by the way, "where he had won a notoriously anti-union reputation." Granting that lack of funds, the brute force of the foreign corporation and the use of Tennessee's soldiers had beaten down the workers, the acceptance of the terms by the union was little less than an unpardonable deception of the striking men and women.

The Gastonia strike, weakened by dissensions and expulsions of leaders from the Communist Party and the National Textile Workers Union, was finally destroyed by the legal reign of terror instituted there.

The Marion strike was "smothered" with "the strikers' own blood." Here again, in the post-strike period, the U. T. W. showed a weakness and vacillation that is difficult to explain. Were it not for Tippett himself and Larry Hogan, there would be little left of the union spirit or remembrance in that little city in the Blue Ridge range.

Danville dittoes Elizabethton. After excellent organizing work on the part of Frank Gorman, he made a pitiful retreat through an alleged "settlement" that turned a defeat into a disaster.

In the greatly advertised Southern campaign, which followed the Marion and Elizabethton ventures, the A. F. of L. again got little beyond the talking stage. It made many blunders. In the South, as in the country as a whole, the pussy-footing of the A. F. of L. "is cutting its own throat." As the author so aptly says: "The American Federation of Labor must either change its policy or it will decline and be moved off the field as other labor organizations have before it. . . . The American Federation of Labor can take it (the southern revolt) or leave it alone, but down underneath the southern unrest is a germ with a will to live that neither mobs nor massacres nor prisons can extinguish."

The militant, realistic viewpoint of the C.P.L.A. is needed in the South. We are glad, after we read this book, that Larry Hogan is down there, as a precursor of other leaders of the new unionism that the South will see arise.

Dr. McCracken's work is a study of the injunction in the industrial South based on five specific cases. It is indicative of the newness of the labor struggle in Dixie, that injunctions have played no real role there until in recent years. Dr. McCracken takes as his cases, those against the Raleigh and Asheville typographical unions, and against the textile strikers in Elizabethton, Marion and Danville.

Dr. McCracken's conclusions may be characterized as a "liberal" indictment of the injunctive process. He finds that it does not serve, as a rule, to curb those things which are the alleged reasons for its use.

Those who are conversant with the industrial struggle know that the sole reason for the anti-labor injunction is as a strikebreaking weapon. The same thought may be gleaned from Dr. McCracken's study. Its chief practical value, to any one in the labor movement, is as a source-book on which to base arguments against the injunction (in the South), and also as a means of information as to how the injunction may be defeated. That can be learned by reading between the lines.

There are several minor errors in regard to the titles of labor officials that might make one uneasy as to the accuracy of the remainder of the work did not a checking-up show it to be a careful study.

And thus, fellow-workers, we see the South emerging as a duplicate of the North: with soldiery, the injunction and crude "legal" forces allied against the

workers. But we also see something else: A fresh view of unionism, a rumbling among these "100 per cent, native born Americans," the beginning of the rise of the Anglo-Saxon poor white. There is bitterness there; likewise, hope. And there is promise of a new day of rebellion, not so far distant.

LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ.

GERMANY, The Key to the International Situation by LEON TROTZKY Published by The Pioneer Publishers. Price 10 cents.

Leon Trotzky, long known as "Lenin's cudgel," deals another devastating blow to the leadership of the Comintern in his book on German Fascism. In fact it is said that the publication and circulation of this pamphlet aroused the ire of Stalin to such an extent that Trotzky was banished for life. Certainly neither banishment, name-calling nor heresy-hunting can effectively meet the reasoned argument set forth in this pamphlet.

Beginning with Spain, England, France, the United States, China and finally Germany, Trotzky shows "what a frightful instrument of the disorganization of the revolutionary consciousness of the advanced workers, the present Comintern leadership represents!"

He defines fascism as "a product of two conditions: a sharp social crisis on the one hand, the revolutionary weakness of the German proletariat on the other." Responsibility for this weakness he ascribes to social-democracy and to the official Communist Party of Germany, whose "resolutions and other documents are, unfortunately," according to Trotzky, "only snapshots of the rear end of the historical process." The policy of the present leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has become "Leave us in peace!" The leadership of the German Communist Party is drifting gradually toward the dangerous theory that, "Fascism is growing unrestrained; its victory is inevitable in any case; instead of 'blindly' throwing ourselves into the struggle and permitting ourselves to be crushed, it is better to retreat cautiously and to allow Fascism to seize power and to compromise itself. Then, oh! then—we will show what we can do."

He characterized this attitude as "a betrayal of no lesser historical proportions than the betrayal of the social democracy on August 4, 1914." He warns that the victory of the German "National Socialists" would mean "the extermination of the flower of the German proletariat" and the waging of war against the U.S.S.R. with the Hitler government as the "executive organ of world capitalism as a whole."

Against this policy of capitulation and treachery Trotzky calls for the unity of the workers "in the name of self-defense." "Every factory must becoome an anti-Fascist bulwark," and he declares that, "Should Fascism come to power, it will ride over your skulls and spines like a terrific tank. Only a fighting unity with the social democratic workers can bring victory."

One is reminded in reading the pamphlet of the criticism made of Trotzky by Joaquin Maurin, the Spanish revolutionary leader. Trotzky is vague, he declares, and while "always right in his criticisms, does not always define his tactics with necessary exactness."

The entire orientation of the pamphlet is directed toward correcting the policy of the official Communsit Party. While this attitude may be correct for the Soviet Union, where the Communist Party is the sole and the ruling party, it is simply futile and meaningless when applied to conditions in Germany and other capitalist countries. It is difficult to understand why Trotzky does not approach the militant, social-democratic workers and even leaders, who are willing to unite in a common front against Fascism. To hope for reform or change of line among the present bigoted and supine followers of Stalin, is to fail to translate an apparently correct criticism and approach into concrete action and reality. In Trotzky's hesitancy to openly approach the social-democratic militants, we are reminded of John Alden's endeavor to woo the beautiful Priscilla in behalf of his friend, Miles Standish. And we are tempted to ask, "Why don't you do it yourself?"

B. M.

The Way Out of the Depression, H. F Arendtz, Houghton Mifflin. $1.
Distributed Leisure, L. C. Walker, Century Co. $2.25.

The Riddle of Economics, E. E. Garrison Macmillan. $2.50.

CAPITALIST society is undeniably very sick and the doctors assemble with their medicines. The diagnosis of Mr. Arendtz attributes the trouble to the fact that while the increase in the production of goods is three per cent, the gold by which they must be exchanged increases at only two per cent. That and the drain on gold caused by the demonetization by India and by the debauch of speculation in the United States have caused the slump in prices instead of the desired stability. An increase in prices is now the necessary tonic and Mr. Arendtz's "cure" is the remonetization of silver (preferably by international agreement) at the ratio of 30 to one of gold. What Mr. Arendtz fails to give is a guarantee that the ratio will hold any more than when it was fixed at 15 and 16 to one. Some of the proponents of silver suggest a ratio of twenty. To have two measures of value would be like having two measuring tapes always liable to alter in relation to each other. Mr. Arendtz makes out a readable case but he does not see that commodities exchange on the basis of the socially necessary labor needed to produce them and is misled by the price form. He just blames "human nature" for putting its trust in metals and not the credit paper of men. One's suspicion is aroused by a doctor who opposes public works, favors "downward adjustments" of wages to retain the profit level and who, to make the patient gulp down the medicine of bimetallism, threatens him with the bogey of the "Moscow Soviet."

The main remedy of Mr. Walker is for manufacturers to keep on their full working force with no cut in hourly and daily rates but with a reduction in the working week, the leisure to be distributed in "useable packages." Undoubtedly underemployment is not so dangerous to capitalism as unemployment, but the whole diagnosis of Mr. Walker is based on the idea that the American worker gets such a high "incentive wage" that he can afford to lose two or three days a week without being troubled. And if these days are considerately given to the worker in a row, or a week or a month at a time, then he can fix up trips and otherwise plan to enjoy his leisure. Apparently Mr. Walker is a farsighted business man who unlike some of his colleagues does not fire some of his employees in order to intimidate the others to work longer hours and do more for less pay in what Mr. Walker optimistically refers to as "the recent business depression." However, it can only be wishful thinking which makes him portray an America in which an amazing prosperity has been secured by co-operation between capital and labor with a full acceptance of Taylorism and the incentive wage, i.e., based on productivity. Large sections of grossly underpaid workers are entirely ignored. No doubt his remarks on keeping the production crews intact and his survey of the relations of the over-alls brigade to the white-collar force are suggestive. But he offers a small pill for his capitalist colleagues to swallow while the patient's condition drifts on the need of a major surgical operation.

Colonel Garrison's many pages of garrulous unindexed ramblings cover most of the items which usually figure in a textbook on economics. Marx and Bryan are of the devil but if only the genius

Alexander Hamilton had received the benefit of the author's advice to prevent speculation, things would not have got into such bad shape. Some twenty-eight specific reforms are listed and the most important remedy proposed is that the Bank for International Settlements shall set up a world wide Federal Reserve System. Unemployment insurance is attacked and significantly here again the capitalists are warned that the bogey of world revolution fomented by the Soviet State will get them if they don't look out. Some idea of the author's mentality is indicated by his dismissal of the Marxian philosophy as "the greatest and most ridiculous aberration of any human mind."

M. STARR.

Sling Shots

(Continued from Page 23)

States, was defeated, showed itself abundantly when it came to appropriating billions of dollars for the relief of the banks, the railroads and the coupon clippers. So much so that the otherwise staid Senator Borah was moved to declare: "The government that will not protect its people is flying a flag which is a dirty rag that contaminates the air in which it flies."

Dead Bull

Months ago we were told that prosperity had at last turned the corner with the Hoover Moratorium Boom. Now we find from a strict translation of the Latin, that "mori" means "death," that "torium" comes from "taurus" meaning "bull," and that the moratorium was therefore nothing but "Dead Bull."

The Charge of the Fat Brigade

It must have been a moving sight to see the noble 100 fat boys of the American Federation of Labor, headed by William Green and Matthew Woll, in their hunger march to the White House in behalf of the Costigan-LaFollette Bill. It took just two years of starvation and mass unemployment to kick them out of their arm chairs. If, instead of depending upon these nincompoops, the American workers took to heart the example of the 900 unemployed of St. John, N.F., who smashed their way to the Prime Minister's office and forced his consent to an increased dole, we might see some results.

Powerful Pumps

Attempts to revive the Dead Bull of capitalist recovery are now being made through the introduction of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Steagall-Glass Bill and later the sales tax. As the Annalist puts it, "today's flow of business 'confidence' suggests the action of powerful pumps." But we predict, despite these efforts to inject oxygen into the decayed carcass, the Dead Bull will remain a Dead Bull.

Fasting Good for the Brain

Fasting stimulates the brain say certain scientists. Maybe this is the reason that the Reno Public Library boasts of an increase in circulation from 17,772 books for the first month of 1931 to 19,521 books in the first month of 1932. Here's hoping that the depression will knock sufficient sense into our heads to dump this crazy old system into the scrap heap.

A Lot of Small Fry

On February 19, the Chaplain of the House, opened with the following prayer: "So we come, blessed Lord, with our conscious smallness and insufficiency." Chorus from the House, "Amen." At least they admit it.

Our Dear Departed

The disintegration of the Hoover administration is evidenced by the recent resignation of Andy Mellon, himself, who is declared to have been "the only United States treasurer who had three presidents serve under him." We are reminded of the words of William Allen White in the Emporia Gazette at the time of the Teapot Dome Oil scandal

"Mellon is next," said White. "Gradually the axe is approaching the neck of Andrew W. Mellon. He can see the block and smell the blood where fell the illustrious heads of Newberry, Fall, Denby, Daughter of William J. Burns."

Now that the axe has fallen, we can expect Ogden Mills to carry out just as faithfully, the duties of U. S. Treasurer in the interests of Wall Street, of which he is a most notorious scion.

A Gold Gibraltar

But Senator Walcott asures us that "By the provisions of this bill (Steagall-Glass), we shall have our reserve of free gold built up so high that it will be a gold Gibraltar that will defy the world financially." The worker has found this gold, thus far, nothing but a millstone about his neck.

Just a Slip

Norman Thomas is declared to have joined with John Dewey in an appeal to liberals for a third party, with Thomas as the Socialist candidate for Presidency on a third party ticket. This move has been brewing for a long period in the minds of such elements as Vladeck, Waldman, Villard and others. The fact that the dispatch was issued from the Socialist Press Bureau in Washington, D. C. certainly casts a shadow of doubt over Thomas' strenuous denial of the charge. Perhaps the period just before the coming Socialist Party convention is not quite ripe for such a declaration.

Truth or Falsehood?

A United Press dispatch declares that the "efforts to start a world revolution against capitalism have been sidetracked in the Soviet Union by the task of creating a successful socialist state within the Soviet frontiers." We have yet to see a repudiation of this dispatch in the columns of the Daily Worker.

Closed Windows

Our Geneva correspondent reports that the Disarmament Conference is being held behind closed windows. The delegates have been forced to do this to keep out the disturbing explosions emanating from the Far Eastern front.

Let's Have a Different Burial

Canadian workers have just buried a steam shovel in celebration of the government's new policy of hand labor. We would recommend that they try to bury the rotten system which prevents mankind from using the steam shovel without accompanying misery and starvation.

Labor's Enemy in the White House

(Continued from Page 5)

president of the American Telephone & Telegraph Co., and head of the current commission explained when he came to Washington.

Today, in the Senate there is being waged a three-year old struggle to enact an anti-injunction bill. In itself it is a pathetic measure, but it represents a long, bitter struggle by Senator Norris, Senator Blaine, and a few others in the chamber to bring to the floor some legislation dealing with this growing evil. The Republican national platform on which Hoover ran in 1928 has a plank promising anti-injunction legislation.

In the three years that the Norris bill dragged its way through the Senate Judiciary committee Hoover, through the reactionary regular Republicans in the Senate, has fought it every step. Time after time he has succeeded in delaying and postponing action. It is now at last the order of business of the Senate—and the President and his Republican cohorts are openly fighting it and denouncing it as a dangerous, radical device designed to undermine the authority and integrity of the courts of the land.

Does this seem funny—then wait a few months until the Hoover re-election campaign gets underway and you will be able to read and hear what a great friend and comfort he has been to the American worker. William Nuckles Doak, his "labor skate" Secretary of Labor, will make numerous and vehement speeches acclaiming his labor "record" and denouncing his critics as Bolsheviks and defamers. Labor "endorsement" will suddenly be forthcoming from strange "unions" and "labor leaders" and will be widely proclaimed by the press.

The good old merry-go-round, bull, blah and hokum, will be in full play. Its the "American system."

Your Electric Bills

(Continued from Page 7)

tional padding for so-called general expenses and especially for "going value," which is merely another word for "good will."

Under these conditions, it has become practically impossible to secure systematic adjustment of rates.

The difficulty has been a lack of a reasonable yard stick in determining the returns to which the companies are entitled. Under the "fair value" rule, based on reproduction costs, the companies have developed special experts whose function is to build up valuations that will justify the rates that are charged. The whole valuation system is unmanageable and unsound. What is necessary is to bring the rates down to actual and necessary cost of furnishing capital for the public service, as is the case for municipal plants.

As to future policy, to the extent that private companies remain, there must be reconstruction of regulation so as to establish definite and manageable yard sticks for rate adjustments. But, in addition, all legal restrictions should be cleared away, and every municipality should be left free to decide for itself whether to rely upon company service under state regulation, or to institute public ownership and operation.

United Mine Workers Convention

(Continued from Page 20)

young and inexperienced and would, of course, change their minds in due time!

Elsewhere in this issue of Labor Age we print communications which illustrate how intense and widespread is the misery among the coal miners, not only in the bituminous fields which have so long suffered, but even in the anthracite where conditions have been comparatively good. One of the major tragedies of this crisis is the fact that the miners' union, which numbered half a million dues-paying members in 1921, is down to about 150,000 today. Never before in this, or perhaps any other generation, have the coal miners been in such sore need of the protection of a powerful and clean union. Not only do they lack such protection but at many points the union actually fights against their real interests.

It is still up to the miners, inspired and helped by militant progressives throughout the land, to develop a militant industrial union, to join with other forces in the building of a labor party, in order to wrest a minimum of justice from the coal operators today, and to prepare for the building of a new economic order under which natural resources will be used for the benefit of the many and not for the profit of a few. It is not likely that this end will be attained by the union, which, according to the report of its international officials to the recent convention, is placing its main reliance on measures now being introduced in Congress by such ardent "friends of labor" as James J. Davis for "stabilization of the coal mining industry by federal government regulation."

The Dress Strike

(Continued from Page 12)

trial Union is concerned, at no time in its entire history was its total lack of influence and prestige shown so markedly as in this strike. In fact, where they did succeed in pulling down a shop, the workers registered with the International.

Manifestly the future belongs to the porgressives, provided they organize and speak out.

At this moment, while the workers are waiting for the three day period, during which prices are to be set, they are witnessing, with much demoralization and discouragement, the fact that the cutters of Local 10 are working furiously turning out work, which there is a strong possibility will be sent to out-of-town non-union shops. The fact that Local 10 is permitted to do this by the International constitutes a blow to the workers and threatens to destroy the possible gains of the strike. The progressives who did the bulk of the work in the strike and who were responsible for its early militancy have been left in the lurch by the International to face the disheartened and disgusted dressmekers.

A Workers' Magazine

Few workers realize the tremendous power of the capitalist journals in keeping them enslaved to their exploiters. The chief purpose of these journals is to make money. To make money they must cater to their advertisers. These advertisers are usually the workers' bosses. Naturally when there is a fight between these bosses and the workers, it is the bosses' side of the story that is told and not the workers'. The bosses are made to appear to be lily white angels criminally attacked by their ungrateful workers.

These capitalist papers also judge the worth of a person not by what he has contributed to the social welfare but by the amount of money he has been able to take from the workers. The great men are the great exploiters. And unless the workers are class-conscious and recognize their enemies they are inclined to believe these stories and to believe that they also have a chance to become "great" men. "In America every mother's son has a chance to become a millionaire or President." This stupid belief sends the workers to the trenches to kill their fellow workers while their exploiters remain safe at home piling up fortunes; it leads them to take the jobs of their fellows who are fighting for better conditions.

For these reasons it is absolutely necessary that workers have their own papers and magazines. But this is not easy. The papers of the workers cannot be run for profit, and no honest paper or magazine of the workers can depend upon advertisements for its revenue. It must depend upon the contributions it receives from its readers and from subscriptions.

Workers, support your own papers and magazines! Subscribe to them, get your friends to subscribe to them. This is one way you can fight your oppressors.

LABOR AGE

The magazine of the workers, by the workers and for the workers.

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