Labor Age

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A CORRECTION

In its February issue, LABOR AGE published a criticism of the way in which the Federated Press handled the story of the indictment and defense of three members of the Tidewater Boatmen's Union—Soderberg, Bunker and Trajer. On further investigation we find that we were inaccurate at certain points. On November 17, 1931, the Federated Press News Service briefly alluded to the arrest of the three men on a dynamiting charge, in a story which led a number of us who read it to the conclusion that these three men were all police dicks and that the organization was purely a racketeering one. Our February editorial was in error, however, in stating that the Federated Press story had named all three men in this connection. It did as a matter of fact mention Soderberg alone. We withdraw also the charge of inference that Federated Press in its failure to print anything about this case other than the story of November 17 or to say anything about the Defense Committee looking after the trial of these workers was motivated by the fact that these men had been involved in factional fights with the Communist Party and was thus acting as a Communist agency. What we are still primarily concerned about is that all militants and progressives should give the utmost support to the Marine Workers Defense Committee of which A. J. Muste is treasurer, which is trying to see to it that these men get a fair trial.

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·LABOR·AGE·

VOL. XXI. April, 1932 No. 4

A NEW high point in CPLA history was reached in the Active Workers' Conference of March 19-20.

It was the most representative gathering of radical American workers, actually engaged in industrial activity, that has been held in many years.

A Workers' Conference—For Action!

The conference smelt of the American soil. These active workers came from steel, anthracite and bituminous coal, silk, wool, cotton, hosiery, printing, the food industries, the needle trades, and other industries. They hailed from Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and the South.

Their reports covered the concrete activities of responsible leaders in their respective groups. Each one of these men and women was grappling with the problem of his fellow-workers in his or her own locality and industry. They came out of the mills and factories about which they talked, and had lived and worked for years in the communities with which they dealt.

Although many of these men and women had met each other for the first time, they had gleaned a common philosophy out of their experiences. It was remarkable how this viewpoint came out of the discussion, automatically and without any lead or prompting upon the part of any individual.

One of the sad cleavages in the American scene has been the chasm that has separated the radicals from the representatives of the mass of the workers. The typical American worker and the typical radical have been miles apart in language, though often close together in thought. Unfortunately, they have been unable to understand each other.

The reports of the delegates to the Active Workers' Conference showed that this difficulty can be overcome. It is the function of the CPLA to bridge this chasm. It has the program and the approach which will bring this needed result. The active workers in themselves personified the union of the radical and the American workingman, familiar with the environment in which he functions.

A more complete picture of the conference is given in an article in this issue. The personnel that it brought together, the program that it adopted, and the spirit that it evoked are encouraging indications of labor action ahead in this country in the coming year.

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THE passage of the Norris Anti-Injunction bill, which outlaws the yellow-dog contract and strictly limits the use of injunctions in labor disputes, as far as federal jurisdiction goes, came after years of dogged effort on the part of the labor movement. It is a sop thrown to hungry and disgusted workers by political and industrial bosses who know that something must be done to pacify the masses in view of the forthcoming elections.

The Norris Anti-Injunction Bill

The law is a gain for labor. There may be a considerable number of concrete instances in organizing campaigns and strikes where it will give workers more freedom of action than they have had, and even a little of that will go a great way in the United States today! On the whole the passage of this legislation so long desired and fought for, has been greeted by the labor movement in a sober way, and that is perhaps a hopeful sign that the movement is growing up and not inclined to "count its chickens before they are hatched." Back in 1913 the Clayton Act, which also outlawed injunctions in labor disputes, was hailed as the Magna Charta of Labor. The courts soon demonstrated that they, and not Congress, made the laws and that the courts still believed in injunctions. We may as well make up our minds that reactionary judges still have some tricks up their sleeves. Fellows like Wilkerson of Chicago and McIntosh of the state of Washington, who have been appointed as U. S. Circuit Judges by President Hoover, and whose confirmation is pending in the Senate, can be counted upon to emasculate almost any pro-labor laws that Congress may write on the statute books.

When labor makes the judges—better still, when labor is ready militantly to ignore injunctions and to take the civil rights which belong to it, then and then only will there be some chance that anti-injunction laws will be respected.

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SOME months ago, when Jimmy Walker was in the headlines of the Mooney case and there were excited rumors that Tom would be a free man before Christmas, LABOR AGE acted "the man from Missouri." We said we would have to see Tom freed before we would believe it. Much to our regret the event has justified our attitude of doubt. Tom Mooney is still in jail.

Labor Must Free Mooney

Early in April Governor Rolph of California is supposed to receive the report of his counsellors on which his decision in the Mooney case is to be based. But already there are rumors that now he will wait with announcing his decision until after the California primaries in May. And after that there will be summer when it is too hot in California for decisions on such delicate subjects as the Mooney case. And after that a national election will be coming along. Always a sufficient excuse to keep Mooney still living in ghastly suspense.

Playing politics with human feeling and with human life is, of course, so common in these United States that it has become very hard to get people stirred up about it. That the shameful exhibition should still go on after fifteen years in a case which has become symbolic, as Mooney's has, is an insult to the American labor movement. But it is an insult which that movement has brought upon itself by its apathy, its weakness, its toadying to the capitalists and to the capitalist point of view. As one proof that American labor is entering upon a new day, let us rise up and demand more insistently and more militantly than ever an immediate, unconditional pardon for Mooney. All militants and progressives should be bombarding Governor Rolph at this most critical juncture in the Mooney case.

United Workers' Action Against Unemployment

PATERSON silk workers, members of the C.P.L.A., picket the State Legislature at Trenton. City and State police seek to stop them. They will not be stopped. Result: The Speaker of the Assembly and the President of the State Senate receive them, confer, have the silk workers' memorial on unemployment and non-enforcement of labor laws read before both houses. An official investigation of Paterson silk conditions is ordered by the Senate, and a legislative program for relief and labor law enforcement is assured the delegation.

This is the beginning of agitation in New Jersey by organized workers for action on unemployment. It will lead much further than the mere picketing at Trenton. The important thing is that it has behind it the support and good will of the mass of the working people of Paterson and the State.

It is vital that the workers, by industries, be hurled into the fight for unemployment relief. The "great silence" upon the part of the great mass must be broken. Out in Detroit, it is true, there is a march of the unemployed under the Communists. Ford-inspired police brutally murder three of the marchers. The act broadcasts the out-of-work issue through the public prints. The hypocrisy of the "benevolent" auto lord is partially exposed. But Moscow dictation to the Communists builds a great wall between those workers who are needed for any great change and this signal to them for action.

An official in the *Daily Worker* (March 31) hit upon the difficulty precisely. Speaking of the Communist-controlled National Miners' Union, he said: "It is a union for the miners rather than of the miners.'" The Communist unemployment campaign reacts on responsible workers in the various industrial groupings in much the same way. It is a movement for them rather than of them, and apparently remains so.

At the same time, the workers are bedeviled by such efforts at fake relief as the New York "block-aid" campaign. While the Detroit massacre is taking place, J. Pierpont Morgan comes out of his hole to plead that the poor give to the unemployed. Newspapers report that there is a tremor in his voice as he refers to the "inability" of the government and the rich to act. Happily, the ordinary worker is waking up. His reaction is: "Why don't Morgan give all himself?" That remark was heard repeatedly the day after the radio speech of the Wall Street King.

That Norman Thomas should have endorsed this bosses' relief campaign seems almost incredible, save that the *New Leader* (April 3) publishes the speech in full as testimony to the growing confusion of the Socialist Party. While stating at length the inadequacy of block-aid and putting forth Socialist proposals for legislative relief, nevertheless, Thomas ended: "Meanwhile, let everyone give as best he can, as much as he can, through the best agency he can find in this crisis." At this hour, it would seem more appropriate for a radical leader to advise the workers not to "give" but to take. Further than that, it was certainly out of place to speak for that campaign rigged up by the bankers and the bosses and devised by them as a smoke screen for real relief. Had the effort been under workers' control, there might have been an excuse for speaking, although the constant attempt to substitute inadequate "charity" for justice has become nauseating.

Clearly, what is needed is an American revolutionary movement which can stir the unions first and then the rest of the workers into aggressive activity on this issue. A united workers' effort is called for, basing itself on American conditions, and moving the organized working people into action. Beginning at the beginning, where the jobless find themselves, it can step forward with events. "Bread and Clothing and Shelter" is the first demand, that will lead on to others.

For the unions: some have sought to meet the unemployment among their membership by use of union funds. Putting aside those cases in which there has been mismanagement of these funds, the method will shortly prove to be totally inadequate. Much better would it be for the unions to spend a smaller percentage of their moneys in a determined drive for governmental relief for those out of work. Such large sums would not be taken from the union treasuries, thus weakening them. And the final outcome would be more effective and more permanent.

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The Wagner Bill

THE principle that the federal government should give direct aid for starving and unemployed American workers must be established. Workers demand such action as a right. The LaFollette-Costigan bill providing for such direct federal aid was defeated by a bi-partisan combine of Republicans and Democrats. The only legislation looking in this direction now pending before Congress is the so-called Wagner bill, S. 3696, providing an appropriation of $375 million by the federal government as loans to states for relief of the unemployed, and an additional $375 million for highway construction. The bill is pitifully inadequate, both because of the amount appropriated for relief and because it camouflages the real situation, by proposing that the federal government make a loan to the states instead of coming out flatly for relief. It is understood that Senators LaFollette and Costigan propose to try to get amendments adopted which would provide for direct and uncamouflaged federal aid. These amendments should be supported. In addition, the Wagner bill should also be supported, inadequate as it is, in order that the responsibility of the federal government for starving workers may be driven home insistently. That can be done more effectively by support of a measure, however inadequate, than by a merely negative attitude. All militants and progressives should make individual and organized efforts to bring pressure to bear upon the senators and congressmen to vote for the LaFollette and Costigan amendments and for the Wagner bill, even if amendments improving it cannot be gotten at this time.

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The German Elections and After

HINDENBURG is to be president of the German Republic for another term, or so much of it as he may live. That is the outstanding result of the recent German elections carefully analyzed in an article by Alice Hanson in this issue of LABOR AGE. The situation there today shapes up about like this: All the various parties have probably gone as far as they can within the limits of parliamentary action. If the international bankers do something fairly effective about reparations; if the Geneva Disarmament Conferences and other agencies manage to quiet the atmosphere in Europe and to restrain the war forces; if Hindenburg can live a few years longer and so serve as a rallying point for the queer variety of parties and groups, including the Social Democrats, responsible for his re-election, then the German Republic (alias the Bruening dictatorship) and the capitalist economy in Germany can manage to live a while longer. Should any of these very shaky props break down, then a crisis would arise which would probably not be settled at the polls.

Distress Among the Miners

SUFFERING and chaos of the worst kind mark the situation practically everywhere in the mining regions as Spring comes along. In Illinois and Indiana the contract between the United Mines Workers and the operators expired at the end of March. The operators want to slash wages. The miners are making a desperate effort to retain what wages and conditions they have. A month of conferencing by the operators and the union led to nothing. So now the mines in these two states are shut down tight.

Some say that the suspension will last a month, and that during that time some agreement will be reached. Others say that heaven (or perhaps hell) only knows when the miners in these states, whose wages are after all still higher than in the scab fields of Kentucky and other states, will ever work again.

How the miners are going to be fed now that the little work they did have is gone, is another huge question mark.

One thing may be safely said, namely, that John Walker and the other leaders of the Illinois miners are making a tremendous mistake in conducting the battle for a new contract, if battle it can be called, chiefly by just sitting down and waiting until the next conference comes along. Now would be the time for rallying the miners by mass meetings of all the men, those who have recently had work and those who have not, by marching on City Halls, County and State Capitols, by demanding relief, by agitating for a labor party. By such means the working class would be made more powerful, alert and intelligent, the only way in which they can get anything out of the present terrific distress.

In the Hocking Valley in Ohio a spontaneous revolt broke out recently against further wage cuts. John L. Lewis' administration has now called out all the miners in Ohio. Thousands have responded. Lewis' game presumably is to bolster up the strike in the unionized fields of Illinois and Indiana by means of this Ohio walkout. Lewis can ill afford to lose the revenue he still has coming from the former states. That the Lewis forces will conduct the kind of fight in Ohio which will get the men anywhere is very doubtful. However, the situation among the Ohio miners is desperate and there may be real fireworks in that state before the present revolt is quelled. It is a pity that the resources and personnel of the C.P.L.A. are as yet not big enough to give the help so sorely needed in this situation.

Harlan and Bell Counties in Kentucky are keeping up their record of re-action and terrorism. Recently college students who went down to give relief to the miners who are virtually imprisoned by the operators' forces in these Counties, were met by armed force and evicted from the neighborhood. We hope that more and more delegations of all kinds will make the effort to penetrate this feudal stronghold. Where, especially, are the Southern liberals who ought to resent this Kentucky situation and insist that the iron wall around these Counties must be broken down and at least a semi-civilized condition restored? Let Fascism be fastened upon the mining regions of Kentucky and the same tactics that work there will presently be used in every important industrial dispute that takes place in this country!

The collapse of the "outlaw" strike in the anthracite is reported in the story of the C.P.L.A. Active Workers' Conference in this issue of LABOR AGE.

West Virginia continues to be the one brightest spot in the mining field. Frank Keeney's confident hope that the West Virginia Mine Workers Union will carry a successful organizing campaign into Mingo and Logan Counties this Spring and Summer is likewise referred to in our report of our Active Workers' Conference.

The newly formed Independent Labor Party of West Virginia held a convention in Charleston on March 26th. Candidates for sheriff and other offices in Kanawha County were nominated. This is to be followed by County conferences for nominating similar officials in the other counties in the Valley.

The platform adopted by the convention is one that we heartily endorse. It states that: "The party is committed to the great fundamental principle that to the worker belongs the full social product of his toil; that labor, applied to the products and forces of nature, is the sole basis of wealth; that the vast creation of labor saving machinery and the consequent socialization of the instruments of production must inevitably lead to social ownership and control."

Among the specific planks in the platform of the West Virginia I.L.P. are demands for a Federal appropriation of not less than $5,000,000,000 for direct relief of the unemployed; State and Federal appropriations for public works; the universal adoption by States and Federal Government of the six-hour day and the five-day week; complete organization of the Workmen's Compensation Department of West Virginia so that it may cease to be a "department of cheap insurance for the employers;" abolition of the strike-breaking Department of Public Safety of West Virginia; enactment of a law forbidding employers to evict employees during industrial controversy; enforcement of constitutional guarantees of economic, political and legal equality for the Negro; complete nationalization of coal mines and legislation providing for control and eventual public ownership of all natural resources and basic industries including banking; opposition to the Sales Tax in any form; higher income and inheritance taxes; tariff reduction; abolition of compulsory military training; recognition of Soviet Russia; repudiation of military intervention by the United States in the affairs of other countries; and independence of the Philippine Islands.

Hope for the miners throughout the country rests in following the policies being worked out by the West Virginia miners on both the economic and political field.

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EVA A. FRANK

The sudden death of Eva A. Frank last month was a great shock. She was a member of the C.P.L.A. and frequently at C.P.L.A. conferences. She gave generously not only of her money but time and trained intelligence to such enterprises as pioneer youth. She was profoundly interested in the industrial activities of the C.P.L.A. in the South, in West Virginia, in the silk, etc., and made it a point personally to visit these scenes of activity and to acquant herself wth the conditions at first hand. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Walter Frank and the other relatives and friends. Our reaction to so sad a loss must be the resolve to battle more vigorously than ever for the new world of justice and brotherhood.

The Active Workers Conference

A REPORT

THE most solid and significant conference that the CPLA has ever held was the Active Workers Conference which met in New York City on March 19 and 20. Nearly 100 men and women who are actually doing CPLA work or identified with union and other activities in which CPLA is playing a prominent part, were in attendance. The states of North Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts were among those represented. The industries included steel, cotton, silk, wool, hosiery, public utilities, anthracite, bituminous, carpenters, electrical workers, garment workers, milliners, clothing workers, food workers and printers.

Nearly 90 percent of the time in the four closely packed sessions was devoted to a discussion of the various industrial situations in which CPLA is active. The remainder of the time was given to the political situation in the United States today and the question of building up the CPLA as an organization, though the latter subject received a good deal of attention indirectly in connection with the discussion of our industrial situations. Nobody made any speeches. Reports, packed in the briefest compass with questions and discussion, took up all the time. This is not to say that some very eloquent utterances were not made, but they were earnest, sensible and concrete, not "hot air."

Chairman Muste set the example by making only a few introductory remarks and then having someone from each delegation introduce its various members. The delegates thus having become somewhat acquainted, Executive Secretary Louis F. Budenz was introduced to lead the discussion on the first main subject on the agenda, namely, What Are the CPLA Policies on the Industrial Field?

Organizing Methods

Under the head of Organizing Methods, Brother Budenz told of the need, frequently, of organizing secretly the key men in a factory or industry under present conditions where anyone known to be at all interested in the organization of himself and his fellow-workers is likely to be victimized; the possibility of holding meetings on the streets or at mill gates and thus carrying on an open campaign as a parallel to the underground work with key individuals; the use of plant or industrial organs which may often be mimeographed sheets, such as the *Hot Saw Sparks* being used by our steel workers or the *Live Wire* of the Brotherhood of Edison Workers; and under certain special conditions the use of a mail campaign. Our position that wherever an A. F. of L. union is in existence we regard it a part of our function to stimulate and force that union into progressive and militant activity was reaffirmed. At the same time it was definitely recognized that the unorganized must be organized, and that where the A. F. of L. unions simply refuse to act, the work must nevertheless be carried on independently.

The Conference agreed whole-heartedly with Brother Budenz in his assertion that we must set ourselves more determinedly than ever against "union-management cooperation," that is, any scheme which makes it a real part of the union's function to step up production and increase profits for the boss. It was pointed out that it has now been clearly demonstrated that under such union-management plans wages are stepped up very slowly in good times and not prevented from falling in bad, and that while some few workers may get steadier jobs, the plan aggravates the throwing of men out of employment by speeding up the mechanization process. Mechanization as such we recognize we cannot oppose, but the cry of shorter hours, opposition to any form of speed-up and demand for nationalization must be raised at every new development in mechanization or more effective plant organization.

At the close of all the various discussions on our industrial situation, Brother Budenz presented a summary of the points to be stressed in CPLA industrial activity in the present period This summary is printed in full elsewhere in LABOR AGE.

Work in the Coal Fields

Frank Keeney described in a way that profoundly stirred the Conference the struggle for unionization among the soft-coal miners in West Virginia since 1900; the Armed March of 1919 and 1920, when the miners of the Kanawha Valley attempted to break down the citadel of non-unionism in Logan and Mingo Counties; the smashing of the union under the Lewis regime; the rebuilding of the union in the Kanawha Valley with the help of CPLA and Brookwood forces during the past year; and the launching of the Independent Labor Party of West Virginia. He announced that union organizers had quietly been making a careful survey of the situation in Logan and Mingo Counties, and that he was confident that during the forthcoming Spring and Summer these counties would for the first time in American labor history be enrolled under the banner of unionism. He asserted that the miners in these counties are eager to follow the leadership of the West Virginia Mine Workers Union. "Such a gathering as this," Keeney declared, "makes it certain that we shall build in America a labor movement which will be truly militant and through which the workers will take hold of industry and government and run them for their own benefit."

Dennis Shaw, N.E.C. member from the anthracite, outlined conditions in that industry—the shutting down of many colleries, the indirect wage cuts being put into effect and the autocracy exercised by the officialdom over the membership. He was not optimistic over the outcome of the "outlaw" strike then just getting under way, on the ground that there had not been enough preparation, that the progressive and militant forces were not united, and that the leadership of the "outlaw" movement was not clearly militant and progressive. It seems to be too much a case of "outs" who wanted to get in. Shaw declared, however, that the purpose of the strike, namely, enforcement by the operators of the contract which they had signed with their men; resistance to wage-cutting; and equalization of working time, were correct and that now that the men were out we ought to give them support. Accordingly a message of greeting was sent to the striking anthracite miners. We pointed out, however, that only by uniting on sound principles and joining forces with the progressive elements in the bituminous in trying to build a clean miners' union from top to bottom, could the anthracite miners succeed. The subsequent course of the anthracite strike which was called off by its leaders at the opening of this month fully confirmed Shaw's analysis.

Hogan in the South

The activities in the Southern textile field were outlined by Larry Hogan, N.E.C. member and Southern representative of the CPLA. The account of his Southern Industrial League and his Progressive Farmer League, each affiliated with the CPLA, has been given in a recent issue of LABOR AGE. Necessarily most of our activities in the Southern textile mills are not at the present time of such a kind that they can be given publicity. It is interesting to note, however, that an Independent Labor Party may be under way this Summer in the section of North Carolina in which Hogan is chiefly active. During Hogan's stay in New York he addressed a group of people on his work, who were so profoundly impressed by its importance as well as its romance that they are banding themselves together to underwrite these activities next year.

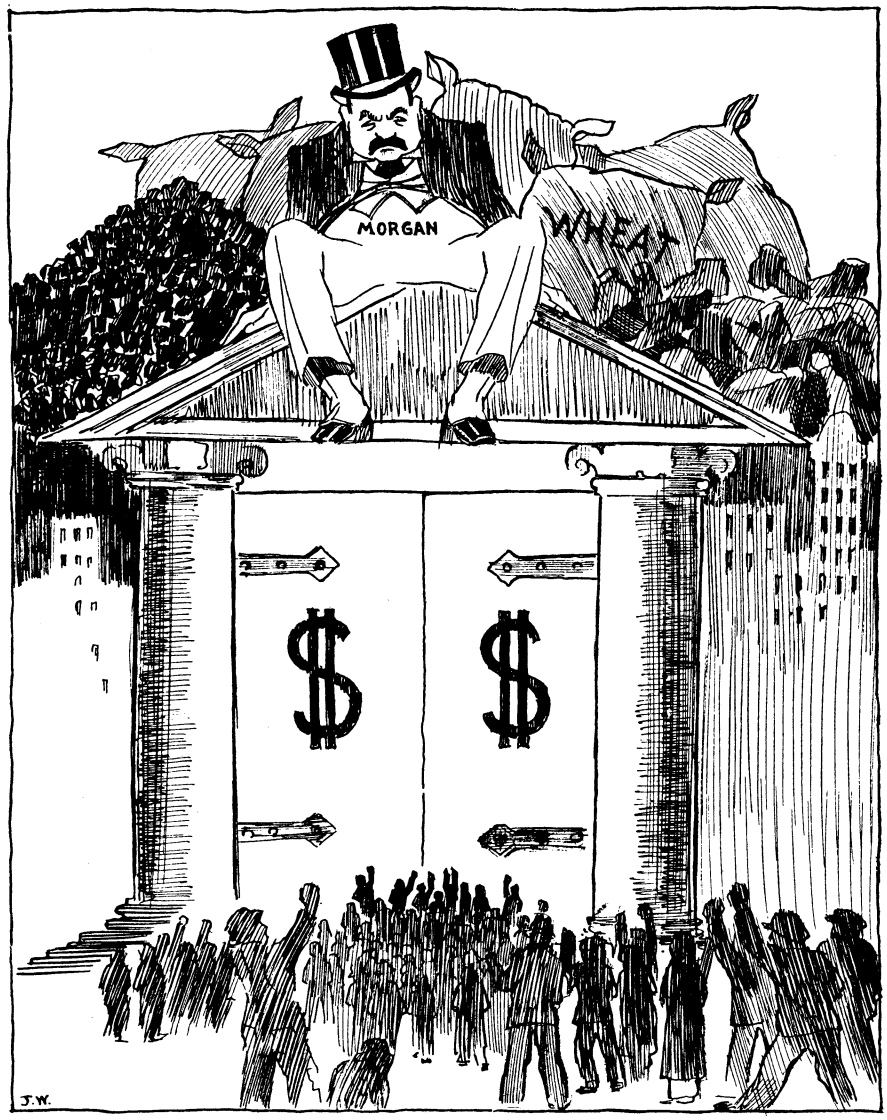
Steel

Elmer Cope and Lem Strong of the N.E.C. and George Parsons and Bill Matthews, well-known young leaders among the steel workers in the Middle West, reported on various aspects of the steel situation. Our work there has a two-fold aspect. On the one hand, it has aimed at putting new spirit into the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers and bringing a new leadership to the front in that organization, using that organization insofar as possible for more aggressive work among the unorganized than it has engaged in for a good many years. On the other hand, our workers recognize that it may in the end prove impossible really to revive the Amalgamated, and that in any case for the present it touches only the smallest portion of the steel workers. Therefore the work of building up groups who will serve as organizing centers among their fellow-workers in places absolutely untouched now by the Amalgamated is also going on. There is possibility of another general wage-cut in steel before long, though it may be that the operators will attempt to gain the same result by indirect methods. Plans are being made to deal with a fresh wage-cutting offensive if such develops.

New England Textiles

William Mitchell and Thomas Shearer, President and Vice President, respectively, of the American Textile Workers' Union of Lawrence, Mass., reported that their organization had just held the best attended meeting since the strike. Thousands of textile workers in Lawrence have never gotten their jobs back since the strike and by various means new wage cuts are constantly being put into effect. Plans for organizing work, unemployed demonstrations, etc., in Lawrence, were discussed. In addition to Lawrence the condition in Cheney's in Manchester and a number of other New England textile centers was reported on.

Jimmie Richards of Connecticut, well-known textile organizer for years, made an impassioned plea for the CP LA to undertake large-scale campaigning in textiles. "The U.T.W. itself," said Richards, "will certainly not do the job. We in New England want action. The organization that will offer leadership to New England textile workers and show fight will get them. That is why so often even the National Textile Workers gets a following. The trouble is that when they are through with a battle, there is nothing left to show for it. The Socialist Party is dead so far as I am concerned. I would rather accept an offer I have had to run for office on the Democratic ticket in my town than put hope for working-class victory in the S.P. Our organization ought to have some kind of political basis. In the old days, before and during the war, the old Socialist locals were the places where militants were found and from which they went out into urgent industrial battles. New England textile workers are waiting and ready for the CPLA to offer inspiration and leadership."



BLOCK—aid Jack Weimars

Hosiery Workers

Eddie Ryan, Jr., and Eddie Ryan, Sr., pointed out that the hosiery mills were shutting down and that the tem-

porary spurt in work which the union mills received because of their ability to undercut the non-union mills after the terrific wage reduction accepted by the hosiery workers union under its last agreement, had apparently spent itself. They stated there was an increasing amount of unrest against the agreement among the rank and file not only in Philadelphia but in other sections of the country, and that it was very important to continue to stimulate the organization of this opposition.

National Federation of of Silk Workers

Gerry Nauta, member of our Paterson branch and leader of the jacquard workers in Paterson during the general strike last summer, reported for the Paterson branch in the absence of Chairman Brooks, who unfortunately was unable to be present. Nauta stated that in the opinion of the silk workers of Paterson, who had had a great deal of experience with organizations and leaders of all kinds, the general strike of last summer led by the CPLA was "the best strike Paterson ever had." He pointed out also that something unprecedented had occurred when the CPLA gave even more attention to the Paterson situation after than it had during the strike. He reported that the first conference of U.T.W. locals looking toward the formation of a National Federation of Silk Workers had taken place in Easton, and that a second conference was to take place in Allentown on Sunday, April 10. He and Brooks of the CPLA are among the representatives of the Paterson workers in these conferences. Steps are being taken to see to it that the National Federation of Silk Workers is made a real and not merely a paper organization, that it shall be in the control of the membership and not merely consist of a board of paid officials, and that it shall inaugurate, even if necessarily on a small scale to begin with, a national silk organizing campaign leading up to a national strike.

The textile workers present at the conference felt that they had such a large number of common problems which could not be discussed in a general conference, that steps were taken to set up a CPLA textile workers' committee. The textile workers' committee cooperating with the national office in this matter consists of Brooks of Paterson (Nauta serving as a substitute in Brooks' absence); Richards of Connecticut; Shearer of Lawrence; Hogan of North Carolina; Heimbach of Allentown and Eddie Ryan, Jr., of the hosiery workers. Brother Budenz is giving special attention to the organization of a special conference of textile workers which will be held in Paterson on Sunday, April 24.

Food Workers

Following the textile discussion, the situation among the Food Workers in New York was presented by Brother H. Gund, editor of the official organ of the Amalgamated Food Workers' Union. Brother Gund referred with appreciation to the macaroni workers' strike in which Mrs. Budenz and other CPLA forces had assisted last December. Brother Max Koch, president of the Butchers' local of the Amalgamated Food Workers in Paterson, explained how he had been impressed by the work of the CPLA in connection with the silk workers' strike and that this had led to his organization calling upon the CPLA to advise and assist in an organizing campaign among the food workers in Northern New Jersey. W. C. Montross, who was assigned to this task, supplemented the reports of Brothers Gund and Koch. Considerable progress has been made in adding membership to the union from among the retail butcher shops in Paterson and vicinity. Careful plans are now being made for tackling the establishments of the big packing corporations in Northern New Jersey.

Time allowed for only a very brief report on the Edison public utilities campaign which was presented by Brother Bill Levich, and unfortunately did not allow for any report at this conference on the situation in the garment trades, where some of our young CPLA forces have been building up strength with real rapidity in recent weeks. Anna Kula's report on this subject appears in the present issue of LABOR AGE.

After the presentation of Brother Budenz's summary of our industrial position, J. C. Kennedy, N.E.C. member and instructor in Economics at Brookwood, presented a brief statement on the present political situation in the United States, and particularly in its bearing upon the prospects of the building of a mass labor party, and presented on behalf of the N.E.C. a resolution which was unanimously adopted, and which pledges the CPLA to cooperation with all unions and other organizations which desire to enter into the movement to build a mass labor party. This resolution is of such importance that it is printed in full in the present issue of LABOR AGE.

Following this Chairman A. J. Muste presented a revised Statement of CPLA Principles and Policies which likewise was unanimously adopted by the Conference and is printed in this issue of LABOR AGE. A number of resolutions on the Mooney Defense; the Kentucky Miners' Defense; protesting against the appointment of Judge Wilkerson of Chicago and of Judge McIntosh of the state of Washington, to the U. S. Circuit bench; on the war danger; against any form of sales tax; were adopted and have been forwarded to CPLA members and branches in order that they in turn may carry similar resolutions.

Summary of Conference

What is to be said in summary of the significance of this Active Workers Conference?

1. In composition this conference was of the very highest order. It was definitely working-class, not "intellectual" or dilettante. The delegates represented the finest type of American worker—serious, wanting to see action, revolutionary, but not taking it out in long-winded, theoretical discussion. That the CPLA should be able to get together a group so representative in type, as well as geographically and industrially representative, is itself an evidence that the CPLA possesses something which is needed and valuable in the American labor scene today.

2. The Conference gave impressive evidence of the fact that despite our very slender resources and the special difficulties we are up against because of getting under way in the midst of this severe economic crisis, the CPLA has dug down and has been able to get noteworthy results in a number of places.

3. Those few in the organization, who have complained that in the past half year we have wasted our time in theoretical and political discussion, were conclusively refuted. The Conference demonstrated that there has been more intensive industrial work in the past six months than at any previous period in our history.

4. We must obviously think out our political position more clearly and must take advantage of the great opportunity developed at this Conference and the enthusiasm developed by it, to draw together our forces, clarify our purpose and build up the CPLA as an organization. Not that we think of the CPLA as an end in itself. It is a means for the emancipation of the American working class. That means, however, must be made as sharp, powerful and effective as we can possibly make it.

The Horse and Plow will soon be things of the past—and also the man who follows the plow

The Farmer Fights for His Life

by Arnold Sather

THE story of how desperately farmers are fighting for existence is best told by those who are themselves in the struggle. Mrs. Warren Johnson, a farm woman living in Hardin County, Iowa, tells of her experience. Mrs. Johnson represents a type of farm family in this state which before the war prospered fairly well. For about 25 years she and her husband have worked hard to make a farm home for themselves.

Concerning the period between 1904 and 1920 she writes:

"Those were wholesome, happy days —better rural schools were maintained, roads were improved, Chautauquas sprang up, farm organizations were begun, vast numbers of farm boys and girls were in high schools and colleges. What hard luck we had spurred us on to greater efforts. Life for most of us was a joy until the World War came. Since food was needed for the army most of us were spared seeing our husbands going off to war. We worked early and late to supply food for the army.

"We farmers were urged and forced to buy bonds, not in proportion to the equity in our farms, but according to the wartime value of them. Five, ten, fifteen thousand dollars worth of bonds.

"Many of us," continues Mrs. Johnson, "did not have any money to loan. 'Oh, that is all right,' we were told, 'the banks will be glad to loan it to you—at eight per cent'."

So the farmers borrowed and bought. In 1920 when the bottom fell out of agricultural prices the banks wanted their money back. Farmers sold their bonds for from 80 to 85 cents on the dollar, and paid the eight per cent interest.

Mrs. Johnson points out that as farm prices have fallen, taxes and expenses have gone up. A grain binder which in 1908 cost $100, today costs $225. The price of the hides from a whole car load of cattle will but buy a pair of shoes. Five hundred farms in Hardin County were offered for tax sale in December. "Practically every farmer," she writes, "is unable to pay his taxes, interest or rent. Foreclosures are daily happenings. Well-to-do farmers are among the masses who are losing their homes."

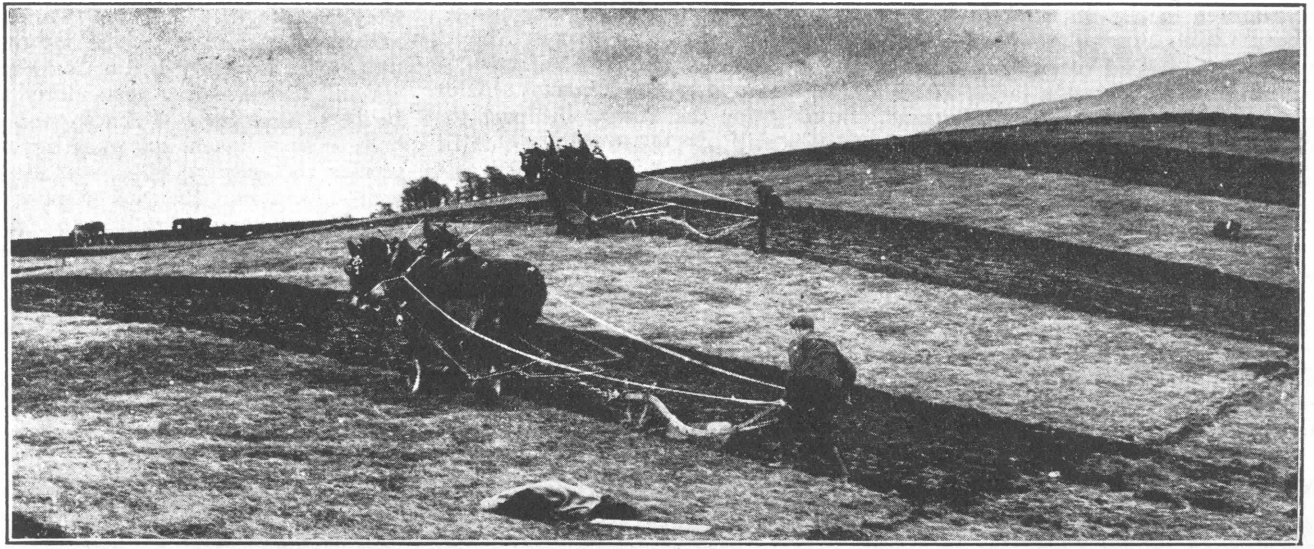
In concluding her story, Mrs. Johnson says: "A few years ago the dance halls were full of farmers trying to drown their worries in the pleasures of the day. Vast crowds flocked to farm picnics, and to hear politicians clamor about our plight. Today, worn out with the struggle, with no money to buy gas or pay the fiddler, we sit at home brooding over our plight. The seriousness of getting food and shelter has so worked on our nerves that husband and wife have becme intolerant with one another, and children and parents are at odds. Life has become a burden. Health is being undermined for lack of care of teeth, etc. There are literally hundreds of toothless farm men and women. Poor health necessitates the pulling of the teeth. Heaven knows when there will be money enough to buy false ones! First the children must be clothed and fed. Money has very largely ceased to be a medium of exchange. Barter is used. The Iowa farmers of 50 are largely a homeless, insolvent, spirit broken class of men."

A Tax Revolt

A tax revolt is on among farmers of Minnesota. When County Commissioners at the county seats in different counties meet, angry farmers by the thousands gather on the court house grounds to protest against the heavy tax burdens. County Commissioners in response to farmer demands try as best they can to "cut" expenses. County officials' salaries are reduced, some are discharged, vocational departments in high schools eliminated, high school staffs reduced, pupil load per teacher increased, school salaries slashed, rural schools closed.

Such is a typical picture of the rural situation in the best farming area in this country. What will be the outcome?

Farmers will forsake the Republican party in droves, and turn to its twin brother the Democratic. Attempts will be resumed by farm leaders to secure the enactment of Federal legislative farm relief measures with "teeth" in them such, for instance, as the equal-



The Horse and Plow will soon be things of the past—and also the man who follows the plow

ization fee in the ill fated McNarry Haugen Bill. Agricultural states will pass laws designed to prevent the organization of corporation farms within their borders. The whole agricultural condition will continue in a state of chaotic flux until—when?

Large scale farming is on the increase in this country. Several large corporation farms in the semi-arid west region are producing wheat at from 25 to 50 cents per bushel. A certain farm in this section which last year comprised 23,000 acres, will this year contain 30,000 acres. The ideal producing unit for wheat, according to the owner of this tract, is from eight to ten times as much, or from 230,000 to 300,000 acres. One thousand acres daily is the standard unit for breaking, sowing and reaping. The manager has an aeroplane which he uses in his supervision. Five motor cycle messengers carry orders and messages.

Cotton and corn too, lend themselves readily to large scale production. Eight thousand acre cotton farms, and 10,000 acre corn farms are not uncommon. In Illinois there is at least one man who manages a 28,000 acre corn farm.

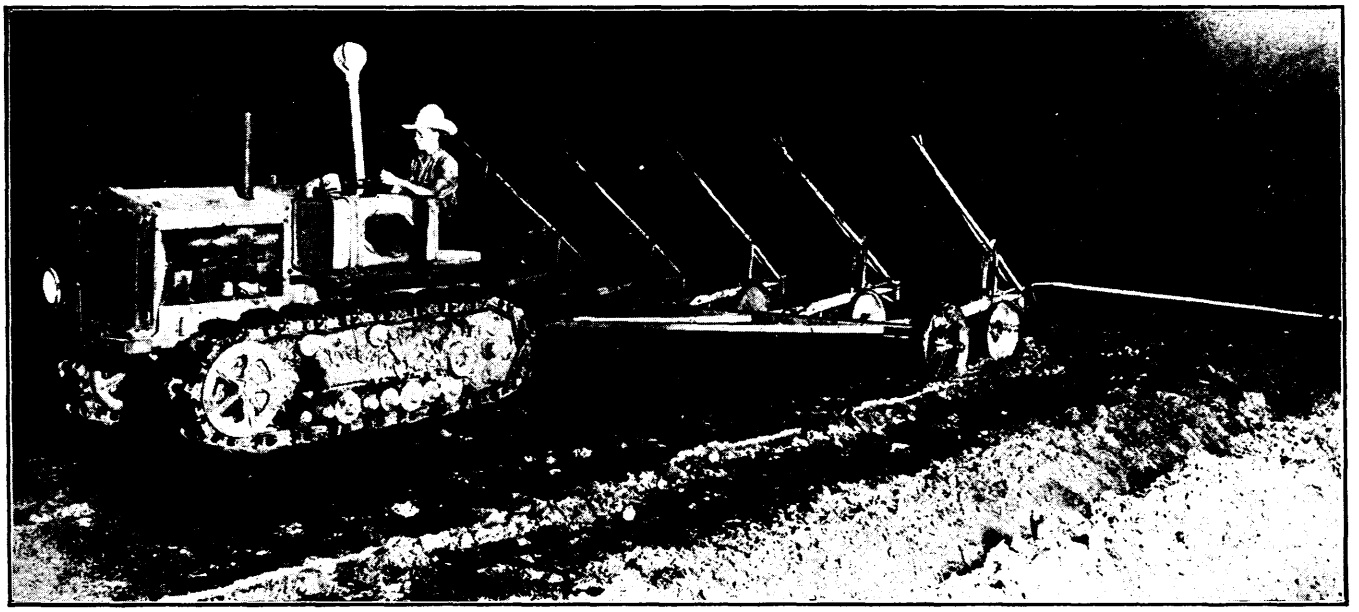
On one large grain factory (which a corporation farm might well be called) there is in use mechanical tractor operation. For plowing, the tractor with plow is guided once round the field by a man. Then the outfit guided by the pilot wheel runs by itself. One man watches and refuels from 12 to 20 such tractors a day.

The Farmer Becomes A Worker

If this is to be the dominant type of farming for the future the part the farmer will play in it will be that of employee. Nor will many of them find employment. Only the strong, young, mechanically inclined men will be sought.

Corporation farming does not any more than the present planlessness in agriculture offer any hope to rural America. It is but another way for man to exploit his fellows.

It is high time that the farmers and workers recognize that their interests are one, and that they unite for their realization. The pity of it is that workers and farmers—and particularly the farmers, have been so conditioned by present environment that they can not yet see the only possible way out of their difficulties. But the pressure of the forces now operating to make people homeless, jobless and penniless may yet clear their eyes. Recently a large group of Canadian farmers in a mass meeting passed a resolution calling upon its government to socialize the farm land. When erstwhile rugged farmer individualists will pass such a resolution, there is yet hope.



Fifteen year old boy plowing at night. This machine is fast making proletarians out of the farmers.

Unemployed Oust Mayor

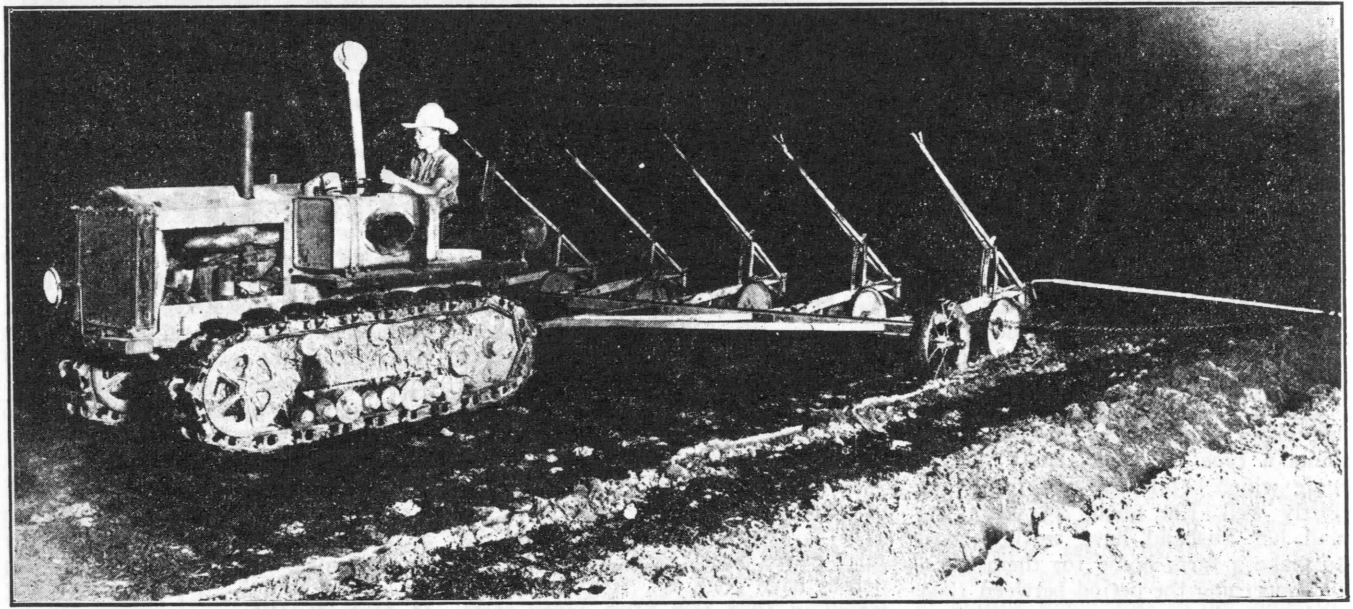
Resentment of the unemployed because of the failure of the Seattle city administration to provide adequate appropriations for work for the jobless was registered at the recent election when John F. Dore, insurgent attorney, defeated Mayor Robert Harlin, trade unionist; and Frank Fitts and Roy Misener, practically unknown candidates, were elected to the City Council, replacing men of long standing.

These men, besides two candidates for the school board and one for the port commission, were given the endorsement and the full support of the Unemployed Citizens League.*

The league, which was organized last fall for the purpose of stressing city and county appropriations for public works, is credited with swinging between 25,000 and 30,000 votes out of the total of 75,000 cast. While for the past three months this organization has been feeding 10,000 families with supplies provided by the county, political consciousness has been developed by the economic situation. With approximately 45,000 unemployed, the refusal of the City Council to provide more than a week's work for 4,765 of these had inflamed sentiment.

The two councilmen who were defeated had made themselves hated by attempting to force the unemployed to work at wages of from $1.50 to $3.00 a day. Mayor Harlin was tarred with the same stick in not opposing this measure until forced to do so by the protests of the Unemployed League and the Central Labor Council.

*This movement was initiated by CPLA members in Seattle.



Fifteen year old boy plowing at night. This machine is fast making proletarians out of the farmers.

"Paterson Can Feed Her Own"

by A Paterson Worker

BELLIGERENTLY announcing to all that "Paterson can feed her own," the rulers and owners of this New Jersey melting pot of numerous races and nationalities, a typical industrial city in the East, are making hopelessly inadequate efforts to relieve the ravages of unemployment, which is involving, according to official figures, almost 40,000 of its 138,513 residents.

Registration of the unemployed in the "silk city" is growing at the rate of 250 a week. By March 25, Good Friday, 11,914 persons, representing 38,147 individuals, some shamefacedly and all helplessly, had brought themselves to the municipal relief headquarters in the old public school building on Fair Street. There they were made to wait in line and publicly announce that they must have the necessities of life provided for them.

In October, 1931, the New Jersey legislature enacted emergency relief legislation. Two years after the depression was under way, the news reached the vigilant authorities of the Garden State that unemployment and its attendant miseries were rampant.

The state aid which these solons provided calls for the creation of an emergency relief administration with control over aid funds, and for an appropriation of approximately $9,000,000 in separate funds to be used by the municipalities and counties from October 13, 1931 to June 1, 1932—municipalities to receive from the state one-half of their expenditures for employment relief (direct work) and 40 percent of their expenditures for dependency relief (straight charity).

The Counties Are Helpless

Passaic county was to spend $240,000 (the state to give half) for work relief. Paterson, the largest city in the county, to date has done nothing. That this helplessness is not a phenomenon indigenous to Passaic county alone, but is the rule throughout the state, is evidenced by the announcement of State Director Chester I. Barnard of the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company, that the various counties are now permitted to receive the state's half of the proposed expenditures without matching dollar for dollar. However, Passaic county's board of freeholders hopefully issues bi-weekly statements to the effect that relief possibilities are not yet dead.

But even if the $120,000 offered by the state were accepted and the program undertaken it would mean employment for only 400 Republicans for twenty weeks at $15 weekly, aiding about 1,600 persons.

In Paterson the Board of Finance has discovered that it cannot appropriate any more money for relief and a $250,000 "voluntary" contribution campaign is under way. There is much questioning now as to what the director of this campaign receives for his work. Is it a "substantial percentage" or a straight sum, such as $6,500, is the question heard.

The Paterson silk workers' branch of the C.P.L.A. has been the chief alert force in that community, driving ahead in a prepared campaign for jobless relief and in attacks upon the vile shop conditions.

Details of the picketing of the State Legislature at Trenton on this score, of the investigation ordered by Senate President A. Crozer Reeves and of what followed that probe will be given in a story in the next issue.

The unemployment relief campaign of the C.P.L.A. in Paterson and New Jersey is just beginning, and more important steps than those mentioned will be taken during the coming month.

A study of the contributors to the drive reveals that workers, lucky to have a job and make their $20, more or less, a week, are being shaken down for two percent of their weekly earnings for sixteen weeks. Girls working in the "five-and-ten" with their grand wages of $8 or so a week are asked to contribute for persons to receive from $1 to $7 weekly.

Nearly $200,000, thus far, has been realized by bleeding the workers in order that the "honor roll" card may be given employers to place in their windows and have their names (free ads) in the newspapers daily. Ask a worker whether he thinks he is being coerced into giving his money for "sweet charity" in order that the 100 percent from his firm may be attained!

The helpfulness of this board of finance can be gauged by the fact that it spent about as much as the amount to be raised for an old Y.M.C.A. building which is still empty and useless.

Number of Unemployed

In attempting to estimate the number of unemployed it is important to bear in mind that a large number who are in need have for various reasons not registered for relief. This number it is of course imposible to estimate accurately.

No occupational analysis has yet been made and is not expected to be made for several years. But a cursory survey indicates that of the nearly 12,000 individuals who have registered asking relief about 80 percent are industrial workers.

According to the census of 1930 there are 62,860 persons gainfully employed in Paterson of which 10.7 percent are under 20 years of age. Of these 62,860 persons 35,382 non-industrial workers, leaving 27,382 non-industrial or white collar workers. Thus on a proportionate basis there are probably 5,000 white collar workers in the same situation as the industrial workers. A large number of these white collar workers to whom poverty is a new sensation find it repugnant to admit need for public charity and as a result become burdens upon relatives and friends.

Relief administrators do not know and are actually in fear of knowing the correct number of needy men, women and children, for they are aware that the facilities and resources of the city and state are in no way competent to meet the actual situation.

But a conservative estimate of the unemployed in Paterson would place the number at nearly 20,000. And this number does not include part time workers nor workers, of which there is a large number, who are barely able to eke out a living with full time work.

Feeding Her Own

Leaving the great numbers of unemployed and unregistered to hope for an early summer let us now consider the relief administration in the city. Of the 12,000 registered, 532 have received employment in private firms. How many of this number are still working is not known. Work on public parks has meant wages for 429 more at the rate of $20 weekly every other week.

(Continued on page 17)

When Workers Know Their Onions

by Larry Heimback

The author of this article was one of the leading actors in the Allentown general silk strike of last year. He was the prime mover in making arrangements for the novel farm project and in getting it under way. At present a student at Brookwood, he is getting ready to go back into the field to cooperate in further organization of the silk workers.
—EDITORS.

HAVE you ever thought of the possibility of strikers raising their own relief — literally raising it? The textile workers of Allentown, Pa., did just that in their 1931 strike. With 20 acres of ground and $100 for seeds, plowing, and rental, we raised enough potatoes, corn, beans, cabbage and other vegetables to practically feed 300 needy families and maintain a soup kitchen for the pickets and active workers during the three months of the strike. Our farm raised more than garden truck, too—it raised our morale.

The strike, a spontaneous one, began on April 23 when the workers in the Majestic silk mill walked out in protest against a 10 per cent wage cut. In less than 10 days 5,000 workers from 32 mills were out on strike. With no organization in the beginning (the United Textile Workers did not come in until after the strike was in progress) and very little outside aid, relief was an immediate problem. And it was solved locally to a very great extent.

Somehow it didn't occur to us to make a widespread appeal for funds. We organized dances (and made $700 on one of them), a bazaar netting $800 to which local merchants contributed everything from necklaces to floor lamps, a popularity contest on which we cleared $1,500; card parties, picnics, a show in one of the local theatres—every means of making money in Allentown we could think of. But our farm project was the most far-reaching activity, not only because of the food it furnished but because it was a genuinely co-operative enterprise.

We Begin Farming

We found a 20-acre tract of good land within walking distance of union headquarters. This belonged to a railroad company which would not lease it to the union direct but agreed to do so through the local welfare association. As we were already two weeks behind the regular planting time, the usual horse-and-plow preparation was out of the question. We hired a farmer who had a caterpillar tractor and disc harrow and he completed the plowing in two days with our eager if somewhat awkward help.

Three men solicited various seed houses and nearby farmers for seeds and potatoes for planting. Another group got together hoes, rakes, buckets, spraying materials, etc. The response was surprising. Most of the seed and implements were donated and many people gave cash besides. Even the local Sears-Roebuck store came across with a tank sprayer and a wheel barrow! We discovered several experienced ex-farmers in our group and they were given full charge of supervising the planting and harrowing.

In about a week we had two acres planted in sweet corn, five acres in potatoes, one acre each of string beans, tomatoes, and cabbage, with early lettuce, onions, carrots, egg plant, turnips, cucumbers, and pumpkins in the remaining ground. The weather man generously donated several rainy days after planting, and before long weeding and cultivating were necessary. Some mill workers with more zeal than knowledge enthusiastically pulled up lettuce and turnips and left the weeds, but we soon educated them. Girls were detailed to take picnic lunches out to the workers and to help with the weeding. The work was a happy change from the stuffy, noisy mills, and the strikers happily volunteered for the gardening.

Farm or Picket!

As our relief list grew we organized a system whereby those wanting supplies had to spend two hours on the farm or on the picket line. A card record was kept of their time. An investigating committee checked up on the genuineness of appeals for special relief and soon eliminated the inevitable spongers.

When our relief funds ran low, the farm produce often saved the situation. The success or failure of a strike is often determined by the regularity of relief rather than the amount of it. We did not sell any of our farm produce, but issued whatever vegetables were ready twice a week to the "farmers" and the families most in need of relief, using the remainder in our soup kitchen which served three meals a day to the pickets and other active workers. (Another story could be told of how we wheedled a swanky hotel out of enough chipped dishes to stock our kitchen after demonstrating that we could grind off its monogram on an emery wheel.) Some 600 bushels of potatoes which were not ready to harvest until after the strike was over were distributed among the victimized strikers. The total cash value of all the produce harvested was about $700.

Of course we did not depend entirely on our farm for food. Grocery stores, restaurants, dairies, bakeries, butcher shops, etc., were canvassed systematically by committees of five strikers in each ward. Most of these establishments gave generously of food or cash. We played rival establishments against one another. "So-and-So gave us 40 quarts of milk"—who could resist the opportunity to outdo his competitor?

Allentown, with its 95,000 residents —70 per cent of whom are in working class families—is chiefly dependent on the silk industry, and the local chamber of commerce estimated that between $250,000 and $300,000 a week was removed from circulation in the town by the strike. One of our chief talking points in soliciting relief and co-operation in our various money-raising projects was the dependence of the merchants and business people on the silk workers' buying power, and perhaps this was the chief reason for their generous response. After the Communists insinuated themselves into the situation and the newspapers played up the "red menace," all local avenues of relief were shut off, of course.

But to return to our farm experiment—the possibilities of such a project during a strike certainly are worth consideration if the season and surroundings are suitable for it. Aside from the material gains, the outdoor work was physically beneficial. When our most active workers became irritable and discouraged—as active workers often do—a few days on the farm would put them in fighting trim again. Moreover, the psychological effect upon the workers was tremendous. They soon saw the difference between production for profit and production for the use of those who produce.

Stoppage of the Millinery Workers

by B. E.

ON Thursday, March 17, at 10 A. M., the millinery workers of New York were called out on a general stoppage by the Cloth Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers' International Union. Thousands of workers—operators, trimmers, cutters and blockers — laid down their tools and marched to Mecca Temple.

There they were addressed by such speakers as Norman Thomas, Heywood Broun, Edward F. McGrady of the American Federation of Labor, and the officials of the International. Although these speakers endeavored heroically to arouse the needed enthusiasm of the workers that such an occasion warranted, they failed pitifully. With the exception of Spector, who, as the last speaker, could not keep his audience from walking out on him, the speakers devoted most of their time in hysterical denunciation of racketeering in the unions rather than to the more fundamental issues immediately facing the workers.

On the face of it, it would seem that a genuine general stoppage should result from the pressure exerted by thousands of militant and discontented workers, united in a struggle against the bosses. Yet in spite of all the laudations of militancy by those favoring the administration this general stoppage had no trace of this genuine quality. For even before the stoppage was called the manufacturers and the union officials knew exactly how long it would last (24 hours). Thus the workers felt that everything had been settled beforehand and they naturally could not enter into the strike as though it were a real fight against the bosses. They had no confidence in the strike because of the manner in which the entire situation was conducted, including the manner in which new members were brought into the union.

At the pep meeting above referred to, President Zaritsky announced the unionization of such sweat shops as Lish Brothers, where hundreds of workers are employed, and many other shops of similar reputation. For this alone one unacquainted with the facts would think that the general stoppage was justified. But how were these shops unionized? Was it because the workers, aroused by the officials of the union, demanded it?

Not at all. Instead of educating a group of workers in these sweat shops of the necessity and importance of a union so that they would go down and take the rest of the shop down and demand recognition of the union by the bosses, the bosses or the foreladies of these shops sent the workers to join the union and in some cases told them that they could not work unless they did.

We are not prepared in this short article to make accusations of a sell-out by the officers of the union, but knowing the motives of manufacturers very well, we think that there must have been some mighty attractive inducements for them to go to the length of becoming organizers for the union. There are rumors floating around about piece work throughout the trade. We know that shops on a week work basis, which paid time and a half for overtime, did not pay time and a half during the week of the stoppage.

Purpose of Stoppage

The chief purpose of the general stoppage was to bring to a head negotiations which had been going on for several months with the manufacturers' association for a collective agreement. Its secondary purpose was to drive out of the industry the two gangster unions which were protecting certain manufacturers against the demands for union conditions. This latter purpose was accomplished.

Now it is true that the collective agreement arrived at has in it many important points for the workers. It provides for minimum wage scales; a 40-hour week as against the present 44-hour week; elimination of contracting; no temporary jobs; a worker to be entitled to a job after one week's trial; no discharge before the grievance is taken before the Board of Adjustment; and many other important provisions.

The Collective Agreement

But like all collective agreements, it contains some very attractive provisions for the bosses also. It insures the manufacturers for the period of its duration, which is two years, against strikes and lockouts.

Now every worker knows that it is the strike as a weapon which very often makes the bosses come to terms. Even the threat of "trouble" makes it possible to make gains. But under this agreement strikes will be considered illegal. All disagreements must be brought before the Board of Adjustment or the "impartial chairman," who is a respectable professional rarely having seen the inside of a shop.

Another serious defect of the collective agreement is that it tends to make the workers less militant. They become so accustomed to referring their grievances to outside representatives that they lose the initiative for dealing with their own problems.

At a mass meeting at Cooper Union on the eve of the Stoppage, I. H. Goldberg, one of the union officials, spoke of the union as a force capable of stabilizing the industry. "Even the manufacturers," he said, "are looking to the union as to a messiah."

The union does not and cannot control work. So this stabilization business is the bunk. But by militant activity, truly working class in character, and not by constantly conferring with manufacturers in comfortable hotel rooms, the union can secure decent living conditions. By continuous and regular meetings it can educate the workers to become enthusiastic and intelligent fighters. With the weapon of the general strike, it can both individually and generally hold on to the conditions it has already gained and fight for greater gains. By virtue of the strength and numbers of its membership, and not by favors from the manufacturers, it can demand unemployment relief and insurance. These, we maintain, it can gain without collective agreements. In fact, collective agreements stand in the way of their realization under present conditions. By constantly conferring with the manufacturers a spirit of compromise ensues. Even when union officials are less prone than some of ours to "see both sides," this spirit is dangerous to the best interests of the workers.

But now we have the collective agreement. It is to go into effect on the first of May. So as members of the International, it is our purpose to maintain the union, to see that it becomes a truly working class instrument and to demand that the union conditions contained in the agreement are enforced in our shops.

Local 66 Proves It Can Be Done

by Anna Kula

WITHIN one short week, the Tuckers, Pleaters and Stitchers, formerly Local 41, now Local 66, I. L. G. W. U., with the cooperation and assistance of the Embroiderers in Local 66, conducted a successful strike and succeeded in winning a number of important concessions for 1,200 workers involved.

Conidtions in the trade were deplorable and growing rapidly worse before the strike. The system of "making jobs," of working a few hours in one shop and a few hours in another, enabled the manufacturers to get along on low wage costs, while a tremendous number of workers remained out of work. One tucker, working below the scale, was thus enabled to piece together a fair sum, while the others remained penniless. These workers worked for as little as 25 cents per hundred (averaging 75 cents an hour) and some for 50 cents an hour flat.

Two and a half years ago, under the agreement in existence at that time, the average wage for a trucker, was $55.00 per week. The Stitchers, who were making from $30.00 to $38.00 a week then, were now earning as little as $18.00 a week. The pleaters were then making $45.00 a week. Just before the strike the average wage of a pleater was about $20.00 a week. Pleaters received the wage of a helper, and errand boys were used instead of helpers at from $10.00 to $12.00 per week. Under the present scale these pleaters receive $35.00 per week.

All crafts were subjected to an unlimited number of hours per week without extra pay for overtime, in one case ranging as high as 76 hours, although the agreement of 1929 was based upon a 42-hour schedule, with permission for two hours extra on Saturday's at straight time—actually a 44-hour week. The old agreement called for time and a half for overtime, but this clause was violated everywhere. As a result of these chaotic conditions only about ten per cent of the union members were employed, the remaining 90 per cent being unemployed.

The 1929 "Strike"

These conditions were the result of the previous so-called strike called by Local 41 in 1929. At that time the embroiderers of Local 66 struck simultaneously with the Tuckers, Pleaters and Stitchers, but separate agreements were made by each local. As a result the Embrioderers secured a 40-hour week in a signed agreement, a minimum wage of $45.00 and full union job control, which was enforced. On the other hand the workers of Local 41, under an unsigned agreement, got the 42-2 hour week, and a paper scale of $55.00 to $30.00, according to craft, which scale was never enforced. There was not even a shred of union control from the day the agreement was made.

The embrioderers have always enjoyed conditions in many ways superior to those of the other crafts in the shops. Embroiderers were compelled to come into the shop only when there was work for them, while all other crafts were compelled to come in and wait whether there was work or not. Active unionists among the embrioderers received full union protection, while the other crafts were discriminated against for union activity. It is now becoming apparent to the embroiderers, however, that their once fortunate position in the industry is being fast undermined by the chaotic conditions of the other crafts and they have recognized their mistake and the mistake of Local 41 in not having amalgamated in the strike of 1929.

Now, as a result of a long fight and the growing chaos in the industry, Locals 41 and 66 have finally amalgamated into Local 66, and the basis has thus been laid for a solid industrial front against the employers.

Preparation

The success of this strike was chiefly due to long and careful preparation and organization for a number of months prior to the strike. General membership meetings and craft meetings were called to arouse the membership. Conditions were discussed in numerous leaflets issued during this period. Through this activity the union convinced the workers of its sincerity and showed the bosses that it meant business. The strike call was issued immediately following the dressmakers' strike, and just before the opening of the busy season.

As a result of the splendid work of a rank and file organization committee, shop after shop was pulled down in the face of the most threatening force of gangsters and special officers. The wonderful cooperation of the embrioderers with the tuckers, pleaters and stitchers in this strike showed the effectiveness of organization on a sound industrial basis.

The Agreement Won

We have now won a signed agreement with the manufacturers' association, including the following terms: (1) The straight 42-hour week. (Our original demand was the 40-hour week while the bosses insisted upon 44 hours). (2) A definite minimum scale of wages—tuckers $42.00, pleaters $35.00, novelty stitchers $25.00 (with the exception of those working on the zigzag and plain stitching machines, who are to receive $18.00.) While these figures apear to be a decrease as against the former paper scale, they mean an actual increase in real wages. Among all these workers, an overwhelming majority got an increase in wages in spite of the present depression. (3) As against the 10 per cent reorganization proposal of the employers which was rejected the union secured the labor bureau. This means the elimination of the former "job making" system and restricts the employers to hire only through the union those workers who have a working card.

The union aims to reach 80 per cent organization of the industry by February 1, 1933, in order to meet the requirement included in the agreement for the installation of the 40-hour week on that date. Time and a half for overtime is to begin on September 1, this year.

These are tangible and important achievements for the workers. But the price for maintaining these conditions is the unceasing militancy and alertness of the union in the face of efforts which will undoubtedly be made by the manfuacturers to get back to old sweat shop conditions.

Organizing the Food Workers

by Jean Ogden

SINCE I started to earn my living at the age of sixteen, I have been working in the food industry. I have worked as a waitress and counter girl in summer hotels, amusement parks, and coffee pots galore. I have been a salesgirl in bakeries, and a factory hand in food factories. I never joined the A. F. of L. because I felt it was not interested in organizing low-paid, semi-skilled young workers. However, in the fall of 1929, I joined the Amalgamated Food Workers Union which seemed to be making a real fight for better conditions in the trade. A few months later, at the time of the split, I followed the Communists into the Food Workers Industrial Union of the Trade Union Unity League.

In June of 1930, I went to Boston. There was no F. W. I. U. so I joined the general T. U. U. L. Once, Obermeier, the National organizer of the F. W. I. U., came to Boston in the course of a speaking tour and we tried to arrange a meeting for him. I was arrested for giving out leaflets to the workers of the Loose Wiles Biscuit Company and sentenced to ten days in jail. The meeting was a flop, and that ended organization for a while. Some months later an organizer was sent to Boston. He stayed only a month and then left for New York. Once more, nothing had been accomplished.

In February of 1931 I came to New York. I learned that the union was trying to organize the Farm Crest Baking Company in Brooklyn, so I tried to get a job there and within a week I succeeded. Two other girls, who were union members, also managed to get jobs, but one was fired the first week; she was unable to keep up with the terrific speed-up. The assistant foreman of the production department was also a member of the union.

This factory was an ideal place for organization. Just a few months before wages were cut throughout, bringing the girls from 30 to 25 cents an hour and lowering their average weekly wage from $14.10 to $11.75. Inexperienced and alone, the girls organized an almost complete walk-out. They came back to work only because they had no one to lead and encourage them.

The most important department in the factory was the production department. Here the doughs were made and cakes were baked. About forty men, most of whom were Filippinos, worked here. They all joined the union, met and paid dues regularly. The next in importance was the finishing department. Here the cake was iced, wrapped, labelled, and boxed ready for sale. About sixty girls worked here. All of them were sympathetic to the union, and though only fifteen actually joined, all were willing to follow the union's lead. Other departments included shipping, where there were five boys, all friendly, and delivery with thirty drivers, some of whom were known to be friendly.

Things began to hum. The girls showed increased interest in the union. Boys and girls alike were ready to strike to regain the cut. We made contact with the workers in the company's Newark factory and planned united, simultaneous action for better wages, better regulated hours, better sanitary conditions, and against the speed-up.

Suddenly, trouble began to develop. The other girl who had come in with me, and who was in charge since she was a leader in the union's youth department, quit the shop because she decided she would rather edit the youth section of the "Food Worker." The union allowed her thus to desert the field of action and she remains a prominent member. At the same time our key man among the men happened to get fired.

Nevertheless, conditions were so bad that organization sentiment increased. The girls were working 13 to 16 hours some days, 5 to 7 on others. New machinery and a further speed-up led, as I predicted, to a lay-off. I organized a group of girls who had to work nights (a new innovation) to demand higher pay for night work. The fact that this was granted and 2½ cents an hour added to our pay, making a difference of about $1.18 a week, gave the girls a sense of their own power. The boys and girls had been meeting separately in small groups. To build a feeling of unity we arranged a shop dance at a near-by workers' club. A large percentage of the workers were present. The machinery was ready to be set in motion.

Meanwhile, where was the union which was supposed to be leading the workers? It was too busy arranging demonstrations, conducting factional fights, and organizing Jewish dairies and delicatessens to concentrate any attention on our factory. This, although the union's professed ambition is to root itself in the heavy branches of the industry. Union representatives failed to show up at shop meetings or came late. The same person never came twice. When leaflets were to be distributed, no one showed up to give them out. The union did not allow us to issue a shop-paper, although the workers wanted one very much. Finally, the union neglected a great opportunity to strengthen our hold in the factory, by not sending unemployed members to get jobs there when the factory was hiring.

What was the reaction of the workers? They became discouraged and suspicious of the union. They felt they had been duped into paying dues for nothing. The Filippinos, with no organization to help them fight discrimination, were gradually fired and replaced by white workers. Interest lagged among the girls when they saw no signs of life from the union. Not only was the shop lost to us, but due to the sabotage of their struggle by the union, these workers nurse a feeling of distrust and even of hostility to any and all unionism. Thus does the so-called revolutionary F. W. I. U. fail to measure up to its opportunities and so forfeits the confidence of the masses.

Revolutionary phrases are not enough. Workers will respond to a militant union, but the union must show a willingness and an ability to carry out its resolutions with practical, day to day work. We need a union devoted to the interests of the exploited food-workers whose leaders are capable of leadership and consistent, sustained activity.

Bankers' Baby Bonds

"Little Caesar" Broach and Local 3

by Louis Francis Budenz

Racketeering and autocracy in the unions are coming into the light of day, under pressure of the unemployment crisis. The expose reveals a vile situation in the Labor Movement that must be cleaned up.

This is the first of at least two articles on Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which Budenz is writing for Labor Age.

The material will form part of a chapter for his book on "The Labor Racket," which he is preparing.

In the meantime, revolt against the Broach-Hogan rule is gaining strength in Local 3 and throughout the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

HOWELL H. BROACH is international president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. He is popularly known as "Little Caesar."

Some years ago, before he became president, Mr. Broach induced a number of members of Local 3 of New York to take his course in oratory. Now, they complain that they are not permitted to practice the art that Mr. Broach taught them. To do so would lead to being tossed headlong out of meetings, fined incredible sums of money, or "barred from attendance at meetings" altogether.

There may be a laughable side to this, as these members state, but there is also a tragic side. There is in it, above all, a serious reflection upon the growing autocracy in the unions, which is now coming to the surface in scandal after scandal.

It is impossible today for union members to criticize the international administration or the local administration in Local 3. Michael Clohessy did that, not as an individual but as a member of a group. He joined in calling a meeting for the purpose of demanding an election in the local. As in a number of other unions, the Electrical Workers officials disposed of an election in 1930 and again last year. Their plea was economy. The scheme was not only economical, but also very convenient—for the officers. They merely continued to stay in office.

Clohessy was one of those who wanted to learn why this no-election program should not be changed. He was yanked before the Local's executive board, fined $300 and suspended from membership for one year. Then, a committee went to the *New York Times,* his employer, and demanded that he be discharged from his job, as he was no longer a member of the union. The newspaper refused to take such action, and one night on leaving work Clohessy found himself beaten up severely by five gorillas.

Although he identified "guards" of the union as his assailants, the trial judge threw the case out of court, claiming that the evidence was insufficient. The case led to some publicity, however, and Clohessy and 14 of his fellows, facing the same disbarment fate as he, did get an injunction against Local 3. This prevented it from denying membership to these men.

During the past four years hundreds of electrical workers have been barred from attendance at the meetings of Local 3. These men are allowed the privilege of paying their dues; but they are not permitted to question how the money is spent or any of the other processes by which the local operates. Relatives of barred men are also barred, and friends, and friends of friends. Speaking to a barred man may be used as a reason for barring a member. The guards at the door of the local have sole discretion as to who shall come in and who shall not.

Members no longer have the temerity to question any of the actions of their officers in local meetings. If they do, they are declared "out of order" by the president. If they refuse to be "out of order," they are forcefully ejected from the hall, and frequently given a sound beating to boot. Behind the puppet president, Frank Wilson, Edward Bieret, assistant to International President Broach rules with a rod of iron.

Terrorism Extends to Job

This terrorism extends, of course, down to the job. That is what makes it particularly effective. Introducing that "business efficiency," of which he writes so glowingly, Broach installed in Local 3 a precise system of checking up on members. There is no doubt that it is a good system, if not subject to abuse. But abused it is, day after day. "Undesirable" men are prevented from getting work. Through the foremen, the center of the Broach machine, job control is enforced. Without reason, men suddenly find themselves discharged. Broach has introduced the system on a wide scale, so that his friends are taken care of and his enemies are punished.

As a result of this terror, the same psychology exists among the union membership of Local 3 as among non-union workers in a large "scab" mill or factory. Fear dominates them. They must be seen sub rosa and upon promise that their names will not be used. They must be interviewed in out-of-the-way places, where the vigilant eye of the "spotter" or "squealer" will not spy them out. Under the new, Broach-written international union constitution, they are forbidden to discuss the affairs of the organization outside the union meeting place. (And, of course, they are not permitted to debate these affairs inside, either, as we have seen!) If they do speak about union matters on the outside, and they are caught at it, they are subject to heavy fine or expulsion.

I have had to meet these men just as I have frequently had to meet non-union workers in organization campaigns—under cover of secrecy. That chief benefit which a union should confer, a sense of freedom, is denied them. The autocracy in Local 3 is almost as great as that which the Steel Trust imposes on its slaves.

The "mass meeting" which led to the Clohessy affair was called by a "Committee for the Restoration of Union Rights." They charged that the president, Wilson, with Emil Preiss and 32 others on the official roster of the local were in office illegally since June, 1929. They instituted action in the Supreme Court for an injunction against these men continuing in office, for an accounting of union funds, and for a new election. Of the 8,000 members of Local 3, 150 had the "nerve" to go inside the New York Turn Hall, where the "mass meeting" was held. About 500 stayed in the street, curious but uncertain.

The reason for this uncertainty is easily understood. Before the meeting, each member of the local had received a letter from the officers advising them of the existing "law" which makes it illegal for members to discuss union matters at any other place than the regular local meetings.

In addition to the charges of intimi-

dation and suppression, the group of 15 asking for the injunction alleged that the union officers, acting in combination with certian favored contractors, composing the Electrical Contractors Association of New York, formed a "ring" which uses the union to harass competitors and thus to secure the best contracts for themselves.

"Racket" Charged in Affidavit

In his affidavit, William L. Lademann, heading the "Committee for the Restoration of Union Rights," says:

"It is my belief that the funds (totalling $7,500,000) have been used to fasten on the people of the City of New York a veritable racket participated in by certain favored contractors and certain favored members of the union who are willing to take the dictation of the Broach regime without question.

"It is my belief that the large amounts of money from this enormous fund have been used for political purposes to stifle threatened investigations of a racket that is carried on by the favored contractors and by the Broach regime to obtain favorable decisions in cases that might be brought to prevent prosecutions for instances of violence that are resorted to by emissaries of the Broach regime, and generally to put the favored members of the union above and beyond the reach of the law."

The "funds" referred to include the dues increased from $28.80 per year for each member to $108 a year, bringing in about $900,000! the initiation fees ,increased from $150 to $300, aggregating $150,000 a year; penalty of 50 cents an hour for overtime, amounting to $300,000, and heavy fines "for trivial offenses," said to come to $200,000 a year. There is also the payment by the contractors of 20 cents per hour for each man employed for unemployment insurance, totalling about $1,000,000 a year, which is paid to the Union Cooperative Insurance Association of Washington, D. C., controlled by the international union. In this connection, the suit alleges that this company has no legal authority to do business in the state of New York.

It is certainly a sad commentary on the conduct of union officials that members feel obliged to go into the courts to fight for such primitive rights as that of election and accounting of funds. When to this fact the charges of the "New Deal Group" in the union are added, the conditions are seen to be absolutely rotten. No other word adequately describes them.

"New Deal Group"

The "New Deal Group" has issued a number of printed circulars to union electrical workers over the country, containing serious charges against the "Broach-Hogan gangster machine." The identity of this group is not publicly known, although they state that they will reveal it at the proper time. Their mailing address is a more than respectable one, however, being that of the Church League for Industrial Democracy. Inquiries at that place, made to Rev. William Spofford, disclose that the group has rented mailing privileges there and that in proof of its good faith, it allows him to examine all its mail. The reason for this method of procedure is apparent. Disclosure prematurely would lead to a possible cutting off of the work of this group.

The Hogan referred to as allied with Broach is William A. Hogan, financial secretary of the local union and international treasurer. As a result of the Lockwood investigation of the building trades in 1920, Hogan was tried and found guilty of grand larceny in the first degree, consisting of the misappropriation of union funds. He was sentenced to Sing Sing for a term of from two and a half to five years. After serving a substantial portion of his term, he was pardoned by Governor Smith.

When Broach made his "clean up" of Local 3 in 1924 (consideration of which will be made in detail in an article next month). Hogan was re-instated as financial secretary of the local. He has continued to serve as international treasurer during his sojourn at Ossining.

In its Circular No. 1, the "New Deal Group" made seven major demands, which were:

"1. The re-estbalishment of democracy in the union. 2. For a complete detailed printed financial accounting of the funds of Local 3 for the past three years, to be made by a regular certified public accountant, to be printed and distributed to the membership at large. 3. For a complete and detailed statement as to the situation pertaining to the three thousand dollar life insurance fund paid for by the employers. 4. For a recognition that the employment fund as now conducted is a failure. At best it only shifts the burden of the non-working members to those working part-time. What it really does is to place tens of thousands of dollars into the hands of the Broach-Hogan machine. 5. For the condemning of the methods of postponing elections which the present officers of Local No. 3 are guilty of (to be sure with the recommendations of Mr. Broach.) 6. For steps to be taken to reduce the dues of the membership considerably (reductions to be made after final report of income and expenses is made.) 7. For the re-establishment of the feeling that Local 3 I. B. E. W. is our union, not 'their' union.

In Circular No. 3, among other things, they challenge Mr. Bieretz "to make public the names of those who beat up James Perry, Joseph Steinberg and John Young right in Central Opera House," at a meeting. In this circular the group declares that the international officers are already "on the run," for after five years an audit is finally to be made of the local's books, through Price, Waterhouse and Co.

Pact With Edison Co.

One of the reasons given by Broach for the "clean up" of 1924, in addition to corruption, was the need for wider organization. It was well known that an agreement existed, for example, between the then local president, Richard O'Hara, and the New York and Brooklyn Edison Companies, by which in return for union employment on certain construction work, Local 3 bound itself not to organize the permanent electrical working forces of the Edison companies. This written pact, couched in flowing language, made more definite a "gentleman's agreement" in existence for 15 years. It was endorsed officially by the New York Building Trades Council, and published as a pamphlet by the Edison interests!

Although Broach did add considerably to the membership in the building construction line, he did nothing to void this agreement. The Edison companies continued to be "unmolested" by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. In the 1927 convention of the I. B. E. W. the pact was definitely sanctioned, as a matter of fact, at the suggestion of the international officers.

The years of "prosperity" went on and on after Broach obtained control of the local. According to official A. F. of L. economics, these are the years to organize the unorganized. "Little Caesar" did nothing about the Edison employees. Instead, he restored "Sing Sing" Hogan to power, consolidated his control of the local, put thugs at the doors and had them parade through the meeting hall, and instituted his policy of wholesale suppression of the membership.

Edison Deal with Union Officials Exposed

LABOR AGE herewith brings to light the startling agreement made between Arthur Williams, General Commercial Manager of the Edison Company and Richard O'Hara, President of Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, in 1924. This agreement, which assures the Edison Company against any effort on the part of the union to organize the employees of the Edison Company, has received the endorsement of the Building Trades Council of New York City, Long Island, and vicinity. The terms of this shameful pact are still in force and govern the relations between the Edison Company and Electrical Workers Union No. 3. The salient points of Mr. Williams' letter of January 29, 1924, follow:

"The Electrical Workers have desired to extend the informal agreement heretofore unexpressed in writing which has been in existence during the past 15 or 20 years, and through which there has been a very favorable degree of mutual understanding and gratifying progress in the electrification of the city.

"The present unwritten understanding or so-called gentlemen's agreement, resulted from a strike amongst the Electrical Workers of the city some 15 or 20 years ago. The principle was established that there are certain features of New York's electrical service which should be conducted through the agencies of organized labor and other features relating to a continuous and satisfactory supply of electric current at all times which in the interest of organized labor as well in the general public interest, should remain outside of the field of organization so fully occupied by the Brotherhood.

"This understanding was established through a series of conferences in which finally the minds of the Electrical Workers, as expressed by their representatives, and of the company met and concluded in this gentlemen's agreement to which we have referred. It shall be recorded to the credit of organized labor as well as, we think, to the credit of the company, that throughout the interesting period of many years, though questions have arisen from time to time there has been no charge on either side of a breach of faith, either in the spirit or the letter of the agreement. It is seldom that one will find after many years an agreement of such an informal and so *unusual* a nature so scrupuously observed by both of the assenting parties.

Agrees Not to Interfere With Hiring and Firing

"Were the company to enter into agreement to limit employment in its operating or other activities to any given organization, it would by that act deprive all other owners of their interest in this great property right (the franchise)—which in the judgment of the Company should have no moral or other justification. This is but another of the conditions which have led the Company to consider that in all operating matters under its franchise, it should possess inherently and at all times, a choice of method and personnel determined only by questions of economy, efficiency and service, impartially and universally rendered to all alike. Most happily for all concerned it would seem the representatives of No. 3 have upon reflection accepted this view with practically little exception throughout the many years.

"Having these considerations before it, the Company is prepared to enter upon an informal understanding that all of its construction work not directly relating to the equipment used exclusively in its operation for the public service shall be done directly or indirectly by the representatives of Electrical Workers No. 3.

"Thus we feel, and your organization has agreed in the past, that the installation of all meters as generally termed, and all other measuring instruments necessary to insure accuracy in our records in our customer relations, and all transformers and converters' service and other controlling switches, devices and apparatus also directly necessary for the proper operation of the general system and appliances and apparatus also directly related to this operation and franchise obligation shall be performed by our own organization."

The foregoing terms, as laid down by Mr. Arthur Williams of the Edison Company, were "acted upon and endorsed" by the regular meeting of Local 3 on Thursday evening, April 17, 1924, and transmitted in a letter signed by John Goodbody, Recording Secretary, and Richard O'Hara, President.

At a meeting of the Building Trades Council held on April 1, 1924, "it was voted unanimously that the understanding or memorandum agreed upon between the Committee representing the New York Edison Company, the Electrical Workers Local No. 3 and the Committee of the Executive Commission of this Council: Be approved and same ordered made a matter of record of the Building Trades Council of New York City, Long Island and vicinity." This information is contained in a letter dated April 20, 1924, signed by Roswell D. Tompkins, Secretary, and John Halkett, Council President.

The 33,000 workers of the Edison Company and affiliated companies are thus left to the tender mercies of the Edison Company to be worked at wages under the union scale, to be laid off at the will of the company, and to be abused in countless ways, while the union in the industry, under its present leadership, places the seal of approval upon these actions.

Paterson's Hungry

(Continued from page 9)

The remainder of those registered is thrown into the hands of the dependency relief administration which is in the hands of a political appointee, the superintendent of outdoor relief, known to others as the overseer of the poor.

Conceding the possibility that there has been no favoritism, no leakage due to political expediences and incidental corruption, in fact assuming that everything is running smoothly in the best of all administrations, there still remain, after subtracting 1,000 getting work relief, 11,000 registrants or about 35,000 persons.

In addition to the 1,000 registrants getting work relief there are 2,591 families or 10,048 persons who are receiving charity from the overseer of the poor. That leaves 8,500 of those who have registered without relief of any kind.

To Get Relief . . .

Now let us see what it requires to get relief. The applicants must register,

(Continued on Page 29)

The German Elections

by Alice Hanson

WHEN the votes were counted in Germany on Sunday evening, March 13, the returns showed that Hindenburg had won the presidential election with 18,600,000 votes, a clean 7,000,000 over his nearest opponent, Hitler, who came through with about 11,300,000. Thaelmann, leader (and great red hope) of the German Communist Party cleared only 4,900,000, and thus sank far below even his enemies' estimates of his probable count. Two also-rans, Duesterberg, leader of the Steel Helmets (the American Legion of Germany) and hope of the Monarchists, and Winter, the man who wanted all money lost in the inflation returned to its owners in full, received 2,500,000 and 180,000 ballots respectively. The only importance to be attached to these latter figures is that either of these candidates out of the field, Hindenburg would have made a clear victory under the German law which requires a candidate to win one more than half of all votes cast in order to secure his election in the first round. The run-off election which will be held on April 10 will not alter the results of this first balloting sufficiently to put the results in doubt: Hindenburg is the duly elected president of Germany.

A number of interesting facts and observations should be noted after a scrutiny of these election returns. In the first place almost 90 percent of the German electorate cast their ballots. The political battle in Germany has absorbed practically all the reserves. Additions to one party or another must now be made from the ranks of their opponents, and not from an awakening of vast numbers of the indifferent masses.

The struggle in Germany has become so intense that everyone is swept to the front on one side or another and there is place neither for indifference nor tolerance.

Hitler

In the light of this situation it is unlikely that Hitler can increase his strength very much more. It is not unreasonable therefore to say that the Fascist wave has probably reached its numerical peak. Certainly during Hindenburg's lifetime. In this election, Hitler played all his cards, and although he gained a great deal—90 percent more votes than he had in the Reichstag election of 1930 when he astonished the world and himself with the results—nevertheless he lost the election. Had he chosen to put up one of his lieutenants and to hold himself and his prestige as leader in reserve for a later, more favorable opportunity, we would have to judge the results differently. But it was Hitler himself who led the National Socialists in this election and it was Hitler who was defeated. How long will he be able to hold 11,300,000 Germans behind him without making some more successful attempt to seize power? On the answer to that question hang Bruening's fate and the hope of the Social-Democrats.

Ever since the Social-Democrats (the SPD, the Socialist Party of Germany) made their decision in 1918 to become one of the parties uniting to write the new constitution and found the republic, it has been placed in the position of being duty-bound to support the state.

Had post-war Germany's parliamentary history run the course it has in England, the consequences of this action need not have been all too serious for the fate of parliamentary socialism in Germany. (Though it is a serious question whether a socialist party can ever function in a truly socialist sense within a capitalist state). It is possible under a parliamentary government for one of the parties committed to the support of the state and its constitution to work in opposition to the capitalist powers also operating within the state and its parliament. When the last Socialist-Democratic government fell in May, 1930, it was not at that time possible to foresee how quickly the forces of Fascism represented in the National Socialist Party under Hitler's leadership would come to the fore. Presumably the Social-Democrats gave up the reigns of government at that time to go into the opposition against whatever more conservatively minded cabinet would come into power.

The Socialists Defend the State

The result of the 1930 election, however, was that the Fascists suddenly and unexpectedly gained 107 seats where they had previously held 12. The state was faced with an enemy of no mean proportions. The Social-Democrats found themselves faced with the direct choice of defending the state they had helped to create, regardless of what men were at its head, or of opposing the Bruening cabinet openly and leaving the way open for the Fascists with the help of the Nationalists to seize power legally.

The Social-Democrats chose to support ("Tolerate" is the way they put it) Chancellor Bruening as the one man who could command enough votes in the Reichstag to maintain a working majority and keep the Hitlerites out. This method of choosing the lesser of two evils led them to accept—not without grumblings and searchings of conscience—Emergency Decree after Emergency Decree which cut unemployment insurance benefits, raised taxes and social insurance rates, and finally cut wages 15 percent, rather than throw over Bruening and let Hitler in.

The Social Democratic Party thus found itself on the eve of the presidential election facing the same choice. The dose now was even bitterer than toleration of Bruening had been, for it meant open championship of a man even less pleasing to working class members than Bruening who founded the catholic trade unions. Hindenburg is a representative of militarism, of East Prussian conservatism, of feudal agriculturalism, of capitalist supremacy. But he was the one man who could hope to combine enough parties and voters behind him to defeat Hitler. And again the Social Democracy chose to defeat the enemy of the republic even at the cost of socialist principles and platform in the presidential election.

European socialists have formed coalitions before, but no socialist party has ever gone into partnership with such elements as the Social-Democrats in this election openly and agressively championed. In England the leaders who attempted such an action found themselves without a party. But in Germany the left-wing Socialists and Communists who had prophecied that rank and file Socialists would never vote for Hindenburg, woke on the morning after the election to find that probably not less than 7,000,000 of them had done just that.

Communists Fail to Gain

Thaelmann, the Communist candidate, might reasonably have been expected to profit by the uncomfortable

position of the Social-Democrats. He knew long before the election that the new Socialist-Labor Party (a left-wing split off from the Social-Democrats, set up as an independent party in October, 1931) at least would cast their ballots for him, as the only working-class candidate in the field. But Thaelmann in spite of having received their open support increased his lead only 300,000 over the Communist totals for the 1930 Reichstag elections and gave himself and his enemies the only big surprise of the election.

If it can be said that the Fascists have reached their high point in absorbing votes from the undecided middle-class, it can also be said with some degree of justice that the Communists having failed at this critical time to gain appreciably at the expense of the Social Democrats when they were morally weakest, have perhaps too reached the limit of their field.

Morally, Hitler won a great victory in this election. He forced his enemies out of the passive position of tolerating the Hindenburg-Bruening regime into open, aggressive support of it, and thus into a denial of their fundamental socialist principles. He stopped the steady flow of votes from the Socialist to the Communist Party, so that the Communists who in such a situation might well have been expected to gain, gained scarcely anything at all; and he gave the lie to the Social-Laborites who had hoped that at best they would see a rank and file revolt from the anti-marxist tactics of the Social Democracy or at least an abstinence in voting on the part of the members of that party.

For the middle parties, Hitler succeeded in galvanizing them including the Socialists into united action against Fascism, and from the point of view of the patriotic German republican, that is the greatest victory of the election: 18,600,000 solidly behind one man. Thus the middle parties have gained the time they need so much in which to carry on their conferences with foreign powers on reparations and private debts; arrive at some kind of an understanding with France, without which peace in Europe is impossible; and to see them through the summer when the tremendous drains on the government for social expenditures in insurance and welfare are lessened.

A Negative Unity

But it will be well for us to remember that the middle parties were united on a negative program: down with Fascism. If they were *for* anything, it was for the man Hindenburg. A unity built on such shifting sands cannot long endure. If it is true that Fascism has reached its high-point, that Hitler by playing everything and losing, has cut into his own gains, then it is conceivable that the forces within the middle will again separate into their elements. It is conceivable that the Social-Democracy will, with some loss of prestige to be sure, again assume its rightful and traditional position of opposition within the capitalist state. On the other hand, if Fascism can consolidate its gains, say in the Prussian elections in May, the present alignments may continue to hold for an indefinite period; in fact may continue to hold as long as Hindenburg himself holds out. It is not exaggerating then today to say that the future of Germany hangs on the slim thread of life in a man of 84 who is entering on his second presidential term of seven years.

Foreign News Notes

Ireland Goes Forward

Profiting by the defeat of the Irish Free State forces, the Irish Republican Army celebrated the historic Easter Sunday, the anniversary of the insurrection of 1916, with an imposing demonstration for Irish independence. In no uncertain terms, Maurice Twomey, one of the leading spirits of the Republican Army Council, declared: "A free people and an independent republic constitute the only status with which we ever will be satisfied. The Irish Republican Army always will be in the forefront in the attack on British interests."

In the recent issue of **An Phoblacht**, the Irish Republican organ suppressed by Cosgrave, Peadar O'Donnell analyzes the present situation as follows:

"The struggle for freedom in Ireland is the struggle of the mass of the working farmers and wage earners to break through the system that exploits them and to achieve a free United Irish Republic outside the British Empire which that system serves. Fianna Fail will not lead this fight: on the contrary, the machine it takes over will pull it into the opposition to this fight.

* * *

"The vast majority of the Irish people know that there is a very high level of personal integrity in the Fianna Fail party. It is important that we should keep minds trained on the parliament so that what will be seen is the failure of honest men to use such a machine except to do the work for which it is built—to enslave the many and serve the few.

* * *

"There is big work to be done by Revolutionary Nationalists. And I think as a pretty close-up observer, that it is likely to be better done than ever; maybe it is at least the luck of the Irish masses really to be served by the leadership of the revolutionary movement in Ireland."

The German Elections

Recent returns from the German elections indicate an increase in the Hitler vote from 6 million in September, 1930, to 11 million in 1932, or an advance of 5 million for the Fascists. In addition they obtained 200 Reichstag seats, which indicates a distinct advance for the Hitlerites in spite of the so-called "Iron Front" with the Social-Democrats. Those who cherish the illusion that reaction received a blow with the election of Hindenburg might well ponder on the statement of the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, organ of the heavy industry:

"But also in its own interest (i. e., National Social Democratic Workers Party—Hitler's party) the adventure of making Adolf Hitler, president of the Reich, is at the present moment not desirable. We support Hindenburg, whose judgment will also draw in the National Socialists at the proper time. If this should take place later, as we also would desire, then the final judgment on the question has not yet been made."

Although the Socialist Workers Party (independent of both Socialist and Communist Parties), which has continuously worked for a united labor front against Fascism, did not put out its own independent candidate in the field for president when both the Socialist and Communist Parties refused to do this, but instead indorsed Thaelmann, the Communist candidate, it has now come out energetically for its own candidates for the Reichstag election. It is still a serious question whether the SAP could properly and consistently ask the workers to vote for Thaelmann in spite of the sectarian and disruptive tactics of the Communist Party of Germany.

C. P. L. A. Statement of Principles And Policy

Adopted by Active Workers' Conference, New York March 19-20, 1932

THE capitalist system is shaken to its foundations, even here in the richest nation on earth. As a result the workers face a concerted and bitter attack from the worried forces of reaction. Wages are being slashed right and left. Hard-won conditions are being taken away. Twelve million or more are unemployed. Instead of adequate relief being provided out of taxation to the victims of capitalist stupidity, greed and brutality, the rich are permitted to escape taxation; the workers lucky enough to hold some kind of a job are being cajoled or clubbed into contributing out of their meager wages to relief funds, and are thus forced still further to lower their living standards, while the unemployed are herded into bread lines, soup kitchens and the corridors of charity societies that they may receive a dole.

When workers refuse to submit without a protest to these conditions, they are ruthlessly terrorized. Never before in any country has protest been silenced more swiftly and completely. Let a worker in any industry or locality utter so much as a word against some new form of wage-cutting, or be found attending a labor meeting, and immediately he loses his job. Special and damnable discrimination is practised against Negroes, the foreign-born and other groups. "Radicalism" now includes anything not fully in accord with the dictates of the bankers and their henchmen, the corrupt politicians of the Republican and Democratic parties. Injunctions, yellow-dog contracts, thugs and the violence of so-called officers of the law, are used to break up every attempt of the workers to organize, every strike, every demonstration of the masses to voice their grievances and demand redress.

Thus the leaders of finance and industry are carrying through a concerted and vicious drive to drug the minds of the workers and farmers and to rob them of every ounce of independence and self-respect. The result will be, they hope, that when the shaky structure of capitalist economy and bourgeois democracy falls to pieces, the masses will submit quietly to a Fascist dictatorship of big business and finance. Fascism is sweeping forward in the United States as everywhere else in the world, except in Russia, where the workers have abolished capitalism and are building a workers' republic.

The only alternative to chaotic capitaism, which has plunged the masses everywhere into misery, and to the sham democracy which prevails in such countries as the United States or to Fascism, is a planned economic system operated for the benefit of the masses and not of the few, and a republic of the workers, for the workers, by the workers. Under such a regime the fabulous resources of this continent will be used, not wasted. The masses of those who do the nation's work will labor to create security, plenty, leisure and freedom for each other, not profits, privileges and arbitrary power for a few. America will be for the workers, not for a handful of profiteers, corporation executives, bankers and idle rich wasters. The lords and autocrats of finance and industry, and the hangers-on whom they have supported in idleness and luxury, will go the way of all Kaisers and Czars, the way the Hohenzollerns, the Romanoffs, the Hapsburgs, and King Alfonso have gone. Senseless class-distinctions of rich and poor, boss and slave will vanish. In the workers' republic under a planned economy, democracy will be a reality and not a sham.

If a new order is to be built, it will have to be done by the masses themselves. Those who do the work of this country, industrial, agricultural, clerical, technical, professional, and who are now cheated of the livelihood, the security and the leisure which should be the fruit of their toil, must themselves provide the will, the courage and the intelligence for the task.

To achieve their purpose the workers must have power. To gain power they must organize. If disaster is not to overtake the workers of the United States, every effort must be bent on building swiftly an effective labor movement in all its branches—trade union, political, cooperative, educational.

As always, the work of helping and inspiring the masses must be shouldered largely by an active, militant, devoted minority. These active spirits, to be effective, must know each other, must train themselves to do real work, must plan and act together and not in a haphazard fashion. For this reason the C.P.L.A. has been organized.

THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS WHICH HOLD US TOGETHER ARE AS FOLLOWS:

First, we accept the fact of the class struggle under the capitalist system, where a few own the machines and the country's resources and its government, and others must serve these few. The interests of masters and slaves are different and cannot be reconciled.

Second, we want to abolish this capitalist system, with its war of classes, its monstrous inequalities, its unemployment, its inability in the very midst of abundance to give the masses the necessaries of life.

Third, we want to establish instead a planned economic system, operated in the interests of all. Instead of the sham democracy we now know, we want in America a workers' republic to be united with workers' republics all over the world.

Fourth, we think of the Russian revolution as the great turning point in modern history. We stand for vigorous defense of the Soviet regime against its capitalist and imperialist enemies.

Fifth, we believe that if a new world is to be built, the workers must achieve power and do the job, making realistic use of whatever means are necessary. We agree with Abraham Lincoln that "this country with its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember and overthrow it."

Sixth, we strive, therefore, to build up the organized power of the working class in the United States. We believe that we must face the realities of the American scene and talk to American workers in their own language. The American labor movement must take its orders from American workers. With capitalism organized and fighting labor all over the world, the labor movement must also be international, but the American section of the movement will have to be built by the courage, solidarity and brains of American workers. Nobody else can do the job here, any more than we can do the job somewhere else.

AT THE PRESENT MOMENT IN THE U. S. A., MILITANTS, WE BELIEVE, MUST STAND FOR THE FOLLOWING IMMEDIATE PROGRAM FOR THE BUILDING OF AN EFFECTIVE LABOR MOVEMENT:

1. *To organize the masses of unorganized workers in basic industries, such as steel, automobiles, textiles, electrical equipment, into militant industrial unions, and to inspire them to struggle for their rights.*

2. *To stimulate and support rank and file efforts for cleaning out bureaucracy, corruption and gangsterism where they prevail in existing unions.*

3. *To commit existing unions to progressive and militant policies.*

Among these policies we include, Militant Unionism, finding its strength in the solidarity and courage of the workers, not in favors from the boss; Industrial Unionism, bringing the workers of all crafts in a shop or industry into one powerful union; Inclusive Unionism, taking in all the workers regardless of race, color, nationality, creed or sex, the unskilled and semi-skilled as well as the skilled; opposition to tendencies to bureaucracy, corruption and racketeering wherever they may exist; vigorous efforts to extend unionization to the unorganized; a united front of all workers against the boss in all industrial struggles; a nation-wide system of social insurance against the risks of accident, sickness, death and unemployment, no contributions to be required from the workers; encouragement of genuine cooperative enterprises; opposition to all forms of capitalist repression and defense of all class war and labor prisoners; opposition to all forms of discrimination against Negroes, the foreign-born or other groups; opposition to militarism and imperialism; striving for a world-wide solidarity of labor.

4. *To win American workers away from allegiance to the Republican and Democratic parties, and organize them into a mass party of labor.*

5. *To promote all efforts at genuine workers' education, which aims not to educate workers out of their class, but to teach them the facts about the present control of finance, industry and government in the interests of a few, and to train them for more effective service in all branches of the labor movement.*

6. *To bring about the greatest possible measure of unity in the pursuit of these ends among all sincere elements in the Labor movement.*

The C.P.L.A. enrolls as members workers who understand and accept its principles, who want to work for its program and are prepared to carry out such policies as may be adopted by the organization. Wherever possible members are required to organize branches which meet regularly and carry on organized C.P.L.A. activities. Where there are a sufficient number of members in a given industry, these are organized into an industrial branch. If the number is as yet too small for this purpose, they will be organized into a general branch which will include all the workers in the locality not yet allocated to any industrial branch.

Branches and members are expected to engage as energetically as possible in the following activities:

1. Educational work both for the members of the branch and for other workers. Members should constantly increase their general knowledge of the labor movement and its philosophy as well as knowledge of actual industrial and political conditions in their own shops, industries and localities. Educational work also includes distribution and sale of LABOR AGE and of other C.P.L.A. literature.

2. Members are expected to be active in the unions of their trades and industries, and to promote C.P.L.A. policies by all legitimate means in the unions and other organizations to which they belong.

3. Promotion of all efforts to organize unorganized workers, especially in the basic industries. Special encouragement of efforts to organize neglected groups such as the young workers, women, Negro workers, etc.

4. Furnishing the utmost possible assistance of all kinds in picketing, strike relief, legal aid, strike organization, etc., to workers engaged in struggles with the boss.

5. Cooperation with all interested groups in building up a mass labor party of workers and farmers, and energetic participation in the activities of a mass labor party wherever it exists.

C.P.L.A. Program for Industrial Activity in the Present Period

Adopted by Active Workers' Conference, New York, March 19-20, 1932

THIS conference, having heard reports of representatives of various industries, recommends the following immediate steps as a guide for C.P.L.A. forces and militant workers generally throughout the country:

(1) UNEMPLOYMENT presents the most important and immediately pressing problem. An effectively organized movement on this issue, instead of dealing with the unemployed as a miscellaneous mass, should in every possible instance be linked up with the industry to which the unemployed are or were attached. Thus the solidarity of the unemployed and the man who still has a job, and the necessity of the latter standing by the former for protection, will be made clear. Emphasis should be placed upon mass pressure for city, state and federal relief. The unions should be compelled to shoulder responsibility for such activity in behalf of the unemployed. Within the unions there should be stimulated a movement for the 6-hour 5-day week, against speed-up, efficiency systems, overtime, night work, child labor, and for the protection of women in industry. In practically every industry now the issue of nationalization can be properly raised as a proposal to relieve the present unemployment.

(2) ORGANIZING THE UNORGANIZED cannot be considered separate and apart from the question of unemployment in the present period. The problems interlock and supplement each other. The union which properly endeavors to secure adequate relief for the unemployed will win those workers for the labor movement. The union which does not tackle the problem will not be able to hold its membership in the face of the competition of the huge unemployed reserve army. The task of stimulating the existing unions to organize the unemployed and of organizing the unemployed where the existing union fails to do the job, remains as a primary duty of the C.P.L.A.

(3) UNION MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATION. The officials of the A. F. of L. are attempting to meet the problems of the present depression by a policy of *Union Management Co-operation,* resulting in actual support of wage cutting and increasing speed-up. The C.P.L.A. places itself on

record for active and uncompromising opposition to these schemes of Union Management Co-operation, wage cutting and speed-up.

(4) RACKETEERING AND REACTION. Under stress of the current economic crisis, abuses which have been growing in the unions are coming to light. The extent of the labor racket is a challenge to militant and progressive workers. We therefore resolve that one of the chief items in our drive for the advancement of the workers shall be a campaign against the widespread labor racket and autocratic union leadership. Our industrial units, along with the organization of the unorganized and work among the unemployed shall dedicate themselves during the coming year to this important job.

The fossilized A. F. of L. bureaucracy, honeycombed with racketeering and corruption, offers little hope of any militant revival in the labor movement. C.P.L.A.'ers should endeavor to exercise and stimulate independent leadership and initiative within the existing unions and in the organization of the unorganized. Wherever the existing unions are found inadequate to handle the task of organizing and protecting the interests of the workers, it is not only permissible but necessary that independent unions be launched to do this work. The sectarian Communist unions cannot be looked to or relied upon to handle this task effectively.

(5) WITHIN THE EXISTING UNIONS efforts should be made to stimulate industrial conferences in the various industries (mining, textiles, steel, etc.), in order to coordinate the efforts to build up a militant labor movement in the various fields.

(6) C.P.L.A. BRANCHES. We realize that a continued and organized campaign cannot be carried on without resultful organization of the militants in each industry and industrial establishment. We therefore regard it as a chief duty to organize industrial C.P.L.A. branches as rapidly as possible.

Resolution on Labor Party

Whereas, there are now in existence or in the process of formation labor parties or farmer-labor parties in West Virginia, Minnesota, North Carolina, Chicago, Philadelphia and other localities and,

Whereas, trade unions such as the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, The Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, International Association of Machinists and other workers groups have at one time or another gone on record in favor of the building of a labor party, and

Whereas, the widespread suffering among the workers and increasing sharpening of the class struggle will inevitably strengthen the movement for independent working-class political action, therefore,

Be it Resolved, that this conference of active workers of the C.P.L.A. hereby calls upon the N.E.C. to do what it can to promote the growth of the labor party movement in all parts of the country, and that it co-operate with other interested groups at the first favorable opportunity in taking steps to organize a broad and effective labor party on a National basis.

Workers' Correspondence

Capitalist Humanity

I went to the funeral of a friend Thursday and had to see a priest officiate at the grave of a man who had renounced both church and God (who let him actually starve to death) since he was twenty years old. During his last days, the 53 year old worker had to sit in the dark near the kitchen stove. Sit there because he had not enough blankets on his bed, and in the dark because the landlady allowed no light. He had not eaten anything decent in two years. Suffering from miner's asthma and dropsy, he was taken to the hospital five years too late.

It makes me mad at men who can allow such things to go on. A dying man, freezing and hungry, sitting alone in the dark in the 40 degree kitchen. I spoke to him many times, for he was once a functionary in the German labor movement. He was sincere and also was one of the few in Luzerne who did not think me "nuts" because I am a radical. Now he is dead; dead when he could be alive still, were it not for the lack of proper food and care. Outside of a little notice in the local papers, no one noted his death, and no one cared. But the whole world is "lamenting, crying, feeling intensely sorry, etc., etc., etc.," for the Lindbergh baby.

Somehow such pictures as the dying man, alone in a cold room do not leave me. Just a year ago another friend of mine here died because he was taken to the "charity ward" of the nearest hospital. "Died of complications," said the doctor, but another told me that he would be alive had he been given proper care. But he had no money. He had only worked since he was 12 years old, and had "fought for God, Kaiser and Fatherland." He had not earned the right to decent treatment in a hospital with 30 years work. If this is still the best of possible worlds, I do not want to live in it.

"Old-timers," when you tell them such stories, will answer by saying that you are young yet, and that sentimentality has no place in life. "You will get used to it, and it will not be so hard on you."—So they say. I wish someone would shoot me on the day I get used to such misery and injustice.

G. F.

Luzerne, Pa.

Class Struggle Notes From S. C.

A woman worker in a Gaffney textile mill incurred the anger of her overseer who thereupon, in retaliation, ran his hand through the warp of her jaccquard loom, tearing down the set. It took the worker 5 hours to set it up again—5 hours of her own time inasmuch as she is paid per loom-run-hour.

In order to get their hands on actual cash money, mill workers in Gaffney, S. C., buy movie passes from their foremen—to be docked from their pay—and then sell them on the streets at a sacrifice of $.60 on a dollar. It is significant that the owner of the mill also controlls the two movie houses in the town in addition to being chairman of the board of trustees of the local Baptist college.

In this same mill workers may draw against salaries withheld from them for the initial week of their employment. When so doing they receive "lunies," or aluminum checks, good only at the company store. These "lunies" can be discounted for cash at the company store for 80 cents on the dollar.

South Carolina C. PAUL.

What's Happening to the Aristocrats of Labor?

Since Labor Age is interested in the Railroad workers, I am going to give you some facts which I consider important. Any opinions which I express, I want you to bear in mind, are opinions of the rank and file. Neither am I a trained writer.

There is a certain amount of distrust amongst other organized workers towards the Railroad workers unions, especially towards the so-called Big Four. This, I think, is largely justified. It results from aloofness of the rail unions from other labor organizations. They have heretofore practiced this selfishness because they thought they were securely situated. With no other source of competition in sight, they thought, in their shortsightedness, that they could keep out of any entangling alliances.

It has been said by many people, including the railroad transportation workers themselves, that they are far and above other workers in intelligence. Now, it may be true that the railroad workers rank high in intelligence, since they are a picked lot, but they sell their intelligence to the railroad companies. Most rail transportation workers come from rural districts, which I believe is an advantage. And these workers must each pass a mental and a severe physical examination before they can qualify for firemen or trainmen.

But in spite of this, the rail workers today are in a sorry plight, especially the transportation workers. They are now beginning to feel the lash that has long been applied to the less fortunate workers in other industries. And they are now paying the price for their selfish attitude towards other workers.

Just last trip, to quote from actual life, our whole crew was called before the Train Master for a half hour of tongue lashing for no cause at all. He wanted to put fear into our hearts so that we would recognize that he is the law and that there is no other law

Before closing I want to express my opinion on this matter of adjustable mileage that the transportation Brotherhoods are trying to put in pracice for no other reason than to hold their membership to the largest possible number of dues-paying members. But when a man gets down to the bare necessities of life, just existence, men like myself and many others cannot afford to help along such progressive movements as, for instance, Brookwood Labor College. My own view on this business of adjustable mileage, especially as it applies to engineers and firemen, is amalgamation.

Pennsylvania B. A.

Union-Management Cooperation

I am sorry that I am not able to discuss with you in detail the union-management cooperation as it exists in Salem because I never stayed home long enough to make a study of it. But I shall state a few of my findings.

First, the members are opposed to this plan of cooperation, having no confidence in their officers. This has been proven especially in the last two years, the members resenting the policy of cooperation with the management, as well as with the union research committee, in the installation of the efficiency system, which in many cases resulted in more work and less money for the workers.

I asked my sister, who is a member of Local 33, what she thought of the cooperation plan. She does not think that the plan works to the advantage of the workers because the Union has to compromise on all of the company's demands. She feels that the management takes advantage of the union since the union agreed to cooperate.

Of course, we have to face the facts and admit that a small organization cannot maintain good conditions if the rest of the trade is unorganized. Our Local 33 took a wage cut in this last month because it was not in a position to fight it.

It seems that some of the unions are beginning to realize that agreements with employers are a handicap. I found that to be the sentiment amongst the members of the Hosiery Union, and that sentiment was expressed by some officers of the Building Trades.

AGNES BROWN.

Salem, Mass.

Getting Worse

I was one of the first to join the union in Marion, and I am still holding to it. But it looks pretty discouraging today. I was shot at in Marion when they had that killing scrap up there in 1929, and there was tear gas thrown in my eyes, and a gun thrown in my face. I have lost two jobs over the union, and I am expecting to lose another one just as soon as they find me out.

But it looks like we need a union now —worse now than we ever did—for we can't make a living on the wages we are getting. When you were in Marion you saw the sanitary conditions they had there. Well, it was ten times better than we have in this village and in the mill here. This is the filthiest place I ever saw.

However, when you talk to the people here about the union, they say they have not got the money to join it. They are not making enough, and that is a serious drawback. Most of the workers in the mill are making only from 7 to 11 dollars a week. The day workers make $9.90 for 61 hours work, and a big house rent must come out of that.

They keep putting the stretch-out on and cutting the hands off. It is a shame the way our families have to go without clothes, for we aren't making enough to buy clothes and pay our grocery bills. I have a family of five and I can't buy clothes for them and feed them on the wages I am making. We will soon be all naked as picked birds.

When you write to me please put it in a plain envelope so they can't catch up with me. I got a box so as to keep just anyone from looking through my mail.

North Carolina J. C.

Another Little Mussolini

Perhaps the following incident will show that accusations of indifference and bureaucracy directed at the present I. L. G. W. U. leaders are well deserved, and it might also disprove their statements that their members ARE NOT interested in workers' education.

During the recent dressmakers strike, the Children's Dress Local carried on an intensive organization campaign. The group of us who voluntarily assisted did not intend to help organize the children dressmakers just to get more dues paying members for the union, and then to drop them.

The newly organized girls are especially young lively girls—promising material for the summer schools. We discussed the situation with a friend who is the recruiting chairman for these summer schools and who is also a C. P. L. A. member.

A short time after the strike, a general membership meeting of the union was held. And what did the manager of the local, who claims to be a progressive, answer, when we and one of his executive board members asked whether he would be willing to have the recruiting chairman speak at that meeting?

"I'm paid to manage the local," he pompously replied. "You should have asked me before speaking to the recruiting chairman. You have no right to discuss the local with an outsider and especially not with a member of the C. P. L. A.

"And it will do no good to bring it up at an executive meeting, because if I oppose a thing, my executive board will have nothing to do with it. Furthermore, you might as well make up your minds that if I don't want workers' education in MY Local, you're not going to get it!"

O. K., Brother manager! That's a challenge and we're taking it!

MAY GIPPA.

Sling Shots

By Hal

FROM CAN TO CAN'T

"What are your working hours?" a common laborer working on the Mississippi levees was asked.

"Boss," was the reply, "we works from can to can't."

"Just what do you mean by that expression?" asked the investigator.

"I just means that we work until we is whipped down." was the rejoinder. Which is about the size of things anywhere in the United States among those fortunate enough to have a job in this blessed era of Hoover prosperity.

PUBLIC WORKS

As a rule, however, the contractors find no barriers in the way of hauling in the shekels on these government jobs. As one facetious observer recently remarked, "The contractor gets the money and the public (especially the workers) gets the works."

LEST WE FORGET

But let us not forget the Hooverian fount of capitalist wisdom from which our present blessings flow. One enthusiastic campaigner has proposed the following slogan for 1932. "Wilson kept us out of WAR and Hoover kept us out of WORK."

FESS GETS EXCITED

In arguing against the Costigan-LaFollette Bill for Federal relief for the unemployed, it is reported that Senator Fess became so excited that he pounded his desk until the knuckles were bleeding. "Which proves," according to our correspondent, "that after all, you can get blood out of a turnip."

MUSSOLINI VS. STALIN

Not to be outdone by Stalin, in his efforts to complete the Five-Year Plan in four, it is reported that Mussolini has just decreed that to increase the birth-rate, the period of pregnancy is to be officially cut down from nine months to eight throughout Italy.

A QUAINT SPANISH CUSTOM

"That the worker is the master of property has taken root among the working classes of Spain" declares the N. Y. Times. "Not long ago in Barcelona the police were hastily summoned to a bakery. It seemed that the workers had decided to take over the establishment and when the owner protested they threatened to put him into the oven."

WHEN THE TIGER AND THE ELEPHANT LIE DOWN TOGETHER

After a conference between Speaker Garner and Leader John F. Curry of Tammany Hall, they promised to hold the lines for the republican sales tax measure intended to filch additional millions of dollars from the pockets of the poor.

From the New Yorker.

The ship was fundamentally sound

AL CAPONE TO THE RESCUE

"We must keep America whole, safe and unspoiled," says Al. "We must keep the worker away from red literature, red ruses; we must see that his mind remains healthy." And when the chief racketeer in this racketeering capitalist country, speaks, he knows whereof he speaketh.

SOCIETY NEWS

Mrs. Harry Brown, the only lady in Washington society who ever owned a gold-plated bath tub, plans to return to the capital in May. She occupies the floor above former Secretary of the Treasury Mellon, who seems to have monopolized the supply of hot water recently. We trust the old lady will not be discomfited in her ba-a-th.

SONG OF AN IRISH POET

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

BLOCK-AIDING

The campaign to block-aid for the unemployed was given great encouragement by the assurance that 2,500 agents of the Metropolitan Insurance Company would go out and solicit. Considering the fact that the Metropolitan Insurance Company is the most notorious opponent of all forms of social legislation in the country, especially of unemployment insurance, the company's strange solicitude for the sufferings of the unemployed can well be understood.

PLAYING FAST AND LOOSE

Sparkling with diamonds, gowned in white satin, Mrs. Jacob Leander Loose, Kansas City Social Leader, who derived her vast fortune from the exploitation of underpaid workers in the Loose-Wiles Sunshine Biscuit Co., announced that she will join Mrs. Dolly Gann on a speaking tour in favor of President Hoover's candidacy. "I am for Hoover—first, last and always," Mrs. Loose declared.

TIME TO BEGIN

It strikes us that when millionaires like George Eastman, the Kodak manufacturer, and Ivar Krueger, the match magnate, decide to commit suicide, feeling that their work is ended, it is high time for the workers to take a hand and make a better job of it.

MOTHER MOONEY AND BILLIE DOVE

Lincoln did not hesitate to interview the mother of an imprisoned young soldier and to grant her request for his release. Herbert Hoover, who has been ranked with Lincoln recently, "was too busy" to see the aged mother of Tom Mooney. Nevertheless he was not too busy for a little billing and cooing with the beautiful Billie Dove, when she visited the White House.

CROONING

That great administrator, that internationally known engineer, that careful organizer and great student of the needs of the country, Herbert Hoover, has asked Rudy Vallee, stage and radio crooner, "to write a song to drive away the depression." We are reminded by Webster's Dictionary that to croon is to make a continuous hollow sound, "as cattle in pain, to bellow." In that case perhaps Hoover ought to do his own crooning.

From the New Yorker.

The ship was fundamentally sound

New Books . . .

THE "PRE-HISTORY" OF RUSSIA

History of Russia. By M. N. Pokrovsky. International Publishers, New York, 382 pages. $3.50.

BEFORE 1917 most people knew very little about Russia—even less about the history of Russia. Since the Russian Revolution and the advent of the Communists, this situation has undergone a decided alteration. Our craving for information about the revolutionary changes now going on in Russia has kept at least one New York City book dealer solvent. But there are many intellectual complications arising from our present interest in Russian affairs due to the fact that far too many of us discovered Russia at the same time that we discovered Communism. These complications are evident in the confusing statements one gets in conversation and from books about Russia now flooding the country. Only one book by an American, namely, *Pan-Sovietism*, seems entirely free from such errors. It is possible that the bulk of these contradictions have arisen because we have failed to appreciate the fact that the Soviet system has been conditioned from its very beginning by a whole host of factors which have roots far back in the history of Russia. An economic system does not spring from a vacuum, so it would seem that if one is really to understand and properly evaluate the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, one will have to have something more than a cursory knowledge of Russian history. But several questions may be asked, "How much history is a prerequisite to an understanding of present day Russia?" "What sort of history, with what interpretation?"

Much can be written about this particular volume which is called, *History of Russia from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Commercial Capitalism*. This volume has recently been translated from the Russian by Professor and Mrs. Clark of Hunter College. The author, Professor M. N. Pokrovsky, taught in the schools of Russia from 1891 until 1905. During this time he contributed articles on the history of Western Europe to those volumes edited by the late Sir Paul Vinogradoff. From 1905 until he was expelled from Russia in 1908, Professor Pokrovsky became increasingly interested in the Russian revolutionary movements of his day. It was during the period of his exile that this, *History of Russia from the Earliest Times to the Rise of Commercial Capitalism*, his most famous work, was written. Since the 1917 Revolution, Professor Pokrovsky has been president of the Moscow Soviet of Workers Deputies, vice-commissar of Education, president of the State Council of Scholarship in the Commissariat of Education, president of the Communist Academy, editor of the *Marxist Historian*, and initiator of the Workers' Faculties and of the Institute of Red Professors. Throughout his life, he has remained one of the most prolific of Russian historians.

This translation then is the first Marxian interpretation of the history of Russia available to the English reader. The present volume carries the student only through the reforms of Peter the Great (1730). A second volume is soon to appear and will bring the remainder of historical events in a Marxian setting up through the hectic days of 1917. Undoubtedly, the volume which is yet to appear will be of more interest to those individuals primarily interested in an examination of present day Russian changes than is the present volume. This volume is of more interest to the student of Economic History. It is a ponderous work, elaborately written, and does not lend itself to easy reading. The author deals with a wide range of data over an unusually long period of history. If the reader expects to find any fundamental and distinct difference between this work and work of the more realistic, but non-Marxian historians, he probably will be disappointed, although certainly, fundamental differences with official interpretations are discernable. Professor Pokrovsky does identify a feudal period in Russian history comparable to similar stages in economic evolution elsewhere. How fundamental is this difference, however, is a moot point. Vinogradoff and other Russian historians described accurately, even in light of descriptions found in this work, economic and social arrangements which are distinctly feudalistic, but without the use of the term "feudalism." Particularly striking phases of this volume are found in the later part, that is to say, in Professor Pokrovsky's treatment of the court life under the leadership of Peter, and the rise of a bourgeois ideology along with the rise of commercial capitalism.

Several defects are obvious. Many of these, but not all, are probably the result of the translators. First of all, the book suffers from a lack of orderly and systematic exposition. Far too varied an assortment of data is crowded into the chapters in a random manner. Undoubtedly, the translation could have been improved by the elimination of dozens of Russian terms and the substitution for these of their English equivalents. Fortunately there is a glossary at the end of the book.

Just how far back the roots of the 1917 Revolution go in Russian history is probably a debateable question. Undoubtedly, one sees in Professor Pokrovsky's elaborate survey and interpretation the beginnings of those things which are commonly thought of as class struggle issues. The first volume is not only incomplete without the second volume, but its usefulness is seriously impaired. Because of this, the second volume is awaited, first, because of the break from 1730 to 1917, and, secondly, because of the obvious difficulty of applying a Marxian interpretation to the events of a very early period, data on which has been sifted and perserved for Marxian historians by non-Marxian historians. The latter difficulty will not be a serious obstacle for a straight Marxian interpretation of the later period of Russian history.

WILLIAM L. NUNN.

HOOVERISM

Mr. Hoover's Economic Policy. By Rexford Guy Tugwell. The John Day Pamphlets, No. 7. Price 25 cents.

The Myth of Rugged American Individualism. By Charles A. Beard. The John Day Pamphlets, No. 6. Price 25 cents.

Tough Luck—Hoover Again. By John L. Heaton. The Vanguard Press. Price $1.25.

IF the reader of these three criticisms of Hoover has long ago accepted the fact that Hoover is a pretty poor specimen from whatever angle you look at him, a "Yes—yes, but what of it?" is likely to be in the person's mind as he reads.

And if he also believes that the cure for Hooverism is in the overthrow of the type of civilization which Hoover so completely epitomizes, the reader is going to be disappointed in the conclusions that the three critics draw from their studies of the President.

Tugwell has made a fine collection of excerpts from Hoover's speeches to prove that the President has been thoroughly unrealistic in facing the problems of goverment which have arisen during his administration. Hoover's words are certainly damning testimony of his inconsisten-

cy and stubborn adherence to untenable positions. Examples of foolhardy bravado are frequent, none more marked than the King's Mountain speech delivered only a few miles away from Gastonia during the height of the trouble there in which he extolled the virtues of the independent and courageous businessman. Professor Tugwell comments that if any of the strikers of these regions still had radios, they must have listened in amazement to this praise of the business man, the results of whose enterprise were being demonstrated in a lurid fashion nearby.

Now, I don't believe that such listening strikers would have been feeling exactly "amazement" any more than I believe that the author's interpretation of the president as a quixotic man is the right one. It seems to me that Professor Tugwell is choosing an easy way out, is being decidedly naive in finding the personality of Hoover puzzling and bewildering. Yes, perhaps, if viewed in comparison with the figure sold to the people when he was ballyhooed into the presidency. But look at his actions as a continuation of the ruthless methods with which he built up his own considerable personal fortune and you get a very different picture. It is that of a man greedily determined that he and the few whom he represents shall retain their wealth at all costs and in spite of everything.

Tugwell has all of the material at hand from which to draw this conclusion. Because he fails to do so, his pamphlet is valuable only as a handy collection of Hoover's fatuous statements.

In the twenty seven pages of his pamphlet, "The Myth of Rugged American Individualism," Charles Beard tries to corner the fallaciousness of the "rugged individualism" idea. He points out that since 1887 when the United States government was forced to pass certain regulations in order to keep the railroads from even further abusing business men. farmers, and the general public as they had been doing by reason of their monopoly, the government has been steadily encroaching on the rights of the individual. He cites fifteen pieces of legislation or boards of control which definitely limit the "individualism" of the American business man and of American business enterprises.

One of these curbs is the tariff which he says shows that "there are thousands of businessmen who want to keep the Government in the business of protecting their businesses against foreign competition. If competition is good, why not stand up and take it?"

Nor is Beard doubtful about what all this harping on "rugged individualism" really means and where it leads. He writes, "In the minds of most people who shout for individualism vociferously, the creed, stripped of all flashy rhetoric, means getting money, simply that and nothing more.... The cold truth is that the individualist creed of everybody for himself and the devil take the hindermost is principally responsible for the distress in which Western civilization finds itself —with investment racketeering at one end and labor racketeering at the other."

The reader by now has the right to expect that a man who sees as clearly and talks as straight as Beard does in the above quotations, is not going to be taken in to the extent of believing that plans for economic planning based on the system of private profit are a whit different in effect from any other forms of individualistic enterprise. But I have told the reader that he is going to be disappointed. For that is exactly what Beard recommends.

Beard has analyzed well our present government which masks its greed under fine sounding slogans, but unless he is ready to accept the idea that all government which is not in the hands of the workers who create its wealth and make it strong, will end inevitably in the same kind of exploitation as the present one, his analyses will not get him very far.

"Tough luck—Hoover again," by John L. Heaton, former editor of the "World," bewails the fact that Hoover is almost certain to be elected again this term. He has some mean things to say about Hoover, but we needn't take them too seriously because he feels that the wisdom of Smith, the capabilities of the deceased Senator Dwight W. Morrow, or the integrity of Franklin Roosevelt might have solved things. Anyway, if the political revolution doesn't get us (yes, he even brings that in as a warning of what may happen if we don't start the dole) he advises all liberals to get together by 1936 and do something about things. But if the Democrats reform before that, we won't have to, says Mr. Heaton.

MARION WEIL

MORE CAPITALIST DOCTORS

Wages and the Way Ahead. James D. Mooney. Longsmans. $2.00.
Wages and Wealth. Roy Dickinson. Princeton University Press. $2.50.

BOTH these books are brightly and plausibly written. Both see nothing fundamentally wrong with the present social system. Yet, typical of the present confusion of capitalist experts, one says that wages should be cut and the other that they should not be. Mr. Mooney thinks, of course, that the cuts would only be temporary and that real wages would not be greatly affected and he makes the high nominal wages of the building trade worker and the workers in the so-called "sheltered trades" his special target. His hatchet is poised above the building trade worker because he thinks that there is such a great need of good houses that building will serve to remove the present depression as the expansion of the auto industry did after 1921. No agitator could portray so vividly the wretched shacks and slums of the United States as does Mr. Mooney. One wonders if he and the others who run the exposures in such dollar magazines as *Fortune* have an interest in the sale of building materials. Certainly, however, no Gosplan would have allowed the over-development of auto production and the under-development of housing; and no more constructive step could be taken than large scale government plans to provide better houses for workers. But that would horrify the "rugged individualism" of our author.

He is just in a mess. To him "capital is only work which someone has been smart enough to save." The ideal worker apparently is the one who saves enough to retire, yet low prices should be used to entice him to buy his home. After showing that it is the high wages ($12-$14 a day) of the mason, plasterer, lather, etc. which have stopped building, Mr. Mooney also proves that these are only nominal rates which are already nullified by all kinds of rebates and private understandings which make the actual wage 30 to 50 per cent less; and he ignores the percentage of non-unionists in the trade. Why, too, if wage reductions are so beneficial, make such cuts temporary? If the building workers lived on chopped straw, would private enterprise and the realtors be capable of building houses for the workers at rents which they could pay? Do not wage reductions mean that families double up and leave houses empty on the landlords' hands?

This book is additional evidence that further attacks upon the building trade workers' standards are ahead. These will come through substitute materials and less skilled labor. The building unions, which have remained the backbone of the A. F. of L. in many towns, will be undermined if they retain their job trust outlook. Many building workers we know would be happier building workers' dwellings than doing the luxury building of the late lamented "prosperity" period. If only Labor had control of the local municipality, the State and Federal governments, how it could cooperate with enlightened building trade unions to house the workers properly! This has already been done in some areas in Europe but that is a different "road

ahead" than Mr. Mooney's which leads only into the same old maze.

Mr. Dickinson believes that low wages contributed to the crisis and that high wages will help to cure it. While Mr. Mooney would bring down the price of industrial products to the low level of agriculture, Mr. Dickinson favors all kinds of schemes for keeping up wages. This is the main idea of his collection of articles here strung together. The few firms, Naumkeag, Proctor and Gamble, Dennison, etc., which have tried to stabilize their working force are given much uncritical publicity. Much of Dickinson's argument makes good propaganda stuff against the bankers and the business chiefs who are openly cutting wages. To overcome the present crisis, Mr. Dickinson suggests that the control of the Mississippi would employ ten billion dollars (to be raised by a public loan) and five million of the unemployed, but he thinks that the social planning proposed by Stuart Chase is impractical.

The truth about the wage movement lies deeper than the superficialities of both these examinations. Real wages went up in the United States in the post-war years partly because of trade unions and partly because of labor shortage. Employers and their publicists made a virtue out of necessity and *talked* about the need of paying high wages so that a market would be created for their commodities. This makes a good talking point also for resistance to wage cuts but we should be clear on the limitation of the argument. When we ask the present system of society to run production to satisfy the desires of wage-workers, not of shareholders for profit, we are asking it to abnegate. A few exceptional firms will pay high wages to secure advertisement, a picked labor force and greater work intensity. The unions will never succeed in persuading the employers that high wages will really increase profits. If the value of labor-power is forced up, that means a deduction from surplus value and that can only be secured by a well organized militant Labor movement.

BRITAIN'S SLAVES

Rebel India. H. N. Brailsford. New Republic, Inc., New York City. 232 pp. $1.00.

REBEL INDIA is the fruit of a several months' stay in India, as the author takes care to point out. The greater part of the book is accordingly an eyewitness account of the most significant phases of Indian life and thought. Such an undertaking is more than a little presumptuous, considering the many volumes already written on the basis of years of residence and study. However, there are several redeeming features, such as the working-class point of view, the recency, and the excellent choice of material which will interest even those who are well informed in new developments. A bare enumeration of chapter headings will make this clear: Why India Followed Gandhi, The Village Defies the Empire, How the Village Lives, The Empire's Slums, Social Changes, The Personal Forces, Why India is Poor, and The Political Outlook. As to the point of view, I need only say that Brailsford's prime concern is the horrible lives of the masses, rather than independence from Great Britain, for whom, of course, he holds no brief. The present civil disobedience campaign has somewhat changed the situation since this book was written, but this fact gives all the more interest to the shrewd forecast which he had the courage to venture at the critical period just before the second Round-Table Conference.

It is, however, the last part, dealing with the economic and political development of the colony, which more than justifies the writing of this little handbook. It would be hard to make a more penetrating diagnosis of India's sufferings, or a more reasonable prescription than he gives in about a hundred pages. Brailsford shows why the peasant has to try to live on a wage of 2c to 8c per day: The landlords, with the government (as always) as acomplice, get as much from the peasant as he can be forced to give, although they have usually never contributed a penny toward the improvement of mud-hut or field. The usurers see to it that by no fortunate accident shall a peasant lay down the burden of debt from the minute of his birth until death puts an end to his contribution to "the reward of abstinence." The middleman relieves him of all worry about his crop—after it is harvested. By his few miserable purchases, by his twelve-hour day in the factory he richly pays the enterprising capitalist in England who has had the energy and foresight to be born in England instead of a village in India. The pensioners and officials who would disdain to ride in the same car with him are not too proud to take their share of the bread from his mouth. Bread? The peasant is too poor to be able to keep the bread he grows; he must live on rice, seasoned with salt and another monstrous tax.

The one first essential is to be free of the British incubus. India has learned her lesson from the fiasco of the labor-government; she has learned to place her reliance, not in the hope of getting fine Christian gentlemen into Parliament, but in her own power. The days of British rule are numbered; India can look forward to the end of the stream of opium and alcohol which enlightened imperialism has forced down her throat, in lieu of food; India can look forward to a chance to rid herself of her manifold misery.

CHARLES BERLINRUT

THE "PRIVATE" UTILITIES

Power and the Public. Edited by Ernest Minor Patterson, Ph.D. Published by the American Academy of Political and Social S ience, 3457 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

"POWER AND THE PUBLIC" includes a number of papers presented at a conference called by the American Academy of political and Social Science on November 6 and 7, 1931, on the subject of public utilities. It includes the viewpoints of such outstanding representatives of public utility interests as William J. Donovan, Matthew Scott Sloan, and William L. Ransom. A critical view of the public utility corporations is presented by Governor Gifford Pinchot, Leland Olds, Dr. James C. Bonbright, John T. Flynn, Henry T. Hunt, Donald R. Richberg and others.

Among the controversial topics dealt with in this symposium are the following: Federal, state and municipal ownership, federal and state regulation, holding corporations, rates, valuation and the general future of the industry.

While the book itself does not attempt to make a case for or against the public utility interests and seeks to present both sides of all mooted questions, yet it contains some very valuable information, especially for those with a critical viewpoint.

In dealing with the question of Holding Companies, Professor Bonbright points out that "the bulk of the power industry of the country has come to be dominated by from ten to twelve great systems of holding companies, some of which are now spreading their activities into Europe, Asia and South America." These holding companies extract huge charges for managerial and financial services, resulting in high rates. The holding companies themselves are under no federal or state restrictions and are therefore free to inflate valuations and force increased rates at the expense of the consumer.

"Electric rates," declares Mr. Harold Evans, "like Topsy, 'just grow'd.' They have been fixed primarily on the basis of what the traffic will bear." Municipal plants in Seattle, Tacoma, Ontario and Fort William have been able to furnish electricity at costs as low as from 8 mills to 2.6 cents per kilowatt hour, resulting in great increases in the average use of

electric apparatus by the consumers. "The domestic consumer has been deprived of the protection of competition and is largely at the mercy of the utilities.... No ordinary domestic consumer can finance a rate case," according to Mr. Evans.

Pointing out that "about 90 per cent of the total electric power generated in central station plants in his country is under the domination or the influence of four major banking interests," Governor Pinchot declares that state regulation and inter-state compacts have failed to meet the problem of huge holding corporations crossing state boundaries.

The ineffectiveness of attempts to regulate the power interests as far as the worker is concerned is well brought out in the tribute paid by William L. Ransom, prominent utility lawyer, who declares, "My hat is off to the competency and the character of a large part of the administration of the regulatory law in this country." Mr. Ransom handles rate cases for the Edison Company before the New York State Public Service Commission appointed by Governor Roosevelt.

Our old friend Mathew S. Sloan pompously extolls electricity as "mankind's universal servant" in a fervid plea for private ownership. However, it becomes clear that under our present system of private ownership the power octopus is rather a most cruel and inhuman taskmaster bringing increased exploitation, greater speed-up and more unemployment. "To those who are willing to face the facts," says Mr. Richberg, "it should be clear that the development of electrical power up to date, despite its many beneficient results, is one of the forces that has aided to deepen and to intensify a profound conflict of interest between what may be called the property-owning and the property-using class of society."

B. M.

MILL SHADOWS . . A Review

Mill Shadows, played before an enthusiastic audience of C. P. L. A.'ers and their friends which packed the 83rd Street Labor Temple auditorium on Saturday night March 19, follows closely the course of the Marion strike and was written out of Tom Tippett's personal knowledge of the situation. It opens "in a Carolina mill village yard on an April evening" when textile workers, alarmed over the newly installed stretch-out system, determine to call in a union organizer. Three scenes in union headquarters in June, July and October mark the progress of the strike from almost light-hearted excitement to grim determination when soldiers are brought in to break the strike, and rebellious disillusionment after the compromise settlement has been flagrantly violated by the mill. The most dramatic spot in the play is the massacre of six workers when the mill superintendent, aided by the sheriff and his drunken deputies, shoots into the crowd of pickets blinded with tear gas.

There is a wealth of social and economic material in the play. The conflict between the old Scotch-English mountain whites and the generation of industrial workers is personified by Granny, the staunch old rebel who says, "We should-a stayed up yander in our hills where we wus free" and young Jimmie, who is "goin' to say right here an' git a hautomobile an' see some of the country." Granny is all for direct action, and when scabs are moved into the village she and other mountain women "toted their stuff out onto the road and told 'em to load it up an' tote it back where they come frum"—an act for which four men are later sent to the chaingang. Granny defies the judge—"Bring on yer sojers!" when boss-planted dynamite blows up an old mill shed and so furnishes an excuse for troops to break the hitherto peaceful strike. Granny wants to shoot the sheriff (and nearly does) when the affable but spineless village storekeeper whom the workers elected as their friend becomes the tool of the mill. In the end, she is ready to go back into the hills with "Piney Strike," the baby whose mother was killed by the cotton mill grind; but hearing Larry, the strike leader, on his way to the chaingang proclaim his faith in the ultimate courage and victory of the workers, determines to stay and fight on.

But if the younger generation was at first reluctant to believe with the old mountain woman that "the law air ag'in the common people," they soon come to realize it and to achieve a labor solidarity voiced by young Jimmie to the bossman—"We don't go out by ourse'f no more; we're all stickin' together now."

The grinding poverty of the mill workers, the long hours and low wages, the mothers, burdened with home cares, working in the mill to add a little to the weekly rations of cornmeal and sidemeat, the subservience of the church and the law to the mill interests, the transformation within one generation from the free, simple mountain life to the dreary mill village—all these are woven into the play.

To the Brookwooders in the cast as well as to the author, the production of "Mill Shadows" has been more than the memorizing and acting out of a play. It is a tribute—however fumbling and inadequate—to Old Man Jonas and Jimmie Roberts and the other four who died a marytr's death, to the strikers in Marion and the whole southern industrial struggle.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, of Labor Age, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1931, State of New York, County of New York, ss.:

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Harry A. Howe, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of Labor Age and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of Aug. 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, and managing editor are:

Publisher—Labor Publication Society, Inc., 128 East 16th St., New York, N. Y.

Managing Editor—Louis Francis Budenz, 128 East 16th St., New York, N. Y.

Editor—Harry A. Howe, 128 East 16th St., New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is (If owned by a corporation its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given).

Labor Publication Society, Inc., (a memberbers); A. J. Muste, President, Brookwood, Katonah, N. Y.; Treasurer, Louis Francis Budenz, Managing Editor and Secretary, 128 East 16th St., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

HARRY A. HOWE,
Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of April, 1932.

(Seal) PETER R. HAWLEY,
Notary Public.

(My commission expires March 30, 1933)

Paterson's Hungry

(Continued from page 17)

admit absolute destitution, submit to an investigation in which they answer as to a description of their home, childhood and marriage, how long out of work, religious affiliation, name of church attended, relatives—are they friendly, etc., public and private record, other social agencies, children and school life, previous and present neighborhoods, etc.

Then, if the investigator, who does 15 to 20 families daily gives his or her OK, the OK slip is given to the poormaster who has the final say as to whether or not the relief is to be administered and how much is to be given.

Single men are immediately sent to the Salvation Army which immediately charges the city 40 cents a night.

Slips for groceries in certain stores, ranging from $1 to $7 weekly, are given to those certified by the poormaster. The average so far has been $4 a week for food for families averaging at least four or five.

The number of stores authorized to fill relief orders, formerly all owned by good Democrats, has grown from three to 160. Rumors of discrimination for certain groups of persons, such as radicals, negroes, and others persist.

The needy have their rent paid on dispossess notice. Clothes are given, as is one-half ton of coal a month. The needy also receive milk. Since January 2, 1932, to Good Friday, the number of families receiving relief has risen from 1,669 to 2,591.

The complete costs under dependency relief in 1931 was $181,214.96. In January, 1932, alone, the costs were $47,523.28, compared with $4,705.92 in January, 1931.

In February, 1932, dependency costs were over $50,000 and in March they were expected to go over $55,000. The costs become less during the Spring and Summer months. But it can be readily seen how long $250,000 will last in the city, even taking care of the same number of needy. And that, it must be understood, means if all the $250,000 raised goes to the needy.

That the government must aid municipalities and states in coping with conditions is apparent. Whether the national fathers will do so is another matter, especailly when state and municipal relief heads are unwilling to admit the true situation in their spheres of influence. "Paterson can feed her own," you see.