

Workers Age

A PAPER DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF WORKERS AND FARMERS

Vol. 6 No. 36.

NEW YORK, N. Y. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1937.

5 Cents a Copy

AUTO CONVENTION BACKS MARTIN

CIO Sets Up City Councils

Boston, Mass.

The C.I.O. is consolidating its position in New England. Organization meetings have been held during the past week in Providence and Fall River for the purpose of establishing central bodies to coordinate the work of the local unions.

Fall River is the fourth Massachusetts city to take steps toward setting up a local Industrial Union Council. Worcester acted first, in reaction to expulsion of C.I.O. unions from the Central Labor Union, early last Spring. After the action of the State Federation of Labor, expelling all C.I.O. unions on the eve of the convention, a month ago, the New England office of the C.I.O. began to take the initiative toward building permanent bodies. In Springfield and Lowell, Industrial Union Councils were set up.

The first step at Fall River was taken August 18, when representatives of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, six T.W.O.C. locals and two I.L.G.W.U. locals met and elected a committee to work out plans for the local organization. Altho not present at the meeting, the National Maritime Union, which maintains a hiring hall here, will take part in the new organization. William Ross, district manager of the I.L.G.W.U., Ethel Azaredo, secretary of the A.C.W.A. and Marianno Bishop, director of the T.W.O.C., are serving on the committee.

Establishment of the Fall River I.U.C. should not only bring better coordination of organizational efforts of the three major unions in the textile and garment fields, where there are still thousands of unorganized workers, but should give leadership to organization of the miscellaneous trades, such as retail stores, and utility workers, heretofore completely untouched by unions. The usual reaction on the part of the A. F. of L. brought an indignant protest from the C.L.U. against C.I.O. "invasion" of the restaurant field. Having the interest of the workers more at heart than any factional politics, the C.I.O. has adopted a waiting attitude to see what, if any, results

(Continued from Page 2)

Labor Unity In Spain

The unity pact, entered into towards the end of July between the C.N.T., the Spanish anarcho-sindicalist trade union federation, and the U.G.T., the socialist trade union body of that country, has already begun to show its vast significance for the future development of Spain. Not only has it united the forces of nearly four million workers (two million in the C.N.T. and over a million and a half in the U.G.T.) in trade union and economic activity but it has also created a common C.N.T.-U.G.T. political front arrayed against the reactionary front of the Stalinists, right-wing socialists and liberals.

It is important to note that this unity agreement constituted a big victory for the Caballero left wing in the U.G.T. and S.P. The pact was bitterly attacked by the Spanish official communist press, the Mundo Obrero of August 9 carrying an especially vicious fulmination. Frente Rojo, another Stalinist paper, had already, on July 10, venomously assailed the U.G.T. executive as "enemies of the people." In the United States, however, the Daily Worker, pretending that the U.G.T. was under Stalinist control or, at the very least, was backing the Prieto-Negrin regime, shamelessly "greeted" the unity pact, which its own brother organs in Spain were daily denouncing!

The political meaning of the pact soon became obvious. On the very day it was signed, in fact, the U.G.T. executive repudiated the Claridad of Madrid and Las Noticias of Barcelona and removed them from the list of U.G.T. papers; both had been captured by the Stalinists and had degenerated so far as to call for the persecution of the P.O.U.M. Even more significant was the decision to reexamine and reorganize the "regional federations" of Catalonia with a view to incorporating them into their proper national unions. In Catalonia, the Stalinists had set up a large number of small merchants and manufacturers organizations, called them "unions" and, thru them, seized control of the local U.G.T. The action of the U.G.T. executive, if carried out, means the removal of these foreign bodies from the trade union movement and the breaking of the Stalinist hold.

The P.O.U.M. and other revolutionary elements in Spain have greeted the close cooperation of the two trade union centers. They are urging that even closer unity be effected and that the slogan of "a C.N.T.-U.G.T. government" be issued.

That the persecution of the P.O.U.M., the C.N.T. and left socialists by the Stalinists under the Negrin government is being resented even by sections of the right socialists, is shown in the following declaration of El Socialista, right-wing socialist organ:

"The attitude of the Communist Party towards all those anti-fascists who refuse to bow to its orders and whom it tries to place on the same level with spies and traitors, can be designated in only one way—contemptible!"

President Martin's Report

(We present below important sections of the report submitted by President Homer Martin to the second convention of the United Automobile Workers, held last week at Milwaukee. The full report is to be found in the August 21 issue of the United Automobile Worker.—THE EDITOR.)

ON THE C. I. O.

IT soon became evident that, if we were to be successful in our efforts to organize the unorganized workers, we would have to look for strength and inspiration elsewhere than the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor. We found this needed strength in the Committee for Industrial Organization which courageously took upon itself the task of bringing the message of unionism to the millions of workers untouched by the American Federation of Labor. Immediate steps were taken for the United Automobile Workers to align itself with the C.I.O. under the leadership of John L. Lewis. . . . It seems to us that with the success of the C.I.O. rests the whole future of organized labor in the United States.

JOHN LEWIS AND WILLIAM GREEN

WE must at this time pay due honor to the great leader of the C.I.O., John L. Lewis, who with his aides gave us the fullest and most complete co-operation and backing. . . . Without the vigorous and militant backing of the C.I.O. our victory might not have been won.

It is quite significant that, at the same time that John L. Lewis and the C.I.O. were bending every effort to assist the automobile workers in this battle of the ages, the leadership of the American Federation, thru William Green, not only failed to come to our assistance but actually, at a crucial moment in the negotiations, threw its entire weight against us. . . . The automobile workers of the nation will always remember William Green as a traitor and not as a friend because of the part which he and others like him played in attempting to defeat the struggles of the thousands of mass-production workers. . . .

SIGNIFICANCE OF G. M. STRIKE

THE signing of the General Motors agreement on February 11 proved to be the turning point in the history of the United Automobile Workers of America and of the Committee for Industrial Organization. With the victory of the union, a new spirit prevailed among workers thru the country. Workers in steel, rubber, aluminum and other industries flocked by the thousands into the C.I.O. . . . The General Motors agreement paved the way for the establishment of contractual relations between hundreds of manufacturers and their employees thru the C.I.O.

The victory of the United Automobile Workers in the General Motors strike was highly significant because it helped in bringing such corporations as United States Steel into line by signing contracts with the C.I.O. The General Motors strike helped to make strikes in other industries unnecessary. This should be borne in mind by all those who hastily criticized the United Automobile Workers for the strikes it participated in. The General Motors strike went far to establish

(Continued on page 4)

The C. P. and the Question of Trade Union Unity

By WILL HERBERG

SLOGANS are not mere words to be judged in the abstract. The meaning of every slogan, of every proposal, is to be determined in its context and implications. This is especially true with the slogan of "trade union unity" today. Of course, everybody is in favor of trade union unity—the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and all of the well-intentioned or not-so-well-intentioned people in between and around. But the same words mean different things to different people and it is these different meanings that are important.

In previous articles,* I examined this unity question as it is seen by the A. F. of L. officialdom (unity thru the destruction of the C.I.O.) and by the right-wing socialists (unity thru disaster). The position of the Communist Party on this issue, especially as developed in recent weeks, is no less important in this connection, for the relative

* See "The C.I.O. and the Problem of Unity," in the Workers Age of May 29, 1937, and "Peace Thru Disaster," in the Workers Age of June 26, 1937.

political insignificance of the C.P. is by no means the measure of its nuisance power as an element of confusion and demoralization.

The C.P. For The A. F. of L.

Just about six months ago, in March and April of this year, the Communist Party was still agitating for "a stronger and more powerful A. F. of L." and was attacking us because we openly proclaimed the split in the trade union movement to be inevitable under the circumstances, historically necessary and progressive. It was the time when the C.P. was still straddling the whole A. F. of L.-C.I.O. issue, blowing hot and cold at the same time, advocating one policy in the A. F. of L. unions and an opposite one in the C.I.O. It was the time when the C.P.-dominated elements supported Wharton for president in the machinists union, when Bridges resisted any approach of the maritime unions on the West Coast to the C.I.O. It was the time when the progressives in the office workers and furriers unions were howled down for advocating affiliation to the C.I.O. As late as

(Continued on page 3)

Big Lead in Board Union Endorses Constitution

By GEORGE F. MILES

Milwaukee, Wis.

The convention of the United Automobile Workers Union closed Sunday night, after a most impassioned plea by President Homer Martin to the opposition delegates for a show of real unity and cooperation had smashed thru their ranks despite the most frantic efforts of the opposition caucus leaders to keep them intact.

The fight came over the delayed report by the Credentials Committee on granting eight additional votes to the 15 delegates from the Fisher Body Number One plant of Flint, Michigan, which backed the administration. The opposition fought desperately, believing that the outcome of this vote would determine whether the seven International Board members from the state of Michigan would divide four to three or five to two in favor of President Martin. They had the wind taken out of their sails by the declaration from the chair that the outcome of the vote would in no way change the results of the balloting for the Board members which had been held on the previous day. Martin appealed for the Credentials Committee ruling on the grounds of local autonomy and, on a viva voce vote, declared the ayes to have it. Pandemonium broke loose for almost fifteen minutes and was ended only when the opposition caucus leaders finally arose to throw in the sponge. They stated that they recognized they were licked and would abide by the decisions of the convention.

Earlier in the week, the convention had been addressed by John L. Lewis of the Committee for Industrial Organization, who dealt at length with the internal condition

(Continued on Page 3)

WEST VIRGINIA A.F.L. VOTES FOR C.I.O.

The West Virginia Federation of Labor voted unanimously, at its annual convention, to disobey orders of William Green, A. F. of L. president, to expel all C.I.O. unions. Passing the resolution was greeted with cheers by the 600 delegates.

John T. Easton, State Federation head, said that if the order had been obeyed, not enough local unions would have been left to "pour water out of a boot."

Such action would divide the workers in the Mountain State and "give our enemies the ammunition to divide us further," the federation declared.

Green announced at the executive council in session at Atlantic City that steps would be taken to revoke the federation's charter if it did not comply with his order at once.

COMING

In the Next Issue:

INDUSTRIAL DECENTRALIZATION AND FASCISM

by LYMAN FRAZER

ON THE "LETTER OF AN OLD BOLSHEVIK"

by JIM CORK

WORKERS AGE

Organ of the National Council, Independent Communist Labor League, 131 West 33rd St., New York City.

Entered as second class matter Nov. 5, 1934, at the Post Office New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879.

Vol. 6, No. 36. Saturday, Sept. 4, 1937.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE 75th CONGRESS

WHAT happened at the session of the 75th Congress just concluded is a most revealing object lesson in the class realities of American politics.

But let us look a little deeper. What brought about this startling shift of political forces in the federal legislature? Profound, deep-going shifts of mood and sentiment in the ranks of the business and employing classes of the country!

In the dark days of the crisis, in the hectic months towards the end of the Hoover administration, big business was frantically on the look-out for something to stave off the collapse of the economic system, which it believed to be imminent.

For labor, the obvious lessons is that, no matter how fair-spoken are the politicians and no matter how liberal their platforms, official politics remains the game of big business just as long as labor is not organized independently into its own party for independent intervention in the political life of the country.

STOP THE STALINIST TERROR IN SPAIN!

An Appeal Of The I. C. O.

(We present below the main paragraphs of an appeal recently issued by the Bureau of the International Communist Opposition, to which the I.C.L.L. is affiliated.—THE EDITOR.)

THERE can no longer be any doubt that Andres Nin, since the death of Joaquin Maurin the outstanding leader of the P.O.U.M., has been murdered.

As Nin, together with other revolutionary prisoners belonging to the C.N.T., F.A.I. and Libertarian Youth, were being removed from the Madrid police jail, allegedly in order to be taken to Valencia, they were met by an auto fitted out with machine guns which opened fire on them and murdered them all.

Who are the guilty ones? Who are the murderers? No one at all acquainted with the facts can have the slightest doubt as to who directed the machine guns that mowed down Andres Nin and his companions.

It was the Communist Party of Spain and the United Socialist Party of Catalonia (P.S.U.C.) that had forced the removal of Nin as representative of the P.O.U.M. in the Catalan government. It was the C.P. of Spain and the P.S.U.C. that, for months, carried on an infamous agitation for banning the P.O.U.M. and shooting its outstanding leaders.

Equally guilty are the right-wing socialists and the wily liberal republicans in the Negrin government, who tolerated and permitted the reactionary terror against the P.O.U.M. and therefore share full responsibility for it.

When the ex-Kaiser's officers, doing the bidding of the Ebert-Scheidemann regime, murdered Liebknecht and Luxemburg, Lenin showed how this awful crime laid bare the shameless lies of bourgeois democracy—a system which turns into reactionary terror against the working masses the moment it is endangered.

In Germany, the reactionary terror began with Noske, the social-

democrat, and ended with Hitler, the fascist.

In Spain, the reactionary terror that has begun with Jose Diaz, Prieto and Azana, will end with Franco—unless the Spanish working class proves able to stay the hand of the bourgeois republicans and their agents in the ranks of labor from shedding the blood of the best champions of proletarian revolution, unless the Spanish working class proves able to set up its own proletarian state power.

We call upon all honest revolutionists, upon all true socialists and communists, to raise their voices in protest against the assassination of Nin, to demand that the crime be fully brought to light and that those guilty be properly punished.

Raise your voices in protest in order to save the hundreds and thousands of revolutionists in the clutches of the murderers of Nin! Organize international mass protests!

Down with the reactionary terror of the Stalinists!

The Bureau of the International Communist Opposition August 9, 1937.

C.I.O. SETS UP CITY COUNCILS IN N.E.

(Continued from Page 1)

the new A. F. of L. concern for these exploited workers would bring about.

The Providence meeting, August 23, was for the purpose of setting up a temporary state organization, pending the probable expulsion of C.I.O. unions at the State Federation of Labor meeting in October.

Other officers elected were: Robert Swift of the Dyers Federation in West Warwick, vice-president; Ralph Lofsky, from the Narrow Fabrics Local of the T.W.O.C.; secretary; Ralph Cicco of the United Rubber Workers, treasurer.

The greatest difference of opinion on rules for the new organization appeared on the question of representation. The big textile locals favored unlimited representation on the basis of one delegate for every hundred members.

Altho the textile industry has not yet recovered fully from the summer slack season, a powerful incentive to renewal of the organizational drive with redoubled energy should result from establishment of the state organization.

By Lambda WORLD TODAY Special Correspondent Describes Conditions In South Africa

(We are devoting this week's column to a very interesting report by a correspondent from South Africa.—THE EDITOR.)

THE seasonal dullness in trade is now accompanied by several failures on the Stock Exchange, caused by the uneasiness in the gold market. It began with the shipments of considerable amounts of Russian gold to the U.S.A. Since then, one bankruptcy has followed another, interrupted by slight improvements.

The building industry, which is important for its number of employees and the material consumed, is closely connected with the stability of the markets.

If the demand of the world market for gold remains approximately constant and the U.S.S.R. increases her gold production and disposes of it, it will mean a further fall in the gold price as well as the closing of some mines, the exploitation of which was profitable during the boom.

The American Woolen Company has waived a hearing before the National Labor Relations Board and will interpose no objection to the election. Elections are expected to follow in the other mills of the company.

Sidney Hillman, T.W.O.C. chairman, after a series of conferences with representatives of the American Woolen Company, said that he expects the workers will choose the T.W.O.C. as their sole bargaining agency and thereby lead to an agreement with the American Woolen Company.

The bulk of the silk workers returned to work two weeks after they had gone out in their first effective general strike, gaining a new status in the industry. With about 14,000 workers covered by agreements reached prior to the walkout on August 9, the majority of the silk workers won their demands in the briefest and most effective strike in the history of the industry.

The role played by the Labor Party and the trade unions, particularly in connection with the race question, is simply reactionary. A serious left opposition does not exist. Recently a "United Socialist Party" was formed, including the communists.

(Continued on page 4)

AUTO UNION CONVENTION BACKS MARTIN

Progressives Win Big Lead in General Board

(Continued from Page 1) of the union and expressed the hope that the convention would end on a note of unity and cooperation. With this in mind, the Pro-

JOHN L. LEWIS



gressive caucus agreed to the reelection of the three general officers associated with the opposition forces. It was thus that a unanimous vote was achieved for the reelection of Homer Martin as President, George Addeas as Secretary and the following five Vice-Presi-

T.W.O.C. IN POLL AT AM. WOOLENS

On the heels of agreements between the Textile Workers Organizing Committee and silk manufacturers covering more than 45,000 out of a total of 58,000 workers in the industry, following a two-weeks' strike, comes the announcement of elections to be held in American Woolen Company mills, under the supervision of the National Labor Relations Board.

The American Woolen Company has waived a hearing before the National Labor Relations Board and will interpose no objection to the election. Elections are expected to follow in the other mills of the company.

The American Woolen Company accounts for about 20 per cent of the woolen and worsted industry, with 27 mills located principally in New England, and employing about 28,000 workers.

Sidney Hillman, T.W.O.C. chairman, after a series of conferences with representatives of the American Woolen Company, said that he expects the workers will choose the T.W.O.C. as their sole bargaining agency and thereby lead to an agreement with the American Woolen Company.

Silk Strike Effective

The bulk of the silk workers returned to work two weeks after they had gone out in their first effective general strike, gaining a new status in the industry. With about 14,000 workers covered by agreements reached prior to the walkout on August 9, the majority of the silk workers won their demands in the briefest and most effective strike in the history of the industry.

The windup of the strike at the close of the second week came with a dramatic climax, when representatives of the T.W.O.C., headed by Sidney Hillman, met with representatives of large Pennsylvania silk mills in Harrisburg, Pa., called by Governor Earle.

HOMER MARTIN



thing, it was the bitter factionalism of the opposition which finally fused the administration forces into an efficient fighting machine. One could see almost before his eyes the emergence and beginning of the crystallization of a national leadership in the United Automobile Workers. President Homer Martin and Vice-President Richard

dents: Richard T. Frankenstein, R. J. Thomas, Walter N. Wells, Wyndham Mortimer and Edward Hall. However, when it came to the reelection of International Board members, the opposition refused to back the proposal for the reelection of the old Board. It was therefore thrown into district meetings where the administration carried all but one district, the latter being Ohio, where the opposition took the three board members. The International Board, including the general officers, now stands sixteen to eight in support of President Martin.

For days, the actual relationship of forces in the convention was alleged to be in doubt, both sides claiming a majority. After four days of conventioning, the opposition blundered into a roll call vote, which definitely showed a majority of over 300 votes for the Martin administration but even this majority was an inchoate mass, most of them attending a labor convention for the first time. Moreover, the leadership on the floor, as well as the national leadership, found it difficult to handle a determined, noisy, obstreperous opposition such as this one led by a handful of Communist and socialist party members and their supporters. If any-

Frankenstein deserve unstinting praise for the masterly manner in which they led the convention, in the face of the blatant factionalism and deliberate provocations of the opposition caucus.

The results of the convention are of great significance for the labor movement as whole and for the C.I.O. in particular. The U.A.W. is the first of the newly born C.I.O. giants—the largest of them in fact—to show its ability to stabilize its organization thru the development of its own leadership out of the ranks. That this was achieved under the abnormal conditions of unscrupulous and unprincipled factionalism and self-seeking, makes the significance even greater. Needless to say, the leaders of the C.I.O. aided materially in bringing about this welcome result. The presence of John L. Lewis and his desire to see peace in the organization were of great value. Most praiseworthy was the fine assistance and aid rendered to the union by David Dubinsky, President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Leading spokesmen of the union expressed their profound appreciation for these services. Union leaders had words of great praise also for the work of Ora Gasaway and Ray Edmondson of the United Mine Workers, who as-

isted in the work of the convention. The results of the convention can be summarized as follows:

1. The Martin forces now have a majority of the officers of the organization. In the past, they were

DAVID DUBINSKY



handicapped by a majority of oppositionists.

2. The administration now has a comfortable majority of two to one on the Board and has carried all but one geographic area.

3. The convention adopted a new constitution which centralizes the organization and the responsibility of the union. The new constitution also provides for biennial conventions, thus giving the Martin administration two years in which to stabilize and build the organization until the next convention at Toledo.

4. The powers of the President have been greatly extended under the new constitution. In addition, the convention has gone a long way to prove Martin not merely a great orator but also a leader of sterling qualities. His prestige in the organization was never greater.

5. The powers of the International Secretary were limited and more clearly defined, making impossible overlapping or duality of authority.

6. The opposition has been robbed of all its "issues." The convention was conducted in a thoroughly democratic manner and the opposition was given every opportunity to express itself. It was licked fairly and squarely.

7. The convention itself was a great education for the 1,200 delegates and for the leadership itself. Out of it is emerging a new, capable, honest and progressive leadership, worthy of the union it represents.

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO WORKERS AGE

The International Class Struggle

Organ of the International Communist Opposition A quarterly publication of labor political theory and practice.

SPRING NUMBER 25c Annual subscription at \$1.00 write to INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST LABOR LEAGUE 131 West 33rd Street New York City

President Martin's Report

(Continued from page 1)

lish the Committee for Industrial Organization as a union movement which must be recognized and dealt with by the employers.

ON THE STAY-IN STRIKE

THE stay-in strike was beyond a doubt the only method by which the workers in the automobile industry could have forced the employers, who were determined to disregard the law of the land, into entering into real collective bargaining relationships. The stay-in strike was not only significant because it brought about collective bargaining in the automobile industry without loss of life but it was also significant because of its singular effectiveness in stopping the very heart strings of industry. The stay-in strike will remain an effective weapon against employers who refuse to recognize the moral and legal rights of the workers to collective bargaining. In my opinion it will remain labor's most effective weapon against the autocracy of industry.

THE SWEEP OF VICTORIES

IT would be impossible to describe or even mention all of the strikes that we have conducted in the automobile industry this past year. The number runs into the hundreds. Our record has been one of practically a clean sweep of victories. We have not lost a single strike which has been authorized. Those that were lost or where the workers received a temporary setback were directly traceable to the fact that in these instances the workers, at the time of the strike, were unorganized and would stop work spontaneously without first being able to obtain much needed advice and assistance from the International Union and would launch themselves into a strike at such time, place and under circumstances which, from the very outset, precluded the possibility of success. . . .

As a result of negotiations with and without strikes we now have signed agreements with over 400 automobile and parts manufacturing companies, together with aircraft and some miscellaneous manufacturing plants. By June of 1937, we had signed an agreement with every single manufacturer of automobiles in the United States, with the single exception of the Ford Motor Company—and let me say that we have working agreements with some of the outlying plants of the Ford Motor Company. We have carried on successful strikes against some plants of the Ford Motor Company, proving that Ford is not different from the others and that Ford workers want organization and the rights and privileges of unionism just as other automobile workers do.

ON CONSOLIDATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

BY the beginning of summer the wave of strikes had more or less subsided. We had attained a membership of more 350,000, of which 200,000 were in the city of Detroit. With such a vast number within our folds we faced a new problem. . . . to consolidate our gains and stabilize our organization in order that we might fortify ourselves for future struggles and protect ourselves from loss of what we had already achieved. One of the most dangerous problems which confronted us at this time was the recurrence of unauthorized sit-downs and stoppages of work.

Never under any circumstances has it been the policy of this organization to encourage or promote unauthorized strikes. Individuals within our ranks, including organizers and other paid officials, who have been guilty, do not represent the policy of the U.A.W.A. We have not hesitated to repudiate any practices on the part of certain individuals or groups within our organization which either directly or indirectly encouraged wild-cat strikes. . . . Union officials guilty of such practices failed completely of their responsibility and forfeited any right to act as leaders of organized labor. Demagogic appeal and a willingness to sacrifice the future of the labor movement for a temporary personal popularity with the workers by posing as a "militant" are the chief traits of such individuals. I should like to emphasize at this point, however, that such behavior on the part of a handful of the officers and members has served to blind the public to the fact that the vast majority of our membership have earnestly endeavored in good faith to fulfill their obligations and shoulder their responsibilities. . . .

In the General Motors Corporation the unauthorized strike situation was more acute than elsewhere. . . . Altho we realized that these unauthorized stoppages so widely publicized by General Motors and others were caused to a considerable degree by the reluctance of local officials to accept the spirit of the agreement between the union and the management, we were determined that, whatever General Motors might do on their part to bring their own managements into line, it was important for the union to do what it could to eliminate unauthorized strikes. . . . The General Motors workers of the nation responded and, since that time, we have had practically no unauthorized strikes or stoppages of work in any of the General Motors plants. We have proven our ability to exercise discipline and assume responsibility to the entire nation.

ON STABILIZATION AND DISCIPLINE

THE stabilization of the International Union is not only dependent upon the elimination of unauthorized strikes and stoppages of work but it is also linked together with broader aspects of the problem, namely, the realization upon the part of the members of our union that we must have one policy which is carried out with authority. . . . We must be welded together into a powerful, authoritative and responsible International Union. Only those who wish to divide and defeat us are interested in any other sort of program. The history of the United Mine Workers of America, the International Ladies' Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers is the history of growth of a powerful, authoritative organization.

One of the most dangerous situations we have to contend with as an organization has been the presence and possibility of sections of our organization acting as if they were small international unions within our organization. This condition is brought about when certain organizers and even higher officers, both of the locals and the International, refuse to abide by the decisions of the convention and of the General Executive Board and put into effect policies other than that of the International Union. Certain cliques which are greedy for control use portions of the organization as vehicles to advance their own interests. They act as if the labor movement was made for the purpose of promoting their own power and glory. . . . Individuals or groups who engage in such practices, help only the enemies of the labor movement. . . . There must be unity within the International Union if we are

The Economic Position of the Negro and Its Effects on the White Workers

By LYMAN FRASER

THE unusually oppressive economic conditions under which the Negro lives is an old story. But it is a story that must be retold to nail down its significance. It must be retold, especially as new material is unearthed, to explore the many-angled relation of the Negro to the American class struggle.

Revealing new material is being unearthed in a study of family incomes and expenditures now being carried on by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. The study covers the year 1935-36. According to the preliminary results in six cities, a staggering larger proportion of Negro families than white families are in the low-income groups.

Percentage of Families with Yearly Incomes Below \$1,000

	Negro	White
Columbus, Ohio	78.7	26.6
Atlanta, Ga.	81.1	24.8
Columbia, S. C.	86.4	22.3
Mobile, Ala.	89.8	33.3
Albany, Ga.	92.1	27.9
Gastonia, N. C.	92.2	45.8

The proportion of Negro families with total family incomes from all sources (including relief) of less than \$1,000 yearly ranged from a low of 78.7% in the northern city of Columbus, Ohio, where the Negro is "better off" than in the South, to a high of 92.2% in Mobile, Ala. For all six cities, 83% of the Negro families had incomes of less than \$1,000 compared with 27% of the white families.

No family, black or white, can live in cities under conditions of minimum decency where the total yearly income is below \$1,000. Still worse, seven out of ten Negro families must live on less than \$750 yearly. It cannot be done in the North. It cannot be done in the South despite the Congressional and other hypocrites who argue that low wages are justified in the South because God has made it possible to live more cheaply in those blessed regions. Differences in cost of living are small; if workers in the South live on less it is because they live less.

The income figures clearly reveal, not only the poverty that grinds down the Negro, but the special racial exploitation to which he is subject since low incomes among Negro families are from

two to four times as numerous as among white families.

It must be recognized that the terrible racial exploitation of the Negro helps to move many white families to higher income levels. This is not only true of the upper classes. It is also true of the petty exploiters of labor, industrial and commercial, who want low wages, and of many middle class families who hire Negro servants for a pittance while the lady of the house plays the grande dame.

Effect On White Workers

But it must also be recognized that the exploitation of the Negro primarily benefits the upper classes and that it helps to keep down wages, salaries and incomes generally among the masses of white people, especially the workers. While there is a large differential between the proportion of white and Negro families in the low-income groups in the six cities, the proportion of white families in the low-income groups is not much smaller than the national average.

In twenty-eight cities surveyed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics the proportion of white families with incomes below \$1,000 was 32%. If one looks at the figures in the table one sees that in four cities the percentage of low-income white families was not much lower than the national average, it was about the same in Mobile and 50% higher in Gastonia. For the six cities as a whole 27% of the white families had incomes below \$1,000 compared with the 32% national average. And it is significant to note that, in the six cities, the absolute number of low incomes in the two racial groups was about equal: there were 13,750 white families getting incomes below \$1,000 yearly compared with 13,926 Negro families. The condition of those "poor whites" was not improved by exploitation of the Negro.

The terrible meaning of those low incomes to the Negro people is illustrated in the blighted slum areas of Birmingham. In those slum areas, where the population is mainly black, the infant mortality is 20% higher than the city average, reportable diseases are 65% higher and deaths 36% higher.

Yet one out of every seven persons living in those blighted slum areas is white; that one is multiplied to include 7,500 persons or

5% of Birmingham's white population. And there are slums inhabited exclusively by whites.

Toilers Have Common Enemy

The recoil of Negro exploitation upon the white toilers appears most clearly on the farms. Negro exploitation is undoubtedly a major cause of the backward condition of Southern agriculture. Independent white farmers, except the minority of substantial owners, are not much better off than Negro farmers. That is still more true among the share croppers: a recent government survey revealed that in North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi and Georgia, 64% of the white croppers and 72% of the Negro croppers had yearly incomes of only \$250 to \$500. The differential in favor of the white croppers is so small as to be practically insignificant; the important thing is that neither the white cropper nor the Negro cropper can live humanly with those incomes. The Negro suffers most, but the others suffer too.

Black and white are, alike, exploited in final analysis, by a system that uses racial prejudices and racial antagonisms to consolidate and preserve exploitation. The most elementary need of the class struggle in the South is realization by white workers, farmers and croppers that the enemy of the Negro is their enemy and must be destroyed.

World Today

(Continued from page 2)

In this party, there are many intellectuals, some clerks, a few workers and even less Negroes. The communists here are not a good type. The natives and colored people are more sympathetic, as a natural basis for opposition exists here. But it must not be forgotten that most of the educated natives are deeply influenced by the church and that many able natives, especially Zulus, are civil servants (army, police, etc.) and they stand with the Empire. The national and social problems of the natives are theoretically clear and not exceedingly difficult to deal with in propaganda. The problem of united action with the white proletariat is much more complicated. The proletariat here differs tremendously from the European working class. It profits by the exploitation of the natives and shows an incredible race-snobbishness, particularly among the "down-and-outs." To this extent, the situation is completely different from what it is in China or India. Only a small minority of the natives live in towns and of these some remain and get some kind of education. The rest live in the kraals or return there. The chief still directs their lives in the kraal. The government confirms or removes him—and pays him. An alliance between proletariat (even the native proletariat) and the kraal is up against tremendous difficulties.

TALL TIMBER

LAKE MOHEGAN, N. Y.
Phone: Peekskill 3275

For Labor Day Week-End

Features:

Concert, Juanita Hall's 22-voice Negro Choir, other artists; movies, lake, good tennis, handball, horses, golf near.

Labor Day rates: \$10 for 2 days then \$4.50 a day.

Regular rates:
\$22 a week - \$4.50 a day

ON LABOR POLITICAL ACTION

THERE is an ever growing tendency for union men and women to feel that there is something wrong in uniting in a powerful union to fight for the defense and advancement of their welfare against reactionary employers on the economic field and, at the same time, vote for the representative of these anti-labor interests on election day. If it is good for labor to unite economically, then why is it not also good for labor to unite politically? . . .

There are growing indications that labor is becoming conscious of the necessity of electing its own people to office, people who it knows will not betray it. It is my firm belief that we will see a day when there will be a labor party in this country which is based on and rooted firmly within the ranks of the organized labor movement.

to have a union. The power must rest undivided in the membership and be expressed thru the convention. The convention delegates to the General Executive Board the authority to carry out the policies determined democratically at the convention and to modify these policies between conventions, as circumstances make necessary. The convention likewise delegates to the President the authority to carry out the decisions of the General Executive Board between meetings of the Executive Board and to administer the affairs of the International Union. The Vice-Presidents are responsible to the President who, together with them, is responsible to the General Executive Board. Our International Union is organized in an industry which is characterized by the highest degree of centralization of control. . . .

Democracy within our organization is insured by allowing the maximum participation by the members in determining the policies and selecting the leadership of the International Union and in delegating the authority to carry out these policies to a highly integrated, centralized body led by an International President. . . . To have a loosely federated group of international unions within an International Union means the division of power. Our membership must retain the power undivided.