

The Political Muddle in Colorado

By MAX SHACHTMAN.

Of the political messes into which the workers have been dragged this year, the one now existing in Colorado threatens to be a serious contender for first place. The situation there is a good reflex of the confusion existing in the politics of the organized workers of America following on the endorsement everywhere of the sleight-of-hand artist from Wisconsin, LaFollette.

The Colorado State Federation of Labor has not only given its endorsement to LaFollette and Wheeler, but also to Alva B. Adams, junior senator, for re-election to the Millionaire's Club. Adams, it will be recalled, was appointed by Governor William Sweet to fill the term left vacant by the death of Nicholson. Sweet, who cashes in on a nice bit of lucre annually as a bond broker, is supporting John W. Davis, democratic candidate for the presidency. And Sweet has the endorsement of the American Federation of Labor in Colorado.

Bob's Committee Headed by Traitor.

Now! The gentleman who has been put in charge of the Colorado campaign of LaFollette is John R. Lawson. Lawson was once a fighter. He headed District 15 of the United Mine Workers of America, and was the leader of one of the most glorious strikes in the history of the American working class, the Ludlow strike. As a result of that walk-out, with its attendant, now infamous massacre, Lawson was framed up by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., run by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the teacher of Sunday schools, and the feudal lord of the state, and was sentenced to a life term of imprisonment for his activity. The case was, however, appealed to a higher court, the decision reversed and the entire affair was dropped. As soon as Lawson was freed from jail, he initiated and led a secessionist movement out of the United Mine Workers because, he maintained—and perhaps correctly—that the international officials of the union had refused to give the strike the support it needed and deserved. For this, he was expelled by the international from the U. M. W. of A.

For some time, the name of John R. Lawson was not heard until he finally turned up as an employee of none other than the Colorado Fuel and

Iron Co., of the same Rockefeller, that is, whom he had previously fought and who had been instrumental in framing him! In view of his new job, suspicion was aroused at his previous actions, but today they are all silenced. He is state director of the LaFollette campaign and, like Brutus, he is an honorable man.

But the same gang that is backing LaFollette is also backing Sweet and his appointee who is now running for senator, Alva B. Adams. To analyze Adams a bit will give an insight into the type of a labor supporter that Sweet is.

Adams—Anti-Labor Lawyer.

Sweet appointed Adams to fill the term left vacant by Nicholson at the time that the shopmen employed on the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad were still locked out. Sweet had only a short time before been elected to the governorship with the support of the American Federation of Labor's Non-Partisan Political Committee. His first act of generosity and appreciation to labor was the appointment of the lawyer of the Santa Fe, one of the worst labor hating corporations in the country, to the United States senate. As you suspected, dear reader, this lawyer was none other but Alva B. Adams!

On the board of directors of the Santa Fe can be found, among others, a gentleman by the name of John W. Davis, who happens to have been nominated by the democratic party to run for president. Davis only withdrew from his directorate after his nomination, holding on to this Morgan job with all energy up to the very last minute. Other directors on this road are such men as Edward J. Berwind, of the notorious anti-labor union mines in Pennsylvania; Ogden L. Mills, one of the biggest stockholders in the N. Y. Central Railroad; W. B. Storey and W. E. Brown, of the famous Brown Brothers in Philadelphia, who engineered that little imperialist maneuver in the Caribbean a few years ago.

It is for this railroad that Alva B. Adams, now supported by organized labor in Colorado, was the attorney.

In case there should be any doubt as to the policy of the Santa Fe, it is sufficient to recall the railway strike of 1922, when this road spread the lie about the abandonment of passengers on the "desert" at Needles, California.

This canard was later exploded by the district passenger agent, E. H. Dallas, and by Albert E. Coyle, editor of the Locomotive Engineers' Journal. Coyle is now also supporting LaFollette!

A Silent Adam.

Adams was the attorney for the Santa Fe at the time the road was carrying on its bitter struggle against the workers, and he uttered not a single word in support of the strikers. Today he gets the support of the labor movement there.

Aside from the Adams buncombe that is being spread by the labor fakers in the state, there is another element of confusion. The political field is cluttered up by a would-be "progressive party," which put up a slate of presidential electors for LaFollette and Wheeler in the hope of attracting votes, but was later repudiated by Frank A. Harrison, LaFollette's regional director. It is composed of disgruntled elements who failed to receive an opportunity to feed at the Davis pork barrel.

And on top of it all comes the farcical Farmer-Labor party, which is neither farmer nor labor, and which will probably have a state ticket in the field this fall. For the last few years a few individuals have been paid by the republican party to navigate this decoy in order to draw some votes away from the democrats.

A Political Chinese Puzzle.

What a muddle! Labor endorses LaFollette, whose campaign committee is headed by a traitor to labor; also Adams; Adams gets the O. K. of Sweet, who in turn supports Davis; Adams was attorney for the reactionary corporation on which Davis was director. Then again: Labor endorses Wheeler, who is running with LaFollette; Wheeler supports Walsh for senator from Montana, altho Walsh has been condemned by the Montana State Federation of Labor as an enemy of the workers; Walsh supports Davis; Davis gets the aid of Adams who is endorsed by labor organizations that are backing the opponent of Davis, LaFollette.

No, this is not a Chinese puzzle. It is only an example of the maze into which labor has been drawn by its failure to follow a policy of independent political action.

The only party in Colorado that

takes a clear stand on questions affecting the workers on all fields of life, is the Workers Party.

When the workers of Colorado decide as to where they shall throw their support in the coming election it is well to remember the terrible result of the futile policy of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies." It is well to recall that the horrible Ludlow massacre, when the tools of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., murdered workers, their wives and children, occurred under the administration composed of such "friends of labor" as the following, elected in 1912, when the Colorado workers achieved their great "political victory." Here is the list:

Governor—Elias Ammons, Democrat, Farmers' Union.

Lieutenant Governor—Benjamin Montgomery, Democrat, Farmers' Union.

Secretary of State—James B. Pearce, Democrat, R. R. Telegraphers.

Superintendent Public Instruction—Mary C. Bradford, Democrat, Women's Trade Union League.

Congressman—Edward B. Keating, Democrat, Typographical Union.

State Senators—Joseph Berry, Democrat, Locomotive Engineers; A. E. Gorman, Democrat, Typographical Union; S. S. Bellesfield, Democrat, Typographical Union; Ralph Tucker, Republican, Trainmen's Union; William Matz, Democrat, Conductors' Union; John Cross, Democrat, Farmers' Union; John I. Tierney, Democrat, Typographical Union; Matt Lynes, Republican, Locomotive Engineers; John Hurd, Democrat, United Mine Workers.

House of Representatives—John Williams, Democrat, Bookbinders; Phil McCarthy, Democrat, Stationary Engineers; William R. Elmore, Democrat, Machinists; Charles J. Leftwich, Democrat, Carpenters; Peter Turnbull, Democrat, Metal Workers; Jack Slattery, Democrat, Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union; John T. Kavanaugh, Democrat, Street Carmen's Union; William Dailey, Democrat, Typographical Union; A. C. Newton, Republican, Typographical Union; J. McDonald, Machinists' Helpers.

They served in office from January 1913 to January 1915. The Ludlow massacre occurred on April 20, 1914. It should be an unforgettable lesson.