

Shall Workers' Education Do the Goose Step?

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

A FEW years ago, Upton Sinclair wrote his "Goose Step", a smashing exposure of the corruption of big educational institutions by Rockefeller, Carnegie and other foundations. This book showed how that portion of American youth that goes to the big trust-owned universities is trained and drilled in the way that big business desires.

Now the Young Workers Education Bureau has fallen in line with the goose step and come under the shadow of these big financial foundations. The Carnegie corporation, founded from the money coined by Andrew Carnegie and the steel trust out of the blood of Homestead, and McKeesport, is a foundation of \$135,000,000 for the "fostering" of "general education, medical education, legal education and scientific research." It is the largest of the many enormous Carnegie foundations. Ever since the American labor movement began to manifest an awakening interest in workers' education, the Carnegie corporation trustees have manifested an interest in the same subject.

Worker's Education Bureau.

THE Workers' Education Bureau, affiliated with the American Federation of labor, marked a great step forward in the development of the American working class, at least in the sense that it "legalized" education in the unions. Up till that time, the "hard boiled" labor leaders had belligerently opposed any attempts at working class education on the ground that the rank and file "know too much already—more than is good for them!" The Workers' Education Bureau served to co-ordinate various local educational movements under the auspices of central labor councils, together with such activities as those of the education department of the International Ladies' Garments Workers' Union and the United Mine Workers. Under the stimulus of the greater attention paid to workers' education many new classes were founded. The question soon arose, Shall it be a mere extension of master class "culture" to the workers—a systematic doping of the mind of the worker with apologies for and defense of the present system—or shall it be working-class education to strengthen the workers' organization and train workers for more conscious participation in the struggles of their class.

Carnegie Corporation Steps in.

IT was at this point that the Carnegie Corporation stepped in. It had on its hands \$135,000,000. Such enormous quantities of money beget enormous quantities of money, so that the fund can spend freely and still continue to grow in volume. The Workers' Education Bureau had undertaken to publish textbooks for the various classes in workers' education. He who writes textbooks dictates the whole content of the class which is based upon it. Consequently, the Carnegie Corporation has thrown a mere trifle—\$25,000—to the Workers' Education Bureau for the purpose of the publication of books.

Naturally, it made no conditions. In fact it did not have to, for the Workers' Education Bureau had already shown by the character of its publications and by the face of its application for the \$25,000 fund that it was not intending to publish anything which seriously questioned the capitalist system. It asked Saposs

write two books, one on "orthodox" trade unionism and the other on "unorthodox" or left wing movements in the trade unions.

These two were supposed to make up a single study course, but the Workers' Education Bureau published the first or "orthodox" section and rejected the second or "unorthodox." A study by Teresa Wolfson on "Women in Industry" was rejected because it merely questioned the willingness of certain American Federation of Labor unions to organize the women. Yet it is an obvious fact that officials of many unions are reluctant indeed to make a real drive for the organization of the women. The Carnegie Corporation had already received ample proof that the Workers' Education Bureau was publishing the "right kind of books," and wanted to increase the amount of such publication so as to provide plenty of textbooks for all "legitimate" purposes.

One of Many.

THE Carnegie Corporation is only one of a whole series of big American foundations, built up from the enormous profits that the millionaires and billionaires have squeezed out of the American workers. A few other important ones are the General Education Board, founded by Rockefeller in 1903 with an initial capital of \$201,000,000; the Rockefeller Foundation, founded in 1913 with an initial capital of \$183,000,000; the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial, founded in 1918 with \$78,000,000; the Hershey Fund, with \$60,000,000; the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, with \$16,250,000; the Carnegie Institute of Washington, with \$22,000, founded for "investigation, research and discovery and the application of knowledge to the improvement of mankind;" the Kresge Foundation, with \$24,500,000, "for charitable, educational and philanthropic purposes;" the Russell Sage Foundation, with \$15,000,000, for "the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States," and innumerable other such enormous social slush funds totaling all together over a billion dollars. These do not include the direct donations to universities and other institutions.

THE power of a billion dollars for the control and corruption of the entire educational system of the United States is incalculable. These foundations do not spend their principle, but merely some part of the enormous interest. On a fund, for example, of \$100,000,000 there are 5, 6, 7 or 8 more millions of dollars to spend every year without touching the principle. In fact, these foundations keep steadily growing in size and since they cannot be broken up by inheritance as can individual fortunes, the one billion in time will amount to fifteen or twenty or thirty billions of dollars, and by that time will be in a position to control national life in a way that cannot even be calculated—always provided that the present capitalist system lasts long enough.

Such funds as already exist are sufficient to control the thought and educational life of the American people from top to bottom is so far as education is for sale for money. But at least it should be expected that workers' education, on however poverty-stricken a scale it might have to get along, would reject such aid and the control that it involves. In this connection, it is encouraging to note that at a recent conference of teachers of workers' education held at Brookwood under the auspices of Local 189 of the American Federation of Teachers on Washington's Birthday there was a unanimous vote condemning the Workers' Education Bureau for accepting this fund of \$25,000.

Return the Money.

HOWEVER, a resolution is not enough. The unions affiliated with the Workers' Education Bureau must at its next convention, to be held in April, 1927, demand that the \$25,000 be returned and that no more money be accepted from that source or from any other source hostile to labor. All unions interested in keeping workers' education free from the influence and control of big business should affiliate with the Workers' Education Bureau and see that it is financed by the unions, owned and controlled by the unions and rejects funds from such sources as will destroy the character of workers' education.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION PAYS OUT UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Unemployment insurance benefits are now being mailed out by the Chicago Joint Board of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. The first payment is 50 per cent of the amount the jobless cloakmakers are entitled to.

Another installment of the fund will be sent later to those that registered at the union offices at 328 West Van Buren St. as soon as all of the jobless have received the first payment.

Great discontent can be found among the membership of the union against the present form of unemployment insurance. The worker in the shop and the bosses are taxed each week for the fund. The fund provides but a very small unemployment insurance payment.

The new administration declares that in its negotiations for a new contract the union will insist on the bosses paying all of the money into the unemployment fund and will seek to free the workers from being taxed

for that purpose as they are at present. Attempts are also to be made for a larger unemployment benefit.

New York Garment Workers Get Their Unemployed Benefits

NEW YORK—(FP)—July 6.—Fifteen hundred of the approximately 21,000 cloak and suit workers who are getting unemployment benefits received their payment the first day of distribution. The maximum amount any worker may get per season for unemployment is \$60, or \$120 per year of two seasons. The total number of New York cloak and suit workers is about 35,000.