

NEW PACT IS A STEP FORWARD BY CHI. LABOR

But Scab Clauses Must Be Eliminated

By ARNE SWABECK.

One more step toward closed shop working conditions has been recorded by the proposed new agreement accepted unanimously by the Chicago Building Trades Council. However, many of the obnoxious and notoriously scab clauses of the old Landis Award still remain in force in this new agreement.

The proposed agreement will, if finally accepted by both sides, remain in force up until January 1, 1929, but it will not cover wages or specific working conditions of the various trades, which are to be negotiated separately.

Paragraph 14 Killed.

The famous paragraph 14 of the Landis Award, which prohibits strikes or stoppage of work individually or collectively on any building fixing a penalty for such stoppage, has been eliminated. In substitution thereof a clause is being proposed which upholds the right to sympathetic strike by laying down the principle that union men are not required to work with non-union men of any trade, nor for bosses in Cook county employing non-union men of any other trade.

One Step Forward.

While this is one step toward the closed shop, it will become real only when followed up energetically to eliminate whatever remains of the old Landis Award; for instance, the provision which permits the use of non-union made material and which seriously militates against organizing the inside shops or the building material factories. The clause of so-called "no limitation of the amount of work a man shall perform during his working day," which in other words means to permit to give the speed-up system full sway, should also be eliminated.

The next step in the same direction is to establish complete job control with functioning stewards, with hiring and firing not to remain at the will of the employer. The building trades workers should compel the leaders to step in that direction.

Bosses Not Unanimous.

While the reports are that this agreement will be likewise accepted by the Chicago Building Trades Employers' Association, it is also said that about 100 Landis Award contractors will refuse to sign and will form an organization of their own and continue to hire non-union labor.

Why the Boss Wants Piece Work

By LILLIAN GREENSWEIG.

THE piece-work system demands of the industrial worker maximum energy, speed and concentration. Is it any wonder, then, that the bosses prefer it to week-work and that they persist in their efforts to get rid of the week-work system?

In a desire and need to get more pay, the individual worker puts forth his best efforts towards speeding up. Efficiency, therefore, is secured almost automatically. So much so, in fact, that the bosses find that they can easily do away with the high-salaried "efficiency experts" and supervisors, and replace them with mere foremen. (I myself worked in a factory of considerable size where the only overseers were the two partners of the business.

There are some workers, tho, that prefer piece-work to week-work. Needless to say, these are for the most part very fast workers, who are often the bosses' favorites and get the choicest kind of work allotted to them. There are others who realize the futility of this system, since piece-work wears them out, so that the extra money earned is consumed in frequent rests from the strain, either immediately or in the future. They also realize that it is an unfair system since it spoils the chances of the

other workers for a livelihood and makes organization difficult.

The fast workers arouse jealousy. Petty rivalries result in many kinds of classification such as fast workers, medium workers, slow workers and apprentices. Certainly under these circumstances, organization seems almost impossible. Aside from this, to aggravate the situation, there is general distrust created even within the groups, and while the workers will often confide their intimate lives, they will never tell one another what they have earned. In fact they consider this an extremely personal question.

Piece-work causes the loss of health and vitality. At the age of forty-five the industrial worker is old. He finds himself replaced by younger men. On his application for a new job, he is told very plainly, that he hasn't the "pep" of youth, that young men work much faster and better than he. Piece-work has sapped all the energy out of him. It has dimmed his eyesight, bent his back, dulled his mind.

It would be well for young workers before they ruin their health to "stop, look and listen." The old, discarded workers wandering around looking for a job, have a story to tell. The wiser and more practical method of obtaining more wages is by organizing into unions.

Nevertheless, this agreement is a blow to the notorious Landis Award and the so-called Citizens' Committee.

It now becomes a question of importance, however, whether the Building Trades Council further directs the struggle to have this agreement not only embrace the bosses ready to sign at this moment, but thru their organized power compel all the building trades contractors to accept closed shop conditions.

To accomplish this, militant policies are necessary, as well as the united effort of all the building trades unions.

Carpenters Not In.

It is noteworthy that the agreement does not include the carpenters, who are not affiliated to the Building Trades Council on account of their disagreement with the jurisdictional ruling on the handling of metal trim. This year the Chicago Carpenters' District Council offered to re-affiliate with Building Trades Council, but laid down a string of conditions of a jurisdictional character.

The Building Trades Council would not accept these, yet it is necessary that some serious efforts be made to completely eliminate this jurisdictional dispute and to have the carpenters become a regular part of the council. The leaders, whatever their interests may be, should not be permitted to stand in the way. The carpenters, by

its approximate 40,000 membership, is the largest single unit within the Building Trades. There can be no real unity without them.

The one outstanding lesson for the Building Trades Workers to learn from the improvements gained in this agreement is the fact that ever since 1921, with the disunity existing, and the complete failure of the leadership to bring the whole power of the united forces of the unions to bear to establish the closed shop, this important step in that direction has become possible only thru the degree of unity which has been accomplished.

Chicagoans Hear Plea Recognize Soviet Union

The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations sat in the Palmer House Sunday and heard with varying degrees of astonishment a plea to renew relations with the Union of Soviet Republics. It came from Chester T. Rowell, a former newspaper publisher of Fresno, Calif., who has just returned from more than a year of travel and study in the Soviet Republic. He urged it because both this country and Russia would benefit by such a resumption of relations. He found too, he said, a bright side to Communist life there in the growth of education among the peasants.