

# LABOR UNITY

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## The Coal Miners Want a Fighting Strike Policy

By JACK JOHNSTONE

THE recent developments in the Miners Union show very clearly that large sections of the rank and file are becoming convinced that the road chosen by Lewis means defeat and can lead only to a marked worsening of the living standards and working conditions of the miners. The rank and file is awakening to the necessity of a fighting strike policy and the need of a leadership that could wage a militant struggle against the coal operators.

This militant sentiment among the rank and file should encourage the left wing and the progressive bloc to proceed toward a definite crystallization of their forces in the union. Only by unhesitating exposure of the corrupt Lewis machine and its defeatist policy can the membership be mobilized to save the union through an aggressive strike policy, a militant organizing campaign in the non-union fields and a real fight for a national agreement.

### Illinois Miners Against Lewis Policies

While the convention of the Illinois miners cannot be considered as a victory for the progressives, the struggles that took place there indicate very clearly a strong resentment against Lewis and the Lewis policies. It was apparent from the first day of the convention that for Lewis to appear before it would have meant to invite a demonstration of hostility. Thus, at this convention of the largest district of the UMWA, meeting in the midst of a strike, the rank and file criticized the Lewis administration

and its policies, and Lewis considered it the wiser course not to appear in person.

The adoption of the resolution for the reinstatement of Alec Howat is testimony to the feeling of the membership in this district towards the Lewis machine. No one in the convention dared to vote against this resolution. While Lewis was afraid to appear before this convention, Howat was received with open arms.

Howat, in his speech, brought forward many points of the "Save the Union" bloc program. However, with all due respect to this proven fighter and his splendid record, it

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## Chicago Building Workers Resist Wage-Cut Attack

By A BUILDING WORKER

THE first attempt to enforce wage cuts in the Chicago building industry since the advent of the notorious Landis Award in 1921 has now occurred. 1,286 members of the Millmen's locals have been locked out on a demand by the Millmen Employers' Association for a wage cut of from \$1.20 an hour to \$1.10. There are a total of 4,200 organized millmen in Chicago. 2,900 of these members are still working in shops where the employers have agreed to retain the old scale, some of them making this decision after the men had left the jobs.

The Millmen Employers' Association

threatens the "open shop". Evidently this is a part of a general scheme to attack the Chicago building trades unions. The millmen seem to be considered the weakest spot, and hence the attack on them to gain an opening wedge. The fight by this association against the millmen, however, is of long standing. It has now more or less transferred to a direct attack. The perpetual injunction aiming to compel the carpenters to put up non-union made trim has been in effect against the Carpenters' District Council since 1914. The injunction was secured by the open shop mills. With the recent ruling of the United States supreme court in the case of the Bedford Stone Cutting Company compelling union men to handle non-union made material, the "open shop" mill owners consider their case strengthened.

District Council Violated Union Rule  
Despite the fact that of the rules and regulations governing the Carpenters' District Council Rule No. 30 reads: "No member shall erect or place any non-union mill and cabinet work under penalty", the Carpenters' District Council has failed entirely to uphold this rule. They have failed to recognize that this rule would be a very important part of maintenance of closed shop in the building industry and for years no restriction has been placed on non-union made material. Moreover, the practice pursued by the union officials in themselves helping to break down union conditions culminated in 1924 when Wm. Hutchinson, General President of the Brotherhood of Carpenters, an

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## Convicted Furriers Released

THE reactionaries who were instrumental in bringing about the prosecution and trial of the militant fur workers at Mineola, L. I., which resulted in the conviction of nine furriers; all of whom, with one exception, were sentenced to from two and a half to five years' imprisonment, have once more been disappointed. A certificate of reasonable doubt was granted to the nine furriers by Supreme Justice May of Brooklyn, and as a result of this they were released on bail pending the appeal.

In ruling for the appeal Justice May criticized severely the conduct of the prosecutor and trial judge, declaring in part:

"Having in mind that the proof offered by the people was far from impressive, the conduct of the District Attorney in his opening, examination, cross-examination and his summation are to be carefully criticized. That the District Attorney went a long way to insure conviction cannot be gainsaid. The rulings of the court give grave doubt as to whether the conviction of the defendants can be sustained on appeal. It is seriously questionable whether the defendants were able to secure a fair and impartial trial."

## Uncle Sam Pacifies Nicaragua

By MANUEL GOMEZ

ONE of those semi-official free-blower wags which the United States government is in the habit of conducting in Latin America has just been brought to a victorious conclusion by the "peace" of Nicaragua.

The "peace", negotiated by President Coolidge's personal representative in the presence of U. S. warships and U. S. bayonets, puts an end temporarily to the civil war in Nicaragua which the United States government itself has been stimulating by insisting that Adolfo Diaz, former employe of a U. S. mining company, must be President of the "republic" against the opposition of the Nicaraguan people.

The civil war was ostensibly a war between Nicaraguan Liberals and Conservatives but actually it was nothing of the kind. Diaz, who seized the reins of government in

the winter of 1926, is the tool of Wall Street, as his entire past record clearly shows. He could not have lasted a month if it had not been for: (1) immediate recognition by the United States; (2) a loan of \$1,000,000 by U. S. bankers with the approval of the U. S. government (as revealed by Secretary Kellogg during the recent Pan American Commercial Conference at Washington); (3) arms and ammunition furnished by American Big Business on credit; (4) partisan intervention by U. S. military and naval forces.

### Diaz Beaten in Many Battles

Even after the landing of the marines, the usurper Diaz was defeated in battle after battle. It was the U. S. forces that finally forced Dr. Juan B. Sacasa, the Constitutional President of Nicaragua, to flee the country, while his army

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## New Left Wing Paper in Chicago

The Chicago progressives and left wingers in the needle trades have for a long time felt the need of a local paper devoted to the struggles of the workers in their industry. This need will now be filled with the publication of the Chicago Needle Worker, the first issue of which will appear this month.

According to the announcement of the Chicago Needle Trades Section of the Trade Union Educational League, the Chicago Needle Worker will support the policy of the National Needle Trades Committee of the TUDEL. It will advocate greater unity in the ranks of the organized needle workers and the amalgamation of the needle trades unions into one industrial union with departments for the different trades. It will fight the splitting tactics of the reactionary officials. The paper will appear monthly.

The subscription price is 50 cents per year. The committee in charge calls upon the Chicago needle workers to send in their subscriptions. It also solicits articles and letters from workers in the industry on shop conditions and on all problems confronting the needle workers. All communications should be forwarded to the Chicago Needle Worker, 106 N. La Salle Street, Room 20.

# The Open Shop Drive in the Needle Trades

By Joseph Zack

THE government dissolved the two Joint Boards of the cloak and dressmakers union and of the furriers, leaders arrested, martial law has been declared in the areas where the needle workers work and congregate. "The union has been reorganized by a committee headed by Sigman, Schachtman, Woll, Grady and Frayne, which has the support of the employers, and the workers were ordered to join the reorganized union under pain of discharge. Deportation, arrests, etc., many of those who refused were threatened with dire consequences.

I am sure it would be a surprise to you to see a few headlines like these appearing in the newspapers, depicting the fight of the A. F. L. bureaucracy against the left wing. You are accustomed to read, "A. F. L. Dissolves Joint Board", "Leaders Arrested on A. F. L. Charges of Advocating Violence Against Property and for Wholesale Bribery", "A. F. L. Appoints Reorganization Committee to Take Charge of the Defunct Joint Board", "Employers Recognize the International, Affiliated with the A. F. L.", "Workers are Registering with the International", etc., etc.

## A Fight of the Bosses Against the Union

If the truth were to be told by the capitalist press, describing the support of the local government, employers associations, Civic Federation, etc., as it is in life, the first set of headlines would be a more correct interpretation of events now transpiring in the needle trades. I doubt whether among the 200,000 needle workers in New York the A. F. L. leaders could get 5,000 to voluntarily follow them. I am sure the right wing could not get 200 active unionists to volun-

teer their services for their dirty work. Take away the support of the local government, the Police Department, courts, and the bosses associations, and there would be no fight, because the workers are in the overwhelming majority on one side—against Sigman, Schachtman, Woll, etc.

For all practical purposes this is a fight between the bosses associations supported by the government, the capitalist press, Woll and company, and on the other side the unions represented by the Joint Boards. But the bosses have a big advantage. They are able to use the union label and union auspices and thus fool many workers in their attempt to establish a boss controlled union. To put it pictorially, suppose you see a gigantic capitalist exploitation machine, Matthew Woll, as the A. F. L. priest, is in front and sprinkling the holy water of unionism, and with great ceremonies a tiny paper is pasted on that machine. Then come nearer, and you find it is the A. F. L. union label. This is the role the A. F. L. leadership is playing in this fight: It is riveting the chains of exploitation on the needle workers.

## Effects on Working Conditions

The workers, after having won their long struggles the 40 hour week, substantial wage increases, are beginning to understand the game. They feel it in the worsened conditions in the shops. Overtime is not being paid, piece prices are fixed downward. There is plenty of smuggling below the fixed wage scale. The workers do not trust Sigman and Schachtman's business agents. They therefore seek to adjust shop grievances as best they can, as the boss does not recognize the Joint Board business agents (the lefts). As to where the work-

ers stand, well, the Joint Board calls a Madison Square Garden meeting (20,000) and it will be packed full of cloakmakers or furriers. But if Woll and company call one in Bellevue Hall (1,200) they will have hard luck.

There is a crisis in the industry, employment is low, the seasons seem to get shorter and shorter every year. Still, under left wing leadership the workers were able to increase wages appreciably and shorten hours. The bosses could not lick the union in the strike. Now however, assisted by the A. F. L. bureaucracy, they see their opportunity and they are taking advantage of it to establish open shop conditions in the industry. Many of the workers in the shops now feel like after a defeat. They are laying low, exhausted by long struggles. But they are grinding their teeth in resentment against the A. F. L. bureaucracy. The union spirit is there. The workers despite the long struggles and bad conditions, have contributed over \$200,000 to the fight and more of it is coming. This is rank and file money. It represents a tremendous moral strength.

Woll and company, heading the Civic Federation do not leave unused a single weapon of this body of open shop employers, no matter how low and despicable, to defeat the workers and force them under the yoke of this treacherous gang. There was a veritable reign of injunctions against the Joint Board. The police gangsters known as the Industrial Squad led the gangsters of the underworld employed by Woll and company in an onslaught upon the pickets of the Joint Board. The leaders were framed up and thrown into jail; union information given in confidence to Woll and company, as

union officials, was betrayed to the police and lies were added to it in regular provocateur style. This is the unionism of Mathew Woll, Green, Sigman, Schachtman and company; the blackest nightmare that has ever come to reality.

## Workers Undefeated

With all this it would be the greatest error to think that the needle workers have been defeated. There never was an army that became so compact as a result of a righteous struggle, and they learned something. A much more class conscious body of union men and women has come out of this battle. Already there are strong indications of the tide turning from despairing resentment and opposition to a counter attack against the employers and their straw men the trade union bureaucracy. Unionism in the needle trades has gotten set back at the hands of the employers in the past.

This time the employers partially succeeded with the assistance of the A. F. L. bureaucracy to wrest from the workers the fruits of their recent strikes.

But this will be a short lived victory. Morally this body of workers is more solid than ever and already there are conspicuous breaks in the employers ranks as shown by the action of the Fur Trimming Employers Association in their signing with the Joint Board. There are breaks appearing in the right wing ranks. The left wing is preparing for a new offensive with the fur workers in the vanguard. Out of this ordeal unionism will emerge stronger than ever in the needle trades industry and the first big nails in the coffin of the A. F. L. bureaucracy is in Woll and company are being driven by the workers in the needle trades.

## The U. S. in Nicaragua

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was obliged to accept the terms laid down by the U. S. representative.

The terms provide for confirmation of Diaz as President, unconditional surrender of the Liberals, new elections at the expiration of Diaz's term of office (the elections to be supervised by the United States), more or less permanent occupation of Nicaragua, by the U. S. marines, who are to become the "Nicaraguan national constabulary".

Thus a new chapter is written in the history of Monroe Doctrine aggression, under the slogan, first expressed by Roosevelt, of exercise of "an international police power" in the western hemisphere.

What has American labor to say to this imperial game of Wall Street and Washington, which reaches not only into Latin America, but into the Far East and to the four corners of the world?

Not only because international labor solidarity demands it, but also because our own interests require it, we must fight the imperialist policy of American Big Business every inch of the way.

In the Nicaraguan outrage, we have a special responsibility because the A. F. of L. is affiliated with the Nicaraguan trade unions through the so-called Pan American Federation of Labor, of which William Green is president. Yet neither Green, nor the executive council of the A. F. of L., nor the executive committee of the P. A. F. of L. (controlled by Green) has had a word to say about it.

Does Mr. Green accept the "Peace of Nicaragua?"

## Chicago Building Workers

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appeared in Chicago and signed a new agreement.

This agreement in its essence was to some degree even worse than the notorious Landis Award. It carried one clause reading as follows: "There shall be no restriction of the use of any raw or manufactured material, except prison-made." Naturally, since the signing of this agreement the closed shop practically disappeared and the carpenters were handling non-union made trim. The big non-union mills imported non-union made material from other states and established warehouses in Chicago for storage of such material. Generally, it served only to help break down conditions and particularly to weaken the position of the organized millmen.

## Hutchinson Favored Proposed Wage-Cut

In line with this policy, pursued by Wm. Hutchinson and followed by the Harry Jensen administration of the Chicago District Council, an International representative by the name of Orris arrived in Chicago, some time ago. When the employers first proposed the present wage cut he appeared before Local No. 1922, of the carpenters bawling the unfair competition from other states which the local mill owners had to meet and declared himself, therefore, in favor of the wage cut. Since then the determined attitude of the union millmen has compelled him to cease his eager support of the manufacturers.

Following the action of the International Brotherhood disaffiliating from the building trades department, the Chicago Carpenters District Council has remained outside

of the Chicago Building Trades Council. Furthermore, when some attempts were made toward united action by the building trades unions in straightening up the jobs in the city, the Harry Jensen administration refused to lend any assistance. However, despite all the opposition developing within the union, this administration managed to hang on and maintain its rule or ruin policy. Of course, election steals and like methods had to be resorted to. Now the Harry Jensen machine is cracking. For the District Council elections this coming June several of his old supporters are out for his job.

Belated efforts are now being made by the Carpenters District Council to give some assistance to the locked-out millmen. The Council has decided not to handle material from the locked-out mills and a general weekly assessment of \$1.00 per member on the 33,000 carpenters in the city is being proposed. If such support had been maintained in the past the locked-out millmen would today be in an even stronger position.

## Progressive Program for District Council

The progressive carpenters in the last year's council elections put forward their own slate and advanced measures to secure closed shop conditions. They won the elections and were kept out only by the steals performed by the Jensen administration. This year the progressive caucus again comes forward with a slate and a progressive platform. Point No. 5 has direct relation to the millmen's situation. It reads as follows: "To work for the organization of all mills. Only union material to be

used on union jobs. No reduction of millmen's wages."

Fred Bobzin, Local Union No. 62, who was last year's candidate for District Council President on the progressive slate, this year also heads their ticket. The candidates of the progressive carpenters are pledged to work for the following program:

1. Affiliation to the Building Trades Council (and the Building Trades Department of the A. F. of L.)
2. A five-day (40-hour week) for the purpose of reducing unemployment.
3. Against arbitration agreements with speed-up clauses, and for the establishment of a form of stewardship that will give full protection to the men on the job.
4. To work for the enactment of provisions and working rules that will enable our aged members to work on a job and earn their living.
5. To work for the organization of all mills. Only union material to be used on union jobs. No reduction of millmen's wages.
6. Salaries of officers not to exceed 40% over the wage scale paid to journeymen carpenters.

The fight now launched by the Millmen Employers' Association against the union is an indication portend of what is going to come. Without any question of a doubt the Building Trades Employers as a whole, backed by the financial and industrial interests, are marking time watching their opportunity to join in the attack. This should be a serious warning to the building trades unions that only a united front of all trades can effectively meet such an attack.

# Cap and Millinery Union Takes Step Backward

By M. Ziebel

**T**HE Cloth, Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union has just held its sixtieth (tenth biennial) convention. Eighty delegates, representing ten thousand organized capmakers and milliners in the United States and Canada, convened in the City of New York to talk about the problems confronting the organization and decide on plans for future work in the interests of those workers. They met for eleven days, holding two and three sessions a day at times.

One would imagine that a convention of a comparatively small international union, meeting for so long a time, considered all the problems of the organization, reviewed in a constructive discussion its past activities, successes and failures, thoroughly analyzed the present situation, and adopted plans for future work. However, in reviewing the work of this convention, one is forced to the conclusion that for the work that it accomplished in reality, or even attempted to accomplish, two days would have sufficed. The right wing delegates, the majority of this convention, concerned themselves only with two important, for them, problems: 1) With bringing back Max Zaretsky as president of the International; 2) With condemning the militants, whose numbers and influence have grown, much to the distaste of the right wing.

## Problems Before the Convention

The organization of the unorganized should have been the chief problem in the deliberations of the delegates. There are tens of thousands of unorganized millinery workers. The millinery trade is spreading out all over the country. The open shop centers of Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Pacific Coast, New England States, and others are in direct competition with New York. It was of prime importance to work out definite plans for the organization of those unorganized centers which are a continuously growing menace to the organized workers. But very little consideration was given to this problem.

In connection with organizing the unorganized comes amalgamation. The Cap centers are small, and the locals in such centers could never become self-sustaining. The field of unorganized millinery workers is very large. It is impossible financially for the Cap and Millinery International Union to place organizers in all the cap and millinery centers. Combinations of manufacturers in the needle trades are growing. The number of factories producing all kinds of men's and women's wear is increasing. To organize the unorganized is the problem of all the needle trades. Under such conditions the Cap and Millinery Workers Union, together with the rest of the needle trades, can become effective in organizing the unorganized and winning better conditions only through amalgamation into one powerful, departmentalized Needle Trades Union.

## Progressive Resolutions Rejected

But the resolution of the militants calling for the amalgamation of the needle trades, was voted down. Instead, a resolution for the old meaningless needle trades alliance was accepted, which does not bind us to anything and which has proven already to be a failure in the needle trades.

Jobbers, contractors, the drive on the part of the bosses to force greater productivity, were practically not dealt with.

The convention accepted a resolution for the establishment of the 40-hour, 6-day week. But it never worked out a plan how and when to demand and get, and how to preserve the forty hours in the centers that have already won them through a struggle with the bosses.

One of the most important problems for the delegates of the convention and the interests of the cap and millinery workers was the unity of the needle trades. Through the betrayal of the Sigmans, Schachmans, Wolls, McGrady's and their henchmen, who, together with the bosses, police and other enemies of the organized workers, are waging a bitter fight against the fur-

riers and cloakmakers, and their duly elected militant leadership, the conditions of those workers have been reduced to the sweat shop period of 1910. The cap and millinery workers, a part of the needle trades, cannot very long remain unaffected in this situation. Unity in the needle trades is in the interests of the workers.

The General Executive Board, which is always talking unity and harmony in the labor movement, failed to make even one plea for unity. The convention voted down the only resolution calling for unity in the needle trades.

## The Concern of the Right Wing

All these problems did not bother much the right wing machine. Their main problem was to bring back Max Zaretsky as president of the International, who was opposed not by the progressives alone. Zaretsky has proven in the past that he is not willing to fight for the interests of the workers. Instead of organizing the unorganized, he organized the bosses. He is known as an opponent of week work. His policy is: peace with the bosses at all costs, which resulted in a weaker organization of capmakers in New York and increased exploitation of the workers.

Besides all this, the progressives opposed him for his last act. Seven or eight months after he was re-elected as president in 1925, when the convention had mapped out a plan of intensive work, he left the union to sell insurance policies to the bosses. All through the convention, the right machine labored hard to have him elected and to discredit by all methods the progressives who opposed him.

## Methods Employed Against Progressives

Four distinct methods were used by the right wing machine at the convention against the progressive delegation. 1) Reduction of its voting strength. D. Soren, organizer for the GEB on the Pacific Coast, was not seated under the flimsy constitutional pretext that he was representing a local of which he

was not a member. The constitution being overlooked on two previous occasions, when the seating of delegates was in the interests of the machine.

2) Attempts to discredit the progressives. The progressive delegates who came from New York Local 43, Boston, St. Louis, Chicago, and some other centers, have proven to be the most constructive ones. They have led some successful strikes, winning better conditions and the forty-hour week; they have made great strides in organizing the millinery workers in New York and throughout the country; they re-established demoralized locals and raised the morale of the membership. Yet the progressives were condemned as "disturbers" and "breakers" of the union for their opposition to the right wing machine and its policies.

3) The progressive delegation, small but militant, was steamrollered by the chairman, shouted down, and deprived of the floor on many important questions. "Tolerance" and "democracy," you know.

4) Last but not least was the fourth method—an attempt to prove that outside of political questions, there was no difference of opinion in the convention. But the machine failed to prove that. Not only in political questions, such, for instance, as the resolution on China, on which they agreed "in principle" but were afraid to act, because it might not please the A. F. of L. leaders. There was the distinct line of policy in all the important practical trade problems, such as organizing the unorganized, amalgamation, needle trade unity, speed-up system, the machine gave lip service; the progressives proposing what to do and demanding action.

Summing up, the convention has forsaken the old traditions of the Cap and Millinery International Union, has given up its fighting spirit, is no more the pioneer of many a movement in the needle trades. It has taken a step backward.

# Struggle of Plumbers Helpers in New York

By WALTER A. JACKSON

**T**HE strike of the plumbers helpers, involving between five and six thousand young workers, of whom nearly three thousand are members of the helpers union, the American Association of Plumbers Helpers, at the end of its second month finds the ranks of the young strikers as solid as on the day the strike was declared.

The strike of the helpers centers around two central issues, both of which are of the most fundamental character. These issues are (1) recognition of the union and (2) the miserably low wages. There are quite a number of minor issues involved, but these two are the most important.

## Lockout in Greater New York

On April 1st, the plumbers of Brooklyn struck for a wage rate of \$14.00 per day and the five-day week. The helpers struck in support and sympathy of the journeyman plumbers, the helpers of Brooklyn responding in large numbers. The strike continued in Brooklyn alone until April 27, when the employers declared a lockout in Greater New York. This lockout was directed not by the Master Plumbers, but by the Building Trades Employers Association, the bosses organization comprising all of the building trades.

The obvious object of this lockout was to crush the Brooklyn strike of the plumbers and helpers,

and to smash the union and stop all the building trades from getting better wages and working conditions. Meeting this attack of the bosses the Plumbers Helpers Union declared a strike in Greater New York, between five and six thousand helpers responding to the strike call issued by the union.

## Seek Affiliation with Plumbers Union

Until very recently the plumbers helpers were the only unorganized workers in the trade. Taking advantage of this situation the employers compelled the helpers to work for the low wage of \$4.00 per day, compelled them to work long hours doing work they were not supposed to do and under the worst working conditions in the trade. The plumbers union paid no attention to this situation until the helpers themselves took the initiative and organized themselves into the American Association of Plumbers Helpers. They are making an effort to have their union become a part of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters, the union of the trade. The helpers union is at present negotiating with the U. A., recently having held a conference with the officials of the different locals of plumbers in Greater N. Y., presided over by Mr. Burke, where the problem of the striking helpers was taken up.

"The attitude of the plumbers

and especially Mr. Burke was a very favorable one for the helpers," said C. E. Miller, president of the helpers union, "the fact that the plumbers are taking such an attitude encourages us in our struggle."

## Need Support of Organized Labor

In a statement the helpers union states: "We are fighting for the right to be union men. We are fighting against our miserable conditions. We ask you to support us. Let your local pass a resolution supporting our strike and asking the plumbers union to grant us a charter. The fight for the recognition of our union by the bosses will go on. Our fight against the miserable working conditions and low wages will go on."

The strike now enters the third month. The helpers union is preparing for a long struggle. The union has opened a relief kitchen at the Church of All Nations that will feed all their striking members. The first day it was opened the kitchen fed several hundred helpers. Committees from the helpers union are approaching the different trade unions in the city to contribute to the relief of their members. The fact that the helpers union, which is but four months old, was forced to enter a strike before it could accumulate a strike fund demands that the workers and their organizations support the strike.

# Suppress Polish Unions

**NEW YORK**—(FP)—6,000 individuals are imprisoned in Poland today for political reasons and wholesale brutality and torture are visited upon them by the authorities. Many detailed cases are cited by the International Committee for Political Prisoners. Civil liberties, the committee finds, after prolonged search at first hand and among official Polish documents, have been virtually wiped out under the Polish republic. The suppression of minority parties, labor unions, and political clubs is of common occurrence.

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**REDOUBLE THE EFFORTS TO SAVE SACCO AND VANZETTI!**

**G**OVERNOR Fuller's announcement that he will not appoint a commission to review the Sacco-Vanzetti case should cause American labor to intensify its protests and the demand for an unconditional pardon to these two workers.

It is reported that the Boston Defense Committee is disappointed with this decision of the Governor. They may well be. They have based their efforts on behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti almost exclusively on legal agencies and support from "respectable" sources, and the Governor's decision is not a favorable indication.

The fate of Sacco and Vanzetti rests primarily with American labor. The militants must redouble their efforts to mobilize the workers for an effective protest that will force the unconditional release of the two victims of capitalist class justice.

**BRITISH IMPERIALISTS BREAK WITH RUSSIA**

**T**HE break of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union executed by the Baldwin government is one more link in the long chain of provocations against the peace of the world in which the British government has engaged consistently for the last several years. The British capitalist class is persistently driving towards a new world war.

The excuse given for the raid of the Soviet Trading Delegation in London, which served as a prelude for the final break, is flimsy and ridiculous beyond any justification. What the British government was looking and preparing for was merely an occasion for breaking relations with the Soviet Union in order to intensify the situation for the war maneuvers of the British imperialists.

Baldwin's policy in China proved to be a complete failure. So much so that the British government felt compelled to execute some kind of a diversion to distract the attention of the masses from the miserable fiasco of British imperialism in China. The break of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union is supposed to serve this purpose.

Joynton Hicks and the growing fascist clique in the British government have made their determination perfectly clear to square accounts with the British trade unions and the working class generally for the last general strike. Ever since that great struggle of the British workers, in which they were mercilessly betrayed by the reactionaries and the sham left wingers, the Baldwin government was preparing to strike a blow for British capitalism which would destroy the trade union movement. The trade union bill, now before parliament, is designed to achieve that end. And in order to facilitate the adoption of the bill, which was rightly branded by British labor as the strikebreaker's charter, Churchill, Chamberlain, Hicks and Baldwin break relations with the Soviet Union to raise the red scare, thus attempting to

frighten the middle classes into joining the attack upon labor.

The British capitalist class is now sailing under the flag of war. War against the Chinese revolution. War against the British trade unions. Preparations for war against the Soviet Union. Driven to desperation by its steadily declining power, maddened by its failures in China, frightened at the inevitability of revolts in India, Africa, etc., terrified by the certain and successful come-back of British labor, agonized by the growing strength and stability of the Soviet Union, British imperialism is staking its fortunes on a new world war. This is the meaning of its attack upon China. This is the meaning of its attacks upon the trade unions. This is also the meaning of its fresh attack upon the Soviet Union.

American labor and its trade unions must realize their responsibilities in the situation. All efforts must be concentrated on defeating the warlike designs and preparations of British, American and world imperialism.

**BILL GREEN ON THE INJUNCTION ISSUE**

**T**HE Supreme Court decision in the Bedford Stone Case forced the attention of the workers upon the ever extending use of injunction writs against labor. Speaking on this decision at a luncheon of the Civic Federation, Mr. William Green, President of the A. F. of L., declared that the A. F. of L. will seek State and Federal legislation "against the abuse of the writ of injunction".

Green overlooks the many experiences of labor with capitalist legislation of which the Sherman law is a fair example. Ostensibly directed against the trusts, it was used, as in the Bedford Stone case, against labor. Seeking a remedy through the Wall Street parties and the legislatures dominated by Wall Street is about as useful as addressing the influential Civic Federation whose influence is directed against the interests of labor.

The injunction curse can be overcome by American labor only through the mobilization of its political strength in a mass labor party and through direct mass defiance of the injunctions.

**CAL COOLIDGE'S LATEST**

**S**ILENT Cal deserves credit for more brass than any of the imperialist spokesmen. For the amusement of the readers we quote from his Memorial Day address:

"We have robbed no people of their independence, we have laid on no country the hand of oppression. When our military forces have taken the field it has been to enlarge the area of self-government, to extend the scope of freedom, and to defend the principles of liberty."

Ask the Haitians, Filipinos, Mexicans, Nicaraguans, and so forth. And it is to be understood that the American battleships and marines are now in China by special invitation as guests of the Chinese people.

**THE DECISION ON THE CRIMINAL SYNDICALISM LAW**

**T**HE decision of the Supreme Court in the Anita Whitney case, declaring the Criminal Syndicalism law of California constitutional, not only outlaws any organization advocating theoretically a change in the present form of government by other than constitutional means, but makes mere membership in such an organization punishable as a crime. The decision should put an end to the illusion that the constitution guarantees freedom of speech.

American capitalism, encroaching ever

more upon the rights of labor at home and upon weaker nations abroad, finds it necessary to have a weapon for singling out the militants in the labor movement and to deprive them of the possibility to rally the workers for resistance to its encroachments. The Criminal Syndicalism laws serve this purpose.

American labor, in its own interests, must fight for the repeal of these laws.

**THE SHANGHAI RUMOR CENTER**

**I**T used to be "news" of Soviet Russia concocted in Riga, Warsaw or Copenhagen. Now it is "news" of revolutionary China coming from Shanghai.

On Monday Hankow is threatened by the advance of the "moderate" army, on Tuesday Hankow is surrounded, the next day it has been captured and the Hankow government dissolved. But on the day following Shanghai itself reports a message from foreign minister Chen of Hankow to the effect that the Hankow government is still in existence and in no danger.

It is always safe to discount any reports in the capitalist press which are unfavorable to the People's Government of China. With the capitalist press and its correspondents the news is very often fathered by the wish of their masters. The Chinese People's Government at Hankow is supported by the millions of the Chinese workers and peasants, and will not be defeated by the armies of the exploiting classes.

**THE ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS THE "DAILY WORKER"**

**T**HE conviction and imprisonment of the editor and business manager of the "Daily Worker" for the publication of a poem which appeared in the paper several months ago is in reality an attempt to suppress this militant paper by the revocation of its mailing privileges.

Proof of this appears in the peculiar features of this case. The prosecution was brought about thru the effort of the American Legion and other similar organizations. The defendants were denied a jury trial, and upon finding them guilty the judge who gave free expression to hostility to the communist paper and the defendants refused to admit them to bail.

The "Daily Worker" incurred the hatred of the professional patriots and the powers that be by its militant defense of the cause of labor. They know that it is facing financial difficulties, and hope by adding this persecution to its burdens to cause its suspension. The militant and progressive workers should rally to the support of this lone militant English daily.

**THE ATTACK ON THE PROPOSED LABOR DELEGATION TO RUSSIA**

**G**REEN'S new "warning" against the proposed labor delegation to the Soviet Union shows how much the labor reactionaries are worried by this proposal. They are afraid of the investigation that honest American labor representatives might make of the conditions in the workers' and peasants' republic and of what they might report to American labor on the achievements of the Russian revolution.

The A. F. of L. reactionaries, who echo Wall Street's attitude toward the Soviet republic, know that the labor delegations from the European countries, particularly the British delegation, brought back very favorable reports and were instrumental in establishing closer contact between the workers of their countries and the Russian workers. And they have reason to fear that an American labor delegation would lead to similar results. Hence the attempt to discredit the delegation before it has yet started for the Soviet Union.

# MINERS STRIKE

## The Illinois District Convention

By ROBERT H. COOK.

THE convention of the Illinois District, the largest and strongest district of the UMWA, met in the midst of a struggle which is certain to have a profound effect on the fate of the miners union. The bulk of the 500 delegates, representing a membership of over 75,000, were rank and file miners. What was the reaction of this convention to the leadership which is responsible for weakening the union that was once the strongest body of organized labor in America and to the policy of paralysis which this leadership has forced on the miners in the present strike?

Judged by the apparent sentiment among the bulk of the delegates and by what took place at the convention, there can be but one conclusion: the mass of the miners of Illinois—and they are no different than the miners elsewhere—have had their fill of the Lewis machine and its policies. The rank and file are true to the traditions of the miners union. They want an aggressive policy and a fighting leadership.

### Lewis-Fishwick on Defensive

From the very first the Lewis-Fishwick forces were on the defensive. They had nothing to offer except evasion and support for the policy of defeat. On the general issues of the American labor movement, not involving directly policies of the miners union, such as the B. and O. plan and the Watson-Parker law, they accepted the progressive resolutions. On questions affecting the miners, as the "yellow dog" contract, they used evasion by moving that the matter be referred to the policy committee. They resorted to "red-baiting" to confuse the issues. On the one issue on which evasion was impossible and on which the steam-roller was certain to break, on the Howat issue, they withdrew their opposition at the last moment, and the resolution demanding Howat's reinstatement was adopted unanimously. With these methods, with a well-oiled machine and the steam-roller at their disposal, and knowing how to take advantage of a certain weakness in the progressive leadership, the Lewis-Fishwick machine managed to get by without a formal repudiation by the convention.

The Lewis machine is calculating on wearing the miners out and then talking conditions that would be acceptable to the mine barons. If the Peoria convention can be taken as a test, as the strike proceeds Lewis and his clique will find it harder and harder to face the rank and file.

### Left-Progressive Block

The left wing, weakened by expulsions, was not strongly represented and had no leadership of its own on the floor of the convention. The left wingers therefore all through the convention fought together with the progressive elements under progressive leadership.

The progressives on the whole fought well and made themselves felt from first to last. They put up a good fight on a number of issues, as on the question of a labor party, on the Howat issue, and, at first, on the issue of a national strike and a national settlement as against the Lewis policy of district and individual settlements.

But they suffered from lack of organization preliminary to the convention and from a lack of clear sightedness and firmness on the part of the leadership. This was responsible for the complete demoralization of the progressives under the "red-herring" attack on

the communists by the Lewis-Fishwick machine at the end of the discussion on the strike policy.

### Howat at the Convention

An appraisal of the Peoria convention would not be complete without a word on Howat's speech before the convention. Howat's record as a fighter for militant policies is too well known and needs no commendation. But in his speech in Peoria he committed an error which is common to many progressives. On the assumption that the internal differences should be laid aside while the miners are engaged in a struggle with the operators, he abstained from exposing the policies of the Lewis administration, and spoke of his expulsion from the union and the fight for his reinstatement as a "private fight".

This view, though generally correct, is wrong in the present situation. The policy of the Lewis administration is a policy of surrender and has paralyzed the strike. It must be exposed and defeated if it is to be replaced by a militant policy that would save the union from defeat. And the fight for Howat's reinstatement is not a private matter between Lewis and Howat.

Alex. Howat, through his courageous fight against the Kansas Industrial Court and the subsequent fight against the Lewis machine and its policies, has become a symbol of class struggle policies as against the policy of co-operation with, that is, surrender to, the employers. The fight for his reinstatement is a fight for a militant union

## "Check-Off" Issue in the Anthracite

By AN ANTHRACITE MINER

THE six months' strike of the anthracite mine workers in the fall of 1925 and the winter of 1926 terminated with the "understanding" that the operators had agreed to the demands of the union to establish in the anthracite industry the "check-off" system. Nearly a year and a half has passed since then and there is no check-off system in the anthracite yet. This situation warrants some examination.

The long and bitter struggle of the miners in the beginning centered principally around the bulk of the demands formulated by the miners in Tri-District Convention shortly prior to the strike: The tonnage system, five-day-week, 10% increase for contract miners and \$1.00 per day increase for all day labor, higher prices for rock work, etc., etc.

### Lewis Dropped Vital Demands.

From the first day the strike was called, however, the Lewis administration waded to the background the real issues in the strike and made the question of the check-off

and in the interest of the whole membership of the UMWA. It should be treated as such, and not as a "private fight".

In conclusion, the Illinois District convention emphasizes the need of a courageous progressive leadership that could serve as a rallying point for the mass of the rank and file and would help mobilize the membership of the UMWA for a militant struggle against the mine operators and the Lewis machine.

the central issue. The low wages and the intolerable working conditions of the men were forgotten while the strike was for the establishment of the check-off.

The declaration of the union leaders that the contract granted the check-off was based upon the clause in the contract stating that "the union and operators will work out a reciprocal program of co-operation and efficiency". This was to be the check-off! Lewis made public declarations to this effect before the contract was ratified and the operators did not deny it.

### Anthracite Miners Deceived

But many months have passed since the strike and no check-off yet. The rank and file are becoming impatient. A general feeling of the men for the past many months is that they have been fooled good and proper. Scores of anthracite locals deluged the International convention a few months ago with resolutions demanding that the union compel the operators to establish the check-off. To date this has not been done, and to all practical purposes the long bitter struggle of the miners gained naught. The gag of the union and the operators "working out a reciprocal program of co-operation and efficiency" in reality has meant the establishment of the B. & O. system in the anthracite industry; that and nothing more.

### "Reciprocity" and "Outlaw" Strikes

Through the medium of this section, the operators throughout the

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## Miners Want a Fighting Policy

(Continued from page 4)

must be said that he shares the mistake of many other left wingers and progressives, namely, that during the strike sharp criticism of the Lewis machine must be dropped. This is a wrong view. It is not so much Lewis as an individual that must be criticized, but the policies which he has imposed on the union and which, if not exposed and abandoned, will cripple the union. The very fact that during a strike Lewis dares not appear before the convention and that the convention demands Howat's reinstatement is in itself a very severe criticism of Lewis.

On the question of honest elections Lewis was bitterly criticized by delegate after delegate. The Fishwick-Lewis machine had to bring in every available delegate to carry the Resolution Committee's substitute on a roll call by a very small majority.

While it is true that the Fishwick machine was able to defeat most of the progressive resolutions proposed, on the whole a real militant spirit was manifest in the convention which, if properly crystallized into an organized expression, could transform the strike into a real struggle that would advance the interests of the miners, and build and strengthen the union.

### District Two Convention

At the convention in District Two we find for the first time in many years the appearance of a definite progressive opposition to the administration. The convention was controlled by Lewis' henchmen. Despite this, the support given to Brophy in his fight for a seat in the convention shows that the rank and file is with him. The vote on the motion to seat him was given as 53 for and 58 against, and there is no doubt that if a roll call had been taken he would have been seated.

The endorsement of the Labor Party by this convention indicates the progressive path that the delegates representing the rank and file were ready to travel. And here again the administration policies were severely criticized, and we see Lewis failing to put in an appearance.

### Discontent in the Anthracite

There are many other indications showing that the rank and file of the miners are discontented and are beginning to awaken to the need of a more militant policy in the present strike. This is also the case in the anthracite district, where the miners have many grievances.

When the anthracite strike was settled, the miners were led to believe that the operators have granted the check-off. They are now realizing that they were fooled, and that the Lewis-Cappellini outfit is helping the operators to evade a definite decision on this issue while the bituminous miners are on strike.

The demand for the check-off should be linked up with the other grievances of the anthracite miners and with the demands of the bituminous miners, and a national policy developed for a settlement covering the entire mining industry.

### The Election Stal

The expulsion policy of the Lewis administration has naturally weakened the union, and especially the left wing in the union. In spite of this reign of terrorism the membership of the UMWA has time and again rallied to the support of the left wing and progressive candidates in elections.

The disheartened returns of the last election prove that the defeat of the Lewis machine was covered up by an election stal which straddles everything that has ever occurred in the labor movement, and that John Brophy, the head of the

"Save the Union" ticket, is the rightful president of the UMWA.

### The Task of the "Save the Union" Bloc

This imposes on the left progressive "Save the Union" bloc the responsibility of saving the union from the attack of the mine barons and the defeatist policy of the Lewis machine. A militant struggle against the coal operators is impossible unless the Lewis machine is defeated in the union.

The left wing must win over the progressive elements to the task of mobilizing the miners for the struggle against the operators and the Lewis machine on the basis of the "Save the Union" program. The strike has now been going on for two months and not a single statement has been issued in the name of the "Save the Union" bloc. This should be remedied. The rank and file cannot be expected to wage a struggle unless it sees a center around which it can rally and to which it can look for leadership.

At the present moment the needs of the strike demand:

1. A vigorous campaign to organize the unorganized miners.
  2. The creation of relief committees and a campaign to enlist the entire labor movement in support of the striking miners.
  3. A struggle against individual agreements and for a policy of a national settlement.
  4. The linking up of the demands of the anthracite miners with the demands of the bituminous miners, and the calling of a national strike to win these demands.
- To mobilize the rank and file of the UMWA for this militant policy of struggle which will defeat the mine barons and save and strengthen the union is the task of the left wing and the "Save the Union" bloc.

# Rationalization—Its Limits and Contradictions

By Henry Gregory

THE growth of productivity and exploitation of labor created by the rationalization of industry leads, in the present position of world capitalism, only to a revival on a wider basis of those selfsame contradictions from which capitalism in every country desires to extricate itself.

The lowering of the workers' share in the national income and of their standard of living caused by rationalization brings down the purchasing power of the majority of the population, thus making home trade difficult and sharpening the crisis of over-production.

### No Reduction of Prices

In the overwhelming majority of cases, rationalization and the cutting of production costs by no means leads to lower prices. Concentrated capital enjoys a monopoly within the home country and separate international agreements for the purpose of increasing the difference between costs of production and selling prices, "organizational rationalization", leads to the closing of certain sections of an enterprise or industry in order to keep prices at a high level. This, as regards the workers, of course disempowers them and lowers their standard.

With the present position of world economy, even though capital through rationalization attains successes in any one industry or country, the crisis in that country is relieved at the expense of intensifying the crisis in other countries.

All these contradictions, so characteristic of countries where capitalism is most distinctly in decline, are transferred in their "latest form" into the sphere of rising capitalism as well. In particular the contradiction between increased productivity due to rationalization

and the contraction of the home markets—added to sharper competition on the foreign markets, is to be observed most clearly in the U. S., Japan and Australia.

### Sharpens Conflicts

Thus, all consequences of rationalization lead to: 1) An intensified conflict between individual capitalist nations (in spite of the concentration of capital on an international scale); 2) To a greater sharpening of class conflicts in each country.

It is true that mass unemployment dulls the edge of working class militancy for a time, but its chronic nature, its hopelessness, and the precarious position of the bulk of those employed, renders it imperative to overcome the depression in the working class produced by the first wave of unemployment.

As rationalization simultaneously increases productivity and reduces the masses' purchasing power; and, moreover, is rapidly transferred from one country to another in its most perfected forms, the first countries to introduce it on a wide scale enjoy its advantages only for a brief span of time, after which they again face greater competition than before.

Also, as rationalization is based primarily on increased exploitation of labor, it meets fairly soon with fresh limits of a purely psychological nature, not to mention labor resistance to an abrupt worsening of its living standards which labor has fought long to build up.

As these limits are approached, and there is no longer a possibility of more cutting of costs, there arises the inevitability of military collisions in the struggle for markets, the destruction of accumu-

lation of goods and the killing off of the so-called "surplus population". Thus arise the dangers of new wars.

### Changes Composition of Working Class

Rationalization brings about profound changes in the type and character of the working class, factory relations and class psychology and finally reduces the mass-basis for reactionary and reformist leadership. True, for a time rationalization extends the role in industry of the skilled journeymen and the narrow stratum of highly qualified workers, assemblers, fitters, instrument makers, etc., and increases the relative number of office employees. But the main mass of office workers are more and more proletarianized, due to the mechanization of their labor also, the shorter training required for their labor, and the fact that the supply of office labor is far greater than the demand.

Moreover, the narrow upper stratum and the highly qualified working force, under the influence of rationalization, will become more levelled out, more homogeneous. The number of skilled craftsmen, as well as the number of unskilled manual workers, is decreased in comparison to the number of so-called semi-skilled. This element is marked off by the extreme division of labor, specialization not requiring lengthy training, hence the unprecedented fluctuation and "replaceability" among the workers, and the wiping out of old craft lines.

### Broad Base for Class Movement

The mass of workers are largely not organized in the old trade unions and are at the same time a

potential base for a broad general class movement. While the ease with which the workers employed can be replaced and the absence of any need for lengthy craft training tend to weaken labor militancy, this is compensated for by the entire system of production becoming more complicated, interdependent and sensitive, a situation in which any holding up of its functioning at any point brings the whole of production to a stop.

At the same time, the worker, changed by rationalization into a more cog in the complex machinery of production, feels an increased interest and bond with others of the group. Despite the effort by capital to "atomize" and isolate the workers, the new type of labor will ultimately make mass action on a broad scale easier to undertake.

These possibilities are, of course, only potential. Their accomplishment, depends very largely if not entirely on the thorough understanding and activities of the militant trade union and working class political organizations confronting the developments of the rationalization of industry by capitalism.

They must be able to establish and to keep close contact with the masses of workers in rationalized industry, who demand a wholly new approach to class relations; new methods of organization and agitation; they must link up the employed with the permanently unemployed and by putting forth a program for every problem and fighting for the workers' loyalty and persistently, eliminate reactionary and reformist leadership and replace it by a new and militant leadership of the working class resolved upon class emancipation.

# The New Situation in China—By Max Shachtman

THE split in the ranks of the national revolutionary movement of China caused by the treacherous defection of General Chiang Kai-Shek and some of his forces has created a new situation in China, not so much because of the act of Chiang himself but because his action was the expression of a very significant phase of the revolution.

The elements of the split of Chiang were contained in the very composition and character of the nationalist revolution, and cannot therefore be looked upon as a simple "palace revolution" a coup d'état of a "strong" individual. Chiang is, and was, the expression of the young, relatively small bourgeoisie of China which felt itself more and more closely pinched between the pressure from the working class and peasantry (chiefly the first) of China, and the pressure of the foreign imperialists.

The former, coming constantly more to the fore in the revolutionary movement, pressed forward for recognition as the driving force and dominant element in the revolution. The element which would give the movement solidity, determination and a stable basis. The workers demanded recognition of the labor unions, the right to strike (not only against the foreign capitalists but also, when necessary, against the native bourgeoisie), and social legislation. The peasantry, who were being drawn in ever greater numbers into the general revolutionary struggle, pushed to the foreground the problem of the agrarian revolution.

### Bourgeoisie Deserts to Imperialists

On the other side, one section of the foreign imperialists were pressing forward for intervention and

another section inclined toward the recognition of one phase of the revolution, the formation of a "democratic republic" and co-operation with the native bourgeoisie against the workers and peasants for a systematic exploitation of the resources and working class of the vast country with the initiative and control of the tremendous financial strength of nations like the United States.

Fearful of the growing strength of the working class in the Chinese revolution, a section of the Chinese bourgeoisie plunged from the main stream of the movement and, with the treachery of Chiang Kai-Shek and his attempts to set up an independent government at Nanking, laid the basis for co-operation with the foreign imperialists for the stemming of the revolutionary flood. It was an act of desperation. The future development of the Chinese revolution was reflected for the Chinese bourgeoisie in the growth of the militancy and firmness of the workers, who were arming themselves, largely under the influence of the trade unions, and who had already done more for the direct capture of Shanghai than the armies of Chiang Kai-Shek. The workers were disarmed, the trade unions driven underground, the revolutionary leaders executed or imprisoned. If Chiang did not need to learn military strategy from the reactionary bandit generals like Chang Tso-Lin, he did learn from them a virulent hatred and distrust of the masses and a fiendish cruelty to their leaders.

### Revolution Dominated by Tollers

The situation in China has become more clarified to a certain ex-

tent. Hankow remains the center of the historical revolutionary movement in China, basing itself more and more upon the masses, particularly upon the workers, who are drawn in increasing numbers into the revolution. Nanking is trying to become the center of the young, vacillating bourgeoisie who yesterday thought to use the workers in the struggle against feudalism and for independence from the imperialists, and who today are consumed with fear at the growing independence and strength of the young giant of labor who not only marches forward with the peasants, but who is able still to maintain a united front with large sections of the petty bourgeoisie who must acknowledge that only the firm hand of the working masses can guide the victorious and consistent war against the foreign imperialists.

The division in the Chinese nationalist forces is not yet complete by any means. Many of the elements under the control of Chiang especially in the army (many of the battalions of which Chiang has been forced to disarm because of their condemnation of the road he was traveling), will soon be won back to Hankow. In addition, the revolutionary Kuomintang, centered in Hankow, will not artificially lop off the bourgeois elements that still support it because of its uncompromising fight against the imperialists. It will even win back some of the petty bourgeois elements that have gone with Chiang when these elements find that Chiang is marching on the road towards co-operation with the imperialists or is becoming one of the many cheap militarists with which China is abundantly cursed.

But the split in the nationalist forces has done this:

It has definitely changed the relation of forces so that the workers, and in ever increasing numbers the peasants, instead of, as previously, the bourgeoisie, are now at the head of the revolutionary movement.

It has settled finally the question of whose interests will have the dominating position in the revolutionary movement, of who will coordinate its forces, who will drive it forward relentlessly beyond the stage of a bourgeois revolution and toward socialism.

### Present Situation and Prospects

The betrayal by Chiang Kai-Shek has been far from fatal. The forces of Hankow have quickly recovered from the confusion created, and their armies are in full march on Nanking. The armies of the Kuo Min Tang general, Feng Yu-shiang, have already taken Chengchow in their march from the West, while the main Hankow army, marching up from the South have already (as this is written), taken Siping, with every prospect of taking Kai-feng, and joining at a right angle with the armies under Feng at Chengchow for a joint march on Peking, the stronghold of Chiang Tso-Lin.

In the meantime, the great offensive against Hankow of which Chiang Kai-Shek has boasted so much since his renegacy has not materialized. The international bourgeois press must content itself with daily despatches about the fall of Hankow which are just as true as the daily despatches years ago which told of the fall of Moscow.

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# International Labor News

## British Reformists Attempt Suppression of Left Wing

By E. L.

THE left wing in the British trade unions, known as the Minority Movement, in the three years since it has come into existence as an organized force has taken an active and prominent part in all working class struggles. During the General Strike and the miners lockout its agitation and slogans exerted great influence over the masses and its supporters were in the very forefront of the struggle and were entrusted with leadership in many local trade union centres.

The Minority Movement has done a great deal to expose the treachery of the reformist leaders, and has carried on successful campaigns to combat their policy of class collaboration and "industrial peace" which determined their actions before and during the General strike and their attitude towards the miners, and which many of them began to preach openly following the General Strike.

### Left Wing Has Mass Power

It is not surprising therefore that the Minority Movement has grown tremendously in influence and organizational strength. At its last national conference over a million workers were represented. While most of its affiliations are definitely organized but unofficial minorities in the trade unions, many local unions and Trades Councils are officially affiliated. Its influence in the Miners Union is well known. While the Miners Union as a whole is not affiliated with the Minority Movement, it generally supports its policies.

The reformist leaders naturally did not remain indifferent to the growing strength of the left wing. They have fought it with all the "peaceful" means at their disposal, which are by no means negligible, but with unsatisfactory results. They are conscious that the Minority Movement has already undermined their prestige and influence, and threatening to destroy it completely. They have therefore decided to resort to the method of suppression.

### The Exclusion Policy

Credit for initiating the policy of suppression is due to the leaders of the General and Municipal Workers Union. Already in November, 1925, they sent out instructions prohibiting the election of members affiliated with the Minority movement as officials of the

## Situation in China

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and Petrograd and the defeat of the Bolsheviks.

What is far more likely to happen after the capture of Peking by the Hankow forces, is a southward march by them on Nanking and Shanghai, which Chiang Kai Shek will not be able to withstand as easily as he does the march of Chang Tso Lin. Such a series of victories, which would virtually establish the hegemony of the revolutionary forces over the greatest part of China, are not fantastic hopes; they are quite likely to be realized within the year, for the forces of Hankow march with the banner of the revolutionary people and are welcomed by them wherever they come, while Chiang Kai Shek marches with the yellow banner of the renegade and counter-revolutionary, streaked with the blood of the workers he has murdered.

union or to its conferences and conventions. But the membership of the union simply ignored this order and continued to elect the militants of the Minority Movement to responsible posts in many local unions.

Last January the Executive of this union sent out a new circular letter, to all local unions, declaring that adherence to the Minority Movement is incompatible with loyalty to the Union and, secondly, that the local unions must have no connection with the Minority Movement or with Trades Councils in any way associated with the Minority Movement.

### Left Wing Accepts Challenge

The Minority Movement answered this with a call for a conference of representatives from the London locals of the General and Municipal Workers Union to force the reformist leaders to withdraw the instructions. The London District Council of the Union threatened to reorganize the locals sending delegates to the conference and to expel the delegates from the union. Despite these threats, the conference was attended by 57 delegates representing 21 locals with a membership of over 20,000.

Following the conference, the London District Council took disciplinary action against five of the largest locals, depriving them of the right to participate in the organizational and administrative work of the Union until its next convention. In addition to this, they expelled 18 members from the union, including one who is a member of the General Executive of the Union and also a member of the Executive of the Minority Movement.

### General Council Approves Policy

This disruptive policy was approved by the General Council of the Trade Union Congress. On March 25th the General Council sent out to all Trades Councils "Instructions No. 28" stating, among others:

"That those Trade Councils which are affiliated to the Minority Movement, or receive affiliations from branches of that organization (that

## Canadian Rail Shopmen Taste Fruit of B. & O. Plan

Winnipeg, Canada. The co-operation or B. & O. system has been in operation on the Canadian railways for two years, and now at last the railway workers of Western Canada see the results of this system of co-operation. All shops in the western regions of the Canadian National Railways system are either working on part time or have laid off a part of their forces. This despite the fact that the net income of the C. N. R. for 1926 exceeded by more than 14 million dollars, the net income of the previous year. The railway workers are now learning that B. & O. co-operation means more profit for the company, and more speed-up but less pay for the workers.

It is expected that within a short time the shopmen will withdraw their delegates from the so-called Co-operation Committees. This is already taking place in Winnipeg. In the Port Rouge shop of the C. N. R. in Winnipeg, the men decided, instead of having ten per cent of the force laid off, to go on short time five days a week and in addition to take ten holidays in succession instead of at intervals. This will prevent about 250 men from being thrown on the streets. At the same time these shopmen have shown that they have already learned the value of co-operation

is, local unions affiliated to the Minority Movement, or are associated with that body, shall not be accorded recognition by the General Council nor allowed to participate in any work carried on under the auspices of the General Council."

This at a time when it was already known that the Baldwin government was preparing to attack the trade unions.

The attempt to suppress the left wing cannot succeed. The Minority Movement is too deeply imbedded among the masses, and there is too much definite opposition to the reformists and too much general discontent with their leadership and policies. The attempt will only further discredit the reformists, and is doomed to defeat.

## "Check-Off" Issue in the Anthracite

(Continued from page 6)

entire industry have removed workers from the job and compelled others to do the work of those removed. Where before three men worked on specific tasks, now one is compelled to do it. This practice is quite widespread. Wages are cut and the working conditions worsened. The "outlaw" strikes of the miners are increasing as a result of the application of this "reciprocal" program.

Not only do the workers strike "outlaw" strikes, the bureaucracy says in one strike after another, but general strikes are taking place, as was recently shown when the Lehigh Valley Coal Co. employees, 13,000 of them, declared a general strike against the action of the company cutting 4% wage rates on rock contracting from the specified rate of \$4.70 to \$2.38. For many months the Hudson Coal Co. miners have been striking in different sections because of the many repeated violations of the contract by the companies, and this resentment and conditions is accumulating so at the present time that a general strike of the Hudson miners is imminent.

All these violations of the wage scale, all the "reducing of the labor

force", all the discrimination and inequalities heaped upon the miners by the operators are done behind the screen of the "reciprocal program". The "program" is reciprocal in the sense that the bosses hog the whole works.

### Lewis Evades Issue

The bosses will not voluntarily accede to the demand for the check-off. They have repeatedly stated that the "reciprocal" section did not mean the check-off. And the officialdom of the union have evaded the insistent demands of the rank and file for something definite on the check-off and have helped the operators to delay a definite decision on this issue. At the last International convention Lewis insisted that the issue shall not be raised on the floor of the convention.

The anthracite miners should force definite action without further delay. They must make common cause with the bituminous miners for a settlement of all their grievances and for a stronger union that the operators throughout the nation will have to reckon with as they used to before the Lewis administration brought it to its present state.

with the company. At this writing the pipe fitters have withdrawn their delegates from the Co-operation Committee, while the car men have given notice of a motion to withdraw their delegates next meeting and the machinists are expected soon to follow this example.

## Building Trades Unions of Britain Amalgamate

LONDON—(FP)—The amalgamation of the building trades is an important trade union development in Britain. The present federation of building trades decided to proceed toward amalgamation. The executive of the amalgamated union will be composed of representatives of the organizations at present affiliated. Craft interests will be safeguarded by the 8 groups established within the new organization. To the usual building trades will be added quarrymen, pavers, brickmakers and cement workers. Each of the 8 groups will have equal representation. Uniform strike pay will be maintained.

Organizations at present affiliated will have autonomy in their internal affairs but all movements affecting wages and conditions will be under complete control of the amalgamation. If any union desires to withdraw it will have to submit to the decision of a court of arbitration.

## Italian Trades Unions Form New Center

THE decision of the reformist leaders of the General Confederation of Labor of Italy, adopted last January, to transfer the headquarters of the Confederation into a foreign country practically meant nothing else than an attempt to liquidate the free (non-fascist) trade unions, driving the workers into the fascist trade unions and thus delivering them to the mercy of the employers.

The decision encountered determined opposition among the class-conscious rank and file, and this found organized expression at a conference held in Milan about the end of February which rejected the virtual dissolution of the Confederation by the reformist leaders and organized a new centre for the Italian trade unions with headquarters in Italy.

Over thirty delegates representing the most important unions affiliated to the Confederation of Labor—metal workers, textile workers, wood workers, transport workers, printing trades, building trades and food workers—participated in the conference. In addition, the central bodies of the large industrial centres, Milan, Turin, Rome, Naples, Bologna, Genoa, Vicenza, Trieste and Bergamo, were also represented. The delegates were of different political views—reformists, maximalists, communists.

The conference unanimously resolved that the Italian Confederation of Labor shall continue to exist with a central in Italy, that the trade unions be transformed into industrial unions and be organized on the basis of factory units. A provisional executive was elected to carry out the decisions of the conference.

Review

NEGRO LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES, By Charles H. Wesley, Vanguard Press, Inc., Price 50 Cents

Whatever the point of view and class outlook of Mr. Charles H. Wesley, Professor of History in Howard University, he has done the American labor movement a great service with the publication of his book on Negro Labor in the United States. It is just the kind of a book that is badly needed now when Negro labor is coming to play such an important role in the American labor movement.

It is a bit funny perhaps to see earnest people, like the author of this book, take so much trouble to prove that the Negro worker can develop as much skill and become as competent in industry as the white worker, provided he were given a chance. To us such a proposition, which is absolutely correct, should need no special proof.

Haven't we already reached the point when such truths are accepted as self-evident? May be not. If so, we will have to admit that the efforts of Mr. Wesley to prove that the negro worker is possessed of the same abilities as the white worker have been worth while.

Increasing Importance of Negro Labor

But the really important feature of Professor Wesley's study is the demonstrated proposition that negro labor is progressively becoming an ever more important factor in the industrial, political and social life of the United States. The industrialization of the negro race, its trend to the cities and into industry, has been truly remarkable. Just glance at these figures. In 1890 the percentage of urban negro population was 19.4, while in 1920 the figure stood at 34.0, and the drift of the negroes to the cities and industries is steadily continuing. Between 1910 and 1920 the number of negroes in industry had risen from 406,582 to 566,680. In textiles alone the number of negro workers increased from 2,919 in 1900 to 24,734 in 1920.

The road of the negro from slavery on the southern plantations to the condition of industrial worker was spread with thorns and difficulties of all kinds. And still is, for that matter. Not least among these difficulties was the opposition of white workmen who, moved by craft egotism, resisted the entrance of negroes into trades and industry.

A relevant and very timely angle in Professor Wesley's study is the relation of the negro worker to trade unionism and to the organized labor movement generally. If proof is still needed, the facts brought forward by this book will show the negro worker possessed of a strong desire to join the general trade union movement and to fight loyally the employers' side by side with the workers of other races. And if the number of negro workers in the trade unions is not now much larger than it actually is, the reasons for this should be looked after in the craft prejudices of the white labor aristocracy, in the quiet opposition and sabotage of the trade union reactionaries, in the manipulations of capitalist politicians, negro and white, and in the general discrimination against negroes all along the line.

Negro Unions Date Far Back

Suffice it to refer to the trade union pioneering efforts of Isaac Myers in 1870 to see the maturity of the negro workers' organization and struggle against the employers. Nearly sixty years ago it was possible to assemble in Washing-

THE HOLE

Alone,  
Even as death is alone,  
Alone with bitter memories.

He sits in the vulturous silence  
Of four walls . . . thinking . . . thinking.  
Only the rancid odors of dampness  
Penetrate the gloom.

Night crawls huskily  
Over the parapets of the prison;  
Day sinks westward,  
Beating the ashen walls with livid wings;  
But in the dungeon interminable gloom.

Oh, the walls of the dungeon are hard,  
The floor of the dungeon is hard,  
The silence of the dungeon is hard,  
Even as the throes of death are hard,  
The hollow gloom of the dungeon is hard.

Once a day  
The muffled step of the Warden is heard,  
A door screeches open  
Flooding the dungeon with blinding light;  
Then gloom . . . and bread . . . and water.

Once a day  
The murderer paces the asphalt ring,  
Breathes deeply of sun and air;  
But in the dungeon's impenetrable gloom  
The class-war prisoner sits with bitter memories.

Fifteen years is a long time . . . thinking . . . thinking.

—JIM WATERS.

To a Massachusetts Judge

What shall the future's children speak of you,  
You bought and paid for tool of tyranny,  
You bloody Jeffreys of New England's greed?  
You cringing, servile lackey, they shall spew  
The thought of you forth from their memory.  
As something loathsome, vile in history  
No words could pen the depths of, infamy  
Too black to fill the minds of people freed.

Crawl on your belly while you live, and lick  
The pudgy hand of wealth that fills your purse;  
Employ every artifice and trick  
To doom the brave. . . We name you with a curse.  
Corrupt, debased, swine of a tinselled sty,  
Our hate shall haunt your sleep until you die.

—HENRY GEORGE WEISS.

ton, D. C., a national conference of 203 delegates representing negro unions in 23 states. It was then that the National Labor Union was formed, the first national trade union federation of negro labor. This organization was formed not because the negro trade unionists wanted to be organized separately from the white workers, but because the craft egotism and prejudices of the latter would not admit willingly the negro workers into their unions.

Developments since then have tremendously increased the need for trade union organization among the negro workers, but little has changed in the attitude of the trade union reactionaries. These latter have become even more opposed to organizing the negroes since they have lost all desire to organize the unorganized generally. The left and progressive elements in the trade unions must now pay much more attention than heretofore to bringing the negro workers into the unions as this

constitutes an essential part of the general problem of organizing the unorganized.

We must note one more angle of the subject omitted by Professor Wesley, which is of tremendous political importance. It is the relation between the growth of negro labor and the struggles of the negro race for its emancipation. Negro labor is coming to be not only the backbone of the liberation movements of the race but will in time also become its leader. Perhaps this constitutes a subject for special study. However, it must be kept in mind that the negro working class, like the working class of all oppressed races, has a double historic mission to perform. It has got to liberate itself from the yoke of capitalist exploitation and in doing so must build and lead the movement for the emancipation of its race. And it is from these two angles that negro labor in the United States must be approached and studied.

ALEX. BITTELMAN.

Sport Sidelights

BY ALBERT STUART

JACK SHARKEY, the Boston Bay heavy, looms as the outstanding challenger to the crown now held by Gene Tunney, the marine who isn't fighting. Sharkey jumped into the light by virtue of his knockout victory of his home town rival Jim Maloney. In this fight he showed speed and punch in both hands and led all the way to the fifth round when the mlow came over.

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THE bout arises as to whom Sharkey will fight now. Officially he is now to fight Dempsey and if he is able to defeat the former champ then he will have earned his fight for the world title in September. We don't know where Jack comes in now. He's out somewhere supposedly training and trying to make up for lost time. However, the writer's opinion is that Jack should go out and earn his right to face Sharkey instead of being right in jump for a title match.

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BASEBALL is rounding out in All the stiffness and kinks are working out according to the two games played recently between the Cubs and the Braves. On Saturday, May 14, the Cubs took an 18-inning game. The following Tuesday the Cubs took a 22-inning game. The outstanding features of these games were the pitching of Bush, who twirled 18 innings for the Cubs, and Bob Smith, former shortstop, who pitched Boston through 22 innings. The two New York teams and the two Chicago teams leading in both leagues. A couple of favorites seem to be in tough running. Cincinnati is out in last place, with Washington and Cleveland 6th and 7th in the American League.

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HITTING has taken a few strides forward. Bing Miller, Brown outfielder, has jumped out toward the front, batting over 400. Old Ty Cobb is keeping up in the front with the rest, already batting in succession in over a score of games. In the veterans' pastime Andy High of the Braves is out there batting way over 400, with Farrell batting in great fashion. Farrell is taking the place of Jackson, who was stricken with appendicitis, but it looks as if he will stick if he continues sticking as he is now. Cy Williams is out hanging out homers again, with Gehrig and Ruth fighting it out for the lead in the American League.

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FROM Russia we hear that there has been a change in the characters of the chess board. We find that the characters have been changed to one of working class figures. The scheme of the new change takes on the following form. On one side the characters are of the workers and on the other side the forces of the capitalist state. We find the worker and red army soldiers on one side and on the other side king, queen and white guard soldiers. This is propagandizing and always seeing that the class angle is presented before the workers even in sports.

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THE capitalists make use of sports continually to corrupt the minds of the workers. Such characters as kings and queens and soldiers train the minds of those playing chess to think in terms of kings, queens and soldiers. This new change in Russia trains the workers to think in the terms of the working class.