

The VOICE OF LABOR

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STRIKE AND THE WORLD STRIKES WITH YOU—
SCAB AND YOU SCAB ALONE!

The Cops Kick Over

WHAT! Respectable Boston, polite Boston, cultured Boston with a police walk-out—perhaps a *general strike?*

That is all very well for crude Western cities like Seattle and Winnipeg—but *Boston!*

A month ago it was only a rumor. Now, a Policemen's Union, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, has pulled out the cops, leaving the Cod-fish aristocracy of Back Bay without protection.

On May 1st the Boston police were merrily cracking heads of the local "Bolsheviki"; on September 10th, by a vote of 1134 to 2, they decided to use Direct Action. As the *New York Times* says, "If the guardians of law and order refuse to uphold law and order, who will?"

The same reasons which compel the organization of Carpenters and Plumbers, compelled the formation of the Policemen's Union. A regular Tsar of a Police Commissioner, starvation wages and other minor grievances forced this action. Contrary to general belief, cops must eat like other people; they have wives and children; they wear clothes, and none of these things are possible with the present wages.

Encouraged and aided by the leaders of the local A. F. of L. unions they affiliated with that organization, and then, relying on the promised support of Organized Labor, they struck—defying Police Commissioner Curtis and the powers of the City and State that stood behind him.

*The immediate pretext for the strike was the Commissioner's suspension of 19 policemen who had joined the Union, after a farcical "trial", in which the sentence was determined upon before-hand.

The attitude of the City officials through their mouth-pieces, the daily press, was illuminating.

At first it was, "... Of course we must pay good wages to our police force. We can't afford to have dissatisfied protectors and guardians ..."

After a while the papers began to say, "They can form an association for their own welfare, but what on earth has an organization of police officers to do with a common labor organization?"

Still later: "No public official can *impartially* enforce the law if he belongs to an outside organization of a *certain class* ..."

The italics are ours. The idea of a policeman on duty being "impartial", when his job is to protect capitalist property!

As for the question of "class" organization, a police force is nothing but the instrument of the Capitalist State, whose function is to protect the plundering of the working class.

Up to the last minute everybody expected the police to capitulate before the firm stand taken by the authorities. But out of it all one thing sticks up like a sore thumb:

The Mayor, the Police Commissioner, and Governor Coolidge *understood the situation and saw where it was leading.*

The police *did not* understand, and *did not* see.

The capitalist press understood.

The Boston Labor leaders did not.

They thought it was merely a question of shorter hours and more pay. While as a matter of fact, it was

a much more startling matter—the *paralysis of the engine of the Capitalist State*, by the workers who operate it!

As we go to press the Boston Central Labor Union is taking a general strike vote. In the meanwhile, the high officials of the A. F. of L., alarmed, are frantically trying to halt the strike. Sammy Gompers threatens; Frank Morrison pleads, Matt Woll, before the Civic Federation, says policemen have no right to strike.

Labor is beginning to understand what this all means. Will the workers be able to stand the shock?

What it means is *that the machinery by which the capitalist class holds its domination over the workers, breaks down as soon as the men who operate that machinery discover that they are workers too.*

If there is a general strike in Boston, the workers will form their own proletarian police to keep order in the city. Here the striking cops will come in very handy, taking their orders from the Strike Committee.

If Boston Labor fails to back up the cops, then the police strike is broken, the impulse toward police organization in this country will receive a serious setback, and the next strike of workers around Boston will get no sympathy from the police.

If Labor *does* stand behind the cops, then we revolutionists may have no fears for the future.

This strike is the crucial test of the A. F. of L. If it fails to support the police, then it frankly admits that it is not a working class organization, but a tool of the Capitalist State.

Don't Go To Work October 8th!

MORE than Two Thousand Workers are rotting in jail because they were active in the Labor Movement.

Many have died of illness.

Many have committed suicide because of intolerable tortures.

Others have gone insane.

The capitalist class is murdering our Brothers and Comrades.

Would you give five dollars to save a buddy's life?

A Day's wages is all it means to you. It means life to thousands in prison.

If the workers of the United States would quit work for *one day*, the class war prisoners would go free.

Don't forget! October 8th is a *holiday!*

GET THEM OUT BY STRIKING FOR A DAY.

Petty Larceny

By Tom Paine

SUPPOSE you were a foreign-born workingman. You had come to this country, let us say, ten years ago, lured by the stories of plenty of work for all, high wages, no military service and freedom for everybody.

After five years of "dirty work"—because you were unskilled—mucking in mine and subway, longshore loading and unloading of ships, trimming coal in the bunkers of Lake boats, lumbering in the Northwest, harvesting, and tending machines of various sorts, you had found yourself broken in body and spirit, but with a small surplus laid aside, scraped and saved by the most desperate economy. You wanted to go home. The promise of work, the promise of high wages turned out to be illusions. The promise of freedom wasn't made good. You were hounded from pillar to post; the American workers despised you as a "wop" or a "hunky"; the employers used you as a strike-breaker; if you insisted on your rights, you went to jail, without a chance in the Courts.

What the War Did.

There was military service. Thousands of your fellow-workers were drafted into the Army, whether they wanted to go or not, whether they were Americans or not. Before, they needed you as a scab; now, they wanted you to take a gun and shoot Germans. No matter if you were a German or Austrian yourself—in many cases the draft boards forced foreigners into the Army, and the Army machine drove them to battle.

But let us say that you were one of the lucky ones—you were doing "essential labor." But on what terms! Now, the Government was your boss. If you dared to strike, you were threatened with the draft. You were tied to your job, the boss speeded up the machinery.

True, there was a War Labor Board, half of whose members were "friends of Labor." The War Labor Board came to your factory, ordered a raise in wages, better conditions, and the right to organize. But the boss didn't pay any attention to the War Labor Board. He went on driving you for his own profit worse than ever.

Liberty Bonds.

You had to buy Liberty Bonds, or get fired. The boss put you down for so many Liberty Bonds, and then took it out of your wages before he paid you. The same way, you had to give money to every Red Cross, Y. M. C. A. or K. C. Drive; you contributed, whether you liked it or not, to support the Belgian Refugees, to buy service flags, to save Armenia. They investigated your bank account and found you had saved up some money. Then they called you in and threatened to fire and black-list you unless you put your savings into Liberty Bonds or War Savings Stamps.

But the cost of living was now so high that you couldn't afford to live on the money you received. You had to sell your Liberty Bonds. But you couldn't get what you had paid for them. Saloon-keepers and cigar-sellers would only pay about \$60 for a \$100 bond—and you had to sell. Then came another Lib-

erty Loan, and you had to go through the whole business over again.

And now you had no rights at all. If you had become a naturalized American citizen, they threatened to take away your citizenship if you struck, if you criticized the Government, or if you didn't buy Bonds. If you had taken out your first papers, you had all the disadvantages and none of the privileges of a citizen. If you were still an alien, they treated you like an outcast.

You were not allowed to go home. You had to stand up whenever the "Star-Spangled Banner" was played, or get mobbed and put in jail. You didn't dare have an opinion of your own. If you dared to criticize the country or the Government, you got twenty years at hard labor.

Now We Can Go Home!

Then the war ended. At last, you thought to yourself, I can leave this terrible prison of a country and go home. You sold your Liberty Bonds and packed your trunk.

But if you were an enemy alien, you found that it was not permitted to go home. Or if you lived in Russia, Lithuania, Esthonia, Lettland, Finland, Poland, the countries of Central Europe. Business men, bankers, manufacturers, militarists could go; American business men and wealthy people could go; but you, a worker, a native of these countries, could not go. Although the Armistice was signed in November, 1918, and it is now September, 1919—although your own Consul vises your passport—still the American Government won't let you go.

But let's say you are an Italian, or a Greek, or an Englishman—and are allowed to leave this country, You have your passport all right, and then you go down to the New York Customs House, as you were told to do, to get permission of the United States Government to leave the country.

You go into the room, where at a long desk officials are cursing a crowd of your fellow-workers.

They hand you a form to fill out, containing all sorts of details about your birth, your life, where you have worked, if you are or are not an American citizen, and how much you have earned in the last two years.

Why the Hell Did You Come?

If you happen to be an American citizen, a big thug brutally asks you why the hell you're leaving the country. If you're not, he asks you why the hell you haven't taken out your papers.

"Ain't this country good enough for you? Haven't you made a living here? If it doesn't suit you here, why the hell did you come here? This is the best country on God's earth. You came here because you didn't like it in your own country, and if you haven't got gratitude enough to become a citizen, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. We're not going to stand for a lot of dirty foreigners coming over here and making a living and then taking their money out of the country!"

This same brute—an official of the United States

Government—asks you what you were doing while the War was going on, why you weren't fighting, how many Liberty Bonds you have bought. He calls you a "slacker," says you have a yellow streak.

The man at the desk, shouting and cursing at you, is making up a list of what you've earned during the last two years. Suppose you've worked on a farm for your board and room. "Three dollars a day!" he says, and adds it on. No chance for an argument; no appeal; no back-talk.

What is this all about? Pretty soon the big man tells you.

"Income tax!" he says. "You gotta pay \$96 before you can leave the country. Now cut it out! If this country ain't good enough for you to take out papers, we're going to see that you don't take all your earnings out of the country. You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Why don't you stay here and spend your money where you made it?"

Income Tax for Workers.

By cross-questioning and bullying you, by setting down arbitrarily what he thinks your board and room is worth, the man at the desk has arrived at a grand total of \$1,200—\$600 a year for two years.

"You gotta pay eight cents on every dollar you've earned for the last two years," he says.

You protest that you were below the Income Tax

limit—you don't have to pay any Income Tax on \$600 a year.

"Cut it out!" he bellows. "Shut up. We don't want any lip from the likes of you! Another word and we'll add on a couple of hundred. You're probably lying, anyhow! Put up \$96 or you can't leave the country!"

Your Consul can do nothing. The United States has all the food in the world, and at home your countrymen are starving. He doesn't dare protest. You have to pay, or stay here.

But suppose that wipes out your savings for ten years? Suppose you *haven't* any savings—or perhaps if you pay that \$96 you won't have enough money left to buy a ticket home?

Nevertheless, you've got to pay, or stay here. No matter if you don't belong here, no matter if you are the citizen of another country, you *can't go home unless you pay a higher rate of Income Tax than J. Pierpont Morgan does!*

What would an American worker think if he was held up in a foreign country and forced to pay *eight cents on the dollar* for every dollar he has earned in the last two years—whether spent on living expenses, or taking care of wife and children, or paying doctor bills?

Picking the pockets of starving workers is a very cheap business for Uncle Sam to be in!

Why Sammy Hurried Home

SAMUEL GOMPERS was abroad, attending the dummy sessions of a dummy Labor Congress in Holland, and debating with Karl Legien about whether the Kaiser or Wilson started the War, when all of a sudden we saw in the papers that he was hurrying home.

Why? What was the hurry?

The International officials and the members of the A. F. of L. machine were getting worried. For one thing, here was this wave of rank-and-file strikes sweeping the country, without the authority of the "leaders" and often against their wishes. The Local Unions were disobeying orders from headquarters, seceding, insisting upon their rights. The One Big Union movement was sweeping down from Canada, and East from the Coast. The membership of the Railroad Organizations was chafing at the bit, while their officials dilly-dallied at Washington. The Plumb Plan was kicking up a hell of a row. The Steel Organization Committee, acting under instructions from the A. F. of L. Convention, was talking "strike" in the steel industry, after their defiance by Judge Gary. In other words, the Labor movement was *moving*.

President Wilson doubled one hand into a fist, which he shook in the faces of the workers, while with the other he beckoned to Sammy to beat it home.

A Busy Life for Sammy.

The following schedule of Mr. Gompers' activities after he reached these shores is taken from an article in the *New York Tribune*, entitled "Gompers Sitting on the Lever":

"August 25th—He landed at Hoboken at 12:30. By

3:30 it became known that the American Federation of Labor had not endorsed the Plumb Plan, and that the use of Mr. Gompers' name as honorary president of the Plumb Plan League was unauthorized." This is a double lie. The A. F. of L. endorsed the Plumb Plan at the Atlantic City Convention, and Gompers accepted the honorary chairmanship of the Plumb Plan League before he went abroad.

"On the same day he took a hand in the Railway Shopmen's strike, and assisted the heads of the Unions to induce the men to return to work. . . .

"August 27th—He conferred with the heads of the Steel Strike Committee, advising them, in their response to Judge Gary's refusal to meet with them, to leave the door open to further negotiations, and to postpone any action looking toward the tie-up of the mills. . . .

"August 29th—He conferred with the President, discussing among other things the Steel situation, and the advisability of holding an industrial conference in which Labor and business should meet to try and work out some program for stabilizing industry during reconstruction. . . .

"August 31—Labor leaders in Washington concur in the view that the situation is improving all around."

Yes—improving for everybody but the workers, who are asked to wait six months while the President reduces the Cost of Living; meanwhile, the workers go hungry, the profiteers pile up profits, and the various "Wage Committees" and "Leaders" of Organized Labor sit around Washington drawing down salaries and travelling expenses.

Hooray for the Constitution!

By John Reed

THE Plutes of America are trying to get up enthusiasm about the Constitution of the United States. They have set September 18th to be celebrated as a holiday, "Constitution Day", all over the United States.

Before you do any celebrating, Mr. American worker, it would be well if you would find out just what kind of a document this Constitution is, and who made it, and why.

The signers of the Declaration of Independence represented the revolutionary mass of the small farmers and shop-keepers, who wanted to govern the country in their own interests.

But the framers of the Constitution were composed of the upper class—many of whom had been against the American Revolution, and particularly, against the small property-owners whose sentiments were expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

They wanted to found a Government to protect the rich against the poor, property against the necessities of life and liberty, and the monopolistic minority against the majority.

At the Close of the Revolution.

The Revolution had made the middle class, which had done the fighting against England, the dominant class. They were jealous of their freedom and independence. But already the development of capitalism had begun to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few.

Great tracts of land had been seized by speculators, and the banking interests in the towns had a monopoly of capital. The middle class was in favor, therefore, of cheap money—just as, at a later date, the middle class supported the Free Silver issue. Also, the capitalists had gathered up all the bonds and obligations issued by the Congress and the States to pay for the Revolution. These had depreciated in value, until they were worth almost nothing. The capitalists wanted to have them redeemed at their face value by some central Government; the middle class wanted to wipe them out. The capitalists wanted a strongly centralized Federal Government, which would guarantee

their speculative investments and protect their property with Federal troops; while the middle class was afraid of a centralized Government, whose actions it might not be able to control as it was able to control the separate state legislatures.

The middle class knew that if the capitalists attempted a dictatorship in the separate states, it might be overthrown by popular insurrection. In fact the country, in the eleven years it existed under the Articles of Confederation, saw many such insurrections. It is interesting to note here that *these insurrections were directed against the capitalists, who had got control of the state governments, by the middle class debtors.* The culminating insurrection was Shay's Rebellion.

The situation is well described by Mr. Curtis, in his *Constitutional History of the United States*:

"A levelling, licentious spirit," says this old reactionary, "a restless desire for change, and a disposition to throw down barriers of private rights, at length broke forth in conventions, which first voted themselves to be the people, and then declared their proceedings to be constitutional. At these assemblies the doctrine was publicly broached *that property ought to be common*, because all had aided in saving it from confiscation by the power of England. Taxes were voted to be unnecessary burdens, the courts of justice to be intolerable grievances, and the legal profession a nuisance. A revision of the State constitution was demanded, in order to abolish the Senate, reform the representation of the people, and make all civil officers eligible by the people. . ."

The Capitalist Frame-Up.

It was these revolts which alarmed the capitalists, and persuaded them to put over a system of Government which would place the state power firmly in their hands. Alexander Hamilton and James Madison — afterward President of the United States—spent several years carefully preparing the country for the capitalist frame-up. They published pamphlets and newspapers, made speeches, called secret gatherings of financiers and merchants, but took care not to let the people know what was on their minds.

In calling the Constitutional Convention of 1787, for instance, the leaders did not dare suggest their real objects; the aim of the Convention, it was stated, was merely "to revise the Articles of Confederation." It was also carefully arranged that the delegates should not be elected by the people, or even by directly representative bodies, as had been done in the case of the Congress which issued the Declaration of Independence; instead, they were either chosen by the legislatures, or, more often, appointed by the Governors of the states. And it should be remembered that property qualification for the franchise existed in all states, so that in no case was the lower, or working class, represented in the Convention.

And when the Convention finally met, it did its work in secret, behind closed doors, like the Peace Conference in Paris; and like the latter, in order to prevent the public from knowing what was going on, it even



Judge (to scab)—What charge do you want to make against the strikers?

Scab—They violated my constitution.

The Liberator

forced its members to promise not to talk to anyone outside. So that when the Constitution was finally completed, it was issued to the world in such a form that its real meaning, and the forces which produced it, were absolutely unknown to the colonists.

Benjamin Franklin Refused to Sign.

Many delegates to the Constitutional Convention who had signed the Declaration of Independence refused to sign the Constitution, denouncing it as a "conspiracy"; among these was Benjamin Franklin.

James Madison, who was chiefly responsible for the Constitution—which he described as having "the form and spirit of popular government while preventing majority rule"—expressed in 1785 the theory of economic interpretation in politics. He wrote:

"The most common and durable source of factions (parties, classes), has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, grow up of necessity in civilized nations and divide themselves into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government."

Listen once more to Madison, speaking before the Constitutional Convention, advocating that the vote be given to the propertied class alone:

"In future times a great majority of the people will not only be without landed, but any other sort of property. These will either combine under the influence of their common situation; in which case, the rights of property and the public liberty will not be secure in their hands, or, which is more probable, they will become the tools of opulence and ambition..."

Too Much Democracy.

Elbridge Gerry declared that all the evils experienced by the Confederation flowed "from the excess of democracy." Edmund Randolph said, "that, in tracing these evils to their origin, every man had found it in the turbulence and follies of democracy: that some check therefore was to be sought for against this tendency of our government..." Alexander Hamilton, in urging a life-term for Senators, said that "all communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well-born, and the other the mass of the people, who seldom judge or act right." Gouverneur Morris, of New York, wanted to check the "precipitance, changeableness and excess" of the representatives of the people, by the ability and virtue of a "great and established property-aristocracy: men who from pride will support consistency and permanency. . . Such an aristocratic body will keep down the turbulence of democracy." Gouverneur Morris showed the capitalist viewpoint of the Convention, when he boldly stated, "Life and liberty were generally stated to be of more value than property. An accurate view of the matter would, nevertheless, prove that property was the main object of society . . . If property, then, was the main object of government, certainly it ought to be one measure of the influence due to those who were affected by the government." And finally, Mr. Madison again:

"An increase of population will of necessity increase the proportion of those who will labor under all the hardships of life and secretly sigh for a more equal distribution of its blessings. These may in time outnumber those who are placed above the feelings of indigence. (The poor may outnumber the rich.) According to the equal laws of suffrage, the power will slide into the hands of the former. No agrarian attempts have yet been made in this country, but symptoms of a levelling spirit, as we have understood, have sufficiently appeared, in a certain quarter (Shays' Rebellion), to give notice of a future danger."

Madison further advised the Convention that in framing a system which they wished to last for ages, they must not lose sight of the changes which the ages would produce in the forms and distribution of property.

Profits of the Constitution.

The Convention did not. It finally framed a Constitution, which, while appearing to preserve popular government, in reality secured the rights and property of the minority against "the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority."

It is fascinating to study the history of these times—to discover, for instance, that most of the signers of the Constitution made a great deal of money out of it; that there was a conspiracy among the upper class of the colonies, in case the Convention failed, to organize an insurrection to overthrow "democracy" by force of arms; that out of the sixty-odd delegates, only thirty-nine signed the document, many withdrew from the Convention altogether, and an immense anger shook the middle class when it discovered, too late, what the Constitution meant; that the middle class had to threaten to refuse ratification before the first ten amendments, which constitute the Bill of Rights, were added to the document; and that the different state legislatures were persuaded to ratify the Constitution through the most shameless corruption by the capitalist interests—even going to the extent of bribery.



Good Morning

SOCIETY NOTE FROM MOSCOW

Prince Godelpus, the well-known land-owner, has decided to spend the winter in town, where he can be seen daily taking his morning exercise.

The Profits of the Constitution.

It is fascinating to study the history of these times—to discover, for instance, that most of the signers of the Constitution made a great deal of money out of it. That there was a conspiracy among the upper class of the colonies, in case the Convention failed, to organize an insurrection to overthrow "democracy" by force of arms; that out of the sixty-odd delegates elected, only thirty-nine signed the document, many withdrew from the Convention altogether, and an immense anger shook the middle class when it discovered, too late, what the Constitution meant; that the middle class had to threaten to refuse ratification, before the first ten amendments, which constitute the Bill of Rights, were added to the document.

The first act of the new Government established by the Constitution, as was to be expected, was the "funding" of the public debt—that is to say, an arrangement to pay the badly depreciated state and Congressional obligations at their face value. This debt amounted to more than \$76,000,000. The holders of the depreciated bonds and notes—most of which they had purchased for a song—were given in exchange bonds of the new Government of the United States, which then proceeded to levy taxes upon the middle and working classes to pay the interest and principal. Thus at the very

beginning of our Government, the little clique of bankers and speculators who framed the Constitution were given a vast fortune, the payment of which reduced the American people to the position of debtors for half a century.

What Patrick Henry Said.

The Constitution so devised has been the framework of the American Government, and has consistently thwarted the will of the majority of the people ever since it was adopted, except in cases of an overwhelming majority. Patrick Henry, upon reading the document, exclaimed, "It is, sir, a most fearful situation when the most contemptible minority can prevent the alteration of the most oppressive government; for it may, in many respects, prove to be such."

Professor Burgess protests against the system for amending the Constitution, and in doing so, unwittingly criticizes the entire document:

"When, in a democratic political society, the well-matured, long, and deliberately-formed will of the undoubted majority can be persistently and successfully thwarted, in the amendment of the organic law, by the will of the minority, there is just as much danger to the State from revolution and violence as there is from the caprice of the majority."

Four-Cent Woodrow

AS we predicted in the last issue of this paper, the Railroad Shopmen, who were persuaded to go back to work by their International officers early in August, partly by threats to scab on them, partly by the intimation of their "leaders" that there would be a strike on September 2, have been buffaloes again. The strike vote carried by an overwhelming majority. B. M. Jewell, at the request of the President, submitted himself and his rank and file to the tender mercies of Director-General Hines of the United States Railway Administration—and the Great White Father finally handed down a present of *four cents an hour increase* with a request to wait 90 days until he reduced the H. C. of L., and a warning that he'd turn loose the Federal Army on the workers if they walked out. Sold again, brothers! When will you find out that the capitalist Government is a harder boss than the private citizen—and the Craft Union oligarchy in the A. F. of L. is there to obstruct the will of the working Class?

The Brotherhoods' Bluff

When the Railroad Brotherhoods, supported by Railroad Employees' Department of the A. F. of L., came out flat-footed with their demand for a large wage-increase, or the Plumb Plan, they hinted at a strike: The usual public wrangle ended with the usual appeal to President Wilson; but this time the President wasn't to be bluffed. In his message to Congress, he warned the workers not to dare to strike. He and his Director of Railroad Hines would settle the matter. The Labor officials said meekly, "All right, Mr. President!" Then came the four cent raise, and the spontaneous strike of the Steamroad men in the Southwest.

Mr. Hines immediately telegraphed that if the strikers didn't go back to work the Government would deal with them "for interfering with and impeding the use

of Railroad property, an offense against the United States Government." How about that, you shouters for "Government ownership"?

Meanwhile the champions of the working class at Washington hurried around to headquarters, and then wired their striking members to go back. Warren S. Stone of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers; W. G. Lee of the Trainmen, and B. M. Jewell of the Shopmen, wired immediately for the men to return to work, or they'd order Union men to scab on the strikers.

Smashed by Their Unions.

The men had to go back. Arrayed against them was not only the power of the Federal Government, but the officials of their own Unions. Thus was staged one more demonstration of the patent fact that the A. F. of L. is against the interests of the working class. Another great body of workers was educated to the necessity for smashing that reactionary and corrupt organization. As for the Government, to a large number it became clear on which side of the class war a capitalist Government always fights.

But the strike was great while it lasted. All California, Nevada, Arizona and Utah were tied up. All along the line strike-breakers were halted on their way to the Coast. In Ogden, Utah, in Las Vegas, Nevada, scabs shipping through were seized, marched to the edge of the town and dispersed.

Even as far east as Chicago the Railroad workers were hard to hold in check. J. D. Sanders, chairman of the Chicago District Council of Federated Shop-Crafts, declared that only a "conservative few" had managed to prevent a strike. As to Four-Cent Woodrow, he said, "Wilson is playing his last cards. He doesn't care about the working man. His League of Nations will get little support from Labor."

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For Labor's organization by Industries in One Big Union.

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Manager.....Ben. Gitlow

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BOOST THE VOICE OF LABOR!

NOTICE!

THE WAR DEPARTMENT is advertising for two thousand volunteers to join the Army and go to Siberia. We advise all workers not to enlist, and to urge others not to. This is President Wilson's private war, and its purpose is simply to restore the Tsardom and the profiteerdom in Russia.

We demand that American troops leave Russia, and take their partners, the Japs, with them.

Hands off Russia!

What's Going On

SAMMY GOMPERS SPENT twenty years trying to get it enacted into law that "Labor is not a Commodity." The Clayton Act would, said Gompers, prevent the use of injunctions in labor disputes. But never in the history of the Labor Movement in this country have so many injunctions been issued by the Courts as now—injunctions against picketting, against striking, against stopping work, against breaking contracts with employers. It revives the old question, "Which direction is Sammy Gompers going?"

IN WEST VIRGINIA the coal miners, who are used to fighting with rifles in the bushes (remember 1912—Paint Creek), are on the march, fully armed, to organize the non-Union coalfields by force. According to the latest reports, some five thousand of them yielded to the Governor's plea, and returned home; but there seem to be several thousand still moving across the State. The mine owners are openly preparing to defend their property rights over their slaves with machine guns.

THE UNITED MINE Workers in the southern part of Illinois are also on the march across their State. The reason is this: Upon the refusal of the International and District officers of the Union to call a strike, the rank and file went out anyway. Frank Farrington, District head—who is also on the pay-roll of the Coal Companies—thereupon revoked the charters of twenty-four Locals. The expelled Locals, supported by the vast majority of the rest of the miners, are parading from mine to mine to win recruits. The new organization will be an industrial organization more or less revolutionary in character.

JUST WHEN WE had all made up our minds that at last the thugs of Bisbee, Arizona, who deported striking miners and their families into the desert two years ago, were about to be brought to trial, a strange thing happened. The witnesses for the prosecution, we understand, have all disappeared. Quick, Watson, the needle!

JIM HOLLAND, THE Bolshevik-hound of the New York State Federation of Labor, appointed a Committee at the recent State Convention to investigate the problem of reducing the Cost of Living. Jim wants to be in right with the President, so he told the Committee to make it stiff. They did—too stiff. They recommended an "industrial truce"—no strikes permitted—for six months or more, to give the President time to wallop the profiteers. But Jim had his wires crossed, so he got a hot tip from Washington to go slow on the "no-strike" proposition—so he had to repudiate the report, greatly to the astonishment of the committee.

IHAVE BEFORE ME the announcement of a meeting advertised in the *New York Times*:

"Discussion by the Rev. Dr. J. R. Straton, 'Ought the Preachers to Go On Strike?' Calvary Baptist Church, West Fifty-seventh Street, 8 P. M."

AFTER BEING TOLD at the Convention of the A. F. of L. that American workers were better paid and less worked than any other body of workers in the world—thanks to the wonderful work of the A. F. of L.—along comes the Weekly News Letter of that same A. F. of L., and says that American coal miners produce the cheapest coal in the world, work longer hours and get a smaller percentage of their product than European miners.

Which is right—the A. F. of L.? Or the A. F. of L.

NEXT MONTH THERE will take place in Washington, D. C., the first International Labor Conference called for under the terms of the Labor Charter incorporated in the Peace Treaty. As we pointed out in a previous number, this Labor Charter is a fake. The Washington Labor Conference will also be a fake; it will be composed of delegates hand-picked by the various Governments and their tools. By the terms of the Charter, any delegate who is objectionable to the Governments can be rejected. Moreover, there will be no delegates at all from the following countries: Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Turkey, Soviet Russia, Hungary, China, Mexico.

THE BRITISH TRADE Union Congress is in session at Glasgow. Upon this convention tremendous issues depend. For two generations before the War the capitalist class of Great Britain, by dint of terrible underpayment of labor, overcrowding and misery, kept its leadership of the capitalist world. Now, however, things are different. The British capitalists are at the mercy of Labor, which is awaking to gigantic desires.

The Congress will show whether the rank and file of British Labor have yet got control. If events prove that they have not, it will only be a short time before they do.

THE A. F. OF L. press has been publishing reports of the collapse of the O. B. U. in Western Canada, which remind us very much of the stories in the capitalist press about the collapse of the Soviet Government. For instance, the announcement that the miners of Western Alberta had voted to go back into the A. F. of L. As a matter of fact, the bosses offered to settle the strike if the men would rejoin the United Mine Workers. The U. M. W. officials held a meeting with the bosses, and then took away the charter of District No. 8, in order to cause a split in the miners' ranks. But no split occurred; the miners should worry—they're through with the Job Trust.

INDUSTRY IS MORE DEADLY than war, says C. W. Price, General Manager of the National Safety Council, which has just held a meeting in Washington, D. C. According to Price, during the nineteen months of the War, 50,150 American soldiers were killed or died of wounds; while here at home, during the same nineteen months, 220,000 workers in industry were injured, and 126,654 men, women and children were killed. No medals or pensions for these heroes—no parades, banquets or bonuses for the survivors—no compensation to their families. Yet this industrial war has been going on for decades, and will go on, until the workers take over industry.

CORRESPONDENCE

Argenta, Ark., Aug. 25, 1919.

DEAR COMRADE:

Comrade D. Zini handed me a copy of your paper. Enclosed find check of \$1.60 for my subscription. I am enclosing clipping out of the Local Labor Bulletin stating that us Henry Dubbs will parade behind Mounted Police and a company of Soldiers on Labor Day. This same bunch at the Trades Council wanted to have the council affiliate with the Chamber of Commerce; they called "get together," but we bucked and beat them. But they pulled the soldier parade off on us, and I don't see how we can beat them now, as the day is so close at hand. With best wishes to you and your magazine, I am Fraternally yours,

A. R. FINKE.

Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 24, 1919.

DEAR COMRADE:

Your letter of Aug. 16 received and also the copies of the *Voice of Labor* sent me. I am well pleased with the *Voice of Labor*, and have handed the extra copies to radical comrades in the labor unions. One comrade handed me 25 cents yesterday to help pay for a bundle to start with.

I am a member of the International Association of Machinists, and we are bringing to a close one of the largest campaigns for membership in the history of Cincinnati. We have increased our membership from about 1,000 to about 10,000 since April of this year, and the one big job is in front of us now: that is, to educate them to revolutionary ideas. That will be the work of the Socialists, and I believe that the *Voice of Labor* can be used for this work, as the Machinists of Ohio have taken a big step forward this year by adopting the industrial plan of organization. It is the plan that we have used in increasing our membership here in Cincinnati.

Yours for Industrial Democracy and One Big Union.

E. L. TRIBBEY.

Quincy Point, Mass., September 1, 1919.

DEAR COMRADE:

The first issue of *The Voice of Labor* goes well. The Socialists like it and so do the outsiders.

Now here's a genuine testimonial.

The General Superintendent of the Fore River Ship-building plant, Harry E. Gould, is excited and very much upset by *The Voice of Labor*. Some ship went from Fore River to Charlestown Navy Yard with a bundle of *Voices* on it. That got Harry's goat; he called the little doggies—the small bosses—together and offered two hundred dollars reward to anyone who will catch the men bringing *The Voice of Labor* into the plant. He said, "This paper would turn any man's head."

That's what I call a compliment.

Fraternally,

GEORGE

Salt Lake City, Utah, Sept. 2, 1919.

DEAR COMRADE:

I have just finished reading your new magazine, *The Voice of Labor*, issue of Aug. 15th, which is the first copy I have been fortunate enough to come across; and all I wish to say is that I heartily indorse everything you advocate, and wish to congratulate you on your choice of reading matter. I can tell you I like it, and what's more, if you can give us the same clean-cut, high-grade, instructive line of argument in the future, your magazine will very soon be a power for good, as it fills a long-felt want, and could not come at a more opportune time.

Here in Salt Lake we are making appreciable headway and I look for wonderful doings in the not far-distant future. The Reds have captured the Central Labor Council, and have gone on record favoring industrial organization rather than craft; recognition of Soviet Russia; withdrawal of troops from there immediately; liberation of all political, industrial, religious and wartime prisoners, as well as scores of other things along radical lines. And last, but not least, on the 29th of August, after an all-evening's discussion, we adopted a resolution opposing the so-called League of Nation covenant and all that goes with it, by a more than 6 to 1 vote. The State Federation is to meet on Sept. 9; we expect that they to take the same action as the city Federation.

J. J. SULLIVAN.

"Bolshevism" in Bridgeport

By Ben Legere

THE crack is widening in the American Federation of Labor.

It is coming from Canada down through the Northwest and spreading out in every direction, following first the highly organized industries of these States.

Bridgeport is one of the most important industrial cities in the country. During the war it leaped into first place as a munitions producing center, and its wage-working population doubled. Munitions brought an era of great prosperity to the town.

Early in the war the Bridgeport workers launched the Eight Hour movement, led by Leon Nelson, now famous as "Petrovsky" in Soviet Russia. The Eight Hour strike in the shops of Bridgeport resulted in the eight hour day becoming the first big war-time Labor concession of the capitalists of this country.

The Rise of Lodge 30

The fight in Bridgeport was carried on by Lodge No. 30 of the International Association of Machinists, and ever since, Lodge No. 30 has been the backbone of a strongly organized local Labor movement.

Nelson's work built up Lodge No. 30 to the highest membership mark it had ever attained, but after the Eight Hour fight was won he was driven out of town by the manufacturers and their allies in the Labor Movement.

The official control of Lodge No. 30 was in the hands of a group of reactionaries headed by a Business Agent named Bowen. Nelson was blacklisted by the manufacturers after the strike, and I am reliably informed that on several occasions when he secured jobs under other names, Bowen in each case phoned the factory superintendent telling who Nelson was, with the result that he was fired.

For a year after Nelson was driven from Bridgeport the Machinists' Union stood still, while hundreds of members dropped out in disgust.

Then Sam Lavit came to Bridgeport, went to work in the Remington Arms plant and began to build up Lodge No. 30. Lavit is not a revolutionist of the same type as Nelson, but he is a good Industrial Unionist with unusual abilities for building an organization. With a number of sensational organizing stunts he brought the membership of Lodge No. 30 up to several thousand, and as a result, he was elected Business Agent and the old gang headed by Bowen was ousted.

The workers in the shops in Bridgeport believe in Industrial Unionism. They have been disillusioned for years about the value of a Craft Union form of Labor organization. In fact Craft Union failures down a long stretch of years taught the workers of that city the bitter lesson of the futility of the type of Labor Union Mr. Gompers stands for.

It was only when the International Association of Machinists opened its doors to specialists and machine operators, and assumed a semi-industrial form of organization, that it became possible to appeal to the Bridgeport workers.

The Grand Lodge Autocrats.

At the same time a vigorous campaign within the

I. A. of M. against the autocracy of the Grand Lodge officials resulted in the election of the Socialist group headed by Johnston, who now control the organization. Lodge No. 30 was strong for Johnston in those days because they believed him to be a "radical." Today Johnston does not dare face an audience of Bridgeport workers.

It is a fact that most of the lodges of the I. A. of M. that are today in revolt against the Grand Lodge officials were strongest in their support when they were first put in office eight years ago. They have discovered since that the evil lies in the structural form of the organization, which permits the power to fall into the hands of a few officials, who are thus able to build a machine perpetuating themselves in power and defeating at every turn the will of the rank and file.

It is this condition that is contributing most to the crack that is widening in the A. F. of L.

The ousting of the local Johnston machine and the advanced Industrial Union attitude on the part of Lavit with the Bridgeport rank and file behind him, marked the movement there for discipline by the Grand Lodge officials. Several times Lavit was removed from office by Johnston, and always promptly put back by the rank and file of Lodge No. 30.

A year ago when the munition-workers' strike, to enforce decisions of the War Labor Board, tied up several big Bridgeport plants, Johnston came to Bridgeport; today the common talk of the town is that he "sold out" the workers, on that occasion, to the manufacturers.

The New Drive

The resentment following this strike, together with the general let-down in munition-manufacturing following the signing of the armistice, caused a considerable falling-off in the membership of Lodge No. 30.

During the spring Lavit began a new drive to build up the organization. On the other hand the manufacturers were insidiously working to get conditions in the shops back to a pre-war basis. The unrest began to make itself felt in the city.

Such was the background of the situation I found when I came to Bridgeport a month ago. The workers in half-a-dozen factories, to the number of about 12,000, were out on strike. Most of them had come out without organization or with very little organization, and appealed to Lavit to organize them. While he was meeting this situation with great energy and success, E. C. Davison, General Secretary-Treasurer of the I. A. of M., suddenly appeared in Bridgeport, declared the strike "illegal," ordered the strikers back to work and demanded that Lodge No. 30 discharge Lavit.

The Lodge refused, gave Lavit a vote of confidence and determined to go ahead with the strikes without Grand Lodge support. Davison then revoked the charter of Lodge No. 30, thus outlawing more than 3,000 members of the I. A. of M. The Lodge went on with the strikes, all of which with the exception of the Columbia Graphophone Company were soon settled favorably.

The Graphophone strike will become an historic in-

stance of strike-breaking by Union officials. Every move made by Davison since his uninvited appearance in Bridgeport has had the purpose of bludgeoning into submission to his authority the members of Lodge No. 30 and the striking workers of the Graphophone, numbering about 5,000.

Selling Out the Graphophone Strike.

A week before he appeared, the Graphophone company offered the strike committee under the leadership of Lavit, the 44 hour week, a 12½% increase of wages, and every minor demand the strikers were asking. The strikers voted to hold out for 25% increase. Then came Davison, the attack on Lavit began, and the company withdrew its offer and gave the strikers three days to get back to work under the conditions which had existed previous to the strike. Not a striker broke ranks, although Davison was filling the columns of the local press with attacks upon Lavit in an effort to discredit him.

The "Bolshevik bogey" is Davison's favorite line of attack, and they even went to the extent of having a photograph of a forged I.W.W. card, secured through collusion with the Department of Justice, published in the Bridgeport Times in an effort to discredit Lavit, Davison charging that he is an I. W. W. trying to destroy the I. A. of M. The Micrometer Lodge of Brooklyn is always referred to in Bridgeport, by Davison, as the Russian Soviet of Brooklyn, and Lavit is accused of being its Bridgeport agent.

Micrometer Lodge is one of the hundred or more lodges in the I. A. of M. that have already endorsed the call of Toledo Lodge for a referendum, to decide whether the I. A. of M. shall re-organize as One Big Union of the metal industry, which means secession from the A. F. of L.

The Graphophone Company next threatened to move their plant from Bridgeport, and then began a perfect barrage of newspaper attacks upon the strikers, while

the Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor, the manufacturers and the Grand Lodge officials of the I. A. of M. got together to drive the strikers back to work.

Lavit Framed.

All these efforts failed until a "frame-up" was put over on Lavit, in which the Mayor and police threatened to prosecute him on the charge of violating the Mann Act, kidnapped him when he attempted to address a meeting of strikers, sent a false message that Lavit advised the strikers to take a vote on going back to work, and "steam-rolled" the vote through, thus breaking the strike. Though there were 3,000 strikers in the hall, only 700 voted; the police counted the ballots and found four hundred voting to go back, to three hundred against.

No attempt has been made to carry through the "frame-up" to arrest Lavit under the Mann Act, the purpose apparently being merely to get the publicity and break the strike.

In the meantime Lodge No. 30 has appealed to the membership of the I. A. of M. for reinstatement, and Davison is going about the country spreading a poison of lies about the Bridgeport situation among the I. A. of M. lodges. The controversy has attained the proportions of a big nation-wide fight of the insurgents in the organization against the Grand Lodge officials, with the officials using all the power of a treasury with a million and a half dollars taken from the rank and file in per capita tax, and a force of about forty organizers, devoting their efforts to combat "Bolshevism" in the I. A. of M. instead of organizing the metal industry.

The outcome of the fight must inevitably be an advance to a new structural form for the organization, for it is clear to all the progressive elements of the rank and file that the mere ousting from office of Johnston, Davison and Co. will not solve the problem.

In Harrison Gray Otis' Town

LOS ANGELES is living through a novel period in its history. The latest developments indicate that instead of being known as the Scab Town, Los Angeles will rank, in the very near future, with such centers of Labor solidarity as the western cities north of Los Angeles. Many Trade Unionists are now indulging in such blasphemies as, for instance: "We are going to make a workingman's country out of this land," and "We are tired of hearing our city being called 'scab town'; we are going to make it a Union town." And again, "They (the corporations) got their bloody hands so far down our throat that pretty damn soon we won't be able to breathe without first biting them off." Such sentiments are being voiced right and left by the striking railwaymen, who demand that their wages be raised within bread-reaching point, and recognition of their Union.

The Mayor of the city of Los Angeles, Meredith P. Snyder, "Labor's choice" for office, for whom the A. F. of L. of this city campaigned and urged every Union man to vote for in the recent election, heard the cries for bread from his constituents, who placed him in a position to serve them. Following the threats of the corporations that they would break the strike,

the men refused to go back to work under the same conditions that forced them out. Urgent appeals came from the Chamber of Commerce and the M. & M. to the effect that they were losing thousands of dollars through the freight tie-up. The Steam road workers were joining the Street Railwaymen, and were tying up the southwest, and threatening to tie up all roads west of Chicago. Only then did the Mayor bestir himself, appointed a mediation board to get employers and employees to compromise their "trifling" differences. The Workingman's Mayor saw fit to appoint the following to serve on the mediation board. Please note how many workers were appointed by the Mayor to deal with the workers' affairs:

The "Impartial" Mediation Board.

Lacy—of the Lacy Mfg. Co. (Open-Shop advocate); Silverwood—of Silverwood & Co. (who has recently helped to break the Store Tailors' strike); Lewis—shirt manufacturer; Mrs. Knowles—a Liberal, who knows no more about Labor conditions than a chimpanzee knows about the "Origin of Species"; Bishop Cantwell—Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church, and Sett Brown—President of the Central Labor Council. This illustrious mediation board met

with the corporation representatives. Thus the working people in this city, and the strikers in particular, learned the value and the advantage to Organized Labor of having a man in office who was endorsed by the A. F. of L., and the strikers surely expressed their gratitude for the Mayor's service in their behalf in the following manner:

The mediation board failed absolutely in its efforts, as everyone anticipated. The Mayor's next step was to send out an announcement to the newspapers calling on the strikers to meet him in one of the most popular halls in the city, Blanchard Hall, where he would address them. The time for the meeting arrived, the Mayor and the presiding officer mounted the rostrum to face a large hall and empty chairs. The fleeting seconds dragged long and mercilessly weary. The ticking of the minutes were drawn-out hammerblows to the disappointed Mayor. The strikers failed to come and lend their ears to his grandiloquence. Only a few strangers came—perchance tourists, who wanted to take in all the scenery of Los Angeles while visiting the city, including the Mayor. Finally a worker stood up and apologized for the strikers' absence, because they were at their meeting halls and they simply refused to come and listen to the Mayor.

Mahomet Goes to the Mountain

Having failed to get the striking workers to come, the Mayor made up his mind to get before them anyway. While the meeting halls of the strikers were filled to the brim, and discussions were in progress, Bang—Bang—Bang goes the gavel, whose echo drowns the voices of the speakers. And Lo! Behold—the chairman announces the Mayor's presence. A murmur like an ocean billow swept through the surging audience. Another heavy blow of the gavel and silence deadened the throbbing commotion. The Mayor began his previously announced but unheard speech, asking the workers to find a common ground and adjust their differences with the companies in an amicable manner, in the meantime to go back to work. The Mayor finished his speech and disappeared, but the meaning of his speech and its intended message was forgotten before the Mayor stepped off the platform.

The strike was at its best with prospects for quick settlement in favor of the strikers when news was received that Mr. Whitney, Chief of the Brotherhood of Railroad Switchmen, is coming to town. Preparations by the Strike Committee were made to receive him and meetings were arranged. At the same time the inside pages of the capitalist press told the world how Mr. Day, a switchman, was shot by a deputy sheriff, while riding in an automobile with a co-worker, for which outrage no reason was given. When shot Mr. Day was taken to the hospital in an unconscious state. The Deputy Sheriff, by the name of Smuckler, was arrested and released under a \$1,000 bond, to continue his atrocities on peaceful striking workmen. When the bullet of that special guardian of "law and order" killed the worker, he was demanding bread for his wife and 5-year-old baby, and after it was fully established that the bullet would inflict by the assassin Smuckler caused the man's death, even then no move was made by the authorities, nor is being made, to prosecute him. He is still out on the original \$1,000 bond. Eugene W. Debs, who sponsored the cause of the working people, the oppressed and exploited, is in prison serving a ten-year

term for speaking the truth, and Smuckler, the cold-blooded murderer, who shot and killed a peaceful man, is free, enjoying his liberty.

Upon receiving the news of the death of their brother and fellow-worker, the striking Railroad and Street Car men went into mourning. Elaborate preparations were made for his funeral. A demonstration that would be record-breaking not only for Los Angeles, but would compel attention of the brutal master class, was planned. Over fifteen thousand Union men with their wives and children were to form in line, and about an equal number of sympathizers were to compose the marching line.

Sedition for Workers to Mourn Their Dead.

But here the strike-breakers got busy to break the strike, and at the same time stop the demonstration. The Los Angeles Times charged the railroad workers with sedition, and with the crime of "Sovietizing the country," which is treason, according to *The Times*; and urged the Government to act and act now. Mr. Whitney arrived and proceeded to address the strikers, ordering the men to go back to work immediately, and that they had no right to go out on strike. Mr. Whitney's speech so enraged the strikers that they advanced toward the platform. Suddenly the angered strikers who were advancing toward the Chief were driven back by sheriffs, who instantly surrounded him and saved his life. Then came the order from Washington ordering the Railroad men to return to work Saturday, August 30, at 7 A. M., or lose their jobs. Mr. Walton, U. S. Marshal, appeared the next day before the strikers, and told them to go back to work or he would put sheriff's stars on every Railroad worker on strike and order them to work; if they refused he would order the Federal troops and put them to work at the point of the bayonet. The workers were virtually placed in a position either to declare themselves in open revolt against the Government, or to go to work, and after long and bitter debate, they decided to take the latter step.

And thus the strike of the Steam-road men of Southern California was broken, and the men were forced to abandon the fight in behalf of themselves and their brothers, the Street Car men, who are still striking.

Every Defeat is a Victory.

Lenin said, "Every defeat is a victory." The men who were forced back to work know it, for they have learned among others these valuable lessons as a result of the strike:

First—The capitalist newspapers are their deadly enemies. They found out to their own satisfaction that everything that was printed in the capitalist press in regard to the strike was lie—lie—and more lie.

Second—That in Union there is strength, being organized in crafts at this stage of the game is a fallacy and a waste of energy. That only One Big Union can deal with organized capitalists.

Third—That their present National and International officers are not to be relied upon. They are worse obstructions to the Labor movement than the capitalists themselves. That instead of serving the workers, whom they actually are supposed to represent, the workers are being used by them as tools for their own and the capitalists' benefit. As far as Los Angeles is concerned, the time is nearly at hand for clear and clean-sweeping changes in the organized Labor movement. A move is already on foot to organize indus-

Seattle's Shop Steward Movement

By Walker C. Smith

WHILE the whole labor movement of Seattle appeared to have been torn with dissension over the question of industrial unionism, or the less clearly defined idea of One Big Union, a development along constructive though not so spectacular lines has proceeded beneath the turmoil. Advocates of the Shop Steward System have pushed their ideas to the front by addressing themselves directly to the workers in the unions.

Where shop stewards already exist the campaign has been to democratize them by instituting direct election from the rank and file, and to strengthen them by adding to their number so as to have each steward responsible for a smaller number of men. Where stewards have been merely for the purpose of collecting dues, seeing that no one in bad standing could work on a job, and taking applications for membership, there has been a strong effort to have these men take up and adjust the minor grievances of the workers in their respective shops. In all cases the advocates of the movement have emphasized the necessity for industrial unionism and for an understanding of Socialist economics.

All of this has involved various compromises and deviations from the Shop Steward System as it is theorized, but the issue has kept fairly clear on the most vital points. Election by the men themselves regardless of grades of skill in a shop, one steward to represent from 12 to 25 men and no more, adjustment of all grievances peculiar to a shop by action confined to that shop, frequent committee meetings of shop stewards within a plant or industry, and regular meetings of shop stewards of each craft throughout the city, have been the points emphasized.

A Real Shop Steward Movement

Perhaps the cleanest cut example of the Shop Steward System in Seattle is to be found in the Journeyman Tailors' Union. The reasons are plain. The movement has encountered no opposition from either International or local officials, the union has declared for and is striving toward industrial form, the local membership is nearly 100 per cent class conscious and is far above the average in intelligence, and the Shop Steward System was set down almost complete within the framework of the union, without the necessity of a compromise with any existing system of representation. Here is a sketch of the system as it exists now, a little more than three months since its introduction.

The union has a membership of about 1,000 distributed in 75 to 80 shops with from 5 to 40 workers employed in each shop. Every shop in the city is thoroughly organized. There is now one steward to each shop who represents alike the skilled, semi-skilled and apprentices, and who is elected by a joint meeting of all employees. In addition to this there is a general grievance committee composed of five stewards elected at the regular fortnightly meeting of all tailor shop stewards in the city.

The initial meetings for the election of shop stewards were called by the business agent of the union, who went to each shop and announced that on a certain

date every employee was to be present in the office of the union. At the meeting of each shop group the business agent explained the workings of the Shop Steward System, but beyond a recommendation that the shop steward be a person possessing both the ability and the courage to meet the foreman or employer on any issue that might arise, he took no part in the elections. Nearly one-fourth of tailors' shop stewards are women.

What a Shop Steward Does

Decision on any action to be taken is made by the workers, whereupon the shop steward must carry out their wishes or be subjected to immediate recall. Adjustment of local grievances within a shop, if not made at once, is taken up at a meeting directly after working hours, or in extreme cases by a meeting on the job. Failing of an adjustment, appeal is made to the grievance committee of five, by whose decision the foreman or employer must abide or face a walk-out; and should the aggrieved workers dissent they can appeal to the stewards as a whole or the Union direct.

In addition to adjusting grievances the duties of a shop steward are to see that all union regulations are complied with, to initiate new members in an emergency, or otherwise to present their applications to the earliest union meeting; and to collect dues. Stewards from the tailors receive the pay checks of the workers in each shop, and after examining them to see that there is no shortage they pass them to the workers whom they represent. By this means the steward makes sure the apprentices are paid according to grade, and the union is also able to enforce its rule that no more than four hours of overtime shall be worked in any one week.

Additional power has come to the tailors by reason of the Shop Steward System. After a worker has been employed for two weeks the employer cannot discharge him except by the joint consent of the grievance committee and the affected workers in a shop. Lay-off of workers on account of slack work is on terms approved by the workers in the shop, and the grievance committee, in accordance with union regulations. Seattle is now forcing a wage scale of \$44 for 44 hours, with double time for over-time and absolutely no work on Saturday afternoon, helpers to receive \$33 straight pay. The old scale was \$36 for an 8-hour day with helpers drawing wages ranging from \$20 to \$26. This scale will probably go into general effect upon the Pacific Coast, and the credit is largely due to the Shop Steward System and the revolutionary spirit of the Seattle tailors.

The Boilermakers

Nearly one-half of Seattle's union members are employed in the shipyards. The largest union in the yards is the Boilermakers. Inability to bring this union into line with the Shop Steward System has been the main stumbling block to the progress of the movement. Shop Stewards exist, but they are answerable to a chief steward and to autocratic union officials, and not to the rank and file, the latter regarding them as a species of private police acting for the distrusted officials. These stewards are known by the wearing of a star,

not by their name or because of their union activity on the job. No system exists in their selection; some being appointees of the chief steward, the business agent or other officials, some being approved in a general business meeting, but none being elected by the rank and file. Their dues are allowed by the union in return for their services as stewards.

Within the shops, however, the demand for systematization and democratization of the stewards is gaining ground. Recently in Duthie's shipyard there was a meeting of shop stewards from every craft, the first meeting of its kind to be held in a Seattle yard, and stewards from the boilermakers were present.

Spreading Fast

Steam and Marine Pipe Fitters have one steward to each shipyard in addition to a shop committee of five. These men are elected by the members on the job, or if appointed by the members of the committee or by the business agent, it is in default of action by the rank and file. One steward is elected on each job employing more than four men elsewhere throughout the city. This union has a membership of about 600, of whom 200 are employed by the Skinner & Eddy yard.

Both the Machinists' Union and the Shipyard Laborers, Riggers and Fasteners, are enthusiastic boosters for the Shop Steward System. In the latter union the assistant business agent has charge of the stewards, and makes arrangements for lectures on their duties and functions twice each month. Through the activity of these stewards the initial meeting of all stewards at Duthie's yard was called, and they are foremost in working out plans to co-ordinate all stewards in all of the yards. The majority of the stewards of both the unions mentioned are class conscious and are well versed in economics.

In the Longshoremen's union there are more students of the Shop Stewards System than in any organization; yet there are as yet no shop stewards, due to the fact that no effective plan has been evolved to care for the short time jobs of loading or unloading cargo. A voluntary committee is working on the matter at this time, and with the present temper of the membership, an almost unanimous adoption of any plan which will leave control of the stewards in the hands of the rank and file can be foretold with complete assurance. Abolition of the business agent by substitution of shop stewards is one of the problems the committee is asked to figure out.

How It Works

As a sample of provisions which are now being inserted in various union constitutions, the following from Inside Electrical Workers No. 46 is of interest:

Art. VIII, Sec. 1.—It shall be the duty of the first journeymen on the job to act as Steward until such time as there are five men or more on the job, when a vote must be taken to elect a Steward, which shall require a majority vote of the journeymen members on the job. The foreman to have no vote. No foreman or assistant foreman shall act as Steward.

"Sec. 2.—The Steward will be held responsible to the Executive Board and to the Local for the enforcement of the working rules and By-Laws."

Electrical worker stewards appoint assistants whenever there are so many workers on a job as to render it necessary, and they call in the business agent on any problem which they think is too large or too import-

ant to the entire union for the men on the one job to handle. The provision regarding votes of journeymen members is quite generally ignored, and helpers participate in the election of stewards. Weekly meetings are held of all shop stewards of this craft.

Propaganda

Ten thousand pamphlets on the Shop Steward System have been distributed in Seattle within the past six months. These have not been street sales. The pamphlets have gone directly into the union or have been quietly passed to workers in a shop prior to a call for the election of a steward. In addition to this there has been wide publication of articles dealing with the movement, and two men making the rounds of the unions delivering half-hour talks on the subject.

Having completed much of the preliminary propaganda work, a plan is now being mapped out whereby given yards will be called upon to elect stewards from the office employees, the various shops, the yard sweepers, etc., so as to affect a permanent organization of shop, department, yard and then finally of the entire industry in this district.

The death knell has sounded for craft unionism; the A. F. of L. belongs to the past. But that does not mean that the millions of members of the craft unions must be ignored, or that we must face the task of taking them one by one into the I. W. W. We know that a craft union crash is coming. When it comes we hope to have in the autonomous and more or less unofficial Shop Steward System a means of holding together the productive units, so that One Big Union will arise from the wreck of the autocratic A. F. of L.

From Kentucky

Louisville, Ky., August 25, 1919.

DEAR COMRADE:

I have just received your bundle of *The Voice of Labor* and I think that I can increase this order some time in the early part of September. We are organizing shop committees in every shop in this city that employs one or more of our Comrades, and if you continue to publish this paper we will make a special effort through these committees to secure a large sale for it.

The labor conditions are fine locally. At present the street cars of this city are tied up by strike that took place August 19th. The men went out 100 per cent organized and have stayed solid so far. Attempts to run the cars with strike-breakers has ended in riots in which both guns and bricks were used. Police have been placed on the cars, but the company claims that these policemen refused to protect the cars in some instances. Two local capitalist papers, the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*, who have been conspicuous for their hostility towards Labor, despatched two reporters to cover a meeting of the street railway men on the evening of August 18th; they were beaten up by policemen who favored the workers.

Twenty-five scabs were arrested yesterday for gambling. One scab was killed this morning while trying to operate a car, another was beaten up and will probably die. Three people were run over by a street car operated by a scab a few days ago and one has died. I am sorry to say that the local A. F. of L. labor fakirs are in charge of the strike and fear that they will try to sell out the strikers. Fourteen hundred men are out in this strike.

The city has just passed through a series of strikes. The bakers were out and are still out in some of the plants. The telephones were tied up by a strike of operators and linemen, but lost out through what is generally considered as treachery on the part of their leaders. Part of the men in the printing industry are out, but not enough to be effective; this is due to craft unionism. The organizing and strike fever has hit this town and I hope it has come to stay.

Fraternally yours,

E. B. AUSTIN, JR.

The Rising Tide in England

By E. Sylvia Pankhurst

(From the *Voice of Labor*, Dublin)

WE are now seeing in Britain a remarkable growth of unconscious revolutionary feeling amongst the masses. In many places the discharged soldiers seized the occasion of the Peace Celebrations to manifest their discontent by rioting; at Luton they even burned down the Town Hall. The discharged men have good reason for discontent. The majority are discharged without pension, and large numbers of them find it impossible to obtain employment, whilst many have left the Army with health greatly impaired. Men who are scheduled by the authorities as slightly disabled, and granted small pensions, on which it is impossible to exist, are often quite incapable of working.

The Police Strike and Unrest

The police strike is symptomatic of the great change coming over the spirit of the working class. That the men struck though they were warned that to strike would mean dismissal, and in spite of some sops in the direction of increased wages and pensions, is remarkable, and so is the fact that their strike took place suddenly and without warning. The sympathetic strike by the railway workers on the London & South-Western Railway is very important.

In this country the sympathetic strike weapon has hitherto seldom been used, though it has long been advocated. In the terrible Dublin strike of pre-war days the British workers were implored by their Irish comrades to use it, and its use would undoubtedly have achieved a sweeping victory for the workers, and have relieved conditions of most appalling sweating. But the appeal was disregarded, and the Irish strikers were beaten.

British trade union leaders are still firmly opposed to the sympathetic strike, and the mass of the rank and file have hitherto seemed incapable of nerving themselves to strike on any question not of primary importance to themselves.

Bakers all over the country are striking against night work. The Yorkshire miners, in spite of all negotiations, still remain on strike, and very significant is the fact that the men who pump water from the pits struck with the rest. This has never been the case in any previous trade dispute. It shows a disregard for the employers' property not hitherto shown. Members of the general public are manifesting great sympathy with the police strikers, and in some cases police on duty have been mobbed.

The Seething Pot

All this unrest, I must repeat, is in the main unconscious. The people who are defying authority have not realized, as yet, that they desire to change the system, but the fact that many of those who are striking or rioting have not formulated definite reformist demands shows that they are dissatisfied with the whole system, and have no faith in any particular panacea.

Meanwhile the gulf is growing between the official Labor leaders, both Parliamentary and trade union, and the rank and file. Mr. J. H. Thomas, M. P., Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, during the war opposed conscription and profiteering, and

retained popularity long after Henderson, Hodge, Barnes, and those who openly supported the policy of the Government, had lost it.

Thomas has now made the declaration in Parliament that he is prepared to support the Government in using the troops and all its resources against strikers whose action interferes with the public services, food supplies, and so on. He says that any Government must do that, and that he would do it himself were he Prime Minister.

In that utterance he clearly shows himself to be opposed to the social revolution. This is not the first time that he has made that clear, but on no previous occasion has he made a statement so certain to cause a cleavage between himself and the railway workers.

Imperialist Hopes

The Direct Action policy against Russian intervention is making headway. It will be remembered that the response made by British official Labor to the appeal of D'Aragona of Italy and the leaders of the French General Federation of Labor was an almost negative one: it was agreed to hold some meetings, but a general strike was tabooed by the leaders, though the Southport Conference, by a 2 to 1 majority, had declared for direct action to be used against intervention in Russia. Though the strike was not officially declared, the London District Committee of Dockers advised its members not to work on July 21st, and the appeal was responded to by a large section. Northampton, South Wales, and other places also made a good response, but largely the official ban had its effect.

Nevertheless, we feel considerable anxiety, as Churchill (War Minister) definitely told the British House of Commons, on July 29th, that the Government will continue to send munitions and supplies of all kinds to the counter revolutionaries in Russia, and as his statement that the British troops are being withdrawn from North Russia and the Caucasus has been made with so many reservations, and with so much vagueness, no reliance can be placed upon it.

Practically it comes to this: British troops will be withdrawn from Russia when the counter revolutionaries can do without them. That is Churchill's policy.

The French workers, whose general strike was called off by the leaders of the General Federation of Labor should note Churchill's statement that France "has a larger body of troops on the western frontier of Bolshevism than we have employed even at the present time in all the various theatres." He added: "The Japanese have a large army—a substantial army—the largest allied army concerned in Russian affairs, which is in Siberia, and is distributed along the Siberian railway. The Americans have a substantial force on the Siberian railway, and I observe from the daily papers that President Wilson, last week, informed the Senate that it was intended to keep it there."

The report that the British Revolutionary Socialists have to make regarding our country is that, though things are moving very slowly here, they are definitely moving, and that Lenin is right when he says that the revolutionary virus has already reached this country.

My Own Shop

Life on the Rolling Wave

By Tim—

THE propaganda spread through this country at the time when every drug-store was a recruiting station for the glorious Merchant Marine, has been soaked up by thousands of people who read the literature. According to the little books the Government gave out, the life of a fireman on a merchant ship was like seeing the world as a passenger—free. Little did the recruit realize that the only view of the world he'd get was through a port-hole, and he'd push a shovel in front of him on his travels. Not a little of the misrepresentation which lured men to the slavery of the stoke-hole was due to the officials of the Seamen's Union who signed the romantic pamphlet entitled, "The Call of the Sea."

But perhaps these officials honestly believe in these glowing-descriptions of life in a coal-bunker. It's a long time since some of them have been in the bowels of a ship—and anyway, don't they believe devoutly that the La Follette Seamen's Act solves every sailor's problem, heals every wound, has made the seaman's existence one long holiday?

The Seamen's Emancipation Act

The Seamen's Emancipation Act, they call it! What doesn't it promise? A seaman can't be punished for desertion; he must be paid some ready money every five days while in port, so he won't fall victim to the "crimps." Any seaman, of any ship which enters an American port, can at once demand half of the wages due him, and if refused can collect it all. Also no matter his nationality, he can quit and go ashore without fear of arrest.

The International officials will reel it off to you. "Why," they'll say, "we spent twenty years (and several hundred thousand dollars of your money) lobbying members of Congress to get this through."

But what actually happens under the Seamen's Act? True, a seaman can't be arrested for deserting ship, but he loses his money and his clothes if he does. Besides, all ships sign on official Government articles, and those of the United States are no different from the articles of other nations. A seaman signs a clause that he shall only go ashore with the master's permission—if he violates this, he loses two days' pay. In other words, he's "logged." A seaman is "logged" for nothing. For instance, if he happens to be at sea, or in a foreign port, and the master orders him to do something which is not in the articles, and he refuses, it's two or three or five days' pay. The seaman can't kick. As for the provision about money every five days while in port, this is refused quite regularly. It is the usual thing to single out a man who has not been sufficiently docile, or who has shown signs of rebelliousness, and refuse to give him any money, while his shipmates go ashore. Remember, too, this is his money—he has earned it. If he wants to, of course, he can demand half his money and quit the ship; but no seaman wants to do that in a foreign country, where he doesn't know the language.

Where Foreign Seamen Get Off

But, they say, anyway foreign seamen coming here are free men. But suppose a foreign seaman in an American port demands shore leave, and quotes the La Follette Act?

In the first place, he has signed articles which say that he can't go ashore without the captain's permission; in the second, if a number insist, the captain pulls the ship out in the harbor, and the seamen can either swim ashore or make signs to a lawyer to sue out a writ of habeas corpus. But even if they get ashore, the Seamen's Act won't help them much. According to maritime law in other countries, a man can draw an advance of half a month's wages when he has been a certain time at sea; now, according to the Seamen's Act, he is entitled to the remainder. Suppose he has been a month at sea; he'll have \$30 coming to him, and ought to be able to demand half of it. But the American courts declare legal, advances in other countries, so he can't get any of his money. Same old position as when there was no Emancipation Act—the seaman's economic necessity keeps him tied, a slave, to his ship, and the Seaman's Act is merely good reading on lonely nights.

A Scrap of Paper

All that the seamen were supposed to get, after years of lobbying in Washington, is just a scrap of paper. The boast about American seamen working under the best conditions of any seamen in the world, still leaves us sweating in the bowels of the ships as firemen and coal-passers, wondering whether the truth is completely ignored, or whether we are being deliberately bulldozed.

A great company running ships out of New York harbor has a "floating palace" which is either subsidized or directly under control of the Government. In this passenger boat, the seamen have no mess-room, but their mess-table is in an alley, four feet wide, down on the 'tween-decks, through which the ship is loaded and unloaded, and also coaled. There are no seats; the men stand when they eat; like horses in a stall, jostled by the longshoremen hurrying past, with the stench of the ship's toilets under their noses.

From the capitalist's point of view the worker has only one function—to work. At sea practically all the seamen's time is spent at work. On nine-tenths of the ships sailing out of New York today—especially the passenger boats—the conditions under which the firemen perform their functions as human beings are simply revolting. Some of their fore-castles have got the Black Hole of Calcutta completely out-classed—swarming with vermin, airless and stinking.

Stand Together on the Dock

There is one way to alter these conditions, and only one. When the men withhold their labor-power; when they refuse to sign, and one and all stand united on the dock—then the shipowners drop their academic phraseology. They quit repeating that this ship was built in the year so-and-so, and consequently doesn't come under the Seamen's Act. When you are on the dock, then they begin to talk English, and ask you if you can work or not. You say that you can under decent conditions, and he'd better get busy and take a little physical exercise. And if he very much wants to go to sea just then, he will!

Solidarity, from the top to the bottom of the ship. Make every ship a regiment of fighters, shoulder to shoulder, sticking by each other. Then you can get what you want!