

the White Terror of their government by attempting to escape to America.

"The annual enrollment of all aliens as long as they remain aliens." The enrollment annually here referred to is plainly the registration carried on annually, under the provision here proposed by Secretary Davis, and whenever the authorities come to the conclusion that the activities of a foreign-born worker are detrimental to the capitalist interest of the country they can refuse to register him as a desirable alien and deport him from the country. This enrollment or registration can become a powerful weapon in labor dis-

putes, against the workers. Through the issuing of an injunction, for example, a strike may be declared illegal and foreign-born workers who must register in order to prove their loyalty and good behavior, can under the threat of deportation be forced back to work.

This campaign against the foreign-born workers and against the immigrants coming to this country is full of dangers to the American Labor movement. It is absolutely necessary that all labor unions and all foreign-born workers' organizations join hands in a fight against this proposed abominable campaign.

Reaction in the Needle Trades

By J. W. Johnstone

IT is in the clothing industry that we see the first real battle between the ever-growing left wing of the American labor movement and the bureaucratic officialdom. This struggle is of vital interest to every militant unionist, and should be carefully studied, because it is one that will be repeated again and again in the other unions and industries as the conditions develop. We all have a great deal to learn from this fight, which is not only a part of a general national situation covering all the unions, but is also part of an international struggle. It is the product of the sharpening class struggle.

The first group of reactionaries to organize a fight against the left wing was the officialdom of the Furriers' Union. Because most of the members of that Union are in New York the struggle was mainly carried on there. The issue involved was, class collaboration vs. class struggle. The members of the union were ready to fight for a better agreement, but the reactionaries led by Kaufman, international president, were willing to sign a defeatist agreement, purchasing co-operation with the employers at the expense of the workers' standards of living. The members wanted to have some control of employment, but Kaufman wanted to give that control exclusively to the employers. The resulting fight is a revolt of the rank and file led by the left wing, against the officials who shamelessly deserted them and went over to the employers.

"White Terror" in the Furriers

The rank and file, accepting the leadership of the left-wing militants in this fight, were determined to elect them to the offices of the union in the place of those who had deserted to the bosses. Following the classical tactics of the yellow Amsterdam International, the Kaufman machine removed from the ballot all candidates whom they considered were opposed to them. The reaction-

aries further disfranchised many members who had developed leadership in the local unions. By these means Kaufman has kept control of the official machinery.

This had the effect of swinging the membership over to the left wing more solidly than ever. Kaufman then started a reign of terror. A favorite method of his was to go to a union meeting, surrounded by gunmen, pick out one or two



BENJAMIN GOLD

In hospital after being assaulted by reactionaries in Furriers' Union

left-wingers and have them beaten up. At a meeting of Local 15, held on Dec. 19th, Benjamin Gold, Fannie Warshafsky, and Lena Greenburg, were assaulted and terrifically beaten at the instigation of Kaufman. The gang of sluggers was led by the chairman of the local, accompanied by the chairman of the Joint Board and an International organizer, while Kaufman looked on with approval.

Gold was stabbed and beaten, and left in a serious condition from which he has not yet recovered. But not satisfied with nearly killing him, the gunmen and stool-pigeons, through their unsavory political allies, had Gold arrested and tried to railroad him to the penitentiary—presumably upon the theory, if theory were needed, that he had assaulted himself. This effort was supported, as have been all the drives against the left, by the *Jewish Daily Forward*. The workers were so enraged that, on Dec. 27th, they staged a mass protest in front of the offices of the *Forward* against gunman rule in the unions and against the gunman supporters.

The demonstrators marched from the courtroom where Gold had been released, to the *Forward* office, carrying great signs reading: "We protest against gunman rule in the union," "We demand a better agreement," "Kaufman co-operates with the bosses and breaks the workers' heads," "The *Forward* defends the sluggers," and others. The demonstration showed the *Forward* to the workers as their enemy. Whenever anything exceptionally crooked and dirty is going on in the unions the *Forward* will be found defending it, just as in Chicago recently it carried Milk Trust advertisements against the striking farmers. The workers will continue their exposures, and more demonstrations like this one should take place.

Sigman-Perlstein in Vaudeville

In the local elections in Chicago and elsewhere, the reactionary bureaucrats are demonstrating their arrogant contempt for the membership by turning union meetings and examinations of candidates into vaudeville shows. Arrogating to themselves the power of striking off any names from the ballots that do not please them, the cynical reactionaries have abolished all rules of election but their own sweet will.

Perlstein made the examination of candidates in Chicago the occasion of a private vaudeville show of his own. Into the examining-room, crowded with minor officials, candidates, and interested members, comes this little watery-eyed, foxy tool of the crafty Abe Cahan, cock of his own dung-hill, and delivers a bombastic speech. He cites himself for bravery, and decorates himself as protector of the union, threatening punish-

ment to all who refuse to lick his boots. Then the "examination" is started.

The first victim is brought in. He is a conservative, an old member known to all the cloak-makers, and an ex-business agent. But he is opposed to Perlstein. "When was the first union in the world organized?" Perlstein asks. "I don't know and don't give a damn," is the reply. "What is the psychological difference between the I. W. W. and the A. F. of L.?" "What! You are not interested and yet you expect to be business agent?" "Bring in the stenographer and have this man dictate a letter to an employer." "'Gentlemen'!—don't you know that it should begin with 'Dear Sir'?" You are not fit to be business agent. Take his name off the ballot. Bring in the next one." This is a sample of the travesty enacted in examining candidates for office. With only a coarse jest as pretext, all names that are not approved by Perlstein are removed from the ballot. To be doubly sure of electing "machine" men, the ballot boxes are stuffed. The same thing goes on all over the country. Elections are dead in the I. L. G. W. U.

Weakening the Union

Perlstein came to Chicago a few months ago ostensibly to lead an organization drive. What he has accomplished, and his work sets the pace for other parts of the country, is to completely disorganize the union. He has spent some \$50,000. of the local funds, not in an organization campaign but to fight the progressives. Instead of taking in new members he has wasted the money of the union in expelling some of its oldest members.

The union is at the lowest ebb of its career. It is in a dangerously weak position as the result of the smashing tactics of the officials. At a time when the officials should be leading a great organizational drive, they have been systematically driving the membership out of the union. Instead of efforts to strengthen the hold of the union upon the industry, they display a clownish disregard for the men and women who pay their salaries.

In Philadelphia, where Sigman had revoked all local union charters and reorganized under control of his appointees further trouble is brewing on account of the Czaristic rule. Less than one-fourth of the former membership has re-registered in spite of the strong advice to do so from even the left wing elements, because the resentment against the officials is so strong. In the reorganized locals, hand-picked by Sigman's agents, a new left wing has already crystallized. The local unions just "reorganized" are now again put under the control of reactionary "commissars" for the coming elections. The General Executive Board, meeting in Philadelphia,

has just voted to give Sigman full power to rule anyone off the ballots if he so desires.

Another move, part of the general campaign directed by Abe Cahan and the *Forward* gang, was made against the left when the New York Board of the Fancy Leather Goods Workers decided to suspend all members who have been, or are, or have intention of becoming, members of the Trade Union Educational League. This is a small union with a membership of about 4,000, in which the progressive elements are quite strong. It is exceedingly bad for the union to have this struggle precipitated by the reactionaries, but the left wing will gain strength under the attack because the membership will rally to its support.

In Men's Clothing Industry

While the reaction has been strengthening itself throughout the needle trades, still in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers we find an entirely different situation. In that union there are three distinct tendencies, right, left, and center. The administration occupies the center position. There is no fight such as exists in the Furriers and the I. L. G. W. In fact in some instances the left wing finds itself lining up with the center in opposition to the right-wing faction. This was the case in the recent elections in Chicago.

The co-operation between left and center was not entirely harmonious; neither was it carried out completely by the administration group. Nor was the left wing greatly strengthened by the co-operation in the election. The main purpose of the agreement was to prevent the right wing from increasing its hold, as it might easily have done if three distinct slates had been in the election. The left wing did not submerge any principles, nor give up the right of criticism or opposition to the administration on issues. It was an agreement of expediency, and to some degree was successful. It has strengthened the Amalgamated very much in the face of the threatened struggles, and is a lesson in good judgment that might well be followed by the officials of the other needle trades unions if they were not so blind or careless of the welfare of their membership.

The Amalgamated is not, however, one happy, contented little family. There are fundamental differences in policy between the left wing and the other groups. The administration is under well-deserved criticism from the left for the dangerous situation in New York, where the manufacturers are cutting material and sending it out to small towns to be finished under non-union conditions. The administration has not been on the job to remedy this menacing situation. The left has not failed to bitterly criticize the choice of Wolf as manager of the Joint Board in New York. Wolf has not the support of the membership. He left the organization to go into business for himself. Now he is called by the administration to be the manager of the union. This is worse than poor judgment. The union is not a business man's club where one can come and go at pleasure. Further, a man who but yesterday was an exploiter himself cannot lead a militant struggle against the employers. The administration is receiving the severest kind of criticism for the return of Wolf, and deserves all of it. This criticism, however, does not break the solid front that all members are putting up in the present struggle. The right, left, and center are a solid unit against the employers.

A National Conference

In order to take stock of the situation throughout the United States and Canada, and to further consolidate the progressive and left-wing forces, a national conference of the Needle Trades Section of the Trade Union Educational League has been called in New York on February 9-10. Coming at a time when the attacks of the treacherous reactionaries are most bitter, when the employers are preparing a greater offensive against the unions than ever before, when the economic conditions are becoming menacing, this national conference of the needle trades militants is of more than ordinary importance. Every organized group of progressive workers should be well represented in the conference. Out of it the militants will come with a clarified program and renewed strength for their struggle in the interests of the exploited clothing workers.

Bill Dunne's Speech at Portland

In response to the hundreds of calls for this speech in a more permanent form, the Trade Union Educational League has published it as a pamphlet. It is the most effective kind of educational work to distribute this widely among union men. Every live-wire will want to read it and pass it on. It should receive the widest circulation throughout the country.

16 pages, paper cover.
5c per copy, single copies.
3½c per copy, bundles of 50 or more.

THE TRADE UNION EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE

106 No. La Salle Street.

Chicago, Illinois