

# THE MILITANT

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

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## Unite For the Unemployed! Resist Attack of Bosses and Government

The activity of the Communists and Left wing in presenting the facts about the unemployment crisis in the United States and in making demands upon the bosses and the government for work or compensation for the unemployed workers, have drawn the fire and wrath of the capitalist class and various governmental agencies upon the Communists. Hoover and Wall Street, Tammany Hall and Whalen, Mathew Woll and Secretary of Labor Davis, et al, are endeavoring to screen the acute misery of millions of unemployed workers by raising the cry of "RED" around the burning issue of unemployment.

Close upon the heels of the unemployment demonstrations on March 6th, a vicious campaign against the radical groups, particularly focusing upon the Communists has begun. For the moment it takes its most violent and vicious form in New York City under the leadership of Commissioner of Police Whalen and his official thugs, promptly endorsed by Mayor James Walker and the business men of the city. This campaign against the Communists is taking numerous forms. Among these are:

### The Proposed Frameups and Police Brutality

1. The arrest of Communist leaders and an endeavor to railroad them to prison for their activity among the unemployed. Every known obstacle was utilized to prevent the release on bail of the New York arrested. Only after repeated efforts and after exorbitant bail (\$12,500 each) had been placed, were they released, to stand trial on charges of felonious assault and provoking an unlawful assembly at the March 6th Union Square demonstration in New York City. The outcome of the New York trials will to an extent determine the scale of repression and terror against the Communist movement and labor in general in other sections of the country. But already in many parts of the country efforts are made to railroad the Communists.

2. A wave of terror, brutality and provocation against the radicals and Communists and any rising militancy by the workers. Every form of weapon—club and blackjack, gun and horses, machine guns and tear gas—is either brought into play or held ready for use against the unemployed and those leading the struggle on their behalf. Almost every capitalist paper in the country reports the extremes to which the loud-mouthed Whalen and others like him went in their brutality against men, women and children gathered at the unemployment meetings and demonstrations.

### The Labor Spy and Blacklist of Militants

3. The method of OPEN LABOR SPYING and BLACKLISTING on behalf of the employers by police and other governmental agents, thus plainly showing that government and law are instruments of the capitalist class. Police Commissioner Whalen of New York has declared that he has turned over the names of alleged Communists to employers that they may be dismissed and deprived of a livelihood because of the opinions they hold; and that he favors and will pursue such a blacklisting policy in the future. Whalen admits that he maintains stool-pigeons in radical organizations, particularly among the Communists, to frame evidence against the radicals; and that, further, he instructs the stool-pigeons to provoke violence and

riots. He thereby admits responsibility for the trouble and brutality at the Union Square demonstration. What Whalen boasts about (until such time as the business men and higher-ups told him to be more discreet) is also done more quietly by police, Federal men, etc. throughout the country. The use of the Labor Spy

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### Heavy Unemployment Among Clothing Workers

NEW YORK—Unemployment has sharply affected the members in the clothing industry, according to reports of officials of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. The busy season, which usually starts about November 15th in the bigger shops, has failed to absorb thousands of union members. It is estimated that 5 to 10% of the union membership is totally unemployed during the present season, which will end about May 1; that another 20% have been able to get in only two to six weeks' work; and another 30% have had only part time employment, three days out of five. Half of the New York membership has been totally or partially unemployed during the season.

## The Aberle Mill Strike in Philly

by M. K. Whitten

The greatest labor demonstration in this city since the Battle of Broad Street in 1910 between the police and thousands of striking street car men, took place on March 9th, when a crowd estimated by the capitalist papers at 35,000, met at the open air funeral of Carl Mackley, 23 year old textile worker of Kensington. In McPherson Square, in the heart of that great working class district, this vast crowd gathered to pay its last respects to the murdered strike picket. His death occurred on March 6th when he was shot by a strikebreaker employed in the Aberle Mill, where a strike involving more than a thousand workers has been stubbornly fought for over a month. Despite the vicious injunction issued by Judge McDevitt, which prohibited more than 4 pickets, despite the utmost brutality of the police who arrested persons living in the neighborhood, merely for being on their own steps when ordered to go indoors, and who have even stopped school children from passing the mill, the strike has been fought with all the vigor and courage that the workers of Kensington are noted for.

Since the demonstration before the bier of Carl Mackley, the striking workers have maintained their militant fighting spirit. Within a week another shooting has taken place. A strikebreaker, Peter Marpone, fired three times into a crowd about his home to protest his scabbing. Fourteen persons were wounded.

### Militancy of Strikers Outstanding

Fighting took place also at the Rogers Hosiery Mill in Germantown where nearly a hundred strikers, half of them girls, were arrested. The Rogers strike is called in sympathy with the Aberle strike. The Aberle Mill textile strike is led by the A. F. of L. The militancy of the strikers has had the A. F. of L. officials worried. The bureaucrats are cooperating with the politicians in every way to get the strike

## The Springfield and Indianapolis Miners Conventions

The deep crisis in the Miners Union, for years the backbone of the organized labor movement in America, was dramatized during the past week by the simultaneous holding of two conventions. One convention met in Indianapolis under the chairmanship of John L. Lewis and put the stamp of approval on his reactionary policy. The other convention met in Springfield, Ill., with Alex Howat of Kansas presiding. The Springfield convention which represented a bloc between the Illinois organization, controlled by Fishwick, the Howat-Brophy Progressive group and the long-dormant Socialist elements, proclaimed the formal split with the Lewis organization on a national scale and announced itself as the "reorganized" U. M. W. of A.

About one thousand delegates attended the Lewis convention at Indianapolis. Of these the only solid bloc came from the anthracite, the great majority of the bituminous "delegates" being payroll agents representing defunct local unions in the disrupted districts. The bulk of the soft coal miners who retain organization in the U. M. W. of A. were represented at Springfield. 475 delegates attended this convention. Of these, Illinois, the largest remaining

district organization of the U. M. W. of A. sent 313 delegates. The Kansas district, which broke from the Lewis organization in a body, sent 45, Ohio 28, Arkansas 19, Oklahoma 15, Iowa 13, Pennsylvania 7, Indiana 6, Missouri 5, Wyoming 3, and Kentucky 1.

The Springfield convention concluded its sessions Saturday, March 15, with the election of National Officers for the "reorganized U. M. W. of A." Alex Howat, famous leader of the Kansas miners, was elected President by acclamation. Adolph Germer, former national secretary of the Socialist party and prior to that a National Executive Board member of the U. M. W. of A., was elected vice-president, defeating Powers Hapgood. John H. Walker, president of the Illinois Federation of Labor, was elected secretary-treasurer. The Indianapolis convention adjourned its sessions over the week-end awaiting the address of President Green of the A. F. of L. scheduled for Monday. The appearance of Green at this convention indicates the decision of the A. F. of L. Executive Council to support the Lewis faction against the Springfield insurgent body.

### Split in Miners Deepens

The holding of the rival conventions and the actions taken by them have the effect of deepening and confirming the split which has been long brewing in the miners' organization and reduce the prospects of an early re-unification to the minimum. The action of the Springfield convention in appealing to Green to call a "unity" convention under A. F. of L. auspices is construed as a diplomatic gesture to aid the fight of the new union for A. F. of L. support. The Lewis convention declared war on the Springfield gathering and demanded action of the A. F. of L. against its participants. The events of the week are the undoubted prelude to a long-drawn-out struggle between the two organizations for supremacy in which court action, appeals to the A. F. of L. and open battle in the coal fields will all be resorted to. A duplication of the historic United Garment Workers-Amalgamated Clothing Workers contest is to be anticipated in its many aspects.

The depth of the rank and file revolt against corruption and reactionary leadership in the United Mine Workers, despite the absence of the Communist Left wing which is split off in the National Miners Union, was graphically revealed at Springfield. This revolt is directed against the Fishwick-Farrington machine as well as against Lewis. It rose like a tornado on the very first day of the Springfield convention, sweeping Fishwick out of the chair and installing Howat in his place and sending the credentials of Farrington back to the credentials committee after a savage attack on him from the floor led by Brophy and the Progressive bloc. It was further shown in the bitter and angry assault on the Illinois officials, whose policies and actions have been in no way different from those of Lewis, as "crooks and cheaters", which accompanied the demand for their removal; in the inability to hold the entire Illinois delegation in line for the seating of Farrington; in a number of progressive amendments to the constitution, and in various other proposals which got the support of a majority or of a strong minority of the convention.

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"arbitrated". The mayor has appointed an "impartial arbitrator" and is endeavoring to settle the matter. At the time of this writing, the Aberle Mill bosses had agreed to arbitration which will no doubt result in a sellout of these militant strikers.

The demonstration at the funeral of Mackley was handled very gingerly by the authorities. They realize the possibilities of what might happen if the thousands of unemployed desperate workers in that district become aroused. The A. F. of L. bureaucrats have all the while acted their usual role of lightning rods to divert the wrath and militancy of the workers. Yet the significance of this tremendous gathering, as well as the continued fighting spirit of the strikers, is a lesson that should be of great value to class conscious workers and to Communists.

Kensington is the very heart of in-

(Continued on Page 6)

### Monarchist Spain Refuses Entry to Trotsky

Monarchist Spain has added itself to the list of capitalist states that refuses admission to L. D. Trotsky for necessary medical attention. So Trotsky, exiled by the bureaucrat Stalin, remains at Constantinople, where thousands of Russian White Guards infest the city and are a constant menace to the life of Trotsky.

The imperialist powers and the Stalinist bureaucracy alike reject Trotsky, the organizer and leader of the Red Army, the leader of the victorious Petrograd Soviet and Lenin's comrade and co-worker. The workers of the world will yet seal their condemnation of Stalin and his bureaucracy that persecute, imprison and even shoot the Opposition, the Bolshevik-Leninists, the standard bearers of the international proletarian revolution

## Business Men Jeer COLD COMFORT FOR WORKERS IN Parade of Jobless

SAN FRANCISCO—(FP)—About 250 jobless workers, augmented at the City Hall by a crowd of several thousand, have marched again to demand "work or wages" from the city authorities of San Francisco. Once more they were fobbed off by vague promises of municipal work when \$5,000,000 city bonds are sold.

It was a pitiful procession, nearly all men in overalls and worn working clothes, one man on crutches, a handful of women, one with a baby in her arms. As they trudged down Market St., preceded and followed by a row of mounted police, well dressed people on the sidewalk jeered and booed at them.

The workless, headed by Harold Harvey, demanded unemployment insurance, emergency relief, a 7-hour day and 5-day week, no overtime so that jobless men could have a chance, no eviction for non-payment of rent, abolition of the vagrancy law. The supervisors met them on the city hall steps, and the mayor made another ingratiating speech which did not sit well with the workers. "We didn't expect anything when we came here," said Harvey, "and we are not disappointed. When we come again it will be to take what rightfully belongs to us. We don't want sympathy; we want relief."

Saidichi Kenmotsu, arrested Dec. 14, has been ordered deported to Japan as a Communist. He is out on \$3,000 bond and will appeal to the federal court. Four other radicals are held in San Francisco for deportation, three Russians and a Greek.

As an indication of the unemployment situation in San Francisco, a recent statement made in a private conversation by an official of the Industrial Assn. is significant. The association, father of the "American plan" in central California, conducts an employment agency for skilled workers, particularly in the building trades—non-union men, but still workers. Normally about 500 apply every month, and are placed anywhere in the west where jobs are open. Last month 1,500 applied, and just 18 men were given jobs.

### DESTITUTION PALL OVER NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA

PHILADELPHIA—Destitution is wide spread in northeast Philadelphia, seat of the city's textile industry. More than 2,500 are on strike against wage reductions in hosiery and carpet mills. Welfare associations are unable to cope with demands for relief and appeals are being made for private charity, but the big dailies refuse to notice the situation.

CHESTER, Pa.—Two workers, Ray Peltz and Charles Holmes, have been charged with sedition as the result of speeches they made to the unemployed before the Ford plant gates in Chester. George Carter, a Gastonia defendant, was given 10 days in jail for speaking to the Ford job-hunters.

Cold comfort is held out to the nation's millions of underpaid and unemployed workers by the yearly report just issued of the Provident Loan Society. After announcing 498,537 loans made last year, the amount of which, \$44,032,832, "was greater than in any previous year," the report predicts "another year of increased activity and usefulness". Apparently the society, which makes its money out of the want of the workers, does not look forward to any improvement in employment or wage rates.

Incidentally the report throws light on the enormous profits made in the money-lending game, even when on a "respectable" and legitimate basis. Nicknamed the "Philanthropic Pawnshop", the Provident Loan Society was organized in 1894 to lend money to needy persons at no "greater rate than 1% per month or fraction thereof", or 12% a year. The supposed legal rate of interest in New York state is 6% annually, but this does not apply to pawnbrokers.

#### Big Profits for Loan Sharks

The 12% per year which the society charges the unfortunates who come to it for loans resulted last year in net "earnings" of nearly \$2,275,000. Of this amount, nearly \$1,000,000,000 went to pay 6% interest to the holders of nearly \$20,000,000 worth of gilt-edged "certificates of contribution", which are practically bonds on the misery of the borrowers. "It is also interesting to note," states the society, "that over \$6,000,000 of the outstanding certificates of contribution are held by 120 educational, religious, charitable and philanthropic institutions".

In its 35 years of business the "Philanthropic Pawnshop" has grown from one rent-free room on the ground floor of the United Charities Building, to 15 offices, 13 of them in buildings owned by itself. From 20,804 loans in its first full year of operation, it has increased to 498,537 in 1929. In the whole 35 years it has made 11,253,932 loans, totaling \$599,271,213. "Earnings" on these loans amounted to \$26,988,036. In addition to paying regular interest to certificate holders, a handsome surplus of \$10,626,071 has been accumulated, of which nearly \$2,000,000 is invested in real estate.

#### Reveals Workers Extreme Poverty

As in any pawnshop, would-be borrowers are compelled to leave "pledges" in the form of clothing, furniture, watches, or other goods that can be sold if the loan is not repaid. Increasing hard times are shown in the rise in number of cases where the pledges are sold at auction, from less than 1% in 1927 to slightly over 1% in 1928 and 1929. The same trend is shown by the drop in surplus realized for borrowers in these sales from \$85,000 three years ago to only \$70,000 last year, while losses from sales falling on the society went up from \$20,000 to \$35,000 in the same time.

One appalling feature of the society's

report is the smallness of the sums, lack of which drives workers into the arms of the pawnshop fraternity. Of the nearly 500,000 loans made last year, almost 18,000 were for \$1 to \$4; 38,000 were for \$5 to \$9; 46,000 were for \$10 to \$14; about 35,000 were for \$15 to \$19; and nearly as many were for \$20 to \$24. Fifty-three per cent of all loans were for \$49 and under.

A final touch of grim humor is added to the society's report by the announcement that among its "ex-officio members" are Mayor Walker and Police Commissioner Whalen of New York, who sent police armed with tear-gas and machine guns to break up demonstrations of the city's unemployed.

### PITTSBURG PAPERS INCOMPLETE ON WESTINGHOUSE RECORDS

PITTSBURG—Westinghouse broke all records in sales billed, orders booked and earnings in 1929, was the glad news in the financial columns of the Pittsburgh papers. Profits were \$27,062,611, equivalent to a dividend of \$10.15 a share.

Other Westinghouse records broken during the year, which the Pittsburgh press did not see fit to print, include: Record uncertainty of employment; record wage cuts, and record speed-up.

### N. Y. STATE JOB FIGURES CONTINUE DECLINE

NEW YORK—Despite every effort of Pres. Hoover and Sec. Davis to pump life into the Hoover prosperity corpse, the figures continue to give them the lie. Employment is still on the downgrade in New York state, according to the state labor department. The index number of employment in Empire State factories—a reliable barometer of industrial activity—slumped 5%, contrary to the usual seasonal gain of 1% between January and February. In only two other years since 1914 have factories cut forces in this period—in 1919 and 1920.

The decline since November has pulled employment down 9% from the fall peak, announces Comm. Frances Perkins so that February was lower than any other February since 1914. The index of employment now stands at 92.1 compared with 100 for 1925-27.

### SAYS MUSIC WASTED ON FUTURE WAGE SLAVES

MONESSEN, Pa.—(FP)—This suburb of Pittsburgh and fief of the steel trust through its subsidiary, the American Steel Wire Co. will no longer waste its taxes on providing an acquaintance with art and music for children designed to be mere wage slaves.

Presumably under pressure of the American Steel Wire, the school board has installed an efficiency expert who has promptly fired 26 teachers as an economy measure and eliminated the art and music training meagerly granted in the public school system. These subjects have no "practical" value, he explained.

In protest the school superintendent has resigned. This school district has a rule that no teacher is allowed pay during sickness unless she reports to a physician.

WORKERS HELP JOBLESS  
LOS ANGELES—Two hundred jobless union printers were given work when members of Typographical Local 174 voted to give up one day's work every two weeks. The 200 will get in four days each week, according to Pres. John Dalton.

ALBANY, N. Y.—A new threat to the already crippled 48-hour law for women is offered by the Miller Bill providing for the 5-day, 10-hour shift. Under various exemptions, women can now be worked 49 1-2 hours a week in New York state on the 9-hour basis.

### RAIL CLERKS ASK SIX HOUR DAY IN NEW PACT

CHICAGO—Workers on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois, represented by the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, are demanding a 6-hour day in the new agreement to follow the one that expired March 14. They also demand eight hours pay for six hours work and in addition want an increase of 8 cents an hour on the 8-hour basis. The largest classification of workers now get \$7 for eight hours, according to system chairman J. J. Hallihan of the Brotherhood.

SEATTLE—One unemployed demonstrator was given 60 days in jail, 32 were fined and three released when cases arising from the March demonstration were heard in court.

### Where To Buy The Militant

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# Unite for the Unemployed!

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by the employers is well known; now it is openly acknowledged and permitted that this be done "legally".

## The Drive Against the Foreign Born

4. The revival by the reactionaries of the campaign to compel the registration of aliens and for the deportations of aliens who are not satisfactory to the Bourbons of Wall St. Bills have been again introduced into the United States Congress for the registration of aliens. In effect it will establish a vast espionage system over the millions of foreign born workers; by means of persecuting them, driving them out of their jobs if need be, jailing and deporting them. The bills are aimed at the alien radicals, and typically enough, are supported by that arch labor faker, now an open tool of Wall St., namely, Secretary of Labor Davis. The foreign-born workers, who are in the basic industries are the ones most sharply affected by the mass unemployment. These alien registration bills have in mind to stifle their protest against capitalist exploitation and oppression, and to take whatever measures are needed to do so, including deportation.

## Workers and Civil Liberties

5. A drive to deprive aliens and American radicals of so-called civil and constitutional rights. The campaign is going on all the time, but now the 100 per centers, the Pay-Triots of every description are coming out of their holes and beginning to bark for greater suppression of radical labor and for withdrawal of so-called liberties and rights from them. Where successful, it will be labeled "Americanization work" (that is, good results in breaking up union organizations, lowering wages, increasing hours of labor, speed-up, etc.); where unsuccessful in "Americanization", then there will be the policy of revocation of citizenship of alien radicals, refusal to grant citizenship, to permit radical gatherings, indoor and outdoor meetings, attempts to persecute Red students and school-children, etc. In New York a college youth has been suspended from City College by the Dean for so-called "violation of a city ordinance". He had the audacity to distribute handbills for the New York demonstration of the unemployed! Others in public schools are to be dealt with by the educational authorities who will work hand in hand with the employers and the police.

## Revival of Criminal Syndicalism Laws

6. The attempted revival of Criminal Syndicalism laws in an effort to drive the Communists and other labor organizations into illegality. The reaction of 1919-20, the period of the vicious Attorney-General Palmer, is raising its head. Nothing serious of course is done with the gunmen, racketeers and murderers who infest society, products of the capitalist system. Indeed, these gangsters and racketeers are regularly brought into service by the officially recognized thugs—the police—against workers on strike, against unions, against the radical workers, etc. The Mathew Wolls and William Greens, the labor agents of Wall Street, chime in to endorse any movements aiming to check the progress of the workers and to smash the "Reds".

## The Bosses Organize

7. The organization of the capitalist groups themselves to give organized direction and policy to all campaigns against labor, organized and unorganized. The New York Chamber of Commerce has formed a special committee to launch a "militant fight" against the Communist movement. They hope thus to hide or obscure the burning problem of unemployment. New York wealth and plutocracy have given the lead and expect the other Chambers of Commerce and business groups to take the cue. It has a Committee on Deportation; Committee on Communism in Business and Industry; Committee on Publicity, etc. Every agency, governmental, business, religious, etc. is to be enlisted to raise the "Red Scare" so that the misery of the workers under capitalism and particularly severe because of mass unemployment, shall be passed by.

## Mass Unemployment Remedy

What needs to be done to stem the

rising tide of reaction and to bring again to the forefront the problems that affect sharply the daily lives of the working men and women of this country? It is largely up to the Communists and Left wing, and in particular the official Communist party, to answer this question and to make possible effective work, agitation and organization among the masses. The tactics to pursue have been proposed before by *The Militant*. The basic problem and issues remain as before.

1. Mass unemployment, estimated at over 6,000,000 at the present time, remains the outstanding phenomenon and cancer of American capitalism. There has been much bally-hoo otherwise, but mass unemployment remains and mounts higher. Cleverness, advertising and now a "Red Scare" have not gone over; Hoover and capitalism are seeking other means to cover up the acute situation. The figures of the Hoover administration, of the U. S. Labor Dept. on unemployment and an alleged rise in industry and business have been challenged from various sources, and have been shown up as valueless, unreliable and untrustworthy.

In New York State, where figures by the State Dept. of Labor have been issued monthly, F. Perkins, State Industrial Commissioner, reports a further increase in unemployment and at the same time challenges the accuracy of the Hoover figures. Reports from other regions are similar, varying in totality of numbers, but revealing essentially the same situation throughout the United States. The need to defend the interests of the unemployed, to unite the organized and unorganized, to get the unions to enter the fight on behalf of the unemployed, to bring together the employed and unemployed, white and colored workers, in common action for demands upon the employers and the government for work or compensation, less hours of labor and speed-up is yet paramount. The Communists remain the main instruments that can give such a movement vitality, purpose and direction, and develop the consciousness of the worker regarding his social position in capitalist society. The basic tasks of the Communists and class-conscious workers remain to explain the causes of unemployment; the failure and inability of capitalism to solve the problem and the Communist solution thereof.

## Create United Front Defense Movement

2. Organize a broad UNITED FRONT DEFENSE MOVEMENT to defend the leaders and workers arrested in the unemployment demonstrations and meetings, and in order to make an effective campaign to smash the anti-Communist and anti-labor offensive of the Bosses, the A. F. of L. labor fakers, Woll, Green & Co., and the Government. A sectarian defense movement, limited largely to the Communist party and the I. L. D. with its present narrow line, will defeat its own purpose. Large sections of the labor and liberal movement can be mobilized in such a campaign, if only the official Communist party will permit and not cut such a movement to pieces, as it did, for instance, in the Gastonia textile case. Already liberal elements—professors, scientists, etc.—have protested the Black List and red-baiting campaign of Whalen, et al. The Socialist party has been compelled to declare against the forms of the drive against the Communist movement. The Socialists find it necessary to present a liberal front against reaction, while they at the same time wish to stave off oppressive measures against themselves. Wide circles of labor can be brought into action for a broad UNITED FRONT DEFENSE MOVEMENT, can be made to see that a blow against the Communists by the capitalist reactionaries is a blow against the whole labor movement and the working class. We demand that the Communist party shall discontinue its sectarian policy and make possible the creation of such a movement.

## United Front for the Unemployed

3. The unemployed movement under the direction of the Communist must likewise be given room to breathe, must be developed into a United Front movement. In such a movement, the Communists can

easily hold their own and make gains among the workers at the expense of the reformists and labor elements that come into it, provided the Communists use intelligent tactics.

In New York, the Socialists and A. F. of L. unions have organized an Emergency Conference for the Unemployed. We have recommended that the Communists propose a United Front movement to them. It is conceivable that the social-reformist movement will attract the unemployed, albeit they have only reluctantly and under pressure begun such a movement. The Communists will have to find ways and means to penetrate the masses wherever they are. The United Front remains yet in this period the best tactic to achieve contact with the masses and to influence their thought and direction. For the Communist party to continue its ostrich policy, to reject the tactic of the United Front, will result in a number of defeats for itself and the Communist movement in the future; moreover, it will directly affect the adequate defense of the arrested Communists, the attempted frame-ups and the progress of the unemployment movement.

In any case, if the unemployment movement is not to be diverted into channels of reformist illusions, or even directly into capitalist grooves; if there is to be a genuine defense movement; if there is to be an energetic campaign against the efforts of the employers and government to smash the Communist movement, to drive it into illegality, the rank and file of the Communist party must make possible the unity of the Communists in these common needs, and demand at the same time a broad united front movement on the issue of unemployment. —M. A.

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## Salvation Army Bread Line Long

NEW YORK—(FP)—Unemployment is from 30 to 35% greater now in New York than it was a year ago, according to a survey conducted by the Salvation Army. Every department maintained by the army for the relief of jobless men is taxed to capacity, its Bowery Hotel has a daily breadline of 1,800 men and all its employment bureaus are swamped with appeals for work.

"Our capacity of 611 beds in the Bowery hotel," said Capt. Paul Brown, "has long been overtaxed and to accommodate homeless men we permit them to sleep on the floor. About 400 of them crowd each night into one large room where they 'flop' on the floor with their clothes on and so close together they can scarcely turn over. Hundreds of others who can find no shelter wander the streets all night.

"From 1,800 to 2,000 men daily stand in the noon breadline. Each man is given a ticket for a free meal, consisting of bread and soup or stew. Each meal costs from 5 to 10 cents."

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## THE NEXT ISSUE

1. By L. D. Trotsky—"An Open Letter to All Members of the Leninbund (Germany). An article of the utmost importance to all Communists, dealing with the causes of the split in the Leninbund developed by Urbahns. Those who read comrade Trotsky's booklet on the *Defense of the Soviet Union and the Opposition* which appeared in the *Militant* serially, (Vol. II, No. 21-Vol. III, No. 4 inc.), will especially find the "Open Letter" of interest.
2. Another article by Arne Swabeck dealing with phases of American Labor development, the Labor Party, Communist party history and policy, etc.
3. Letters from the Soviet Union, and many other articles on events of the labor and Communist movement.

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## Fight Registration of the Foreign-Born

Attempts are again being made by reactionary forces to compel the registration of all non-citizen foreign-born living in the United States. Bills are again before Congress, supported by the Department of Labor, which, if their passage is not prevented by the united efforts of all labor, will establish a vast espionage system primarily aimed to harass and persecute all radical workers and especially the Communists. Advocates of compulsory alien registration who appeared on March 12 before the Senate Immigration Committee were the red-baiter, Capt. Trevor, spokesman for the New York Chamber of Commerce, and Assistant Secretary of Labor Husband, speaking for Secretary of Labor Davis.

The registration of the alien worker, which would be a forerunner for registration of all people in the United States, makes it easy for the employers to persecute and oppress the foreign-born worker particularly. The threat of discrimination, arrest and deportation would always be held as a whip by the employer over the alien worker who fought for betterment of his conditions, wage increases, decrease of hours, for unionization, etc. The employing class and government forces endeavor to sow further division between the native or citizen-workers and the aliens whose interests as exploited workmen and women are identical and whose actual enemies are the bosses and the government that persecute them on any and every opportunity.

## Capitalists Aim to Establish Spy System

Government snoopers, private detective agencies, employers' dicks would be used to intimidate, spy upon and blackmail the alien worker. The Pay-Triots would be given an additional weapon in their hands to fight any progress of labor and would intensify their ranting and violent activities particularly against the revolutionary minded workers. There would develop a vast espionage system over the entire country whose primary task would be the persecution of radically minded workers.

Among the most vicious of the Bills before Congress is the Aswell Bill, H. R. 9101, introduced by Congressman Aswell of Louisiana. It is approved by the Department of Labor, and among its proposals are:

1. Every alien 21 years of age and over must register annually. Failure to register is a crime. Failure to register for 2 years subjects an alien to deportation. The fees are \$2.00 for the first year and \$1.00 for each year thereafter.
2. The certificate must bear the alien's photograph and signature. It must be shown any time on demand to any public officer. All changes in name or physical appearance, together with the record of all arrests and convictions, must be reported to the Commissioner of Naturalization, who is charged with enforcing the law. Violations of the law are made serious crimes.

The movement of the capitalists to put over such measures against labor has been defeated in the past through the strenuous efforts of liberal and labor forces. The reactionaries look to every opportunity to revive and put over registration laws, and all labor must be continually on guard to prevent such attempts. Protests, meetings, resolutions, etc. at union meetings and gatherings, fraternal organizations, to Congress, etc. are among the methods of publicity to be used to protest against any kind of registration bills.

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**37**

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# A Letter To The Italian Left Communists By L. D. TROTSKY

Dear Comrades!

I have just become acquainted with the contents of the document, "Platform of the Left" which, though issued in 1926, has just come into my hands. I have also read your letter addressed to me in No. 20 of *Prometeo*, as well as several leading articles in this paper, this having given me the opportunity, after a very long interruption, to refresh my meager knowledge of the Italian language. This document, as well as the articles and speeches of comrade Bordiga, aside from my personal acquaintance with him, permit me, to a certain extent, to pass judgement upon your basic idea as well as on the degree of your solidarity with us. Although, in order to reply to this last question, not only are the principle theses of importance, but your political orientation towards the events of the day as well. (The Sino-Russian conflict has brought this home clearly to us once again.) Yet I believe that our solidarity at least, goes quite far. If I do not express myself categorically at the present time, it is solely because I wish to permit time and the course of events to substantiate our ideological closeness and our mutual understanding. I hope that they will be completely and lastingly confirmed.

"The Platform of the Left" (1926) made a great impression on me. I believe that it is one of the best documents of the International Opposition, and which, in many points, retains its importance yet,

Particularly important, especially for France, is that the platform lays the most stress, in respect to the revolutionary politics of the proletariat, on the question of the nature of the party and the basic principles of its strategy and tactics. During the past few years we have seen how, in France, the Opposition has served, for a number of well-known revolutionaries, merely as a stage in the evolution from Marxism to Syndicalism, to Trade Unionism, or simply to scepticism. Almost all of them stumbled on the question of the party.

## The Nature of the Party

You are evidently familiar with the brochure of Loriot wherein he demonstrates his complete lack of understanding of the nature of the Party and its historic function in relation to the class and falls into the theory of passive trade unionism, which has nothing in common with the ideas of the proletarian revolution. Unfortunately, this brochure, which represents a distinctly backward step in the working class movement is today still being propagated by the *Revolutions Proletarienne* group.

The decline in the ideological level of the revolutionary movement during the past five or six years has left its mark on the Monatte group. This group, which, between 1917 and 1923, approached close to Marxism and Bolshevism, has since taken a series of backward steps towards syndicalism. All this is no longer the aggressive syndicalism of the beginning of this century which constituted a step forward in the French working class movement. No, this is a relatively waiting syndicalism, negatively passive, which almost always degenerates into pure trade unionism. And this is not surprising. Whatever progressivism was present in pre-war syndicalism has now been absorbed into Communism. Monatte's chief shortcoming is his false attitude towards the Party, and connected with that, his fetishism of the "trade union organization", which he takes as an end in itself, independent of its directing concepts. Nevertheless, if the two French "General Trade Unions" would unite today, and even if tomorrow they would draw into their ranks the entire French working class, that would not for one instant do away with the question of the directing ideas of the syndicalist struggles, its methods, the linking up of the immediate tasks with those of a general character, i. e., the question of the Party.

## (To the Adherents of Comrade Bordiga)

The Syndicalist League, led by Monatte is in itself an embryo party; it recruits its members, not on a trade union basis, but on an ideological basis, on the basis of a particular platform, and seeks to influence the trade unions from without or, when possible, to subordinate them to its ideological influence. These are the indices of a party. But the Syndicalist League is a party without a finished constitution, having no definite form, which is clear in neither theory nor program, which has not become conscious of itself, which hides its true nature, and so deprives itself of all possibility for development.

Souvarine, in the course of the struggle against the bureaucracy and disloyalty of the apparatus of the C. I., has likewise come to a denial of the political action of the Party itself, though by a different route. While proclaiming the death of the International and its French section, he at the same time considers the existence of the Opposition to be useless since, according to him, the political conditions are unsuitable. In other words, he denies the necessity for the existence of the Party—which always, and under all circumstances, represents the revolutionary interests of the proletariat.

These are the reasons why I attach such importance to our solidarity on the questions of the Party, its historic role, its unceasing activity, its duty to struggle in order to insure its influence in all phases of the working class movement. On this question a Bolshevik, i. e., a revolutionary Marxist trained in the school of Lenin, can make no concessions.

## Theoretical Perversions of Stalinism

On several points, the Platform, of 1926 gives some excellent formulations which still hold true today. It states with absolute clearness that the so-called "autonomous peasant parties inevitably fall under the influence of the counter-revolution" (p. 36). One can fearlessly say, that in the present epoch, there have been and can be no exceptions to this rule. Where the peasantry does not follow the proletariat, they follow the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Despite the experiences of Russia and China, Radek, Smilga and Preobrazhensky have not yet realized that it is on just this point that they tripped up. Your platform reproaches Radek for "open concessions to the German nationalists". To that must be added the indefensible concessions to the Chinese nationalists, the idealization of Sun-Yat-Senism, and the justification of the subordination of the Communist party to a bourgeois party. Your platform correctly stresses, in connection with the struggle of colonial peoples, the necessity for the absolute independence of the Communist party. Failure to keep sight of this essential rule leads to the most disastrous consequences as was demonstrated in the criminal subordination of the Chinese Communist party to the Kuomintang.

The disastrous tactics of the Anglo-Russian Committee, which, it goes without saying, has received the complete support of the present leadership of the Italian Communist party, resulted from the desire to rapidly pass from the insignificant Communist party into the large trade unions. Zinoviev openly expressed this idea at the Fifth Congress of the International. Stalin, Bukharin, Tomsky have sustained these same illusions. With what results? The British reformists were strengthened, and the British Communist party was extremely weakened. That is what results from playing with the concept of the Party. Such a game does not remain forever unpunished.

Within the Soviet Republic we note another form of weakening and destruction of the Communist party: in order to divest it of its proper individuality and independence, it is artificially diluted into the large spiritless mass who are terror-

ized by the governmental apparatus. This explains why the Opposition which has gathered and educated new revolutionary cadres numbered only in the thousands is in actuality the Bolshevik party, while the Stalin faction which carries on formally in the name of a Party of 1,500,000 members, and of a Communist youth of 2,000,000 strong, in reality undermines and destroys the Party.

## The Class Character of the U. S. S. R.

I note with satisfaction, on the basis of your letter published in *Prometeo* that you are in complete accord with the Opposition on the question of the definition of the social nature of the Soviet State. On this question, the ultra-Leftists (see *L'Ouvrier Communiste*, No. 1) reveal with absolute clearness their complete break with the fundamentals of Marxism.

The question of the class character of a social regime rests on the question of its political structure which in turn falls back on the degree of bureaucracy and administration. As far as they are concerned, the question of the ownership of the means of production does not exist. In democratic America, as well as in Fascist Italy, those who are accused of preparing the expropriation of the factories, the shops and mines of the capitalists—are shot or fastened to the electric chair. In the Soviet Republic even today—under the Stalinist bureaucracy—the engineers who attempt to prepare the restitution of the shops, the factories and the mines to their former owners are shot. How can one fail to distinguish this fundamental difference which actually defines the class character of the social regime? Nevertheless, I shall not expound too lengthily upon this question, to which I devoted my recent brochure (*The Defense of the U. S. S. R. and the Opposition*) (Published serially in the *Militant*, Vol. II, No. 21, Vol. III, No. 4, incl.—Eds.) directed against certain French and German ultra-Leftists who, it is true, do not go as far as your Italian sectarians, but who, for just this reason, can be more dangerous.

## The Analogy of Thermidor

On the question of Thermidor, you make certain reservations as regards the correctness of the analogy between the Russian Revolution and the French Revolution. I believe that this observation rests on a misunderstanding. In order to judge of the correctness of historic analogy, we must clearly determine its content and limits. Not to have recourse to analogies with revolutions of the past, would be to completely abandon the historical experience of mankind. The experiences of today are always different from those of yesterday. Nevertheless, one cannot learn from yesterday's experiences except through analogies.

The remarkable brochure of Engels on the Peasant War is based completely upon an analogy between the Reformation of the Sixteenth century and the Revolution of 1848. In order to temper the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Marx heated his iron in the fire of 1793. In 1903 Lenin defined the Social-democratic revolutionary as a Jacobin loosely tied with the mass movements. At that time I objected to him in an academic manner that Jacobinism and scientific socialism rest on different classes and make use of different methods. Considered in itself this is evidently correct. But Lenin did not identify the plebeians of Paris with the modern proletariat and Rousseau's theory with that of Marx.

He laid down as conclusive only the general features of the two revolutions: the most oppressed masses who had nothing to lose but their chains; the most revolutionary organizations which supported themselves on the masses and which, in the struggle against the forces of the former society, set up a revolutionary dic-

tatorship. Was this analogy correct? Completely. Historically, it has proven very fruitful. Within the same limits, the analogy with Thermidor is fruitful and justifiable. What was the distinctive feature of the French Thermidor? It was the first stage of the victorious counter-revolution. After the Thermidor, the Jacobins could no longer have (if they could have in a general manner) regained power except by means of their own uprising. Thus, the stage of Thermidor has, in a certain sense, a distinctive character. But the counter-revolution was not yet completed that is, the real masters of the situation were not yet in power; for that the next stage was necessary.

## What is Thermidor?

Finally, the complete victory of the counter-revolution, bringing with it the restoration of the monarchy, the indemnification of feudal landlords, etc., was assured by the foreign intervention and the victory over Napoleon. In Hungary, after a short period of Soviet power, the counter-revolution was established completely after a single armed blow. Are we to expect a similar danger in the U. S. S. R.? Certainly not. But anyone can recognize open counter-revolution; it does not require any commentaries.

When we speak of Thermidor, we have in mind an underhand counter-revolution, clandestinely prepared, and which is accomplished in several stages. The first stage, which we call conditionally Thermidor, would signify the transfer of power to the hands of new "soviet" rulers—disguised factions within the leading party, as was the case with the Jacobins. The reign of these rulers, especially if they be weak, could not long prevail. Either, under favorable international conditions the revolution would return to the dictatorship of the proletariat, which would inevitably necessitate the use of revolutionary force; or, the victory of the big bourgeoisie, of finance capital, or even of monarchy would be achieved, the latter necessitating a supplementary revolution, or perhaps even two.

This is the substance of the analogy with Thermidor. Naturally, if we go beyond the permissible limitations of the analogy, if we orientate ourselves purely on the mechanical external of events, on dramatic episodes, we can easily become lost and mislead others. But if we consider the class relationships, the analogy is no less profitable than, for example, the analogy which Engels drew between the Reformation and the Revolution of 1848.

## The Stalinist Leadership of Italy

I have read recently the first issue of the publication which I have already mentioned—the *Communist Worker* (*L'Ouvrier Communiste*), obviously published by a group of Italian ultra-Leftists who have separated from your organization. Without other indications, this issue by itself would be sufficient proof that we are in a period of decadence and ideological confusion—the result that always follows major revolutionary defeats. The group publishing this paper seems to have undertaken to unite in one whole all the faults of out-of-date syndicalism, adventurism, left phrases, sectarianism and theoretical confusionism, while stamping it all with the mark of student carelessness and trouble-breeding quarrels. Two columns from this publication suffice to make it clear why this group broke with your organization, a Marxist organization; although it is rather amusing to see how they exert themselves to cover themselves with Marx and Engels.

As far as the official leadership of the Italian party is concerned, I had no opportunity to observe them except at the E. C. C. I. in the person of Ercoli. Of a relatively yielding temper and with a well-oiled tongue, Ercoli is fitted, above all others, to prepare an attorney's speech made to order on any subject, and is of

(Continued on Page 6)

# Letters from the Soviet Union

## The Five Year Plan And the Kulaks

At double pace the voids caused by the unfitness of the 5 year plan are being filled in haphazard and uncertainly. Suddenly half a million rubles are withdrawn from the food cooperatives; now, a figure of such magnitude has never been so easily conjured with in any plan. Wholesale prices are being increased. (You recall this was "a Trotskyist fraud", according to the Stalinist theory). What is more, this increase is retroactive. For all selling organizations, a revision of accounts is being made. Speed was ordered for those two measures and at the same time the press was kept quiet. How much ink was poured out against the rise in wholesale prices when it had been proposed by the Opposition not as a panic measure but in the name of economic foresight. All the symptoms of instability are clearly present...

Here is an extract of the leading article of a country newspaper of a hundred percent collectivized district: "The Kulaks and the middle peasants fraudulently kill their cattle..."

"The Kulak spirit has penetrated all departments of the local government (all this in hundred percent collectivized districts). They kill the horses of their own volition, cattle are chased into the forests and the valleys where they die of cold. In the forest of ... there are two hundred abandoned horses". And yet Pravda, full of authority, shows that if the middle peasant strangles his cattle, it is because he is firmly decided to enter the cooperative and this is why, before leaving, he liquidates his cattle! The base for the new adventurist bond of centrism is a break with the middle peasantry. Instead of squarely facing this difficulty, the Centrists think that a theory, scholastically elaborated and administratively applied, that is, collectivisation, can strike from the order of the day the fundamental question of irregular relations of the classes in the country. With this new formula they expect to exorcise the truth.

As I already said, the class relations in the country are disturbed. I believe that the offensive of classes hostile to the dictatorship of the proletariat is inevitable, under the guise of civil war supported by external intervention. Actually great confusion reigns in the circles of the Party base. This brings in a new stage in our work. It is necessary to leave home for free air. Some prefer to remain in waiting—because it is more dignified and more peaceful. We must break with them because passivity becomes a chronic disease. It is a serious danger. To enter the new activity a very precise and pointed appeal must be written. The country is being led towards catastrophe with bandaged eyes. The working class must take the fate of the U. S. S. R. in its own hands. The appeal must be made not only to Russia but to the international proletariat. The dictatorship is in danger. It can be saved only by bringing it to the Leninist path. Now, many signs show that interest in Leninism and the proposals of the Opposition are rapidly growing. Our appeal can and must play an enormous role.

As in one of Andersen's fairy tales (The Emperor's New Clothes), at the most solemn moment of the imperial procession our appeal must shout: "But Centrism is completely naked!" In Stalin's speeches it is stated that a completely new course is being instituted, that is, the liquidation of the NEP. That which interests me, above all, is to know whether this course is the product of an unavoidable necessity, of a blind alley which does not permit of maneuvering with respect to the peasant class, or whether it is a product of the theory of socialism in one country.

If one holds to the official ideas, to the phraseology of the leaders, it appears to originate from a "voluntary desire". Thus it is an adventure which allows of the catastrophes being foreseen. But many signs indicate that it is the result of the

precedent "no snail". (Allusion to "We shall construct socialism, even at a snail's pace" of Bucharin—N. D. L. R.) The verification of the theory of socialism in one country, whose hour is close, will show its complete failure.

## Stalin Endangers the Proletarian Dictatorship

January 25

I am sending you some bits of news. First, the oldest: at the October celebrations about a thousand of our comrades were "withdrawn from circulation" throughout the Union. This is very gladdening, isn't it? This shows the good feeling that still prevails. You certainly know that a short while ago the two musketeers (Zinoviev and Kamenev) issued a declaration whereby they once again (how many times already?) rejoined the Party. This is what took place. When Zinoviev had to present his statement at the purging of his nucleus, a great number of members showed up; he was given 20 minutes. He started out in this manner. "To narrate my autobiography would be to give the entire history of the Party." This introduction was greeted with applause. After 20 minutes he had not yet reached the Third Party Congress. His time for speaking was extended. He harangued for three hours. His speech was often interrupted by applause. At the end of his speech, he made it clear, with carefully chosen phrases, that the Opposition, although it had made some mistakes, had in general been correct. "Thus," he concluded, "we were fighting not against the Party but against the Right wing." The next day he was called before the powers above who washed his head, black soap being necessary. Then he entered his declaration. The secretary of his nucleus was designated as conciliator.

With Kamenev, matters were entirely different. During the purging, he was given six minutes to state his position and not a second longer. But a private paper was stolen from his house in some unknown manner (he has certainly no luck with private papers). In this paper, among other things appeared this phrase: "L. D. (Trotsky) was right in saying 'In the Party nothing can really be achieved'." The matter of this paper was brought up in the Political Bureau. They even wished to expel Kamenev. But he had opportunely written his statement, and the tempest subsided. This is how the "sages" of the Party conduct themselves. Their life is droll indeed. It is enough to drive one to drink.

### Morale of Opposition Excellent

As for ourselves, our morale is excellent. We are following the advice of old Spinoza which you suggested to us: "Not to weep; not to laugh; but to understand." As for weeping, we don't weep. As for laughing, at times we do laugh. One cannot help laughing, however much it may be mixed with bitterness, when one reads in Pravda that the middle peasant is killing his cattle and liquidating his possessions because he firmly intends to join the Collective. He sacrifices his cattle because of enthusiasm. Seized with the sacred fervor of "socialist construction" and the "general line" he sells everything in order to prepare himself for complete collectivization. One cannot help laughing at the "Marxist explanation" given to these disturbing phenomena. As for what concerns the "to understand" of Spinoza, we understand the situation thus:

The plan to appeal to the Party and to the working class must be realized in the quickest possible time. This appeal must be in as brief form as possible in order that it may affect the entire working class, the entire Party. We must tell the "Chief" (the Central Committee) not only the objective causes but also those who are directly responsible, denouncing them by name.

In this appeal light must be thrown

upon the following: the Party regime, the situation of the working class, the industrialization, the complete collectivisation, the situation in the country, the command to wipe out the Kulak and the Nepman as a class at a time when, thanks to the Centrist policies, the middle and poor peasants are lined up against us and when, still thanks to these same policies, the ties with the working class are beginning to weaken. We must shout at the top of our voices that Centrism is on the road to cutting down (the branch on which rests the entire Soviet regime).

### The Slogans of the Opposition

In a word we must say that Stalin is destroying the dictatorship of the proletariat. It seems to me that in this appeal, we must also point out in what manner it will be possible to get out of the impasse into which Centrism has led the Party and the country. The issues will concern the betterment of the position of the working class in the political and economic field, workers democracy, secret ballot in the Party and possibly in the trade unions, and a Leninist course in the country. As for the administrative introduction of socialism into the country on a very weak technical base, a sharp end must be put to this stupidity. The order for the complete collectivisation must be abandoned. We could break our heads on this course. The order for the liquidation of the Kulak through orders from above, when the link

with the poor and middle peasantry is being weakened and when the working class is undergoing increased pressure from the apparatus, must be condemned as adventurist. The slogans "Long live the 5-day week; down with uninterrupted work; long live the collective rest of the workers;" must be put forward. We must warn the working class that after the present ultra-Leftist course, Centrism can, with the same facility, introduce a new NEP.

It is certainly necessary to stress the fact that events are confirming our Platform.

The putchist tactics of Molotov result in the decomposition of the Eastern Parties. A great deal of attention must be given to the questions concerning the Communist International, as they deserve. The Opposition must be reintegrated. The Party must be left to its own course. We must appeal to all the workers to drive out the stranglers of proletarian democracy. We must appeal to the workers to purge, without waiting for authorization from above, the Party, the trade unions and the Soviets, of the Thermidorian bureaucratic scum. We must state openly that the present leadership is leading the country and the dictatorship of the proletariat towards destruction, and that their policies are paving the way for counter-revolution in the country.

Yours,  
S.

## Employment Sharks Exposed

By Federated Press

Admissions in the United States Senate that "known unemployment is now 3,100,000," while "the actual unemployment is twice that amount," give tragic emphasis to a report on fraudulent practices of private employment agencies just issued by the American Assn. for Labor Legislation, in New York.

The report, prepared by George H. Trafton, summarizes hundreds of pages of information buried in the unpublished proceedings of the New York State Industrial Survey Commission. "Witness after witness testifying under oath," says Trafton "described flagrant abuses practiced by some of these commercial enterprises, conclusively demonstrating that the fee-charging employment agency business is still infested with unscrupulous characters who do not hesitate to mulct the helpless, and who find the jobless worker an easy victim."

One of the most common complaints before the commission was misrepresentation of jobs. "Witnesses testified," says Trafton, "that after paying fees they had been sent to jobs which obviously they could not fill and for which they had not applied." Others swore that they had been sent off to temporary positions which had been represented to them as "permanent." Some told of going to distant cities for jobs which did not even exist. Still others testified that "the wages paid on the job were much lower than the agency had represented."

Theft of fees, collected in advance for jobs, but not returned as the law requires when no job was found, was also charged against the private agencies. Sometimes the employment sharks flatly refused to return the fees. At other times they would send the disappointed workers off on other wild goose chases. In this way, one witness stated "they would keep the men going back and forth until they got tired so that they would not come any more and they would not go back for their fee." Another witness reported having "seen fellows thrown down the stairs," when seeking return of their money.

### Employers in on Gypping Game

Charges of fee-splitting with employers or foremen, repeatedly made against the private employment sharks in the past, are confirmed by this latest report. Under the fee-splitting system, the boss fires the worker after a few days, and asks the

labor-agent sent to the job the agent collects a fee, which he divides with the employer who obligingly makes the vacancy for him. Thus, as one expert has put it, the employment shark "has three men for each job—one on the way to the job, one on the job and one on the way home from the job". An investigator in Buffalo testified before the commission that in one case he had "affadavits of the man who saw the actual payment of money by the fee-charging agent to the employer".

During the investigation, the United States Supreme Court handed down the typically capitalist-minded decision that the fees charged by private employment agents are not subject to regulation by law. Hence the agencies can charge the workers their very eye-teeth for a short-lived chance to be exploited. One instance is cited of a "woman who paid \$18 for a job which lasted only two weeks; so that her job cost her half of the total wages received. She returned to the agency, but received neither another position nor a refund."

Sending of girls or women to immoral resorts is also a standing grievance against the private agents investigated in the report.

## HALF MILLION STRIKERS IN INDIA IN 1929

WASHINGTON—Half a million workers in India went on strike in 1929, in some 140 industrial disputes, according to a report cabled to the Department of Commerce from its agent at Calcutta.

"The unsettled labor situation is not expected to improve materially in the near future," this agent reported, "as the growing demand of labor for higher wages to improve living conditions will no doubt continue to make for protracted strikes."

## JOBLESS COSTS ON CHARITY MOUNT

ST. LOUIS—(FP)—Unemployment is responsible for 60 cents of every dollar the Provident Assn., local family case work society, is spending for relief nowadays. One third, or 33 cents, of each relief dollar is the average spent the two-year period 1928-29 on families whose need was caused by the wage earner's lack of a job. Each winter the proportion chargeable to joblessness rises sharply, but this winter it has climbed to unprecedented heights.

## PITTSBURGH CABMEN FIGHT TRAITORS

PITTSBURGH—(FP)—Unable to smash the solidarity of the striking taxi drivers' ranks by a frontal offensive, the Parmelee Transportation Co. is resorting to innuendoes aimed at the strike leaders. Letters have been mailed to all the cabmen with photostats of correspondence between organizers and officials of the Teamsters and Chauffeurs union.

One letter, signed by Pres. Daniel J. Tobin of the Teamsters Intl. criticizes the Pittsburgh teamsters' secretary for admitting the taxi men into a teamsters' local. "I advise you now that you had no business to admit those taxicab drivers into your local union, as this is in direct violation of your charter rights," warns Tobin. "Such action on your part without the consent and approval of the international executive board is a violation of the laws of the international union. It is not the policy of the international union to admit to membership men while they are on strike as I told you in our conversation over the long distance phone."

This letter carries the Parmelee caption: Proof of How You Are Being Misled! Another letter, intercepted by Parmelee spies, refers to the payment of \$500 by the teamsters' local secretary to the strike committee. It carries the unwarranted Parmelee caption: These men Eat Whether You Do or Not!

The company's extensive undercover department, working incessantly to corrupt individual strikers, has been able to reach only five so far. These five were disciplined by the union for counterfeiting tickets for a benefit. Thereupon Parmelee took them openly on the payroll, opened office and installed the five Judases as a "Back to Work Committee."

The Hearst Sun-Telegraph, anxious to discredit the strikers at every turn, has hailed this committee as indicative of the early end of the strike. The strikers' answer was to order the arrest of the quintet on embezzlement charges. Their own solidarity against the company's insidious efforts was shown recently when a company settlement was turned down with only one dissenting vote.

Φ

ATLANTA—The Georgia Federation of Labor will hold its annual convention April 16 at Waycross.

## Naval Conference Talks On

New attempts at the revival of the London Naval Conference, after its sudden collapse in recent weeks, continue to make little or no headway. Almost two months of sessions find the conference today no further than when it began. The dispatch of Balderston, in the New York World (3-14-36) makes the following characterization: "The London Naval Conference still lives tonight, although it is fighting for its life."

Realizing this condition, the capitalist powers are trying in every conceivable manner to adjust things so that the failures of the conference shall not be too glaring. The attitude prevails that "at least something ought to be done."

The various powers distrust one another. This was evident in refusals to entertain political pacts among themselves. The French proposals for a political pact between her and England on the one hand, and with the United States on the other, netted nothing. Neither the United States nor Great Britain are ready to accept such political alignments at this stage, and declare by their actions that at this juncture of the war preparations, such steps are premature. The failure of political pacts, while adding to the further crisis in the conference, reopened again the "discussions" on limitations.

In the meantime the conference sessions have been postponed in favor of preliminary discussions between the individual powers with the hope of arriving at some minimum agreements with which to continue with the conference proper. These too, have made no progress.

The main handicap continues to be the failure of the Italians to put their cards on the table, giving figures as to what the Mussolini government considers essential to the security of Italy, it is said. So far, the Italians continue to insist on parity with France as the first essential to an agreement on the Mediterranean. In this manner the N. Y. Times pictures the present situation. The French refuse to budge from their original proposal calling for a 725,000 naval tonnage. Neither will Italy accept any reduction from parity with France. A condition for France's reduction would be a similar decrease on the part of England and the

United States, which is a very unlikely change.

With the apparent impossibility to attain a 5-power treaty, steps have already been taken to arrive at a three party agreement between the United States, Great Britain and Japan. At this writing negotiations on this basis have proceeded and brought with it a renewed attempt to bring about agreement between France and Italy. A three-power treaty would result in an increase of antagonisms. This would mean that France and Italy, without feeling the atmosphere of the conference, would enter into a heated rave in construction which would in turn be counteracted by increased building on the part of the members of the three-power treaty.

It is becoming more and more evident that the outcome of the conference will fail to hit its intended mark. Neither of the powers will budge from their demands of sufficient "security". Edwin James in the New York Times (3-14-36) says, "Looking at the conference broadly, there still exists a possibility of making a limitation treaty here, but there seems no chance at all of registering any reduction in the sum total of the world's war craft."

The conference has thus far failed to make any progress; on the contrary it sustains the contentions of the Communists that such conferences of the capitalist powers, are held to bring confusion in the ranks of the working class and to cover the war plans of the imperialists. The unmasking of these attempts at deluding the masses is the task of the Communists.

Φ

## MILWAUKEE COPS ABUSE CHILDREN IN JAIL

MILWAUKEE—(FP)—Police beat and abused eight children, arrested with 60 adults in the unemployment demonstration March 6, it was revealed when the demonstrators were released from the Milwaukee jail. Twenty five of the adults were charged with rioting and 35 with vagrancy, presumably because of their unemployment. Six were given six months in jail as one way out of solving their individual unemployment problems and 18 got three months each.

## THE ABERLE MILL STRIKE IN PHILLY

(Continued from Page 1)

dustrial Philadelphia, but the Communist party here has never discovered this.

Lovestone and Foster yesmen, who as District Organizers, have so gallantly paraded through this city—Bentall, Tallentire, Weisbord, Jakira, Bail, Benjamin and now Gardos, never penetrated into this vast unknown hinterland. Yet, every nationally known Philadelphia product, except Baldwin Locomotives, Kirschbaum Clothes and Scott's Sanitissue, is manufactured in Kensington. Miles of streets are lined with textile mills and the homes of textile workers. Here Stetson Hats are made which are carried around the world by ships built in Cramps Shipyard. The vast coal and grain piers of the Reading R. R. and the world-known Diston Saw works are both manned by Kensington workers. There is probably no larger nor more fully proletarian unit in America.

Kensington is very largely populated by the descendants of Scotch, Irish and English textile emigrants, for, before the Southward movement, it was the greatest textile center in the country. There is a scattering of other nationalities, but it is typically American in its entirety. It is the proper base for the working class movement in the Philadelphia industrial area.

### Philadelphia's Labor Record

It is generally believed outside of Philadelphia that it is a city of scabs. Whatever truth there may be in this, certainly does not apply to Kensington. It has always been strongly union. When the textile industry was in its prime there were probably 75,000 organized workers in that industry—most of whom lived and

worked in Kensington. This had its natural reflex in helping other workers, such as barbers, bartenders, store clerks to unite. During the great car strike, Kensington was an armed camp. Police, state constabulary, National Guard, occupied the streets of the section, and riots were continuous. Ashwagion drivers dumped their loads upon the tracks while women from nearby houses brought oil and gasoline out to burn the stalled cars to the ground. The Cumberland Street carbarn was only comparable to a Belgian fortress on the German frontier. IF THE A. F. OF L. HAD HAD A CLASS VIEW INSTEAD OF A CRAFT OUTLOOK, Kensington could have been organized 100%. Hundreds of lesser struggles attest the fighting qualities of these workers. The outlaw railway strike closed the Reading shops in Kensington, while the last strike at Cramps is a labor classic.

The pitifully inadequate leadership and the wrong policies of the Communist party are here most clearly shown. After ten years of existence in Philadelphia they have absolutely no connection with its most militant workers. Hand picked D. O.s sent here to keep in order political fences have never troubled themselves with little things like this. The handful who did realize the importance of Kensington were given no aid or encouragement. In fact some who were too insistent in demanding that real work be done were driven from the Party.

### Left Wing Isolated; Fakers Pleased

Where is the National Textile Union in a situation of such magnitude? If it has any existence, except on paper, in this great textile city, the writer is unaware of it. It has not appeared in the Aberle

It has doubtless been a great relief to the A. F. of L. fatboys, McMahon and Co, that the Communists have so kindly withdrawn from the field. It's tough enough to try to keep in hand a bunch like these Kensington workers, who, despite all the advice of their officials, have insisted on making this strike real, who, in defiance of injunctions have made mass demonstrations around the mill, 60 of them being arrested recently at one time. It's worth a \$10,000 yearly salary to work that hard, without having a lot of Communists in the union counteracting every effort toward peaceful class collaboration. One can almost hear them breathe, "Thank thee, oh God, for the blessed third period."

Of course, if one reads the Daily Worker, another impression might be gotten. At first the Party press virtually ignored the strike. Now, to cover up the inactivity of the Party and the N. T. W., stupid and lying stories are carried. This gets nobody anywhere. For instance, the Daily Worker captioned, "Thousands led by N. T. W. U. fight Aberle scabs." An untruth out of the whole cloth, concocted presumably by the Party to cover up the failure of the N. T. W. textile organizer, Murdock. On a few occasions, Party members, not textile workers, have made futile gestures by distributing denunciatory leaflets. The capitalist press has not even mentioned them, and the capitalist is not likely to overlook any bet to scare up a RED issue in the strike. Of the 92 strikers arrested, none are reported as being members of the Party or N. T. W. U. The funeral demonstration, sadly enough, was an A. F. of L. affair entirely. The Mayor, the police and the A. F. of L. fatboys realize the volcano underlying the situation and cooperate in every way to provide a safety valve that would harmlessly—for them—let off steam. The rest

## Marion Workers Discuss New Strike

MARION, N. C.—(FP)—This mill town is seething with excitement, both among the blacklisted strikers of last summer and the workers employed in the Marion and Clinchfield mills. Announcement by the mill managements that the stretchout system is to be put back into effect has caused threats of a strike. Before and after work the workers are seen knotted in small groups discussing the new order.

One hundred and thirty families numbering 735 men, women and children are facing starvation here. They are the victims of strikes at the two scab mills. Evicted from company owned shacks, they are now living in dugouts, barns and abandoned shacks, as many as 14 adults and children in two rooms.

Φ

## A Letter to the Italian Left Communists

(Continued from Page 4)

the type to carry out orders. The sterile quibbling of his speeches, always definitively directed to the defense of opportunism, is the exact opposite of the vigorous, strongly-marked and fruitful revolutionary thought of Amedeo Bordiga. By the way, is it not Ercoli who tried to adapt to Italy the idea of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" under the slogan of the Italian Constituent Assembly supported by a "worker-peasant body"?

On the questions of the U. S. S. R., the Chinese revolution, the British general strike, the revolution in Poland, or the struggle against Italian fascism, Ercoli, as well as the other leaders in the bureaucratic machine, invariably began by adopting an opportunist line and eventually rectified it by means of ultra-Left adventure. It appears that at present, that variety is again in season.

Having thus on the one side Centrists of the Ercoli type, and on the other side ultra-Left confusionists, you are called upon, comrades, under the difficult conditions of the fascist dictatorship, to defend the historic interests of the Italian proletariat and of the international proletariat. With all my heart I wish you good luck and success.

Yours,

L. Trotsky

Constantinople, September 25, 1929.

of the Daily Worker reports are in line with the above quotation. As for an occasional leaflet distribution, this is not the equivalent or substitute for persistent, solid, systematic work among the workers.

### Establish Roots among the Workers

What's to be done? There is but one possible course. The Party must be re-orientated. Its roots must be firmly planted in Kensington. The work that should have been done years ago, must be begun at this time. The policy of working also within the A. F. of L. must be revived.

If the Party in Philadelphia had adopted a correct attitude years ago, it would have established bases in Kensington and picked up the broken threads of the S. P. It would have built an influence, that, by the time of the Passaic textile strike would have enabled it to have reached masses of Philadelphia textile workers, and have secured their hearty cooperation, both organizationally and financially. The Party today would be in a position to have occupied a leading position in the recent great demonstration. When Weisbord finally came to Philly, he spent his time in factional politics, as did all the other apparatus men who followed him.

If such preparatory work had been properly carried out during the past years, so-called unemployment demonstrations staged here lately at the City Hall, could have been real. There are tens of thousands of unemployed in Kensington. Whole families are unemployed and starving. Thousands of them have lost the equities they had in homes sold out at sheriff's sales.

Will the value of this lesson be lost? It is for the Communist and the Left wing to turn seriously to the task of obtaining a base among the most exploited sections of the Philadelphia working class, especially in the Kensington area.

# WITH LENIN AGAINST STALIN WOMEN SUFFER IN PRESENT ERA

By L. D. TROTSKY

(The following is a chapter from a large work, "THE REVOLUTION DISFIGURED" by L. D. Trotsky. This book will shortly be published by The MILITANT in an inexpensive edition, and will include documents from the archives of the Comintern, speeches of L. D. Trotsky, Lenin and other valuable material never as yet published by the ruling Stalinist bureaucracy. The book will shed a penetrating light on the falsification of the history of the Russian Revolution perpetrated by Stalin and his scribblers, Yaroslavsky, et al. The section here printed is addressed by comrade Trotsky to the Bureau of Party History of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party: Concerning the Falsification of the History of the October Insurrection, the History of the Revolution and the History of the Party".—Ed.)

I will not quote here Lenin's principal letter against Stalin on the national question. It is printed in the stenographic reports of the plenum of July 26, and moreover, it is being passed around in separate leaflets. They will fail to conceal that letter. But there are other documents on the same theme, completely unknown to the Party. Arkhivarius and the historians of the Stalin school are taking every measure to prevent those documents from appearing. They will continue to do so. They are quite capable, in fact, of simply destroying them.

For that reason I think it is necessary to quote here the most important excerpts from the early letter of Lenin, and the answer of Stalin, on the question of the structure of the Soviet Union. Lenin's letter, dated September 27, 1922, was addressed to comrade Kamenev, a copy being sent to all the members of the Politburo. Here is the beginning of the letter:

"You probably have received already from Stalin the resolution of his commission on the admission of the independent republics into the Soviet Union.

"If you have not received it, get it from the secretary and please read it immediately. I spoke about it yesterday with Sokolnikov, today with Stalin, tomorrow I will see Mdivani (a Georgian Communist suspected of advocating 'independence').

"In my opinion the question is supremely important. Stalin has a slight aspiration toward hurry. You must think it over well. Zinoviev too. (You once had the intention to take this matter up and did so to some extent.)

"Stalin has already agreed to one concession, in Section I, instead of saying 'entry' into the R. S. F. S. R. to say 'formal unification' with the R. S. F. S. R. in a union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia. I trust the spirit of this concession is obvious. We acknowledge ourselves on an equal basis with the Ukrainian Republic and other Republics, and together with them on the basis of equality we enter into a new union, a new federation, the Union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia."

There follows a whole series of Lenin's corrections made in the same spirit: In the concluding part of his letter Lenin says:

"Stalin agrees to postpone introducing the resolution in the Politburo until my arrival. I arrive Monday, October 2. I should like to have an interview with you and Rykov for a couple of hours—in the morning, say from one to two, and, if necessary in the evening, say five to seven, or six to eight.

"Here is my preliminary project. On the basis of a conversation with Mdivani and other comrades I will fight for it and change it. I urge you to do the same and answer me.

"Yours,  
"Lenin

"P. S. Send copies to ALL members of the Politburo."

Stalin sent his answer to Lenin to the members of the Politburo on the same day, September 27, 1922. I quote from his answer two important passages:

"Lenin's corrections to paragraph 2, proposing to create along with the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Republic, a Central Executive Committee of the Federation, should not, in my opinion, be adopted. The existence of two Central Executive Committees in Moscow, one of which will obviously represent a 'lower house' and the other an 'upper house' will give us nothing but conflict and debate."

And further:

"4. On the subject of paragraph 4, in my opinion, comrade Lenin himself 'hurried' a little, demanding a fusion of the commissariats of finance, food supply, labor and people's economy with the commissariats of the Federation. There is hardly a doubt that this 'hurriedness' will supply fuel to the advocates of 'independence' to the detriment of the national liberalism of Lenin.

5. Lenin's correction to paragraph 5, is in my opinion superfluous.

"J. Stalin"

This extraordinarily illuminating correspondence, concealed from the Party, like many other documents, preceded the famous letter of Lenin on the national question. In his remarks upon Stalin's draft, Lenin is exceptionally reserved and gentle in his expression. Lenin still hoped, in that period, to adjust the matter without a big conflict. He gently accuses Stalin of "hurrying". Stalin's accusation against Mdivani of "independence" Lenin places in quotation marks, obviously disassociating himself from that accusation. Moreover, Lenin especially emphasizes the fact that he will introduce his accusation on the basis of conversations with Mdivani and other comrades.

Stalin's answer, on the contrary, is marked by rudeness; the concluding phrases of the fourth point, is especially worthy of attention:

"There is hardly a doubt that this 'hurriedness' will supply fuel to the advocates of 'independence' to the detriment of the national liberalism (!) of Lenin."

Thus Lenin had arrived to the point of being accused of national liberalism.

The further course of the struggle about the national question showed Lenin that he could not straighten things out by means of inside and, so to speak, family methods of influencing Stalin, that it was necessary to appeal to the congress and to the Party. With this purpose, Lenin wrote in several installments, his letters on the national question.

Vladimir Illych attributed enormous importance to the "Georgian" question, not only because he feared the consequences of a false national policy in Georgia—a fear which has been wholly confirmed—but also because upon that question was revealed to him the falseness of Stalin's whole course on the national question, and not only the national question. The big fundamental letter of Lenin on the national question is concealed from the Party to this day. The pretence that Lenin did not intend his letter to be read to the Party is false to the bottom. Did Lenin intend his remarks in notebooks and on the borders of the books he read to be published? The fact is that you publish everything whatever which directly or indirectly strikes at the Opposition, but you hide the letter of Lenin giving his fundamental program on the national question.

Here are two quotations from this letter:

"I think that here the hastiness and administrative impulsiveness of Stalin played a fatal role, and also his spite against the notorious 'social chauvanism'. Spitefulness in general plays the worst

possible role in politics." (From Lenin's note of December 30, 1922.)

And here in more exact terms:

"It is of course necessary to hold Stalin and Dzerzhinsky responsible for all this really Great Russian nationalistic campaign" (from Lenin's letter of December 31, 1922).

Vladimir Illych sent me this letter at the moment when he felt that he would hardly be able to appear at the Twelfth Congress. Here is the note which I received from him in the two last days of his participation in political life:

"Strictly secret. Personal.

"Esteemed comrade Trotsky:

"I earnestly ask you to undertake the defense of the Georgian affair at the Central Committee of the Party. That affair is now under 'prosecution' at the hands of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, and I cannot rely on their impartiality. Indeed, quite the contrary. If you would agree to undertake its defense, I could be at rest. If for some reason you do not agree, send me back all the papers. I will consider that a sign of your disagreement.

"With the very best comradely greetings,

"Lenin

"Dictated to M. V.

"March 5, 1923."

"To comrade Trotsky:

"To his letter, sent to you by telephone, Vladimir Illych asks me to add for your information that comrade Kamenev is going to Georgia Wednesday, and Vladimir Illych asks me to find out whether you do not want to send something there from you.

"Signed, M. Volodichiva.

"March 5, 1923"

"To comrades Mdivani, Makharadze, and others (copy to comrades Trotsky and Kamenev):

"Esteemed Comrades:

"I am working in your behalf with all my heart. I am outraged at the rudeness of Ordjonikidze and the connivance of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky. I am preparing for you notes and a speech.

"With esteem,

"Lenin

March 6, 1923."

"To comrade Kamenev (copy to comrade Trotsky):

Leon Borisovich:

"Supplementing our telephone conversation, I communicate to you as acting president of the Politburo, the following:

"As I have already told you Dec. 31, 1922, Vladimir Illych has dictated an article on the national question.

"This question has worried him extremely and he was preparing to speak on it at the Party conference. Not long before his last illness, he told me that he would publish the article, but later. After that he got sick, without giving final directions.

"Vladimir Illych considered this article to be a guiding one and extremely important. At his direction it was communicated to comrade Trotsky, whom Vladimir Illych authorized to defend his point of view upon the given question at the Party conference, in view of their solidarity upon it.

The only copy of the article in my possession is preserved at the direction of Vladimir Illych in his secret archive.

"I bring the above facts to your attention.

"I could not do it earlier since I returned to work only today after a sickness.

"L. Fotevia,

Personal secretary of comrade Lenin

"March 16, 1923.

After all the slanders with which they have surrounded the question of Lenin's attitude to me, I cannot refrain from calling attention to the signature of his first letter—"with the very best comradely

WASHINGTON—Half a million workers women falls the heaviest burden of the struggle for existence as wage earners. A study made for the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor by Agnes L. Peterson shows that women, formerly held responsible for keeping the home, are now compelled in a large proportion of cases to share the family bread-winning while keeping the home and bringing up children. When disaster meets the man of the family, they step forth as sole wage-earner for the family, besides being home-keeper and nurse. And this burden is carried despite the wage discrimination against women.

Information was secured from almost 60,000 women as to their share in family support. More than half of them turned over all their wages to their families. Of 455 working mothers, among immigrant workers in Pennsylvania, only 108 reported that their husbands made as much as \$30 a week. "Sickness and unemployment as possible causes of reduction of the meager income hung over the women like an awful dread."

One woman, a cigar maker, has been supporting her husband and two children for more than six months because the man was unable to get work for more than a few days at a time. In another family the mother was compelled to work for wages to support herself and three children because her husband, disabled by an injury for five months, received only \$12.50 a week as compensation.

## Marriage Increases Burden

Among 17,000 unmarried women, 1 out of every 5 was taking care of a family without the help of male relatives. Another phase of the inquiry showed that sons do not forego marriage in order to give needed support to their parents, in any such proportion as daughters sacrifice themselves to this duty.

"In many cases," says the report, "marriage fails to bring to women the economic security considered formerly to be one of its chief advantages. Nowadays marriage may mean new financial responsibilities for wife as well as for husband."

Of 74,000 Rochester women reported by the 1920 census as married, widowed or divorced, 28 percent were gainfully employed. Even in the 59,000 cases where the husband lived with the family, almost 9 percent of the wives were employed away from home; and of 2,300 cases where the husband was absent, 48 percent of the wives had outside employment. In about 4,300 families the wife or widow was the only bread winner.

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A LECTURE ON

## Communism and Syndicalism

by

JAMES P. CANNON

at the

Labor Temple  
242 East 14th Street

on

Saturday, March 29, 1930 at 8 p. m.

Admission 15 cents

Auspices: New York Branch  
Communist League of America (Opposition)

greetings". Whoever knows Lenin's parsimony with words and his manner of conversation and correspondence, will realize that Lenin did not sign these words to his letter, accidentally. It was not accidental either, that Stalin, when he was compelled to read this correspondence at the plenum of July, 1926, substituted for the words "with the very best comradely greetings" the official phrase "with Communist greetings". Here again Stalin was true to

# A Seaman on Conditions

The Militant  
Dear Comrades:

Shipping today isn't what it was. It never is. The man who comes before the board in the Seamen's Institute with his discharge in his hand and his heart in his mouth, every time the high priest comes out to chalk up a job, vowing that if he gets a ship that's half decent, he will never be on the beach again, had better get wise to himself. There isn't any such animal today as a half decent ship and the average seaman knows that.

To meet competition in this industry and to carve himself a good hunk of profit the ship owner in America, as elsewhere, builds his ships so that they can be loaded and discharged faster and cheaper, builds them with Diesel Engines and oil burners instead of coal burners. Iron mike and pneumatic chippers and spray painting outfits are installed. But he cuts his crew down to a skeleton (and some of them look like skeletons after a month or two on some wagons I know). They are cutting below the level demanded by ordinary safety. In a word, he overloads his ships and overworks his crew. Hence we have Vestris disasters, which will become more common in the future. Ramsay MacDonald who is chief spokesman and lord high juggler for the British capitalists now has demanded a raising of the load line and what the British ship owners says, goes in the marine industry.

What does it matter to this high-souled blatherskite, if thousands of seamen are condemned to certain death, so long as it means an extra margin of profit to the class he supports?

America, as a great imperialist nation, feels the need of a merchant marine, not only for peaceful trade, but as an useful auxiliary to the fleet in case of war. The Jones-White Pact passed last year grants subsidies to American shipowners to build ships in accordance with the plans of the Naval Board, and shows which way the wind blows. Already shipowners are getting into action with the full support of the U. S. government and are preparing to fight a stiff battle for mercantile supremacy with Great Britain.

## Seamen Disorganized

If the events in the marine industry since the war are any criterion, one can see the ship owners have driven seamen back all over the world. The I. S. U. and I. W. W., once proud and powerful organizations, now exist as a mere shadow of their former selves, pale ghosts who haunt the waterfront. The N. S. U. of Great Britain with its PC 5 is in reality under the control of the shipowners. Everywhere, with one or two exceptions, seamen are demoralized, conditions aboard the ships are utterly barbarous. Bulldozing and hazing with blackjacks by the officers take place. The 2 watch system is practically universal, with all kinds of dodges to get unpaid overtime work.

As for improvement in these conditions, look at what is happening. The new ships Europa and Bremen of the Nord Deutscher Lloyd symbolize the increasing tempo of competition for trade, fanning to a white heat the already intense struggle. The freight market has continually been dropping for years.

American finance capital intends to build a merchant fleet, and the cost-price, with a profit attached, will be paid for by the blood and sweat and suffering of American seamen. For \$50 per month meantime and later for less. The ship owners stand well organized, well prepared for the battle.

What leadership does the Party offer the seamen?

The policy of the Communist party in the Seamen's League, has been a duplicate of that followed in the coal miners' union and elsewhere. All non-Party elements of any standing among the seamen are ousted or kept submerged. Anyone, even Party members who oppose or differ from secretary Mink are likewise ousted and attempts made to discredit them. While on paper the outfit struggles to build a

union which the rank and file will control through ship committees, the reality of the situation was expressed by Hines, the New York secretary. He told at a membership meeting, which was in revolt against the bureaucratic methods and lack of initiative of the League officers, that "the T. U. U. L. would run the League and not the seamen". Mind you, I had to ask several who were present at the meeting before I could believe it. That seamen are willing to organize and fight the hellish ship conditions afloat is obvious.

## A Narrow Policy

The Longshoremen are likewise disgusted with the grafting and sellout tactics of Joe Ryan and company. The Marine Workers League has made a little progress, in spite of its leadership rather than because of it. Right here are workers prepared to struggle. Drop the monkey business, and backstairs "third period" diplomacy. Encourage the rank and file to

# Miners' Conventions

(Continued from Page 1)

Farrington was finally seated, after a stormy debate which consumed the greater part of two days, by a vote of 225 to 145. The fight over the credentials of this reactionary crook and grafter became the dominating issue of the convention. It symbolized the elements of corruption and reaction in the new union and the determination of the rank and file to uproot them. The vote was, to a certain extent, a measure of comparative strength of the two forces on a show-down issue, a measure that was weighted in favor of the reactionaries by the Left wing boycott of the convention.

Farrington, formerly president of the Illinois district and long a bitter enemy of all progressive tendencies in the union, was exposed in 1926 as the paid employee of the Peabody Coal Company under contract at \$25,000 per year. He was expelled in 1926 and re-admitted recently into the union after the break of the Illinois District with the Lewis organization. The case against Farrington is clear and undisputable. At the time of his expulsion a letter written to him by Peabody was made public by Lewis in which Farrington, protesting against Peabody's instructions not to run again for the office of district president, said: "I feel that I can serve you better as an official of the Miners' union". Despite this clear proof of his perfidy, Fishwick, who had been Farrington's henchman and an accomplice in his evil deeds, backed his credentials and jammed them through with the weight of the Illinois district machine.

What effect this action and the battle which centered around it will have on the fortunes of the new union remains to be seen. Farrington hailed the result as a "vindication of his honor", but he followed it with the announcement that he would take his seat and participate no further in the convention. Nevertheless, he remains a power behind the scenes in the Illinois district organization, the strongest body in the union, and the issue remains. The progressive rank and file forces consolidated themselves in the struggle to unseat Farrington and an expansion of the new union in the coal fields will create the conditions to broaden these forces and increase their strength.

## Progressives Measures Brought Forward

The power developed in the fight over this question forced a number of progressive measures through the convention. Among them were the following: the amendment of the preamble to replace the demand for "an equitable share of the fruits of their labor" with the demand for "the full social value of their product"; the five-day week and six-hour day from bank to bank; the advocacy of unemployment insurance; the reduction of officers salaries by 50 per cent and restrictions of their powers.

One measure, pushed through on the

look after their welfare in the organization.

A broadening of the leadership is necessary. Seamen will certainly fight for better conditions. More attention to the everyday struggles of the seamen and less prominence to the latest contortions of the third period.

It is not enough to line up a member and then let him drift away. A man becomes a member in a haphazard and lackadaisical manner and then he is of no further interest or else he is informed that so and so are a bunch of saboteurs. This causes him to quit. Why not try to put some of the paper resolutions into practice?

Two years have passed and still no union, and unless the Party's throttling grip is relaxed, then the new union will die. The situation demands action. Either the Party means business, in which event the bureaucratic methods now adopted will have to be dropped or else the Party and League will get nowhere. Seamen demand a showdown, as they say on the waterfront.

—JAMES RUSSELL

wave of sentiment for union democracy—the provision for greater autonomy of the district organizations—which was promoted as a safeguard against the autocracy of national officials made so odious by Lewis, opens the door for trouble from another quarter. Such decentralization is, at bottom, a step backward. In practice it will weaken the national battle-front of the union and provide justification for strike-breaking separate agreements by treacherous District officials of the Fishwick type. Moreover, while it will tend to protect a progressive district against the disruptive interference of a Lewis, it will also shield a reactionary and corrupt district machine from the corrective influence of the national organization. The Fishwick-Farrington elements undoubtedly supported district autonomy with such considerations in mind.

Already at the Springfield convention the principle of autonomy—on its face a step forward—was invoked in defense of Fishwick and Nesbit against the proposal from the floor for their removal. John Hindmarsh, speaking on these proposals, said that "for the convention to meddle in the internal affairs of a district would mean giving the new union's officers the power we are seeking to wrest from Lewis". It was this argument that shielded them from the demand for an accounting of their administration of the district organization. It also helped to squeeze through the credentials of Farrington. It will have similar implications in the future if Howat, as president of the national organization, disappoints their calculations to use him as a harmless decoration of progress and militancy for their reactionary designs.

## Communists Adopt Isolation Policy

An interesting feature of the Springfield convention was the re-emergence of the socialist elements and the assertion of socialist influence in the new union. The Socialist party, once a power in the United Mine Workers, has had no influence whatever in recent years. Its place was taken by the rising Communist party which, fighting aggressively and employing skillful tactics, gained influence over a big progressive movement of the rank and file. The Communists have lately maneuvered themselves onto a side track by ill-advised tactics ("boycott the Springfield convention!") and made no effort to assert themselves in this new movement. The Socialists, who are no doubt grateful to the "third period" for this opportunity, made the most of it to edge into a strong position at Springfield. The election of Germer as vice president of the new union is the symbol of a formidable socialist advance in one of the most important sectors of the American labor movement.

Next week's Militant will contain further detailed reports of the Springfield convention and the first of a series of analytical articles on the miners' union and the tasks of the Left wing.

## The MILITANT

we believe, has fulfilled a vital role in the best interests of the working class and Communist movement in the United States. It gives a true picture of the situation in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist International.

## The MILITANT

prints the original and incomparable writings of Leon Trotsky, the leader of the Left Bolshevik Opposition, now exiled in Turkey by the Stalin bureaucracy. In so doing, it makes clear to all intelligent and honest revolutionary workers, the revisionist policies of the present leadership of the International Communist movement as directed, since Lenin's death, by Stalin and Bucharin and their Centrist and Right wing supporters in the various countries.

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