

# Danville Strike Prospects

## A. F. of L. Leaders Prepare the Surrender of the Workers Struggle

After two months of heroic struggle, the strike of the 4,000 textile workers of Danville and Schoolfield, Va., is continuing militantly in spite of the "pacific" policy of the United Textile Workers. At the present the strike of the Virginia workers in the only major industrial conflict taking place in the United States and what it will lead to is of paramount importance to all workers, especially insofar as the future of the National Textile Workers Union is concerned.

A little over a year ago, the N. T. W. U. led the historic strike in Gastonia which we were told, was the beginning of a series of mighty struggles south of the Mason-Dixie line. At that time, the U. T. W. had a base only at Elizabethton, Tenn. and Marion, N. C. Today, it has support in many textile centers of the South while the N. T. W. U. is all but liquidated everywhere, including Gastonia.

The Danville workers are feeling the heavy club of the capitalist class just as their comrades did in Gastonia in 1929 in New Bedford in 1928 and in Passaic in 1926. Tear gas bombs are used to break up mass picket lines formed in spite of the reactionary U. T. W. leadership. Strikers to the number of 50 are arrested at one time and the National Guardsmen with glistening bayonets patrol the roads leading to the mill to prevent picketing.

When the U. T. W. protested to Gov. Pollard against the use of guardsmen to escort scabs to their homes, the governor referred the protest to Col. H. C. Opie of the National Guard for investigation and action. It so happens that Col. Opie is in command of the more than 500 guardsmen who are doing strike duty in Danville!

Recently three strikers were evicted from the company owned houses and similar eviction notices were served on 47 of the most active strikers. When a protest was made to the governor he answered as follows:

"The 47 who were given eviction notices were known to be guilty of unfair and in many cases unlawful interference with the lawful right of other mill workers to work in the mill."

Most of the strikers live in the company owned houses and there is but little doubt that a wholesale eviction campaign will soon be started. At that time the crucial period of the strike will be reached, for the U. T. W. will not be willing to conduct a strike of such proportions that will result in evictions on a broad scale.

### Policy Leads to Sell-Out

Already we have seen that the U. T. W. policy leads directly to a sell-out of the workers as took place in Elizabethton Marion and elsewhere. The futile appeals to Gov. Pollard who has shown clearly that he is an agent of the mill owners, is one telling example. The turning over of N. T. W. U. organizers to the police authorities in the early days of the strike in another. It is a clear indication that the strikers are greatly bewildered and do not know who are their real enemies. The strikers, who have in the past belonged to a company union are not so much to blame as the U. T. W. officialdom who in a critical period, can be depended upon to serve the mill owners and betray the interests of the workers.

The strike is the result of a 10 p c. wage cut given the workers last February. Altho the workers who all belonged to the company union, objected, nothing took place immediately. Later the United Textile Workers Union sent organizers into the field and on Sept. 29 called the strike.

In passing it may be asked: where was the N. T. W. U. all this time? According to the reports we have been reading in the *Daily Worker* for the last six months or more the South is honeycombed with N. T. W. U. organizers. Of course, we know that it is not true, and is printed in the Party press like so many other exaggerations to fool the Party membership and allow glowing reports to be sent to Moscow.

Only after the strike had been on for several weeks did the N. T. W. U. take notice of the situation and send down one man, Bill Murdoch, without any money or other resources. Before he was able to go he cooled his heels for several days

in the corridor of the national office of the Party while Bedacht decided if money could be "spared" for that purpose. Bedacht told Murdoch to hike to Danville, to which Murdoch rejoined by asking Bedacht if he hikes when he goes on a tour for the national office. The whole situation brings up an interesting question: does the Party intend to keep the N. T. W. U. only as a decoration to issue an occasional statement in the Party press and send paper delegates representing nobody to the many "mass" conferences called by the Party, or does it intend to liquidate the organization and call for the building of a Left Wing the U. T. W.? According to the present line it will not do the latter. Yet the Party is not doing anything seriously to develop the N. T. W. U. altho it calls it the organization of the mass of textile workers. It must not be allowed to become a mutual admiration society but a dynamic force for organizing the hundreds of thousands of unorganized textile workers in the South, New England and elsewhere. At the same time militant workers in the U. T. U. must be organized to fight against the McMahon regime and for the support of the Danville strikers.

### N. T. W. U. Has Virtually Disappeared

In a series of articles contributed to the *Militant* in the last year, warning was given that unless the policy of the Party was changed the N. T. W. U. would virtually disappear from the scene. Events have more than justified the warning. Today practically no N. T. W. U. exists. The national office of the union is located in New Bedford where there is a membership of less than 200. A small group can be found in Paterson, N. J. and a sprinkling here and there. It is by no stretch of the imagination a national organization and unless immediate action is taken even the skeleton will disappear.

Once again we appeal to the militant workers in the N. T. W. U. to stop the ruinous policy of isolation and the suppression of those who do not accept the Stalinist program, and to rebuild the union on a broad basis. There is a big field in the United States for a militant textile union and there is no reason why the N. T. W. U. should not be that instrument. As its first task it should start a nation wide campaign for the support of the Danville strikers and a warning to the strikers against the ultimate betrayal by the U. T. W. The *Daily Worker* is strangely silent on the strike. Why?

—SYLVAN A. POLLACK.

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## Militant Goes to New Headquarters

More room, more light, more facilities, better location—that describes the new headquarters to which the office of the Communist League and the *Militant* have just moved. The new quarters are at 84 East 10th Street, between Third and Fourth Avenues, right on the first floor. The quarters we occupied previously at 25 Third Avenue proved to be too small for our purposes. In the new place, it will now be possible not only to have an efficient national office but also the local New York office. The technical equipment of the organization will also be there, and there is a large hall attached to the office which will permit the holding of regular branch and committee meetings, classes, and public forums.

In the process of moving, naturally, the expenditure of quite a sum was required. The local New York organization of the League after discussing the advantages of the new quarters, voted to share the expense of the moving. A number of comrades made special pledges which they have already paid, and it is largely to them that we are indebted. The contributors are as follows:

Nathan Berman, \$25.00; Brown, \$10.00; A. M. Glotzer, \$10.00; M. Sterling \$10.00; Morris Lewit, \$10.00; Zipkin, \$5.00; Phil Shulman, \$5.00; Pauline Gutringer \$3.00; Schwartz, \$2.00; Sympathizer, \$1.00.

In addition, after an appeal made by comrade Cannon at the public forum addressed two weeks ago in New York by Shactman, comrades and friends in the audience contributed a total of \$14.00.

In the moving itself a number of comrades contributed invaluable assistance in carting over our furniture and equipment in the most economical manner. These included, comrades Pete Hansen, Joe Friedman, Russ Blackwell, George Clarke, Jack Carmody, Sam Gordon, M. Morris. Many of them, including Paul Schwalbe, Max Engel and others, donated their services to arrange the new place in the best possible order.

A library and reading room is to be set up in the meeting hall to which Left wing and Communist workers are invited. Remember the new address: 84 East 10th St., New York N. Y.!

### Our Open Forum

Ever increasing attendance is the feature of the most successful open forum series yet held by the New York branch of the Communist League. The last forum at which comrade James P. Cannon spoke on "Prospects for the American Revolution", we had the largest attendance yet: some 130 workers, who listened closely to the end and then stayed for questions to the speaker and discussion from the floor. One of the most significant sides of the forum is the increasing number of Party members who come to the meetings, participating through the questions and discussion in the most comradely manner. The plan of the New York branch in holding these meetings at the Labor Temple every Saturday night is to illuminate some current question from the viewpoint of the Left Opposition as well as to deal with the more fundamental questions that lie at the basis of the revolutionary movement. Comrade Max Shactman, editor of the *Militant*, will speak on January 3, 1931, on "Alignments for the Next War". Unemployed presenting membership cards in their Council are admitted free.

## WELCOME MALKIN!

New Year's Eve, Dec. 31st at Militant Hall, 84 E. 10 St.

Music :: Entertainment :: Speaking Comrade Malkin Will Recount His Prison Experiences

Admission: 35 c. All Invited

THE MILITANT Vol. IV, No. 1, Jan. 1, 1931. Published twice monthly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 84 E. 10th St., New York N. Y.; Subscription rate: \$2.00 per year; foreign \$2.50. Five cents per copy. Bundle rates 3 cents per copy. Editorial Board: Martin Abern, James P. Cannon, Max Shactman, Maurice Spector, Arne Swabeck. Entered as second class mail matter, November 28, 1928 at the Post Office at New York N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879 (Total No. 60.)