

ON THE WORKERS' FRONT

A «New Era» in A. C. W.

The triumphant victory achieved by Sidney Hillman in his fight against the Orlofsky-Beckerman gang in the New York organization has been marred by an unpleasant, though in ordinary times an insignificant incident.

While Hillman was preparing a jubilant celebration of this triumph on the occasion of the liquidation of the Orlofsky-Beckerman opposition racket, the news leaked out in the Freiheit of his secret negotiations with the underworld, where the finishing touches of the settlement with the racketeers for the liquidation of their racket were made. The Freiheit even disclosed the details of the settlement and the various sums paid out to each of the important participants in this racket. There was a complete picture of a sales transaction in the old Hillman tradition.

Hillman in a Deal with the Racketeers
Surely, it was a disgraceful disclosure, bound to defame Hillman's entire campaign against racketeering which has been so promising a venture as well as a vital necessity for his prestige. Hillman did not lose time. He hurried with statements of denial to the press. He rushed to the meeting of the Cutters' Local that took place in the evening of the same day when the news appeared. In an unflattering speech he condemned the Communist attacks as malicious upon the good name of the Amalgamated.

But, alas, the facts of the settlement have already been widely broadcast in the clothing market, so that Hillman's denials were of no avail. Thus Hillman's victory has been deprived of its sweetness. The effect was not certain, though the gesture was so firm.

However, Hillman's spirit has remained undaunted. He did not hesitate to declare to the world in general and to the clothing workers in particular, the coming of a new era in the Amalgamated with the cleansing of the organization of its corrupt elements. What this new era will represent and what it promises to the membership he did not make clear. But he urged the members to be patient, disband their groups, cease their criticism of the officials, rest their fate with the latter, and their future will be secure.

Results of the I.L.D. Methods in St. Louis

ST. LOUIS.—Because of the stupid attempt of the local Stalinists to disrupt the conference, the first sessions of the St. Louis United Front Mooney Committee were devoted almost entirely to bitter discussion with no benefit to Communism or its official representatives. There was sharp resentment against the slanders made by the Stalinists upon everyone not a member of the C. P. or its auxiliary organizations, and their unwarranted proposal to amalgamate the conference with the I. L. D. conference which was not yet in existence.

At the November 11 session, the Stalinists for the greater part were absent. A measure of quiet obtained, during which the delegates of the Communist League of America (Opposition) succeeded in introducing a few organizational measures which were carried. Basing themselves on the release, read to the conference, and is used by the California Molders Defense Committee calling for demonstrations on November 28 (the fifteenth anniversary of Mooney's commitment from a death sentence to life imprisonment), the Left Opposition delegates moved to hold such a demonstration. It was carried. A second motion to elect a committee to work out the details and with power to act was also carried.

Opposition Proposes Mooney Demonstration
The committee met on Saturday, November 14. It consisted of two delegates from A. F. of L. locals, an individual

No Changes in Policies

Will this new era bring back the union conditions in the shops, will it bring a reversal of policy of the organization of serving the interests of the manufacturers, to that of protecting the interests of the workers? Hillman did not state. The membership will draw the logical conclusions from Hillman's recent actions.

A certain change in the situation is to be expected, but this change will hardly be for the benefit of the membership in spite of all the promises of the officialdom. The regime in the A. C. W. and the corrupt atmosphere have not been changed with the removal of some of its corrupt officials in the latest campaign. The policies of the organization have remained the same as before the so-called campaign against racketeering.

Before any improvement in the conditions of the workers can be attempted, the activity of the masses must be developed, self-expression of the membership must be assured and the policies radically changed. Hillman's announced

introduced to the conference by a letter from the California Molders Defense Committee, and a delegate from the Communist League of America (Opposition). The individual on the committee, not representing an organization, Peter Frank, is a Mooney minstrel who goes from city to city giving lecture slides on the Mooney case, and is evidently more interested in organizing these lectures than in building a working class movement to force Mooney's release.

Through the garrulity and the prestige with which the California Molders Defense Committee endowed him in the eyes of the A. F. of L. delegates, he prevailed, despite the strenuous opposition of our delegate, upon one of the A. F. of L. delegates to vote against the demonstration. The other A. F. of L. delegate hesitated and finally abstained from voting. The vote was two to one against the demonstration, one abstaining. As far as we know, the Party will hold no Mooney demonstration in St. Louis on that date.

The Opposition succeeded however in having a recommendation passed to organize such a demonstration at a later date. We will work for this. In the meantime we will visit A. F. of L. locals and other working class organizations in an effort to build a broader united front.

The Communists Must Lead and Unite Movement

The committee meeting showed again the inability of workers ingrained with the A. F. of L. ideology, to grasp the working class nature of the solution to the Mooney case. Only a movement which a united Communist movement initiates and drives ahead with a clear class policy can achieve Mooney's liberation, as well as all other class war prisoners. This will require patient, systematic work, a superior program of action and purpose. The Stalinist tactics of split and slander will not bring about a mass movement; quite the contrary.

Party and I. L. D. sectarianism make it possible for minstrels, labor fakers and reformists to decide the fate of a mass movement on behalf of Mooney and Billings. It is objective support that Stalinism thus unwittingly gives to such elements. These elements are growing holder all the time, assuming leading positions in the Mooney movement, in order to ent it to pieces, and excluding Communists. Yet the T. U. U. L. resolution says, "the I. L. D. is leading the struggle for the release of Tom Mooney. . . ."

Comrades in the Party! Let us join together to build a united front movement in St. Louis for the liberation of Mooney, Billings and all class war prisoners, and thereby enhance the prestige and cause of Communism.
—CHARLES MAHLER.

The New York Opposition Forum

The death of the Haymarket martyrs forty-four years ago was commemorated at the open forum of the N. Y. branch, Communist League of America (Opposition) on Friday November 13. Comrade James P. Cannon in a lecture described the events that are associated with the names of the Haymarket martyrs, the powerful movement for the eight hour day in the '80s. The Communists, he said, are the heirs of the great tradition they created. This tradition must

be preserved by us, and serve as a source of inspiration today. Comrade Cannon analyzed the struggle of those days for the eight hour day, and showed how many valuable lessons are applicable for a movement for the six hour day. He analyzed the philosophy of the Haymarket martyrs, showing its weaknesses in its anarchist trends. While they cannot be strictly identified with any group or party today, they stand closer to the Communists than to either the anarchists or the socialists. An interesting discussion from the floor followed the speech of comrade Cannon.

At the next forum on Friday November 20, Arne Swabeck will speak on "The Manchurian Crisis". The timeliness and importance of this question needs no comment.

«Young Spartacus» is Out

By the time this issue of the Militant reaches its readers Young Spartacus will be off the press. Let the first issue be a spur for support to Young Spartacus. Subscribe to it! Send in your donation, immediately! Get your bundle orders! Distribute it among the youth! Fifty Cents per year.

crusade against active groups in the organization can serve as a warning to the membership of what they can expect in the future and what Hillman's new era holds out for them.

The membership must give the answer to the attempts of the Hillman bureaucracy to further worsen their conditions and suppress their resistance. The membership must strengthen their activity in their locals and groups if they ever can hope to effect a change in their conditions. They must launch their own campaign against racketeering and corruption in the organization which alone can guarantee them a clean organization and a new era of improved conditions.
—ALBERT ORLAND.

(Due to technical hindrances, this article appears belatedly; it retains, however, its complete validity. Other articles on the A. C. W. will appear in forthcoming issues of The Militant.

Soviet Celebration in Staunton, Ill.

STAUNTON, ILL.
We worked hard to make a success of our November 7th meeting in celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution. This meeting was held under the auspices of the Miners' Educational League and the Communist League of America (Opposition). Leaflets announcing the meeting were posted on the entrances to the mines and on mine tipples in and around Staunton.

Prior to the opening of the meeting the Stalinists appeared in the hall, headed by Joe Tash, the latest scapegoat for the mistakes of the leadership in the National Miners Union. Tash distributed leaflets announcing a meeting in celebration of the 14th Anniversary of the Soviet Union, under the auspices of the Communist Party, to be held in the same hall on Monday, November 9th. There is no doubt that this action was inspired by the earlier announcement of our meeting.

The meeting opened with about one hundred workers present, all miners. Comrade Tom Stamm, the speaker for the Communist League of America (Opposition), spoke on the Left Opposition and its attitude toward relations with the Communist Party and Comintern. He gave an example of our policy for unity of all Communist forces by calling upon the workers also to attend the party meeting. The workers listened very attentively.

When the meeting was thrown open for questions and discussion, the Stalinists came into their special element. A misguided worker truculently attempted to provoke the meeting against the Left Opposition, but was promptly called to order by the chairman and by the workers themselves. One or two other questions were asked, and then Tash rose to the assault.

Tash Bungles Again
After a few nominal remarks, Tash launched into a denunciation of the Watts, the Allards and the Morgans! He was called to order. He shifted the ground of his attack—to slander comrade Trotsky. With lightning speed he disposed of the speaker, the Communist League and the International Left Op-

THE MOVEMENT FOR MOONEY IN BOSTON

BOSTON.

At the I. L. D.-Mooney Conference in Boston on October 25, comrades Cooperstein and Shechet were delegates from the Communist League (Opposition) branch. Comrade Shechet was elected to the credentials committee and the Opposition was seated. It was a pretty dull conference until comrade Cooperstein asked some questions regarding the last amnesty conference and criticized the lack of activity. Comrade Cantor immediately interpreted this as an attack upon the I. L. D. in an attempt to set the conference against us. But this machine was sadly disappointed when

comrade Shechet rose to say that criticism should not be taken in that manner.

It is only with the interest of the work at heart that we criticize in order to avoid repetition of neglect to carry on the work, comrade Shechet went on to say. Tom Mooney, after spending fifteen of the best years of his life in a California dungeon has realized that the reactionary right wing has betrayed and deserted him. He has now turned his face to the Left wing of the movement. Let us prove to him, to the entire working class and to ourselves that we really demand the unconditional release of Mooney. The only way to do this is to set right to work instead of merely calling conferences. We must broaden the base of our work by reaching the masses on behalf of Mooney; to reach the masses we must penetrate every organization where workers are concerned, regardless of all hardships. Comrade Shechet concluded by saying that she hoped that this conference will lay the foundation for a sound, broad organization with the one objective in mind: the unconditional release of Tom Mooney.

What the Conference Did
This sentiment undoubtedly expressed that of the 72 delegates. But the apparatus-man, Nat Kaplan, angry at the reception accorded comrade Shechet's remarks, delivered a speech at great length to tell us that it made no difference whether we agree with the way the Five Year Plan is being carried out; and that whatever intentions of disruption our militant phrases may cover up, the work will go on! It is quite obvious that he came prepared with this speech and had to say it regardless of what we said.

The conference itself only set up a committee of one delegate from each organization represented. This committee was to meet November 1st to map out plans for work. But when comrade Shechet came to the appointed place at the scheduled time, she found no one there except the secretary who told her that the meeting was postponed due to the absence of the "leaders" and without them nothing can be done.

"Left" phrase-mongers and the fakers in possession of the apparatus of the reformist unions. . . .

"The policy of the so-called "united front from below" . . . has reduced our so-called revolutionary unions to a sick existence, permitted it to impose upon the membership such demands as ruined the Independent Shoe Workers' Union, led to the weakening of the Communists and the strengthening of the reformists in the Needle Trades Strike, coal miners' strike, Paterson strike and many others. The same wrong policy is responsible for the stagnation, disintegration and bureaucratic regime in the Food Workers Industrial Union. . . .

"The same "united front from below" . . . permitted them to make a factional football out of the Mooney case . . . and the party lost a splendid chance to come to the political arena . . . as the representative of the widest layers of the workers. . . .

"Therefore, taking into consideration that the Left Opposition, under the Leninist guidance of comrade Trotsky, foretold from the very inception the way the party was traveling: taking into consideration that the Left Opposition was the only force which . . . fights relentlessly against all kinds of bureaucratic degeneration of the party under Stalin's misleadership:

I consider that the only way out of the present situation . . . is the full acceptance of the platform of the Left Opposition and a main road to it, a full and exhaustive party discussion of the burning questions of the party line.

(Signed) Leon Logan
Party Member, Section Two, Unit 3
District Two.

Before the Party Control Commission

In my statement which I gave to the District Control Committee of the Party in New York on November 12, 1931, when my hearing took place on charges of "Trotskyism" I wrote:

"The bureaucratic degeneration of the party apparatus, due to the anti-Leninist leadership of Stalin and his Posters, Browders and Weinstones, have resulted, in a complete disappearance of a real proletarian democracy based on Leninist understanding of centralized democracy, and therefore the bureaucratic regime has deprived the party of its Bolshevik-Leninist character."

This statement is fully affirmed by the way my case was handled and carried through at the hearing before the District Control Committee. At the section two membership meeting which took place on October 27, I spoke against Perla's report on party work among the unemployed; I stressed the fact that the "united front from below" as conceived by the party is simply another name for propaganda work, and not a united front as understood by Lenin. Perla then openly threatened to have me before the Control Committee. That called forth a protest from the floor, and because of the protest against such tactics, Perla said that I would be given a chance to explain my position to the section membership.

At the Nucleus Meeting
Instead of that, the Section Committee issued an order to the nucleus unit organizer not to admit me to unit meetings until further notification. At the unit meeting I made a statement that this kind of persecution against a comrade who is involved on political matters, is open defiling of inner-party democracy, and a bureaucratic transgression of the political rights by the section committee.

Many comrades of the unit evidently also saw it in that light. When a motion was put to the unit that I leave the meeting in accordance with the edict from above, about half the members present abstained from voting.

The hearing before the District Control Committee further bore out the Opposition contention that since the beginning of the campaign against "Trotskyism" in 1923, a systematic revision of Leninism was taking place under the leadership of Stalin and Bucharin.

In my statement I also pointed out

position.

Getting his second wind he wanted to know why the Opposition didn't speak about the National Miners Union and the situation in the Illinois mine fields, instead of on the Russian revolution, etc. Comrade Goldberg later asked Tash why the Party was calling a meeting in celebration of the 14th anniversary of the Soviet Union. In answer to the statement that between the 10th and 11th plenum of the E. C. C. I. Molotov had been removed by Stalin from the presidium of the E. C. C. I. Tash criticized the speaker for mentioning "individuals which even I haven't heard about". (!) A little later Tash railed against the speaker for introducing theoretical questions in workers' discussions. In conclusion, Tash moved that the meeting adjourn and give way to a meeting of the Unemployed Council which meets in the same hall. The motion was ruled out of order.

In general Tash displayed all the signs which a petty functionary gains in the Stalinist school of theory and practice. It was plain to see that his little influence was considerably less after the meeting. Nor did he add to his prestige by asking me after the meeting in the presence of workers. "What kind of a clothing store have you got?", and then running away from the answer which I made to the workers instead.

Many workers approached the Left Opposition comrades after the meeting and expressed their thanks for an interesting and instructive afternoon, and asked us to come again and speak on other subjects. This we promised to do. On November 15 comrade Stamm will go to Staunton to speak at a meeting to launch a united front movement for the unconditional freedom of Tom Mooney and all other class war prisoners. This meeting is arranged by the Miners' Educational League. What will be the party's attitude toward the meeting and conference? Will they practice the same disruptive methods they used in St. Louis because the meeting has not been organized by them? Or will they work with the Left Opposition and other working class organizations in a united front?
—H. L. GOLDBERG.

After the setting up of part of the executive, the meeting proceeded with a report of the I. L. D. representative, followed by what was supposed to be, according to the agenda, a report on the Conference. Cantor elaborated on the Lawrence strike with the news that it came to an end on November 11; that the thousands of workers went back to work under a 10% cut, with the Pacific Mill shut down entirely. That during the strike 145 strikers and strike leaders were arrested and jailed, and that the I. L. D. needs funds to get these prisoners out. He concluded with entertaining Prager's motion to add the Lawrence cases to the Mooney campaign, under the general campaign for the release of all class war prisoners.

In the discussion I asked Cantor whether he reported for the I. L. D. in general or for the Mooney Conference, and in my remarks, pointed out that while strike is our strike and we must give full support to it and the arrested and jailed men and women, we must not forget that this is the duty primarily of the I. L. D. in its regular tasks.

Rallying A Mass Defense Movement

But the United Front Committee for Mooney, though called by the I. L. D., must devote itself to the Mooney issue and not allow it to be side-tracked by other events of the day. Of course the answer was what we could expect. Just as the Stalinists argued that the revolution in Spain was of no concern to us because it was a distant event, so in this instance came the remark, "We must bring the case closer home."

Is it a question whether this is a California case or a Lawrence case or a question of significance? We must be able to make this distinction. We must realize that around Mooney, because of his long standing in the labor movement and the national and international significance of the case, we can rally the widest masses, and thus best aid all class war prisoners.

We must sound a warning. Let us not give Mooney cause to turn his face away from the Communists as he did from the reactionaries. Tom Mooney is our militant fighter of long standing. The Left Opposition will work unceasingly for the unconditional release of Tom Mooney.
—C. SHECHET.

Engdahl on the Mooney United Front

NEW YORK.

At the Party Forum in New York held November 8th, J. Louis Engdahl was the speaker on the subject, "How To Free Tom Mooney". Engdahl approached this question from the official party viewpoint, the so-called "united front from below." He concerned himself a good deal with attacks upon the Left Opposition because of its united front ideas. The Left Opposition, correctly, demands a united front of all workers' organizations—from the Communists to the reformist and reactionary labor organizations, feeling confident that in the struggle for the release of Mooney and Billings, the fakers and insincere elements can be exposed most easily to the workers for what they really are.

But perhaps Engdahl could not be expected to grasp this essential Leninist idea; instead he naively read from The Militant the latter's scathing condemnation of the labor fakers, and then, turning to the audience, inquired: "If that's their opinion of these leaders, why do they want a united front with them?" Thus always with ignorance.

The floor was later thrown open for discussion. I and other Left Oppositionists asked for the floor, but the Chairman, carrying out Amter's proscription of the Left Opposition, refused to let us have the floor. So the forum no longer was a forum. A whole string

The Lawrence Strike
After the October 25 conference itself we went to what was supposed to be a mass meeting for the Lawrence Strikers. There were about thirty at this meeting. Listening to the reports of Cantor and Ballam which contradicted each other, one could almost laugh were it not so tragic. Cantor reported that the workers in Lawrence are paying their own fines because they are not ready to give the sacrifice of staying in jail. Right after he finished, Ballam delivered one of his usual orations, saying that there is a great movement in Lawrence, that the masses of the 25,000 workers are revolutionary and at the end of the strike there will be shop nuclei of Communists! It takes a low politician to make such a discovery, and of such types of politicians, Ballam gets the prize. When one looks at the true picture of the strike, it's no wonder it is in such a condition. When people insist on turning a strike of backward mill workers into a Communist campaign, it can not be otherwise.

—A CONFERENCE DELEGATE.
(Since this was written we have heard from comrade Shechet, who with comrade Cooperstein were delegates to the I. L. D.—Mooney Conference. The letter, in part, follows—Ed.)

"The 'leaders' of the I. L. D. have marked time for three weeks, which has not helped the Mooney movement. Proof of this was the attendance at the meeting last Friday night, November 13, when out of 46 delegates, only eight were present. Eight are sufficient, however, for the leadership of the I. L. D. to carry out its usual policy. When, in electing an executive committee, I was nominated for secretary and was the only one who accepted, Cantor at once saw to it that no "Trotskyite" be secretary of a united front Mooney committee, and called for more nominations! I assured comrade Cantor that the secretaryship was not uppermost in my mind, but only the opportunity to work on behalf of the Mooney movement, and, office or no office, nobody could prevent me from putting forward correct policies or carrying on my work.

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—C. SHECHET.

of "safe" speakers were given the opportunity to vent their customary spleen—"renegade", "counter-revolutionary", etc.—against us. Comrade Gellman was accidentally given the floor and pointed out the experiences of the Sacco-Vanzetti case, upon which Engdahl had said not a single word!

A Negro Worker Protests

One Negro worker, a functionary, took the floor, and stated that anyone in the audience who wished the floor should get it, and then the audience could judge for itself on the various views presented. This was a sound, healthy reaction, and is to be welcomed as evidence that the corrupting influences and practices of the party bureaucrats are resented in many quarters. But the Chairman, of course, ignored the comrade's demand and replied that it was the policy of the Workers' School not to grant the floor to the Left Opposition.

Engdahl then summed up in a cautious manner. The meeting adjourned, and we fraternized with a number of the workers.
—HERBERT CAPELIS.

CHICAGO YOUTH AFFAIR

A Dance and Entertainment will be given by the Chicago Youth Group of the Communist League of America (Opposition) on Saturday, November 28, 1931 beginning at 8 P. M. at 1435 No. Western Avenue. All profits will go for the benefit of Young Spartacus.

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