

EDITORIAL NOTES

LEFT WING VICTORY OR TREACHEROUS BARGAIN?

The recent elections in Local 9 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union are an event of great significance for the Left wing labor movement. In these elections the Left wing, under the direct leadership of the Communist Party, elected five delegates to the national convention of the union out of a total of seven. Since Local 9 is one of the largest and most important locals in the union, having approximately 7,000 members (cloak finishers), the momentous import of the election result can be seen at once. On the face of things it would appear that the Left wing has captured one of the main strongholds of the "company union". If this is really so, if the Left wing, which was expelled from the International and compelled to form its own union, and, then, in its convention two years ago, declared the I. L. G. W. U. to be a "company union" and forbade the formation of any organized movement within it, can come out now as the victor in the elections to the convention—then this is indeed an amazing testimony of the strength of the Left wing and of the Communists in the needle trades. If it is a genuine victory it portends momentous developments in the entire movement.

didates, and so did the Left wing. But the Schlesinger group, the black and yellow gang that has been distinguished always by its voracious appetite for office, was overcome with modesty and put up no slate of its own! And when this illuminating circumstance is considered in connection with the result of the election—the victory of the weakest group over the strongest group—there is only one possible conclusion: the right wing forces voted for the Left wing candidates!

are obligated to the Schlesinger gang or not. . . . WHAT HAPPENED TO THE "COMPANY UNION" THEORY? At the convention of the Needle Trades Industrial Union two years ago the I. L. G. W. U. was branded a "company union" and organized work within it was forbidden as an opportunist illusion. At that time, in our comments on the convention, we pointed out the falsity of this theory and the tactical conclusions drawn from it. Our arguments were unavailing and the theory and the tactics had to run their course. This course, strewn with tragedy for the Left wing, is just about finished. The facts of life have spoken their own word against these conceptions. The most revealing fact of all is the election in Local 9. The Daily Worker's comments on this event, miserable and scanty as they are, leave very little to be said for the "company union" idea.

The Mooney Case and the Party

The hypocrisy of Governor Rolph of California is now clearly revealed by the succession of delays in announcing decision in response to the pleas of Mooney's lawyers for a pardon. At first an announcement appeared of a decision to be reached by the end of February. It became next postponed to the middle of March, then to the end of March and now again to April 21. Will there be further postponements?

eratic optimism appears under the head. "Force Unconditional Freedom of Mooney." How do the C. P. and the I. L. D. propose to force Mooney's unconditional freedom? The Daily Worker says that only a mass movement can force Mooney's release. But do they propose the creation of a mass movement? Do they propose a series of united front conferences to build this mass movement? They do not. They propose merely "This week must see a special burst of protest." What form shall it take? "There must be a rising flood of letters, telegrams, resolutions, to Governor Rolph at Sacramento, California, demanding immediate and unconditional release. . . ." And that is all!

DEMOCRACY AND FASCISM by LEON TROTSKY

(Continued from last issue) "As regards 'the class content' there are no distinctions between democracy and Fascism," lectures Werner Hirsch echoing Stalin (DIE INTERNATIONALE, Jan. 1932). The transition from democracy to Fascism may take the character of "an organic process", that is, it may occur "gradually" and "bloodlessly". Such reasoning might dumbfound anyone, but the epigones have inured us from becoming dumbfounded.

when and where the "normal" police methods of reaction under decay capitalism are replaced by the Fascist régime. Whether Bruening is "better" than Hitler (better looking perhaps?) is a question which, we confess, doesn't interest us at all. But one need only glance at the list of workers' organizations to assert, Fascism has not conquered yet in Germany. In the way of its victory there still remain gigantic obstacles and forces.

the question to whether it is better to starve under Hitler or Bruening. To them it is a question of under whom to starve. To us, on the contrary, it is not a question of under which conditions it is better to die. We raise the question of how to fight and win. And we conclude thus, the major offensive must be begun before the bureaucratic dictatorship is replaced by the Fascist régime, that is, before the workers' organizations are crushed. The general offensive should be prepared for by deploying, extending, and sharpening the sectional clashes. But for this one must have a correct perspective; and first of all, one should not proclaim victorious the enemy who is still a long way from victory.

* The article "Democracy and Fascism" is an extract from comrade Trotsky's larger work What Next?—Vital Questions for the German Proletariat. Others will follow in coming issues.—Ed.