

PRICE
2
CENTS

THE MILITANT

Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]



Published weekly by the Communist League of America (Opposition) at 126 East 10th Street, New York, N. Y. 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
VOLUME VI, NO. 47 [WHOLE NO. 194] NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1933 PRICE 2 CENTS

'The Evil Genius of the American Labor Movement' A Monument to Gompers

"It is fitting that in the capital of the nation a statue should stand through the ages to remind future generations of the services to that nation of a patriot who served his country well."

These are President Roosevelt's words of tribute in dedicating a monument not to a general, an admiral or an imperialist free-booter but to a labor leader—Samuel Gompers, the deceased president of the American Federation of Labor. The president of the United States is so lavish with his praise for Gompers because he feels a deep admiration for the man whom he rightly considers not a tribune of the oppressed or a warrior for a new society but a staunch pillar of the powers-that-be, a "patriot".

We have no argument with Roosevelt when he says that Gompers "served his country well". Indeed Wilson's eulogy of Gompers, quoted by Roosevelt, reveals how deeply the masters are indebted to Samuel Gompers.

"If I may be permitted to do so," said Wilson in 1917, "I want to express my admiration of his patriotic courage, his large vision and his statesmanlike sense

Khaki Shirts Get Medals

New York City.—Silver medals for "bravery in action" have lately been bestowed upon several members of the Fascist Khaki Shirts of America who took part in the clash with anti-Fascists in Astoria, N. Y., on July 14, when Anthony Fierro, anti-Fascist student, was killed. It is for Fierro's death that his comrade Athos Terzani faces trial here solely on the basis of an accusation by "General" Art J. Smith, commander-in-chief of the Khaki Shirts.

Eight of those who were in the Astoria affair, including Smith, were decorated recently in Khaki Shirts headquarters in Philadelphia. This was done with pretentious ceremony. The silver medal is described as "the American Fascist meritorious service cross."

After "General" Smith received this honor from the general staff of his organization, he bestowed a like decoration on Adjutant General J. E. Monaghan, Col. Pasquale Rogliano, Emilio Torres, Frank Moffer, Mario Martin, Albert I. Agostino, and Algisso De Felice.

At the same time a silver cross was pinned upon Mrs. Domenico Sica, widow of an Italian characterized as "the first martyr of the Khaki Shirts." Sica was killed in South Philadelphia in June, and press reports said that he met his death during an attempt of the Khaki Shirts to break up an anti-Fascist meeting in a hall. Investigation indicates, however, that Sica was not injured during the break-up of that meeting, but was stabbed afterward on the sidewalk outside, evidently by some private enemy.

New Inquiry Into Killing
District Attorney Charles S. Colden of Queens County, who agreed on August 28 to make a new inquiry into the Fierro killing, has before him the declarations of Terzani and another eyewitness, Nichelangelo Palumbo, made on the night of the tragedy, that Fierro actually was shot down by "General" Art Smith's associates in the Khaki Shirts.

Mr. Colden is running for Borough President of Queens on the Democratic ticket next month, and his office voiced no objection when the Terzani defense asked recently for two months postponement of the trial. It is now set for November 27.

So far no brief has been filed by the prosecution in support of Assistant District Attorney Joseph Loscalzo's resistance of the defense demand for photographs of all finger-prints on the murder-gun. Just what tangible reasons Mr. Loscalzo can offer for withholding those finger-prints remain to be seen. It is believed by observing lawyers here that the prosecution will have difficulty in justifying its position that it should not be obliged to disclose the finger-prints on the gun in advance of trial.

Terzani's four-page affidavit which accompanied the petition for the finger-prints, contends that he cannot have a fair trial unless he is permitted to show by expert testimony that the finger-prints on the pistol are not his. He challenges the state to produce those prints in open court.

Money is needed urgently for Terzani's defense. Contributions should be sent to Herbert Mahlor, treasurer of the United-front Terzani Defense Committee, 94 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

of what has to be done. I like to lay my mind alongside of a mind that knows how to pull in harness. The horses that kick over the traces will have to be put in a corral."

"In harness"—For the Bosses From the outset of his career as a labor leader, Gompers caused the capitalist class little worry. He knew how to pull in harness—not for the workers. The bosses reaped a lucrative harvest from the plasticity of Samuel Gompers who traded the fighting battalions of the proletariat for the Judas gold of respectability.

Gompers founded the American Federation of Labor; he was its president until his death in 1924. For this activity he has not suffered the storm of abuse, calumny and vilification with which the ruling class so profusely showers the protagonists of the labor movement. On the contrary he is glorified in a monument erected to his memory in the citadel of American imperialism. A curse at the death of "Big Bill" Haywood, a sigh of relief at the passing of Debs and a monument for Gompers! The oligarchy of capital knows how to estimate the work of labor's leaders.

It never could be said of Mr. Gompers that he "kicked over the traces". His kick was at the working class. His long years of service, earning him such profuse praise from Roosevelt, began with renegey from the socialist movement whose ideas he assimilated as a young cigar maker. He deserted socialism for the respectability of a "pure and simple" craft union movement whose motto was "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work". He wanted no connection with the socialists because they preached a doctrine of "class hatred and violence" as an imported atrocity of foreigners. No connection with the socialists or the mass of unskilled who might be contaminated with radical ideas—this was his credo in founding the A. F. of L. in 1881. The great mass of exploited workers standing outside of the sequestered cloister of the aristocracy of labor were also outside the concern of Gompers.

A Bulwark Against Radicalism
The whole career of Samuel Gompers was predicated on currying the favor of the master class, of showing them by deeds that the labor movement that he led was good 100% American—a bulwark against radicalism. In 1894 the memorable strike led by the American Labor Union and its great inspirational force, Eugene Victor Debs, dared the power of the railroad magnates. The government sent the militia against the strikers. On the other side the railroad men were supported by the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance which promised to feed the strikers. The country was in an uproar, the class lines were drawn taut and the unions were clamoring for action—for support of the Pullman workers.

Gompers called a meeting of the A. F. of L. Executive Council and refused to call either general or local strikes in support of the beleaguered railroad workers. Debs was charged with contempt of court for violating the injunction. Gompers seized this opportunity to prove to the master class that the labor organization associated with his name would have no part in radical action. The strike was lost, in no small degree because of the treachery of Gompers. Debs went to jail; Gompers won the good graces of Wall Street. Gompers was learning the lesson of solidarity—with the ruling class.

National Civic Federation
It was as president of the National Civic Federation that Gompers earned his spurs as a trusted lieutenant of the capitalists within the ranks of labor. An organization composed of notorious labor haters like Ralph Easley and labor

(Continued on Page 4)

while in the three months ended on Sept. 30, 621,000,000 pounds, or 4,782,000 gags, were destroyed, either by burning or by dumping into the ocean.

"About 15,500,000 bags of coffee are held in the Brazilian warehouses now, against 25,048,000 a year ago and 27,999,000 two years ago."

If you go without coffee now you know the reason. There is too much of it.

CHICKEN DINNER
Saturday, October 14th at 8 P. M.
by
PROTOMAGIA
Speech by
DIEGO RIVERA
ADMISSION . . . 50c
International Workers School
126 East 10th Street, N. Y. C.

New Issues Disturb 53rd A. F. of L. Convention

Mass Movement Surges against Old Forms; Roosevelt Threatens Strikers

The fifty-third annual convention of the American Federation of Labor, now in session in Washington, D. C., marks the largest gathering of this body representing over 500,000 workers, according to the official figures, than any time since its confab in Buffalo in 1917. Its attitude towards the NRA, the rising strike wave and the burning problem of craft or industrial unionism are up for decision at this meeting.

The convention is infused with the ballyhoo spirit of the "New Deal". President William Green told the assembled delegates of the blessings of the NRA, saying that the "tide has turned" for labor and, further, that "the president himself will rely upon the hosts of labor to see this thing satisfactorily through." Exactly what this reliance on the president will mean the delegates were not long in finding out. Senator Wagner came before the gathering and bewailed the fact that the working class, which had so patiently suffered during the four years of crisis, "should resort so largely to extreme methods after revival has begun and when further revival depends upon the success of the program of cooperation." The strikes are plainly disturbing the Roosevelt administration.

Johnson Threatens Strikers
Much sharper, much blunter, and far more threatening was the warning of Roosevelt's man Friday, General Johnson, Green had complained that the wages set in the codes were not adequate. Others had urged that the organized workers use their power to gain what they thought was so generously offered under the NRA. This was manifested in the great strike wave that has been the almost automatic response of the working class. Not so with General Johnson who attempted to persuade the delegates that their rights were "effectively" protected under the NRA administration. And if the workers will not believe this, if their conditions

of life belie it, then Johnson has this to say: "The plain stark truth is that you cannot tolerate the strike." If, in spite of this threat, the workers have recourse to the strike weapon then Johnson has the following threat to make: "Public opinion is the essential power in this country. In the end it will break down and destroy every subversive influence."

It is unnecessary to write that the delegates did not accept the challenge and fling it back into his teeth. As has been the case for years the Left wing was conspicuously by its absence. The fat salaried office holders are monopolizing the stage. The Greens and Lewises, for whom Johnson has words of praise as against the rebellious coal miners, are running this show. The Stalinist party, which has consistently robbed the A. F. of L. of any organized Left wing, sent its "A. F. of L. Committee on Unemployed Insurance" to the convention. It was refused admittance on the grounds that the unions it claimed to represent were already seated at the convention and it was preemptorily thrown out by the police. No word of protest was raised in the convention.

A "Family" Faction Fight
It is true that there is a faction fight in the Federation. But this is only a family quarrel over the spoils. John L. Lewis is making a bid for power. Green is solidly entrenched. It appears that Green and his lieutenants will retain the honor of being the outstanding official servants of the capitalist class in the labor movement.

These squabbles for place and sinecure give a picture of unreality to the convention of an organization that has seen a tidal wave of unionization sweeping the country. 500 federal unions, some in basic industries, have been added to the A. F. of L. in the recent period. Whether they liked it or no, the bureaucrats of the Federation were forced to wrestle with this problem.

The convention was inescapably confronted with the issue that has churned within the labor movement generally and within the federation for decades: How to organize the vast sections of the workers in the trusted basic industries, rubber, automobile, steel, oil, etc.—in craft or industrial unions. The convention divided into two camps. On the one side, the impotent craft unions, jealously guarding their autonomy and their officials' jealousy guarding the dues; on the other hand the unions for whom the industrial or vertical form are a matter of growth or stagnation.

Issue of Industrial Unionism
The New York Times reports that a "long and bitter" debate took place over this question. The U. M. W. A. and the Brewery union delegations led the fight for changing the traditional form of the A. F. of L. The craft form of organization is responsible for the jurisdiction disputes wrecking the Federation and hamstringing its effectiveness in organizing the unorganized in the heavy industries.

By a vote of 13,872 to 5,859 the advocates of industrial unionism were defeated. But the huge size of the minority vote foreshadows the scope that the demand for industrial unionism will assume in the future. In the end the push away from the obsolete craft union will be irresistible.

An ironic touch to the convention is provided in the resolution offered by Paul Scharrenberg of the California Federation of Labor, stating that Mooney is innocent and urging a message to the California authorities calling for his immediate pardon. It was remembered that it was this same Scharrenberg who sabotaged the movement for Mooney's release and was the target of Mooney's bitterest condemnation. Significant it is that even the Scharrenbergs are forced to give lip-service to a cause they hate. The masses are moving.

The Cuban Government Moves to the Right

The recent flare-up of the army rank and file against the officers barricaded in the National Hotel in Havana weakened the government and strengthened the soldiers. The assault was carried out against the temporizing policy of the government with regard to the agents of the Machado terror and now the champions of De Cespedes. The speed and energy with which the soldiers attacked the officers following the latter's provocation testified to their hatred of their former superiors and their dissatisfaction with the policy of the government.

The sniping from roof tops and windows and the innumerable miniature street battles which followed the battle of the National Hotel sharply emphasized the fact that large numbers of the population are armed. Following the overthrow of Machado the ABC systematized the armed its members sympathizers. The Student Directorate did the same. In the interior the workers armed themselves as best they could. In Cienfuegos the workers sacked the hardware stores and carried off arms and ammunition. Following the establishment of the Grau San Martin government and the rising tide of working class struggles the students organized the Carribean Army, an armed auxiliary to the police and army. Today the armed detachments of students are being directed against the workers to recover from them the mills they have seized to en-

force their demands for higher wages and better conditions.

Government Turns to Right
The sending of armed detachments against the workers and the forcible suppression of the Communist Party in Havana and other cities marks the end of the Martin government's development to the left on the basis of the struggle against imperialism, and its evolution to the right out of fear of the workers and the pressure of the Cuban bourgeoisie and the American imperialists. This change of direction, which is characteristic of the whole course of the petty bourgeoisie and was to be foreseen, is inherent in the position of the petty bourgeoisie in Cuban society.

The social structure of Cuba is cast in the capitalist mold: 'bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie and the working class. But for the bourgeoisie it is a distorted one. The bourgeoisie is not master in its own house. The almost total concentration of the economic resources of the country in the hands of American capital leaves little room and very few avenues of development for the Cuban bourgeoisie except in the service of Yankee imperialism. Thus, Machado on the road to power became the vice-president of several American corporations in Cuba.

But the petty bourgeoisie cannot aspire even to vice-presidencies. The student in the university who studied law knew that nearly all of the legal practice of the country was in the hands of large American law firms. The colono, who rented land from the large American owned mills and corporations, on which he raised sugar cane, the only market for which is these same mills and corporations, was hopelessly enmeshed in the net of American property and finance.

The Impoverishment of the Petty Bourgeoisie
On the other hand, the crisis in sugar, which began years before the present world crisis of capitalism, impoverished not only the workers but also the petty bourgeoisie. To pay the interest and principal on Machado's loans from Wall Street, his extravagant public works program, and his army, he levied insupportable taxes, which fell upon the petty bourgeoisie with crushing force. Out of their decreasing income the petty bourgeoisie had to

pay the exorbitant rates of the American owned utility companies. In New York City, which has a high rate, the cost of domestic electricity is six and five cents per kilowatt hour. In Havana it is as high as twenty. Altho they were equipped to use these necessities, whole towns are forced to do without gas and electricity.

Under the pressure of the increasing difficulties of his rule, Machado reduced the public services. All high schools were closed in 1932. This economy program was also extended to a lesser degree to the lower schools. Practically a whole generation was condemned to illiteracy. The appropriation for army mules was thirty-two cents a day; for hospital patients, before the hospitals ceased to function, twelve cents.

The mercenary pressure of the crisis, the domination of the country's life by American capitalism and the tyrannical rule of Machado drove the petty bourgeoisie on to the path of revolution. The same factors pushed the workers along the same road. All the efforts of the petty bourgeoisie to remove Machado were unavailing until the workers intervened with a general strike. The continuing struggles of the workers provided the Left petty bourgeoisie with their opportunity to remove the servile De Cespedes government.

(Continued on Page 4)

Striking Silk Workers Protest New NRA Code

The Paterson silk strikers have met the latest intervention of the government in its attempt to impose a code containing lower wages than those obtaining before the strike. They have rejected it to a man. The battle lines stand solid.

It is this institution that is supposed to raise wages and improve conditions—the NRA—which has made the proposal and the striking silk workers that they return to work under a minimum wage of \$12-\$13. The thin veneer of the Roosevelt New Deal is beginning to peel off—for the Paterson workers at least. The first intimation that such a raw deal was being put over by Roosevelt and his crew brought a delegation of strikers from Paterson to Washington to make it clear that the silk workers would not countenance this step backward to slave conditions—that they would fight the battle to the end and get a settlement on the picket line where they make the greatest challenge to the bosses' lie.

No agrant was the proposed code, such an outright concession to the rayon bosses, that a peculiar form of united front took place in Washington. Not only the delegation of silk workers, but preachers, businessmen, politicians and silk bosses went to the capital to protest the proposed code. The bosses are making the most of this coincidence.

The Paterson Evening News purrs with unceasing delight over what it considers a demonstration of class collaboration.

"Paterson is making history to day for its industrial records!" "The trek to Washington, which brought several hundred Paterson silk strikers, manufacturers, dyers, businessmen and craftsmen together fighting as one in the common cause, is an epochal demonstration of the civic consciousness of this city."

"When all shades of labor and employing thought can join hand in hand and, forgetting their basic differences of wages and hours, stand shoulder to shoulder with their proverbial enemies, the bosses, then there is some powerful moving force which is welding together so solidified and impressive a movement."

This statement is calculated to deceive the workers. The interests of the bosses and the workers are far from identical. The Paterson silk bosses are opposed to the present code because it would be disastrous to their business, their profits, in the struggle with competitors. The silk workers can rest assured that the bosses will fight for a strike settlement at rock bottom level. Just wait: tear gas and policemen's clubs will dispel all this pretty idyll of class collaboration.

'Rev.' Green Preaches

The President of the American Federation of Labor besides being a great "friend" of Labor and a still greater friend of the bosses is also a magnificent preacher. If anybody has any doubt of the labor "leader's" preaching abilities he has only to read his sermon delivered last Saturday at Washington Cathedral. In his heart-rendering appeal to the bosses to banish poverty from our sinful earth Father Green said:

"Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven!"

"Instill in those who have made possible your success the power to continue living a good life. Among them let your blessing be shown in the form of adequate and steady wages."

Bill Green, as we see, is not only a faithful servant of his earthly bosses but also a devoted preacher of the Gospel of the Big Boss in heaven.

—D. MARCUS.

At the present time a hearing is in progress in N. Y. for a silk code. What will emerge from this hearing is still a matter for conjecture. But this much is certain: if the silk workers relax their vigilance in regard to the conning of the NRA and the officials of the U. T. W., represented by Panken at the hearing, then the outcome of the strike will be far from favorable for the strikers.

The extension of the strike, the maintenance of the picket lines—only on this condition can the Paterson workers wrest a victorious settlement from the bosses.

OPEN FORUM

THE NEW YORK ELECTION CAMPAIGN
Speaker:
MAX SHACHTMAN
Friday Night, October 20th, 1933
at International Workers School
126 East 10th Street
Auspices: Manhattan Branch,
Communist League of America
(Opposition)
ADMISSION 10 CENTS

Miners' Strike Bucks N.R.A.

In spite of Senator Wagner, and all the big and little flunkies of the A. F. of L., the striking miners in Pennsylvania have not accepted this wisdom. When the "magnificent policies" of the NRA were revealed to them last week by a "settlement" that did not recognize the United Mine Workers in the captive mines of the Steel Trust, the miners remained on strike. Roosevelt and Johnson had ordered them to go back to work, vice-president Murray of the NMWA had rushed head over heels to accept the settlement, Murray had promised that any miner who did not return to work "would not live long", and still the miners stayed out.

Even if Lewis, Murray and Co., try to pass off a sell-out "settlement" the miners understand the difference. After all the money which such sellouts put into the purses of Lewis and Murray is sweated out of the hides of the miners who remain in peonage and slavery. Even when the UMWA misleaders threatened to outlaw the strike, the ranks held firm.

The Miners Force A "Recon-

sideration Roosevelt is now almost talking of union recognition. Murray is again rushing headlong to open new negotiations. The U. S. Steel Trust has finally consented to confer with the U.M.W.A. In short, the miners have forced Roosevelt, the U. S. Steel, and the C. M. W. A. bureaucrats to begin all over again in their attempt to swindle the strikers out of the gains of their strike. If, instead, the miners had accepted Senator Wagner's recovery philosophy, they would be back at work with nothing gained except bullets and deaths from its steel Trust's gunmen.

The strike is far from won. Altho Roosevelt is talking bravely about "collective bargaining", he is still the same man who a week ago accepted the agreement that did not recognize the union. The Murray, who is now lacking the hand of the steel bosses, is the same man who threatened death to all miners who did not accept the sell-out. From such people the miners can expect nothing but treachery. If the strike demands are to be won, it will not be won through Roosevelt's promises or through the negotiations of Murray. They will be won only through the militant struggle of the workers themselves. And only through a militant policy in the U. M. W. A. will these demands, once won, be maintained. For that policy to exist, there must be an organized Left wing in the union.

PETER MORTON.

CHICAGO MEETING
ARNE SWABECK
on
THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM
at
International Labor Lyceum
2557 W. North Ave.
Sunday, October 22—3 P. M.

ST. LOUIS MEETING
ARNE SWABECK
at
CRUNDEN LIBRARY
AUDITORIUM
14th and Cass Avenues
Friday, October 27, 8 P. M.
B A N Q U E T
at
7119 Lafayette Avenue
Saturday, October 28, 8 P. M.

Too Much Coffee!

Workers who have trouble these days getting a nickel for a cup of coffee ought to have their loyalty to the capitalist system strengthened by the following article from the New York Times of October 7, 1933:

"Since July 1931, the National Coffee Department of Brazil has destroyed 3,050,124,000 pounds of coffee, having a value of approximately \$200,000,000, according to reports to the New York Coffee and Sugar Exchange. The program of destruction so far has eliminated the equivalent of a full year's world consumption.

"In the last few months the Brazilian Government agency has been speeding up the destruction. In September 196,430,000 pounds, or 1,511,000 bags, were destroyed,

Too Much Butter!

The recent advice of the government to the farmers to plow up at least 10 million acres of cotton, while a large section of the population is clad in the shoddies of rags, was not enough. The insanity of insanities that has hit the starving American proletariat square in the face is the news that there is too much butter!

The solution? Well, there are many. But one and all are directed toward one end, to cut the existing supply of butter. To bring this about the dairy companies say that it is necessary to kill a large number of the cows now on hand. But this will not of course solve the question of the "surplus" butter which is already on hand. For this they need money and they have already asked the RFC for a fund of 30 million dollars to buy up

this "surplus". It will then be turned over to the tender mercies of the big hearted dairy bosses who are not a bit squeamish about saying what they are going to do with it. They say openly they will destroy it,—if necessary.

In the land where millions walk the streets and starve; where hunger stalks the country like some gaunt wolf, leaving a train of death, disease, prostitution and crime in its wake; where 8 million underfed school children try to learn on empty stomachs that George Washington was a great man; where infant mortality and suicide present a steadily rising percentage, where demonstrations of starving workers are common and frequent,—in this land there is, if you please, too much butter!